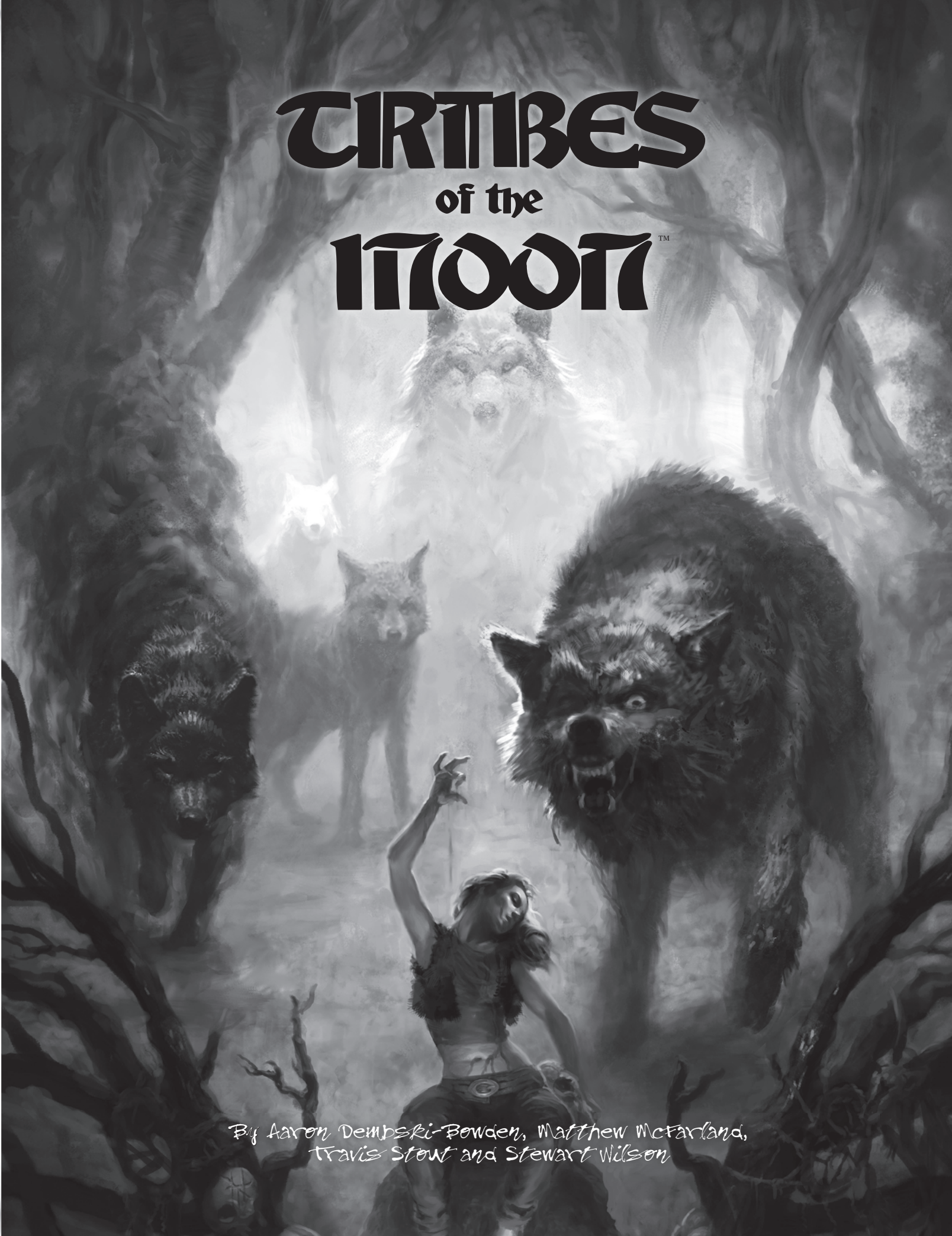

Tribes of the Moon™
the World of Darkness
Werewolf
The Forsaken®


Tribes
of the
Moon™
By Aaron Dembski-Bowden, Matthew McFarland,
Travis Stout and Stewart Wilson

The Funeral of Eli Marks

The wind is biting cold, and there's nothing around to break it. The wind bites like it wants to hurt someone, and more than one of the people assembled on the hilltop wish they'd brought coats. They don't show their cold, though. They're strong. They've each seen more pain and bloodshed than most soldiers, most cops, most doctors — because these people are werewolves.

But more than one of them cries anyway. The grave is fresh. The headstone is simple granite, hand-carved by one of the werewolves with fresh tears on his cheeks. The Uratha look at the stone, and finally one of them steps forward.

He looks old. His face is worn with sun, his arms are scarred with many battles and his walk is slightly bent. A stranger might peg him as 70 or 75. He is in fact nearly 100, but he's lost count. He isn't crying, because he's buried too many friends to have tears left for the deceased. Normally he wouldn't even speak… but this is Eli.

He looks down at the headstone, and sighs.

Here lies Eli Marks. Died alone, surrounded by his friends.

"Look, that's what he wanted on the stone.

"Eli's headstone is miles from anywhere. It's on top of a hill that no human being ever climbs, outside a cornfield that hasn't been tilled in decades, in a town where the people know to stay the hell inside on certain nights. It's the kind of place that Eli hated, but he wanted to be buried here. I imagine that's because he knew it would be quiet, and he figured that the People would come to visit his grave. He's right; here we all are.

"Eli's pack. Makes perfect sense that Eli would be hanging around with you people. You're all different tribes, and when I met you, that just boiled my blood. But see, where I'm from, if you Changed you joined the *Suthar Anzuth*, or you left the area and never darkened a doorstep again, and that's just how it was. I didn't feel like leaving my hometown, so I became a Blood Talon, and I've never regretted it.

"When I met Eli Marks, he was just a kid, barely into his 20s. I was already well into my 50s, I'd seen my own son grow up, get married and swear that he'd never talk to his crazy old man again. Eli asked all the wrong questions. He asked me if I had kids, and he asked me where my pack was. He asked me about my *wife*, and then when he'd picked himself up off the ground, he asked me why I'd hit him. And finally I got tired of putting him off, and so I talked about my son and my wife and my pack, and you know what that son-of-a-whore said to me?

"Yeah, you do, because he said it to all of you. He said, 'Good thing you've got a tribe to support you.'

"Damn, but I got sick of hearing that. I never had much use for the *Thihirtha Numea* — sorry, but I don't — and I did not like him throwing it in my face. But you know, there were days that I got to wondering, where *was* my tribe when my wife was murdered? Where was my tribe when my son thought I was crazy for talking to shit that wasn't there? Where was Fenris when my packmates fell to their deaths? I know what this sounds like, but I'm standing over the grave of the Uratha that I —

"I'm sorry. Someone else can…"

The old man steps back. Another werewolf reaches out and puts a hand on his shoulder, and he flinches, but then turns and nods in thanks.

A woman steps forward. She is much younger, but she walks with a cane. The bandages on her legs are fresh, and the wounds there haven't completely healed. Several of the werewolves here have offered to perform a rite to heal those wounds, but she has refused. She brushes blonde hair, still stained with blood, out of her eyes, and she puts a hand on her packmate's gravestone.

"Eli Marks, I never would have thought you'd go out this way. I thought you'd outlive us all. But then I've never been right about you, never once.

"You know the first time I met him, I thought he was human? Yeah, I know how ridiculous that is, but he had that stupid ring on, the one that masked his scent. I actually hit on him. Stop that, assholes, I didn't know. He corrected me right away, and I ran.

"We were in DC, outside the reflecting pool. I was looking for spirits there, and Eli, well, he was looking for Uratha. He tracked me down at a coffee shop three miles away, and found me sitting outside chain-smoking and pounding down green tea or whatever the hell I was drinking back then. And we got to talking. He pegged me as *Farsil Luhal* right away, and he ribbed me about not knowing he was one of the People. And he said it to me, too, 'Your tribe would understand, right?'

"And I wanted to say, 'What? If I fucked a werewolf and gave birth to one of those god-awful *things*? Would Sagrim-Ur forgive that?' But then I thought about it, and I wondered if he really would. Do you lose points with the Firstborn for thinking about this shit?

"Anyway, Eli could get away with that kind of thing. He said it with a smile, and you had to figure that he was asking because he wanted to know the answer. And I had to think about it, because he asked, and I figured it out — it doesn't matter if Red Wolf would forgive me. Red Wolf trusted me not to do stupid shit like that, and I don't want to betray that trust.

"I'm sorry. I should be talking about Eli. Fuck. I'm no good at this shit."

She takes a step away from the gravestone and throws her arms around another werewolf. She buries her face in his chest and starts to cry, and he strokes her blood-stained hair. He has much that he wants to say, because Eli Marks was his packmate, too, but he can't, not when she needs him. Instead, he nods to a werewolf standing at the back of the group, and the assemblage turns to face him.

The Uratha is younger than the first speaker, but he is clearly the most powerful Uratha here. He has a glimmer of silver to his skin, even though his marks aren't visible. His name is Severn, and he leans upon a staff, into which he has bound a spirit of lightning. When he speaks, the rumble of thunder speaks behind him.

"Eli Marks shouldn't have died this way. I know his packmates feel they fought their best against the Pure, and perhaps so. But for him to die fighting the *Imru* — and the *Anshega* are still the People, no matter what you might think — is a travesty. He should have died fighting something terrible from the *Hisil*, something that couldn't think or reason. Eli Marks was a creature of reason, and this…

"But there is nothing for it, now. Eli died well, I'm certain of that, and my only regret in knowing him is that I never discharged my debt to him. When we met, nearly ten years ago now, I was a cocksure alpha of a pack of my fellow *Iminir*. I know that some here would say that things have not changed, but would you say it to my face?

"Eli did. That was his gift. He somehow managed to say exactly the wrong thing in exactly the right way. When we met, he was trespassing on my pack's territory, and we surrounded him. I demanded that he show his belly, and he did, but he said, 'Winter Wolf must be quite proud of you, you're so strong.' He didn't *sound* sarcastic, but why would he say such a thing except to mock? And so I called down lightning on him, just to teach him a lesson…

"And the lightning would not come. Perhaps I simply failed to rouse the spirit of my staff, but I believed then — and I still do now — that Skolis-Ur disapproved of this show of power. And so I helped Eli Marks to his feet, and I dusted him off, and I told him that he was welcome in my lands.

"Three days later, our territory came under attack by a being that we could not see, feel or track. And Eli Marks knew how to beat it, using a Gift that no spirit in my lands could teach. And I told him then, as we stood on a battlefield marked with my blood, his blood, and the blood of that damnable creature that killed two of my pack, that I would repay him for his assistance and his lesson.

"I never did. But I thank *Amahan Iduth*, *Urfarah* and Skolis-Ur that I was able to bleed with him that day."

The thunder builds to a climax. Severn steps back, and heads around him incline out of respect. But Severn, too, is nodding, his head bowed to the gravestone.

A long moment passes before anyone else speaks. The Uratha who speaks next moves to the gravestone without anyone seeing him. He looks over the rest of them with a slight sneer. He is thin, black and young, possibly the youngest present. He wears a pistol in a hip holster, and although the assembled werewolves can't see it, the symbol on the hilt marks him as *Meninna*, though he himself would not use the First Tongue name for his tribe.

"You all make Eli sound like a faggot.

"Hey, goddamn it, think how I feel! Eli was my friend, and here I have to listen to you making him out like he's some touchy-feely hippie guru pussy! Eli wasn't no faggot. He was People, and he was a fighter, and I don't know what the rest of you saw, but I didn't see him take shit from anybody. Not even me. Hell, I *shot* the fucker, and he didn't take shit from me.

"He rolled into Atlanta one night. He's walking through College Park like he owns the place, and I'm figuring somebody's gonna punch his card before too long anyway. But then I realized he's one of us, so I better roll on him before someone else does. I told him he'd better step off, and there's fucking Eli with his 'Yeah, I guess you're right, I'd never see you coming, huh?'

"And I look around, and I'm standing in the middle of the goddamn street. Nearest cover is thirty yards away, and I can't exactly just change forms out in front of God and everybody.

"No, I didn't shoot him then. That was later, and that was over something I ain't telling you all about. But I punched him in the head, and he punched me right back, and there we are knocking each other down and he's not budging and neither am I. And finally I grab his ass and tell him whose territory he's in, and he says, 'Oh, OK then,' and asks me if his pack could maybe find a place to hole up for a while.

"I walked away from that shit bleeding and sore, and you damn well better believe I never rolled on anybody like that again. All that time I'm walking around Atlanta thinking what a badass I am 'cause I'm a Hunter in Darkness, like the name means shit. Thank you, Eli, and fuck the rest of you."

The young man hears some snarls as he walks away, but he doesn't turn. He sits down partway down the hill. He wants to leave, but he wants to howl for his friend, too, and he can't do that until the funeral ends.

Eli's Iron Master packmate has composed herself, and stepped away from the werewolf who comforted her before. He takes off a tan leather jacket and folds it neatly, handing it to her. Then he steps up to the gravestone and falls to his knees.

He whispers in the First Tongue for a moment, and the wind dies down a little. The night is still cold, and only the barest sliver of moon shines. The werewolf traces the words on the granite with this finger, and then stands and faces the People. He has tears in his eyes, and like his packmate, his clothes and hair are bloodstained. They have refused to wash the blood from their bodies until Eli is put to rest, and tonight is to be the cleansing for them. He doesn't know about his packmate, but he feels like this blood will never leave him.

"I killed Eli Marks.

"I don't mean that figuratively. I mean it literally. But I want to explain what happened, how I failed. And then you can decide what to do.

"I was the last member of our pack to join up. The others didn't want to take me on because I was lousy in a fight. I guess you're expecting me to say Eli persuaded them otherwise, but he was the one who was most dead-set against it. Eli would tell me it was because I'd chosen the Bone Shadows. He'd say that we were so scared of death we'd made a religion out of it, and that secretly we just wanted Death Wolf to reject us so maybe we wouldn't die. Hey, we all know Eli said shit like that all the time. What's annoying is how often he was right.

"A month after my First Change, a murder-spirit started hanging around me. It looked kind of like a crow, but… shit, you know how spirits are. It *wasn't* a crow-spirit, you knew just by looking. It was waiting for me to kill someone. And finally I told it to fuck off, that I wasn't killing anybody, and it left. It was right, though, it was just early.

"When the Pure attacked us the other night, Eli was right next to me. The rest of the pack was half a mile away. They ranked us out. They hit Eli and me because we were the youngest and the weakest. Eli wasn't weak, but he *looks* weak. Maybe he looks harmless more than weak, I don't know. But they hit us, and Eli took the time to howl because he knew we were screwed on our own.

"We fought them off as best we could, but by the time the others got there — less than a minute — we were already pretty cut up. And then the *Zathu* opened up and all I saw was… crows. But not crows, these were murder-spirits. All one spirit. They were —

"If I hadn't done what I did, he'd be one of them. He'd finally have found a tribe, because those bastards would have forced him. I knew that. I *knew* it by looking at those fucking crows, because I knew that they weren't going to kill him. That's what you get for looking at death so long, daring it to look away first. You know when it's coming for you, and those murder-spirits weren't there for business. They were there serving that pack of *Anshega*.

"And they grabbed him. He was hurt, so hurt he'd dropped to Hishu, bleeding from all over. They were picking him up to take him away. And so I… I had to."

He falls to his knees again, but he doesn't cry. He waits for judgment. The assemblage is stunned, angry, but they look to his pack.

The Iron Master helps the Bone Shadow to his feet. She looks long into his eyes, and she knows that he is not lying. If anyone knows death and when it is necessary, it is the *Hirfathra Hissu*.

He thanks her silently, and then he changes to wolf form. The rest of the Uratha do the same, and they draw breath to howl. But when the howl comes, it is not the loud, dissonant howl of a pack of wolves. It is deafening.

It is the howl of the fear of night.

It is the howl of the taste of battle.

It is the howl of the last breath of the dying.

It is the howl of the fury of the storm.

It is the howl of change and chaos.

The werewolves look to the skies and see unbridled rage. There are shapes moving behind the clouds, five wolves that snarl with hatred and vengeance. The Firstborn of Father Wolf, the Chosen of Luna, the patrons of the five Tribes of the Moon look down on this assemblage. And they demand blood.

The assemblage runs, the ritual of laying Eli Marks to rest giving way to a hunt the likes of which this area has never seen. The werewolves hear voices echoing from the storm, from the ground, from the world of spirits and from the paved roads, and the promise of blood.

The old Blood Talon feels Fenris's Fire, and he knows that Fenris never abandoned him. But Fenris cannot succor his children in their despair; he can only feed their fury.

The young Hunter in Darkness knows that Black Wolf is there in the forest of the city, and that he has served her well and kept his territory sacred. Bullets or claws, his territory has never been violated.

The revered Storm Lord knows that he can repay his debt tonight, and his many silver marks blaze white-hot like lightning for a moment. He takes the lead and howls to the People to follow.

Eli's packmate, the Iron Master, spies a rail-thin wolf behind a tree, and she knows that she was right, that Red Wolf *does* trust her, and that she was right to be curious.

At the rear of the pack, a Bone Shadow stumbles. His guilt, his grief, drags him down, and he feels cold teeth on the back of his neck. *Not yet*, Death Wolf whispers, picking up her cub and setting him on his paws. *Not tonight*.

Somewhere, a pack of Pure werewolves looks at the sky and shudders. They are right to fear. The *Lushar Iduthag* are coming for them.

Tonight, Eli Marks will be avenged.


Kotiros

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Introduction

"We are all tattooed in our cradles with the beliefs of our tribe; the record may seem superficial, but it is indelible."

— Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

Stereotypes are not born in a vacuum. They do not spring whole cloth from fantasy, though they may one day cross into that territory. Buried within a stereotype is often a grain of truth. This grain is sometimes tiny, almost insignificant. Other times, it is a more robust thing, a seed whose growth emerges time and time again.

It's easy to stereotype the tribes. The werewolves of the Blood Talons must all be warriors, grabbing at glory with blood-caked claws. The Bone Shadows? Mystics and witches of the dark woods. The Hunters in Darkness act as wolves within the shadows, grim defenders with a fanatic's gleam in their wild eyes. Clinging to their urban domains lurk the Iron Masters, adjusting a tie or a do-rag with claw-tipped thumb and forefinger. Then come the Storm Lords, barking orders from pride-bloated lungs.

Does truth live in these stereotypes? Absolutely. Not only is there a foundational element in play, but don't forget that the Forsaken are culpable in the cultivation of their own stereotypes. A thug 'banger with piss and whisky for blood might see the Blood Talons as a reflection of what he most wants them to be: an excuse to be violent, a safe haven for his own worst indulgences. One hopes the Blood Talons teach him the truth about their tribe, but that's not always going to happen, is it? Get enough of those hot-blooded firebrands into the tribe and that is what the Talons become — at least, in that region.

But the perception of a tribe and its members needn't be a hard or fast truth, either. A Catholic priest in Ethiopia looks and acts differently from a priest from Boston. A Republican in Kentucky is not a Republican in Massachusetts. So it is with tribe. Can a Blood Talon be a mystic? Yes; the Talons need their ritemasters and spirit-talkers as much as any other tribe. The Bone Shadows need their gnash-tooth warriors; the Storm Lords cannot be a tribe of all proud leaders (the cliché of "too many cooks in the kitchen" rings true). Specialization breeds weakness. If they all become one thing, they fail at any task that demands them to be different.

This book endeavors to walk the line between what's expected of each Tribe of the Moon and the reality of those stereotypes. Sometimes, they embody such expectations, for better or for worse. Other times, they cast such weak assumptions into shadow.

Truth of the Tribe

So. Just what *is* a tribe, anyhow? Strictly speaking, the term implies a society of people bound by blood (interlinked families, often featuring generations born into the group). This isn't precisely true for the Forsaken, given that the tribes are something a werewolf chooses as opposed to something dictated by nativity. But it isn't precisely *false*, either.

First, some *feel* born to a tribe, even when they are not. Upon learning of a given tribe, a werewolf may feel an intense kinship to a particular group. What a particular Tribe of the Moon does and why it does that is something that can speak to the heart of a character. In this way, she may feel that her blood (in the metaphorical sense) belongs very much to one tribe over another. Is this always the case? No. For some, a tribe is just a loose social group, a union or circle of like-minded monsters. To these werewolves, a tribe provides some social guidelines and the safety of the group, but they do not necessarily commit their hearts to the idea (though the Firstborn through the vow and spirit servitors will surely try to push one onto a more… *committed* path).

Can one be born to a tribe? Sure. One's blood counts for something. If a parent — or even a distant relative — is a Hunter in Darkness, that Hunter may show up at the time of the First Change and leave little room for choice. (Note that in the game this necessitates an understanding of the difference between *player choice* and *character choice*. The player chooses to what tribe the werewolf character belongs, helping to create the conflicted story. The character is at the mercy of this conflict, and is for the moment without choice.) Dragged into the tribe of a parent or a relative is one way to be bound to a tribe by blood and birth. This isn't permanent, of course. Despite the assumption that one is tied to tribe by blood, in the end it remains a purely social convention. Those forced to cling to one tribe over another can one day break free from such oppression when it occurs, and choose a new tribe… or find a region where her existing tribe acts in accordance to her own ideals.

Layer Cake

It might help to think of each tribe as a needle puncturing three layers — it is a single thing that becomes different at each tier.

Local

A tribe operates predominantly on a local level. At this level, the tribe members are free to define themselves to a point. Their customs and habits can remain unique to them, perhaps found among no other members of that tribe.

A pack of Storm Lords in Brooklyn are cocky *braggadocios*, brimming with bluster. They have their customs: first names only; fingers full of rings, necks rounded with heavy chains; the five-member pack tries every night to outrun the train, associating the rattle of the trellis with the sound of thunder; and they know to stay the hell out of the Shadow whenever possible, because the city's spirit has gone mad.

Ah, but what of a Storm Lord pack in the Siberian taiga? Those Storm Lords, too, have their ways: their names are First Tongue deed names, and in fact they speak mostly First Tongue, as close to the way the spirits speak it as possible (this allows the Storm Lords to rule spirits as well as Uratha); they wear little clothing even in the coldest weather; their tests of ability are brutal, leaving burn-marks and abraded flesh; and they are the masters of the desolate Shadow, braving it perhaps *too* often.

Neither pack would recognize one another. Yet they are all Storm Lords.

Global

To say again: *Yet they are all Storm Lords.*

They may not recognize each other at first, but give them enough time to demonstrate who they truly are, and they'll see those common threads emerge. See, each pack is in some way about proof of power, about pride. Both packs know what they've promised and to whom: none shall look upon their failings, none shall offer comfort or solace for their weaknesses because their weaknesses are buried, hidden beneath scabs and calluses, behind gold chains and the rumble of a train.

Each pack acts different, looks different and even *sounds* different in ways that go beyond mere language. But they are all Storm Lords. While no great Forsaken Nation exists, the tribes are a global phenomenon. A common thread must bind them, because if it doesn't, what's the point?

Cosmic

The strongest "common thread" belongs to the cosmic. Each tribe is given over to its totem, one of the Firstborn wolves, which provides a kind of "cosmic mission statement" for each tribe in the form of the vow (which is as much ban as it is an oath). The legacy forged by each Firstborn Incarna is key to the cosmic bond. It also provides myths, legends, a kind of spiritual touchstone for each tribe member.

Of course, there remains a cosmic thread outside the werewolves' control, as well. Spirits can be remarkably simplistic entities. Spirits often first see a Bone Shadow as exactly that, a Bone Shadow, regardless of how different that Forsaken is from any other member of her tribe. The spirits expect a certain model of behavior from those who serve the Firstborn, because that is how the spirits themselves behave. Spirits are, to a degree, programmed. Sure, they have room for independent thought (and this capacity swells as they grow in power or consume variant spirit types), but at a core level, a spirit *does* what it *is*; a spirit's membership to a given type is emblematic of its behavior, almost predictably so. Hence, the spirits sometimes expect that to be the same for werewolves. This cosmic thread is admittedly outside a werewolf's control, but the expectation is present nevertheless, and must be considered.

Milestone Gifts

This book introduces a new concept for **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, the Milestone Gift. Such a Gift is without a dot rating. One doesn't purchase such an ability with experience points. So what is a Milestone Gift, and how is it achieved?

Milestone Gifts are bestowed by the Firstborn to a member of the tribe who has in some way embodied the ideals of the tribe and the totem. A Hunter in Darkness who comes a hair's breadth away from dying to protect the sanctity of an ancient temple or a powerful locus may be a candidate; so, too, a Bone Shadow who single-handedly puzzles out the ban to an *idigam* raging across the desert with its mad army.

The bestowal of such a potent Gift is not something given lightly, and it does not occur without fanfare. Each werewolf experiences the gaining of the Gift in a different way. One might find an intensely spiritual and personal experience; called to the Shadow, a Blood Talon finds the jaws of Fenris on the back of her neck, and she is dragged to a mountain lair, where he teaches her. Another might experience something rather public: after negotiating a tricky peace between warring vampires using various half-truths and full-lies, an Iron Master may fall to his knees in front of his pack, and they all hear the cacophonous whispers and distant howls of Sagrim-Ur whirling about their packmate.

Note that each Milestone Gift is given a set of prerequisites. Harmony is fundamental to gaining and keeping such a boon: if a character drops below Harmony 6, she has three cycles of the moon to regain that lost balance. Fail to do so, and the Firstborn will snatch the knowledge of the Gift in his jaws, withdrawing the ability forever (as in, the werewolf can never regain it). Many go at least a little mad with the loss of such knowledge, given that the werewolf becomes fully aware of just how keenly she has disappointed the tribal totem. Some even gain temporary derangements, lasting weeks or even months. A werewolf's own sense of treachery or weakness might plague her endlessly until she is able to regain some measure of Harmony and find a rough semblance of calm.

Before granting a character access to a Milestone Gift, the Storyteller should discuss the opportunity and cost with that character's player. Some such Gifts, while potent, are also with a troublesome cost. For instance, the Bone Shadow Gift: Eyes of Death Wolf results in the loss of a character's eyes. The Gift compensates for this, of course, but if that character falls below Harmony 6 for too long and loses the blessing of the Firstborn… well, her eyes are still gone. And now the Gift does not compensate for the loss of vision, making that character blind. Therefore, it's worth having a conversation with the player and ensuring that he is comfortable with the cost and repercussion. Great power, great responsibility, as the saying goes.

If the Storyteller so decides, a Milestone Gift *can* be purchased with experience points, though this is not the recommended fashion by which a werewolf would receive such a Firstborn blessing. The purchase of a Milestone Gift is equivalent to 30 experience points.

Chapter by Chapter

The **Prologue** offers a story of Forsaken from many tribes coming together to mark the passing of a friend and packmate.

Each chapter after this details the tribes, one by one, starting with the Blood Talons and ending with the Storm Lords. In each, you'll discover the legends and histories of the tribe, full of shared truths and misconceptions. You'll also find new lodges, rites, fetishes and one Milestone Gift for each tribe. Each chapter concludes with sample characters embodying the tribe and its ideals.

Consider the view of each tribe as written from each author's individual perspective. Each brings his own views to his given tribe, presenting the tribe to you as the author sees it. Travis Stout brings you his views on the Blood Talons, Matt McFarland offers us a deeper look into the Hunters in Darkness and the Bone Shadows, Stew Wilson gives us a peek into the intricacies of the Iron Masters and Aaron Dembski-Bowden takes time to show us his look at the Storm Lords.

No Ghost Wolves?

This book does not feature information on the Ghost Wolves given that they are not actually a Tribe of the Moon. It's not that they fail to be deserving of deeper information, only that this book is about the literal tribes and their Firstborn patrons. The Ghost Wolves are without that connection, and as such are already detailed in books such as **The Rage**.



Chapter 1

Blood Talons, Suthar Anzuth

The door crashed inwards in a shower of splinters under Morris's booted foot. Lewis was right behind him with the shotgun, loaded for bear with double-aught silver buckshot, just in case there were any surprises.

"Police! On the ground! On the fucking ground right now!"

The four bangers inside tried to rabbit out the back, only to run headlong into Guzman and Valentino, both heavily armed and thoroughly pissed off. Guzman caught the leader in the mouth with the butt of his MP-5, and the punk went down, spitting blood and teeth. Morris and Valentino tackled two of his boys and wrestled them down, while the third decided Lewis's shotgun looked a hell of a lot more intimidating than a bit to his street cred and gave himself up.

"Yo, man, this our turf!" The chief banger was still spitting mouthfuls of blood, so it fell to his lieutenant to defend their honor.

"You lost your claim when your boys broke the peace, T-Money," Morris said. "You been dealin' over by Bellevue. Chains doesn't like that."

T-Money snarled something ugly in the First Tongue, and the cuffs on his wrists burst as his body began to warp and twist into Gauru.

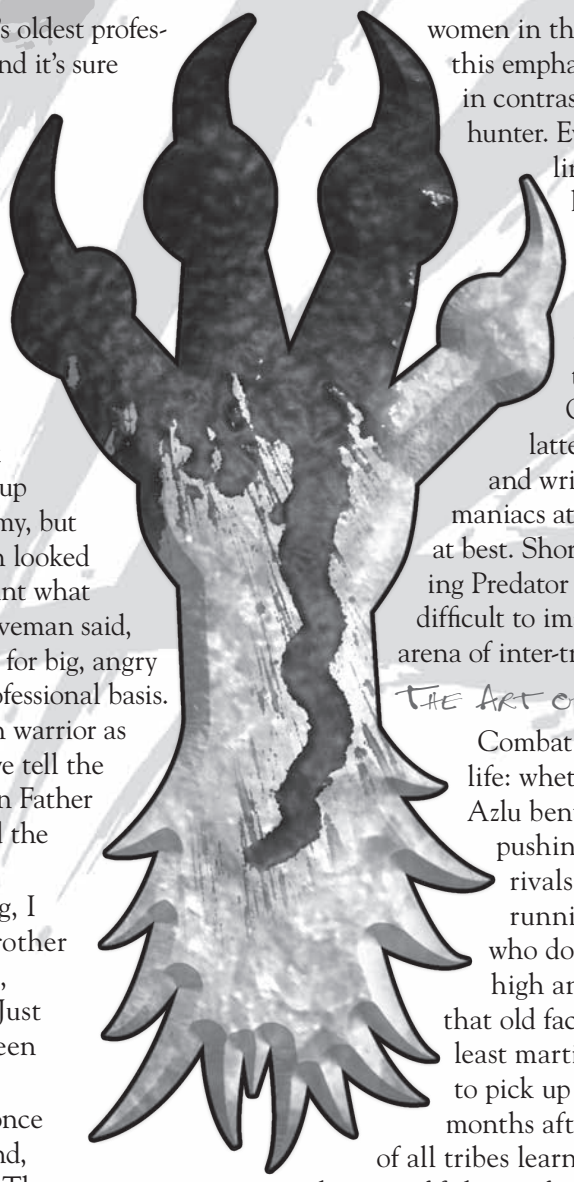
"Aw shit, here we go..."

Blood Talons

Suthar Anzuth

"My centre is giving way, my right is retreating, situation excellent, I am attacking."

— General Ferdinand Foch



You know what the world's oldest profession is? No, it's not whoring, and it's sure as shit not farming. Hunting? Maybe you could make a case — but that's not so much a profession as it is "not starving to death." No, I'll tell you what the oldest job in the world is:

Soldiering.

Yeah, that's right. Sure, maybe they didn't call it that back in the day, maybe it took a few thousand years to come up with the idea of a standing army, but from the day the first caveman looked at his neighbor and said, "I want what you have," and that second caveman said, "Fuck off," there's been a need for big, angry folks to bash in skulls on a professional basis. Even Father Wolf was as much warrior as hunter — why do you think we tell the tale of the epic battles between Father Wolf and the Plague King and the Spinner-Hag?

Look, don't get me wrong, I respect the hell out of our brother tribes. They all do their jobs, and they do 'em damn well. Just remember which of us has been around longest.

The Blood Talons are at once the simplest tribe to understand, and one of the most complex. They are an elite warrior fraternity, dedicated to the ideals of combat and warfare. That's an easy enough concept to understand; dozens if not hundreds of books, movies and TV shows have explored the concept of the brotherhood and ties of honor that bind men and women in the crucible of war. And yet, this emphasis on war and battle stands in contrast to the werewolf's nature as a hunter. Every Blood Talon walks a fine line, balancing the dictates of his tribal philosophy with the instincts of his blood. *Urfarah* calls out to Blood Talons to hunt and stalk and kill, while *Fenris-Ur* urges them to rend, devour and destroy. Other tribes often see only the latter side of the *Suthar Anzuth* and write them off as bloodthirsty maniacs at worst or useful hired muscle at best. Short of inviting a pack of slavering Predator Kings to a tea ceremony, it's difficult to imagine a bigger mistake in the arena of inter-tribal relations.

The Art of War

Combat is a part of every werewolf's life: whether it's destroying a skittering Azlu bent on walling off the Shadow, pushing an encroaching pack of rivals out of their territory or just running off some stupid humans who don't know better than to get high and fuck near the Verge in that old factory outside town. Even the least martially-inclined individuals tend to pick up one or two things in the months after their First Change. Rahu of all tribes learn as much as they can about the arts of fighting, from hand-to-hand and archaic weapon techniques to modern SWAT tactics and infiltration skills. To the Blood Talons, though, combat is more than a means of survival; combat is a way of life.

That isn't to say that Blood Talons are invariably the *best* warriors of all the Uratha. Young, arrogant initiates who hold to such a view are disabused of the notion shortly after meeting their first Rahu veteran of another tribe. What sets the *Suthar Anzuth* apart from their fellow werewolves is the Blood Talons' approach to the ideals of warfare. Combat is not merely conflict resolution; it is the principle by which they live. A Blood Talon seeks to be a great warrior not because he wishes to defeat all of his enemies, but because honing his body and mind into a weapon is to honor the spirit of the Destroyer Wolf and, through him, *Urfarah* himself.

This devotion to the arts of battle extends to all aspects of a Blood Talon's life, and the majority of the tribe thinks in terms of conflict and battle when faced with an obstacle. Blood Talons refer to this mindset by the First Tongue term *"Thu Ibiru,"* literally "All War." *Thu Ibiru* bears similarities to the philosophies espoused by Sun Tzu and Miyamoto Musashi, albeit in a simpler form. Some Cahalith of the tribe have posited that one or both of these men were influenced in part by conversations with Blood Talon warriors, and a few even claim the men as wolf-blooded or even full-blooded Uratha, but the evidence for such a claim is anecdotal at best.

According to the principles of *Thu Ibiru,* to think of the Destroyer Wolf solely in terms of physical destruction is a limited understanding of the Firstborn. *Fenris-Ur* is more than the destruction of the flesh; he is the destruction of all obstacles, physical, spiritual and mental alike. When a Blood Talon truly lives *Thu Ibiru,* she can bring the full might of her warrior heritage to bear in *any* conflict.

That doesn't mean a *Suthar Anzuth* challenges her mortgage broker to a duel to first blood when her loan is denied, but she approaches the problem of money with the mindset of a general faced with inadequate supply lines: who can do without what and still be able to fight tomorrow? Maybe a pack with a large and lightly contested territory can afford the members to be evicted from their apartments to afford the medical care a pregnant wolf-blooded mate needs. In a small or exceptionally dangerous territory, it might be more important to keep the authorities from trying to drive the pack out of their one and only safe haven. Can resources be pooled and supplies redistributed to ensure that everyone has at least something? Three packmates working shitty, minimum-wage jobs is safer than having one packmate bringing in the equivalent amount of money on her own.

This combative mindset gives the Talons a reputation for stubborn hardheadedness among the other tribes. To a certain extent, that's true: when you think of negotiations in terms of feints, ripostes and retreats, it's all too easy to see concession as surrender, and that treads perilously close to a violation of the tribal vow. The ability to see the distinction between "surrender" and "discussion" is what marks the difference between a skilled warrior and a wise leader.

Born on a Battlefield

The Blood Talons are one of the easiest tribes for a newly-Changed *nuzusul* to fall in with. This isn't because it's easy to be a Blood Talon — the *Suthar Anzuth* have some of the most stringent and punishing initiation rites of any of the Tribes of the Moon — but because the basic tenet of the Talons' philosophy is one that is very easy for a new cub, still thinking like a human half the time, to understand: We have enemies. We destroy those enemies. When compared to the mysticism of the Bone Shadows or the almost alien outlook of the Hunters in Darkness, it's easy to see how a young werewolf might cling to the Talons simply to have something he can wrap his head around.

Despite their easy appeal to the young, Rage-filled werewolf, the Blood Talons are among the most discriminating of the Tribes of the Moon when it comes to accepting new recruits. Stupid, violent thugs or psychopaths are rarely accepted into the tribe unless there is a dire need for new warriors; the *Suthar Anzuth* want warriors strong in body, mind and soul. One needn't be a Caesar or a Rommel to be accepted, but most Talons look for candidates with at least a basic understanding of tactical thinking and battlefield savvy.

In many cases, *nuzusul* with good instincts and an iron will are given preference over dull-witted thugs who can kill a man with their little finger. Anyone can learn to kill in many interesting and creative ways, especially with the natural talents Uratha have at their disposal, but as one famous *Suthar Anzuth* alpha from the Mississippi Delta is fond of saying, "you can't fix stupid." One of the most famous figures in the tribe's mythology, Boneless Harald, earned his place as a warrior of the tribe and alpha of his pack in medieval Sweden, despite being born a cripple and

unable to walk. He was given the initiation despite his handicap because he had a knack for seeing to the heart of a conflict and divining the swiftest way to crush the opposition.

Thugs and Killers

All of this doesn't mean that the Blood Talons' reputation as brutal, savage warriors is entirely undeserved. The tribe's ethos *does* attract those with a penchant for mindless violence, and sometimes prospective members aren't screened as diligently as they should be. Sometimes, war and attrition require that standards be relaxed; better to have a subpar line of defense than none at all. Sometimes, a particular candidate's peculiar talent or zeal for the tribe's goals is just too good to pass up.

The tribe sometimes tolerates those maladjusted, violent brutes who end up as Blood Talons, but those brutes generally end up as the omegas in Blood Talon packs. Ironically, this pushes such brutes to leave their tribemates behind and seek out mixed-tribe packs, whose members might be more inclined to be impressed by displays of brute force masquerading as leadership, thereby further cementing the stereotype in the minds of other tribes.

Joining Up

The Blood Talons are infamous for their simple and yet brutal initiation ceremonies. Where a Bone Shadow might be required to bargain with a spirit or give a dissertation on some obscure piece of esoterica, or a Storm Lord might be expected to take charge of a group and earn obedience solely on the merits of his aura of authority, a Blood Talon's task is usually more straightforward: Destroy an enemy. End a conflict. Don't surrender.

Just because it's straightforward doesn't mean a Talon's recruitment is easy; just *surviving* a Blood Talon initiation rite is a feat worthy of Renown. Prospective members can expect to be tested to the absolute limits of their physical and mental endurance, and sometimes beyond. Rahu are held to especially harsh standards. Blood Talon tradition holds that their tribe's Irraka, Ithaeur, Elodoth and Cahalith are equal to the Full Moons of any other tribe, and their own warriors are expected to be the very avatars of Mother Luna's wrathful face.

For all the vaunted brutality of a Blood Talon initiation, the ordeal is rarely fatal. The Talons choose their candidates carefully, and seldom offer a *nuzusul* the chance to prove herself unless they're already pretty sure she'll cut it. Tradition dictates that the ritualist overseeing the initiation ceremony is responsible for acting as a candidate's patron and setting an appropriate task. If a prospective Talon dies during her initiation, it reflects poorly on the ritemaster's Wisdom. Conversely, if the supplicant doesn't come back thoroughly beat to hell, it likewise reflects poorly on her patron. In rare cases, a prospective member is made to undergo a second initiation rite if the ritualist's judgment in choosing a task is deemed fatally flawed by the rest of the tribe. A second initiation is considered a *grave* insult to the ritualist — bloody duels have been fought over such slights. The supplicant's Renown is not considered slighted by being forced to repeat her initiation: the fault was the ritualist's, not the supplicant's.

In the event of a *nuzusul* failing to accomplish the task set before her for initiation, her patron brings her to the attention of one of the other tribes. By the time such an event occurs, the patron has a good idea of where the *nuzusul* might fit better, and makes arrangements accordingly. Some Blood Talons take this duty more seriously than others; at the bare minimum, the washout's patron might put her on the cross-town bus and tell her to look for the graffiti markings that look like little gravestones. Out in the Great Plains, there's a story going around about a Blood Talon who uprooted his entire pack and took them on a month-long journey up into northern Canada, just to deliver a *nuzusul* who failed the initiation to a pack of *Meninna* he thought would be a better place for the cub. Such devotion is rare, but certainly worthy of Honor Renown.

Recruitment Tactic: Esprit de Corps

The *Suthar Anzuth* consider themselves the elite of the elite. Much as Delta Force or the U.S. Navy SEALs are to the rank-and-file enlisted soldier, so the Blood Talons see themselves in comparison to the other tribes. This elitism can lead to arrogance, but it also fosters a strong feeling of camaraderie amongst the tribe's members. Oftentimes, this *esprit de corps* is its own recruitment tactic, especially for all-Talon packs who work well as a unit. Frightened, unsure young *nuzusul* see this group of werewolves who have their shit entirely together, and naturally want to be like them. Most Talon packs will at least sound out a newly Changed cub who expresses a desire to join the tribe, just to see whether she actually has what it takes to join the Talons or is just enamored of their badassery.

When then tribe actively tries to recruit using this tactic, they take it a step further. A candidate being actively recruited is invited to join a local Blood Talon pack on a trial basis; while running with the pack, the Talons accord the cub the same respect and honor as a full member, and the initiate in turn is expected to adhere to the tribal vow and the tenets of Renown as espoused by the *Suthar Anzuth*. Most packs consider it an honor to receive a new recruit (even if they complain incessantly about having to break in the newbie), and in the case of cubs with particularly auspicious destinies attributed to them, rival packs have been known to come to blows over the right to initiate the *nuzusul*. If, after a few weeks, the tribe judges the candidate worthy, they invite her to swear the tribal vow and become a member in her own right.

This tactic is most popular in territories where the Talons have a large population, and usually at least one stable pack fully composed of Blood Talons. While the tribe isn't averse to demonstrating the efficacy of mixed-tribe packs, such egalitarianism doesn't have quite the same punch as far as convincing young Uratha that the Blood Talons are the best of the lot.

Recruitment Tactics: Blood of the Kill

The professional world is full of people who entered their chosen profession because of the impact another had on their lives. A young man becomes a heart surgeon because a cardiologist saved his father's life; a girl joins the police academy after a dedicated detective finally brings her sister's killer to justice. That same emotion can influence a cub's choice of tribe as well: if a pack of Blood Talons destroys a Host intent on killing the cub and her family, that cub is quite likely to be favorably inclined toward joining the tribe.

While this might seem an unlikely means of recruitment, remember that the intense spiritual disruptions that precede the First Change are violent and far-reaching, and Uratha aren't the only ones who can detect the disturbances. It's a sad fact of life that many Uratha are killed (or worse yet, claimed by the Pure Tribes) before they have even the faintest inkling what they are. Wrathful spirits, Hosts frightened of a potential new predator and even mortal monster hunters can and do conspire to kill *nuzusul* before they master their newfound gifts.

When the Talons learn of a cub undergoing the First Change, one of the first things they do is to sweep the Shadow and the physical world, looking for anything that might not have the cub's best interests at heart. Usually, the pack just quietly takes care of the threat on its own, but jaded (or desperate) packs lurk out of sight and conveniently show up "just in time" to rescue the cub. Sometimes an overzealous pack will deliberately steer some sort of spiritual predator in the direction of the *nuzusul*, engineering a situation wherein the pack can show up, save the day and draw the recruit into the tribe. Rarer still, and generally considered one of the most despicable acts a pack can commit, the predator might be steered toward the cub's human friends and family, which has the dual effect of conveniently severing ties with human society and pushing the cub toward the tribe as a surrogate family.

Recruitment Tactics: Controlling the Rage

The Rage that boils in a werewolf's blood is a savage and dangerous thing. All too frequently, a newly Changed Uratha finds himself unprepared for the torrent of emotions and utterly unable to control it. The stories of cubs murdering their entire families in the throes of the First Change are regrettably common, and the grief that comes along with that can destroy a young werewolf's mind.

Enter the Blood Talons. Thanks to their tribal affinities, they understand Rage in a way that few Uratha do. Furthermore, many of the tribe's members have a similar story haunting their past and can relate to the grief that comes with the knowledge that you are responsible for the deaths of your entire family. The Talons promise to teach the cub how to control that Rage, how to bottle it up and release it against worthy enemies rather than innocents. Sometimes the tribe will even teach the *nuzusul* a Rage Gift or two, as assurance that they can deliver what they promise.

Recruitment Tactic: The Straight Shot

As a rule, the Blood Talons appreciate forthrightness and directness of word and deed. A few Irraka aside, most members of the tribe prefer not to mince words or bandy about with elaborate schemes. It's not too surprising, then, that one of the most common recruitment tactics the tribe employs is simply to approach a cub shortly after his First Change, lay out the facts of his new life and offer him a place in the tribe. This sort of recruitment appeals particularly well to cops, soldiers and others with disciplined personalities

and lifestyles that frequently involve high-stress, life-threatening situations, but sometimes a breath of frank, uncompromising honesty is just the thing to calm a panicky kid down and make him see reason.

Raw Recruits

Ask any experienced soldier, and he'll tell you the soldiering life takes all kinds. The Blood Talons are no different. The fact that werewolves are neither born nor raised in a tribal environment gives them a less unified character than the term "tribe" might initially suggest. Still, like calls to like, and if one were to take a random sampling of Blood Talons from around the world, most would share some common traits:

• **Courage:** A warrior who shrinks and cowers from the first sign of danger is no warrior at all. The Blood Talons don't expect their brethren to charge shrieking into battle against every foe, no matter how overmatched the warrior might find himself, but when the battle is joined, every member of the pack has to step up and do his duty.

• **Wits:** It's all well and good to be a 300-pound brute who can crush skulls in one hand, but if you don't know *which* skulls to crush or in which order, you aren't much good to anyone. Blood Talons thrown into battle quickly realize the need to keep a sound head on their shoulders and make snap decisions that won't get their packmates killed. Significantly rarer but greatly prized is the ability to maintain some semblance of tactical thinking in the Rage of the Gauru form.

• **Fortitude**: Offer no surrender you would not accept. That's the central tenet of the Blood Talons, and those who can't stomach it don't cut it in this tribe. A Blood Talon might be stubborn as a mule, tough as an old oak or as implacable as the tide, but she won't give in and she won't give up.

• **Ferocity**: Every Blood Talon is a warrior. Even the tribe's scouts, healers, seers and shamans know how to handle themselves in a scrap. Some are more capable than others, to be sure, but all are children of the Destroyer Wolf with all that that entails. Whether it's a talent for knock-down, drag-out brawling, a knack for knives in the dark or a particularly vicious streak when fighting with fang and talon, the Blood Talon who doesn't know at least one or two ways to maim an enemy is rare indeed.

• **Confidence**: Self-confidence comes from the knowledge of your own ability to handle any situation thrown at you. As the finest warriors of a people built from the ground up for handling tough situations, Blood Talons are possessed of confidence in abundance. It might take the form of a quiet self-assurance or a loud, boastful braggadocio, but it's hard to survive more than a few weeks as a Blood Talon and not develop some kind of self-confidence.

• **Revelry**: Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die. While some Blood Talons hold themselves to a severe, ascetic lifestyle, many recognize the eternal peril in which they live their lives and, consequently, try to squeeze every bit of enjoyment out of this world that they can. Why eat plain, boiled rice when that place down on 5th Street makes the best hot dogs in the city? Why drink rainwater out of puddles when the good Lord saw fit to invent liquor? Why live a live of celibacy when Father Wolf graced you with the body of a well-tuned machine and that natural predatory sexuality? That's not to say the Blood Talons are a bunch of effete hedonists — quite the opposite. Any Blood Talon who expects to live more than a few weeks knows not to overindulge to the point of self-impairment — but most see fit to revel in the pleasant things life brings, especially when they come along so rarely.

• **Camaraderie**: All werewolves have a strong pack instinct, but the Blood Talons marry that instinct to the bonds of brotherhood that form among members of elite fighting units. Of all the tribes, with the possible exception of the Hunters in Darkness, the Blood Talons are the most distrustful of lone wolves. A warrior without comrades to watch his back is a corpse waiting to happen.

Initiation Rite: Jumping In

Favored mostly by young, urban packs of Blood Talons, "jumping in" echoes the practices of human street gangs. In order to find a place in the tribe, a prospective member must survive a savage beating delivered by the established members of the tribe. Depending on the region and the size of the local Blood Talon population, this might be anything from one or two members of a single pack all the way up to a dozen or more representatives of the tribe from across several packs. Being jumped in by an all-Blood-Talon pack is a point of pride in urban territories on the West Coast, and *nuzusul* thus initiated may wear red cloths around their left arms to signify their status.

The actual jumping in ritual can take many forms, depending on the Blood Talons' presence in a

given region. At the most simple, the process involves nothing more than a savage beating in a back alley with fists and feet. More elaborate versions might involve restraining the supplicant in some way while each pack member in turn strikes her with claws, fangs or weapons. The only real constant is that the beating has to last. The blood and bruises earned in the jumping in are badges of honor; they show that the cub is a cub no longer but a full-fledged member of the *Suthar Anzuth* and a child of the Destroyer Wolf. Thus, the beating almost always rolls over into aggravated damage for the initiate. Once the jumping in is finished, the initiate is embraced and welcomed by her new tribemates. Liberal amounts of food and alcohol usually follow.

In the Philippines, it's common practice to literally crucify cubs and leave them exposed to the elements for one or more days. *Nuzusul* who survive the ordeal are considered "Brothers in Christ," and often affect the garb of Catholic priests or monks after their initiation. In Los Angeles, the local *Suthar Anzuth* gather in the runoff ditches by the light of the initiate's auspice moon. By unspoken tradition going back 50 years, all inter-pack feuds are suspended for the ritual. Only fists, feet, elbows and knees are allowed; if the initiate is still standing after a 10-minute beating, he is accepted into the tribe. He'll be expected to join a pack (locally called a "set") the same night, or it's open season on his ass. The LA Talons don't like lone wolves.

Older and more experienced Talons tend to frown on jumping in as an initiation ritual, since all it really proves is that the applicant can take a beating. While that's certainly a useful quality to have, it's also not particularly impressive. Even the frailest and least-hardy Uratha can take a tremendous beating, after all, and the ability to stand there and take it speaks to a certain perceived weakness of character. Sometimes, though, a cunning ritualist will arrange a jumping in for a new recruit — but the *real* test is how long it takes the candidate to stand up and start fighting back. Usually, the ritualist calls off the beating before it becomes fatal if the initiate refuses to fight back.

Initiation Rite: The Lady or the Tiger

A warrior who does not know his enemy is only wasted breath on the battlefield. More subtle than many Blood Talon initiation rites, this ordeal is designed to test the initiate's cunning and ability to think and plan more than her ability to destroy an enemy or survive a beating. The prospective Talon is given the names and locations of two individuals: one is a Ridden (or a Host, or a vampire, mage or other threat to the territory), while the other is an ordinary mortal. The initiate's task is to observe both, determine which is the threat and eliminate it.

On the surface, this seems relatively simple. The Uratha have access to several Gifts that allow them to sense the supernatural, after all, and one would expect that deducing the presence of spiritual malfeasance would be a simple matter — and in most cases, it would be. Before the initiate is brought in and given his task, the local Irraka of the tribe spend several days or even weeks monkeying with the system, so to speak. They plant false evidence of bizarre spirit bans in the home of the mortal or clean up after the vampire's messier feedings. They enact rites and employ fetishes to set the Shadow buzzing around both targets, making detection of the supernatural much more difficult. In Ireland and parts of New England, a great deal of emphasis is placed on the setup for such an initiation, and the Irraka can earn Cunning Renown for especially devious tricks. In some rare circumstances, *both* targets are supernatural beings, and the werewolf must make a distinction between a relatively harmless mage and a Beshilu steadily gnawing a hole in the Gauntlet, for example. Sometimes, it's the *mortal* who is the tiger — a skilled monster hunter is a far greater threat to the tribe than a minor Ridden.

Once the stage is set, the initiate is turned loose to make his investigation. Traditionally, the rite begins on the first night of the initiate's auspice moon and lasts until the beginning of his next auspice moon (roughly one month). Sometimes the initiate is given a shorter deadline, particularly if he has already demonstrated a natural cunning or knack for problem solving (after all, the tribe wants to see how well the cub works under pressure). At least one more experienced tribe member is usually assigned to watch the initiate and monitor his progress — in the event that the initiate picks the lady, not the tiger, the tribe tries to avoid unnecessary bloodshed.

In Rome, where the local packs are forbidden by an ancient oath from making open war upon each others' territories, this method of initiation is particularly popular. Ritualists take great pride in rooting out the contacts and informants of their

rival packs, then turning the clueless initiate loose on them as a way of undermining an enemy's control over their territory. While the initiate races about trying to unravel the truth, a kind of invisible war takes place between Irraka of the rival packs, each subtly trying to lead the initiate to the answer they prefer. Often, the real test is how quickly the initiate realizes he is being manipulated by *both* sides.

In Morocco, a slightly different variation of this rite is used to test Ithaeur and Elodoth initiates. The cub's patron blindfolds her and leads into a room, whereupon a Ridden or other supernatural entity is brought near just long enough for her to catch its scent. The creature is then taken away and placed in a room with some 20 or 30 humans (usually wolf-blooded family members of the tribe's members, although beggars are sometimes rounded up to fill out the number). The initiate must identify the one out-of-place individual by sound or scent or supernatural intuition. As an added incentive, the ritualist stands behind the initiate with a large scimitar to "discourage hesitancy." If the initiate fails to choose in a timely manner, the ritualist strikes her with the sword.

Initiation Rite: Running the Gauntlet

Probably the most common rite of initiation into the tribe, this is a straightforward test of endurance, leadership and combat prowess. Running the Gauntlet is seldom invoked as an initiation rite for individual *nuzusul*; usually a group of between three and five initiates are put into a group and sent out together. The majority of these initiation groups (those that survive, at any rate) go on to formally join together as packs after being accepted into the tribe. Many Blood Talons don't trust a new pack member with whom they didn't undergo the rite of initiation, at least until they've shared an equivalent experience in battle. In this respect, the bond is not dissimilar to that between soldiers who went through basic training together: until the "new guy" proves himself under fire, he's an outsider.

The rite typically begins on the first night of the crescent moon (in the rare instance that a group of initiates all share the same auspice, their auspice moon is sometimes substituted), at the most prominent locus in the ritualist's territory. The initiates are then given a particular "course"



to run through the surrounding territories. The run traditionally starts in the Shadow, and may cross back and forth into the physical realm at various loci in the vicinity.

Running the Gauntlet is far more than a footrace through the Shadow; the course is always constructed to lead the initiates through trouble spots where violence is likely. In the Shadow, the initiates may be required to skirt the edges of a Wound or pass through an area where hostile spirits are known to congregate. In the material world, the route is carefully designed to take the initiates through the territories of other packs, vampires and even stranger entities.

Sometimes the task is complicated by requiring that some task be performed at each point along the route ("Make your way up Culver to the old hospital. Speak to the Weeping Ghost there and learn her name. Cross into the Shadow at the locus in the operating room, then pass through the domain of the Duke of Thorns. Bring back a silver rose from the hedges that border his realm."), sometimes the navigation itself is made opaque by referring to local history or landmarks, especially if the initiates are from out of town ("Go out on Old MacArthur to where the Schmidt farm used to be. Find the locus in what used to be the cornfield and go to the Murder Alley where Mark Two-Stone destroyed the Azlu swarm").

In Latvia, the Blood Talons send initiates on a harrowing run through burned-out shells of buildings, slipping in and out of the Shadow and weaving amongst brooding spirit courts of war and desolation. Only the worthiest initiates are tasked with retrieving pebbles from the rooftops of those buildings, for something terrible stalks the Uratha in high places. Those who come back are marked with a red tattoo on their arms, something resembling a devilfish with ragged wings. Even the elders of the tribe no longer know what it means. In Kenya, they call this rite "threading the needle," and it involves racing from locus to locus in the wild savanna, ping-ponging back and forth between the Shadow and the physical realm as all the local packs — which know the territory much better — attempt to cut the initiates off. Survivors often take a cheetah-spirit as their totem.

Tales from the Front

Given that the Blood Talons revere Glory above all other types of Renown, it's no surprise that they have a long, rich tradition of myth and legend about the origins of their tribe, its mythic heroes and even its more earthly, modern representatives. Cahalith of other tribes often joke that there are three kinds of Blood Talon stories: those in which all the Blood Talons die, those in which everything else dies and those in which *everybody* dies. Jests aside, there are surprising breadth and depth to the stories shared by the bards of the *Suthar Anzuth*. Tales of glorious sacrifice and epic heroism abound, but so do tales of love, redemption and loyalty to one's packmates over all others.

Myths and Lore

The oldest stories of the Blood Talons date back to Pangaea before the Fall. Most of these stories can't truly be called "Blood Talon stories," since the tribe wasn't properly formed until after the murder of Father Wolf, but the *Suthar Anzuth* often hold that, in those early days, the tribes were united as much by blood as by totem. The earliest stories the tribe's Cahalith consider "theirs," then, are those of Red Claw, one of the First Pack, and his kin, who are thought to be the progenitors of the Blood Talons.

The Oldest Tribe

We're the oldest of all the tribes. Bet you didn't know that, huh? It's true, though. When the Firstborn cut and ran after Father Wolf died, when our brothers and sisters sat around blubbering about how bad shit had gotten, it was our kin that stood up and said, "Fuck this noise." This was back in the old days, when there weren't so much 'tribes' as families. Those that became the Blood Talons, they were descended from the first Uratha to land a blow on Father Wolf. In a way, it's fitting. Our first ancestor might not have actually killed Father Wolf, but that first blow was what invoked his ban, no two ways about it. Once we raised claws against him with murder in our hearts, he was powerless to fight back. When you think about it, it was that first blow that destroyed him. The killing stroke just made it official.

You remember that, kid. Remember that the fatal blow isn't always the one that actually kills your enemy.

Red Claw Refused

After the murder of Father Wolf, the First Pack was scattered across the broken remnants of Pangaea. Over time, they multiplied and brought up sons and daughters in the ways of the wolf. These were the first tribes, though they were not yet called by the names we give them today. Knowing that they could not take up Father Wolf's mantle on their own, they sought the aid of the

Firstborn, who had fled to the depths of the Shadow at their father's death.

One tribe, the descendants of the great Rahu Red Claw, was the first to set out in search of the great wolf-spirits. Red Claw was more than a warrior — he was a visionary. He brought together feuding packs quarreling over territory and mating rights, and he made them an army. He was our Alexander, our Caesar, our Arthur and our Napoleon. And when he led us into the hell that had become the Hisil, *we followed eagerly.*

I don't know how many we lost on that campaign. Vengeful spirits boiled forth from every stone and tree, the misbegotten progeny of the Plague King and the Spinner-Hag emerged from their putrid holes, and even our dear, mad mother sent her Ralunim to make war on us. Our forefathers were nearly wiped out to a man, but Red Claw pushed us on, led from the front and never, ever let us believe we might fail.

At length, after months or maybe even years of searching, we found ourselves at the mouth of the Destroyer Wolf's den. Fenris-Ur *dwelt in the hollow of a huge skull the size of a mountain, which some say was all that remained of Father Wolf himself. I don't believe that, but that is not the point of this tale. Red Claw took the Urshul form and howled out his challenge to the Destroyer. When* Fenris-Ur *emerged from his den, he made the mountain itself look tiny by comparison. In his limbs was the doom of men, and his eyes spoke of the cold death of suns. When Red Claw made his demand, the great spirit simply laughed.*

'I will bind myself to you,' he said, 'if you abase yourselves before me and surrender to my might.'

Red Claw refused.

'Then we have no business here,' said the Destroyer, and made to return to his cave. But Red Claw leapt on him and sank his teeth into the great wolf's shoulder. Fenris roared and shook the Uratha off, throwing him against the bony face of the mountain.

'Yield,' Fenris snarled, 'and I may yet let your kin live.'

Red Claw refused.

Fenris brought his terrible jaws down on Red Claw's forelimb, shearing completely through the bone. 'Acknowledge me as your better, and pay obeisance!' the Firstborn demanded.

Red Claw refused.

The two fought until the moon had turned her face away, and continued to fight until she turned back once again. Each time the Destroyer wounded the Uratha, he demanded a concession — but each concession was a lesser one than the last.

Red Claw refused.

Finally, when Red Claw was lame in all his limbs and bleeding out his life from a thousand wounds, Fenris said, "Your determination has pleased me, half-blood. I will take you under my patronage, and you will be my honored servants. None shall dare cross you, lest they cross me as well."

Red Claw refused.

The great Destroyer was silent for a long moment. 'You realize the decision you make here this day?' Our great leader could scarcely speak; he only nodded. And then Fenris-Ur *took Red Claw's throat in his jaws; with one snap, he ended the warrior's life. The stroke was quick and merciful, and the Firstborn addressed the assembled packs with their alpha's blood still coating his muzzle.*

'This is what it truly is to be a warrior. I will bind myself to you, I shall be your patron and your advisor and your protector — but you shall be no servants of mine. You shall swear only one oath to me, in memory of he who led you: Offer no surrender you would not accept.

And with one voice, the Blood Talons howled their assent.

Historical Epics

If there's a famous historical warrior out there, odds are a Blood Talon *somewhere* has claimed him as wolf-blooded, if not a full-blown member of the tribe. Marc Antony, Charlemagne, Joan of Arc — even figures as recent (and improbable) as Dwight D. Eisenhower and Erwin Rommel. Most serious sages scoff at these historical attributions, preferring instead to point out that there are countless stories of actual, confirmed *Suthar Anzuth* heroes who deserve to be remembered for more than making credulous *nuzusul* exclaim, "Holy shit, *he* was a werewolf?"

Boneless Harald

You want to know who the biggest fucking badass in all our tribe's history is? I'll tell you, and I'll bet you a 10-spot it's a name you never even heard before. I didn't know much about him myself till recently — you really gotta dig through the oral histories and trace the stories back to Sweden, and there aren't a lot of Swedes with wolf blood around here. I heard the story from a Ghost Wolf in Minnesota, believe it or not. He used to run with a pack of Talons in Europe, heard the story from one of them.

So, about a thousand years ago, give or take, there's this Talon warlord called Ragnar Two Step. Story goes

he was called 'Two Step' on account of he couldn't go two steps without killing something, or fucking something or both. Anyways, he was hardcore, but he ain't the guy this story's about.

Now, as you mighta guessed, old Raggie had a whole buncha kids. We're talkin', like, maybe thirty. And he was real proud of the fact that almost all of 'em had the wolf's blood and went through the Change. Got to the point where he'd teach his kids the Oath and Harmony and all that even before Luna kissed 'em. Yeah yeah, 'The Herd Must Not Know' and all that. Not the point.

So Ragnar's got these 30 tough little psycho kids hangin' around him, forming their own packs that owe allegiance to his pack, when out pops kid number 31. Born under the full moon, really big portents all over the Shadow, the whole nine yards. Only the kid ain't got no legs*! Well, maybe he had them, but they didn't work right. It's some kinda condition,* osteo-whatever-the-fuck*. Poor Ragnar's just crushed that his streak is broken, 'cause, you know, why would Luna choose a kid like that?*

Only here's the thing. She did. When he was about thirteen, the little cripple they called Boneless Harald got the touch, and he turned right under the full moon. Maybe if his pops had been a Bone Shadow, they'd have called him touched by the spirits and made him some grand poo-bah shaman. The Hunters and the Stormies would have just killed him outright, and who knows what the Iron Masters might have done? But the kid was a Blood Talon born and bred, and damned if he wasn't going to live up to that.

So here's what he did: he got himself a really big sword, bulked up his arms like crazy and had four of his pals carry him into battle on a fuckin' litter! Hand to god, like some kind of Arabian prince! Of course, lugging around one corner of a goddamn litter makes it a little tough to defend yourself, so his bearers usually had a life expectancy of about a minute. When the thing went down, like it always did, the bastard would take the Gauru *and drag himself around with his hands, just tearing hunks out of people with his jaws. Way I hear it, he finally bought it fighting a Pure insurgency — at the ripe old age of* 46*.*



So next time you see some new-blooded banger beatin' his chest about how tough he is, you just remember that image: a crazy legless motherfucker with a sword, going into battle on a litter. Only when you're that hardcore will I be impressed with your bragging.

The Middle Path

You don't hear a lot of stories about our tribe coming out of Asia these days, but don't assume that means we aren't there. I was in San Francisco a few weeks ago, chasing down a lead on Eddie Spinster's missing niece. Yeah, the one who disappeared last year. Anyways, while I'm out there, it falls to me to negotiate territoriality with this pack called the Nine Walkers. Their Cahalith was this girl from Tokyo, called herself Rose. (I swear to God I'm not making that up. I don't think she got the reference, either.) During a break in the negotiations, she told me this story she heard back in Japan.

This would have been right around 400 years ago, just after the Tokugawa Shogunate took power. These three Blood Talons, all lone wolves for one reason or another, met at an inn beside the road to Edo. There was Fukue, the itinerant monk born under the crescent moon, Komori, the Elodoth swordsman who had backed the wrong horse in the battle for the Shogunate and Michiko, the Moon-Dancer who was also a Kabuki dancer.

These three had never met before, and if any common factor brought them to that inn at that time, it could only have been fate. Whatever the case, their presence had interrupted the work of a coven of spider hags. I guess probably they were Azlu, but they had some weird powers I've never heard of. According to the legend, the entire town turned against the three Uratha, came at them with everything from rusty polearms to rolling pins. It wasn't until Fukue looked into the Shadow that he saw the gossamer spider webs attached to them, controlling them like marionettes. The Talons followed those threads back to their source, killing almost three quarters of the village along the way, and found the three hags lurking in the bottom of a well. The fight was long and bloody, but the three werewolves proved a match for the three demons.

After the village was cleansed, the three wanderers decided to band together and travel as a pack for a time. Since they lacked a New Moon and a Full Moon, they named themselves the Middle Path and took a lesser kami of balance and moderation as their totem. For a while, they were like folk heroes to Japan's Uratha population. Where most of the Japanese werewolves kept themselves to the deep forests and high mountains, the Middle Path traveled from village to village, exorcising malevolent spirits and destroying the beasts and Claimed men and women who threatened the peasants.

Middle path or not, though, the pack eventually swung out of balance. Komori was killed when he tried to assassinate Tokugawa Ieyasu — apparently Komori'd never given up that particular grudge. They say it took 25 of the Shogun's guards to bring Komori down. Michiko was killed during one of the numerous anti-Christian riots that plagued Japan at the time. She tried to bind the hate-spirit that kicked up the riot in the first place, but she lacked Komori's mastery of subtle wordplay and tricky negotiations. Fukue just plain disappeared one day; rumor has it he had belonged to one of the Iga ninja clans before his Change, and he'd fled rather than betray the Oath by revealing the People to his kin or dishonor himself by keeping the secret from his clansmen. Maybe they caught up with him, who knows?

The Japanese Talons just tell the story as a heroic epic, and believe me, there are a lot more stories of the Middle Path's exploits that I'm not sharing here. Me? Well, I can't help seeing a parable in there: you can call yourself balanced all you want, you can maybe even fool yourself into believing it. But without all *your brothers and sisters beside you, you're just deluding yourself.*

As for me, well, I'll tell you this much: I'd rather go lone wolf than belong to a pack missing an auspice.

Modern Heroes

The Blood Talons are not relics of a forgotten past, dusty antiquities to be marveled at and then placed firmly in the barbarous past. The warrior tradition remains alive and well to this day, with new stories of valor and glory born every day in territories around the globe. The lucky ones will survive in epic tales that will spread from territory to territory across the world. The unlucky will die and be unremembered, but that makes their tales no less glorious. Some Blood Talons (see the Lodge of the Einherjar on p. 32) make a point to journey to territories where packs of their kin have been wiped out, hoping to use their Gifts and the knowledge of local spirits to reconstruct such lost stories and ensure that they are properly honored.

Frankenstein versus the Wolf-Man

This story comes from my grandfather, Emmet Royce. You're probably not going to believe it, but Grampa Emmet never lied to me my whole life, so I'm not going to say it's not true. Grampa Changed back in '41, just a few months before Pearl Harbor. He and his pack had a little patch of hardscrabble in Iowa to call their own, nothing too special, never really had any big problems. But the night of December 7th, the pack's seer wakes up screaming about some huge turmoil in the Shadow, something not too unlike the end of the damn world. So naturally, they hear about the attack, they do what any red-blooded American boy would have done, Uratha or not: they signed up.

Somehow, and I was never entirely sure on the details, they struck a deal with one of the bloated bureaucracy-spirits that popped up like weeds as soon as the Army started mobilizing. The spirit made sure they all got sent to the same boot camp, all shipped out at the same time, even all ended up in the same squad. Grampa's got a hundred stories about that war, from D-Day to Berlin, but he tells most of them better than I do.

So anyways, a few months in, and the pack starts getting a reputation. I don't think anybody knew they were werewolves, not even the top brass, but the officers figured out pretty quick that the "Hellhounds" of Baker Company were the go-to guys for weird shit. War's a breeding ground for nasty spirits and fucked-up resonances, and that's before you even account for the occult craziness the Nazis were throwing around.

Around winter of '43, Grampa's pack gets some orders in: the Nazis have got some kind of weapons lab set up in a castle somewhere in the Alps, and the Hellhounds are going to go in, figure out what they're making, and blow it up real good. Intel said there was some freaky shit going on up there. Corpses disappearing from the town cemetery, weird lights on the mountain, all kinds of stuff.

You see where this is going, right? Yeah. The pack gets up there, takes out the sentries on guard and storms the place like avatars of Fenris himself. But the Nazis aren't making bombs or guns or planes, they've got about a dozen or so goddamn Frankensteins, *all apparently made by this creepy old dude covered with stitches and scars. I have no idea what they really were, and neither did Grampa, but they were some kinda tough bastards, and between them and the SS guards on the place, Grampa lost three of his packmates before they killed the last of the SS.*

But you haven't even heard the best part of the story. Somehow one of the SS commanders got a message off to headquarters. Grampa swears the guy must have been some kind of wizard, because while the three surviving Hellhounds were still setting the charges to blow the castle, an entire panzer brigade comes rumbling up the pass. All of a sudden, Grampa and his boys have to hold this 500-year-old castle against a bunch of SS tank crews.

It was Grampa's pal Ollie White who came up with the plan. He found an old escape tunnel that led from the castle out to the village, right smack into the middle of the churchyard — the same churchyard that, thanks to the Nazis' grave-robbing hijinks, was now the happy home of a minor locus. Thanks to the Nazis' generous raping of the local Shadow, the Hellhounds had a perfect way to slip out into the village, step sideways and pinpoint the Nazis' precise positions. A few negotiations with house-spirits to force the explosive charges back through the Gauntlet, and you had the perfect trap.

While the Germans were still combing the streets for the American soldiers they'd been warned about, Gramps and his boys managed to blow up all but two of the tanks. After that — well, I'm, no stranger to the hunt and the kill, but the look in Grampa's eye when he talks about how easy it was to peel those panzers open like sardine tins still creeps me out.

Like I said, you probably won't believe it. Half the time, I'm not sure I do — it sounds like a bad Saturday matinee serial. But Grampa has this trophy on his mantle, one he puts away whenever human company comes to visit. It's a man's skull, almost the size of a soccer ball, and all the bones are fixed together with these copper plates with, like, electrodes sticking out of them, and these old Norse runes carved all over the bones. Weird, huh?

The City of One Wolf

Have you heard the one about the guy that has his own city?

It sounds crazy, I know, but I've heard it from like a dozen different wolves from across all the tribes. Somewhere out there, I've heard Miami, I've heard Chicago, I've even heard New York, there's a city that just didn't have any of our kind in it. Who knows why? Maybe the vampires ran them all out, or Mother Luna's just a crazy old broad and decided 'hey, wouldn't it be fun if there was a city with no Uratha in it at all?'

So as you can imagine, this place is a total shithole. Ridden everywhere, the Shadow's like a toxic waste

dump and the only reason people aren't afraid of being raped and killed on their way home from work is they're too scared of worse things happening.

Then one day, this Blood Talon just gets off the bus in the middle of downtown. Nobody knows his name, he just calls himself 'the Wolf,' and he says the town is his.

Naturally, the King Shits of the Shadow don't much like this, so they send a couple of Claimed flunkies to off the guy. He sends 'em back in pieces. So they send some bigger guns — and this guy sends 'em back in pieces. Then one day he just up and strolls right into the courts of the biggest muckety-muck in the city's Shadow, and announces that Father Wolf's law is being enforced, and they'll either bow down or feel his boot on their necks. And they believed him. The spirits backed down.

Fast forward a few months, and this Wolf's got the city under his thumb. I even heard a few folks say he's made deals with vampires and wizards and even fairies, if you believe that shit. This Bone Shadow kid I know, he said that last summer, some new pack got pushed out of their home city and tried to stake a claim to some turf in the Wolf's city. Either they didn't know about him, or they figured he wouldn't notice, or maybe that between the five of them they could take him. He left a piece of each one of the poor bastards at every road into and out of the city. The cops still have no clue what it means.

So if you happen to be on the road, and you pass through a city where you don't see any pack markings, watch your ass. Maybe you just found yourself some unclaimed real estate — or maybe you just walked into his backyard.

A Warrior Culture

Despite the tribes' global omnipresence and history that stretches back to quite literally the dawn of time, they are hardly global organizations. Separated by distance and time, shaped by the human cultures that grew up around them, the unity the tribes held in the earliest days has long since disappeared. Here, then, are some elements of Blood Talon culture and practices from around the globe. Some are tied to a specific locale, to give a sense of the tribe's evolution in different regions. Others are left geographically vague, so you can freely adopt them for your local Blood Talons or set them up as the practices of "those weird foreigners on the far side of the mountain."

The Destroyer and His Brother

All Blood Talons acknowledge the Destroyer Wolf, *Fenris-Ur*, as their totem and patron. Most accept the common stories of how the progenitors of their tribe tracked down the great Firstborn and battled him to a standstill, thereby convincing him that they were worthy of his patronage.

In some places, they hold that this isn't the whole story. They say that *Fenris-Ur* was only one half of the equation: that he had a brother (or in some stories a sister, or in still others a mate), the Creator Wolf, Danu-Ur. The dualistic association of creator and destroyer is a common one in religion and mythology, and the story of *Fenris-Ur* and Danu-Ur follows a similar pattern: the Destroyer removed that which had grown old and stagnant, while his brother/sister/mate made new things to fill the place left behind.

When the Blood Talons sought out the Destroyer Wolf to be their tribal totem, according to this legend, they overlooked the Creator Wolf. The stories as to why are varied: Some say the Creator Wolf died in the cataclysm that followed the end of Pangaea. Others say that, still consumed by grief and Rage over the killing of Father Wolf, the progenitors of the Blood Talons were simply in no mood to seek out a more peaceful, constructive spirit as a totem. At least one version of the tale holds that the Creator Wolf went mad at the killing of Father Wolf and became known as Rabid Wolf, but that tale is considered heretical by Blood Talons and Fire-Touched alike.

Perhaps the most intriguing version of the story, though, holds that a tribe of Uratha *did* seek out the Creator Wolf, and succeeded in binding her as a totem. Maybe they were driven to extinction sometime in the distant past — but maybe they're still out there somewhere, waiting for their wayward brothers and sisters to come home. But if they *are* out there, why aren't they known to the other Tribes of the Moon? What reason could these Uratha have for remaining hidden? Perhaps they believe their totem could have prevented the utter destruction of Pangaea, but was prevented somehow by *Fenris-Ur* and his new tribe. Not quite Forsaken, not quite Pure, could the Tribe of the Creator be lurking out there in the shadows of the moon, waiting for the right time to take their totem's revenge?

A Warrior's Delicacy

Eating the flesh of man or wolf is taboo according to the tenets of Harmony. To feast on one's own kind is to become a mad beast, lost to the lust of the kill and the mindless fury of Death Rage. The Blood Talons know this, but nevertheless a heretical practice called *ghu-ghabhasughar* in the First Tongue survives among isolated fragments of the tribe.

Ghu-ghabhasughar, or "eating the foe," is a form of ritual cannibalism in which the flesh of an enemy is ritually prepared (see the rite "Courage of the Fallen" on p. 40) for consumption by the warriors who defeated him, in the belief that by consuming the flesh of an enemy, one also consumes his power and his courage. The ritual bears similarities to those practiced by certain human tribes in Africa and parts of the South Pacific, and may in fact be a corrupted and debased form of worship of the Destroyer Wolf, or possibly even *Urfarah* himself. Fragmented tales and riddled half-truths spoken by spirits that were ancient before the rise of human civilization have indicated that Father Wolf took as his divine right a piece of ephemeral flesh from every spirit he hunted, and a chunk of bloody meat from any human foolish enough to wander into the Shadow.

In its "purest" form, *ghu-ghabhasughar* is practiced without discrimination. Any foe a pack brings down is prepared and consumed in accordance with the ritual, complete with prayers offered to Father Wolf and Destroyer Wolf. In the case of particularly worthy foes, the enemy's skin, bones, hair or teeth might be made into clothing or adornments the pack members wear later. This form of *ghu-ghabhasughar* is fairly rare in the modern era, and is generally thought to occur with any frequency only in the Pacific Rim and the deep Congo. Tribal legends persistently tell of a huge, multi-pack clan of Talons and their inbred, cannibal kin lurking somewhere in the mountainous regions of the United States. The stories varyingly place this clan of man-eaters in the Appalachians, the Blue Ridge Mountains in Kentucky and even the Rockies, but no reliable reports have been confirmed. Similar rumors attribute the practice to the Predator Kings, but given the amount of reverence paid to the Destroyer Wolf in the ritual, any cannibalism rite practiced by the Pure is unlikely to take the form of *ghu-ghabhasughar.*

While the extreme form of *ghu-ghabhasughar* described above leads inevitably to degeneration and the dreaded state of *Zi'ir*, a lesser variation has recently come into vogue in certain parts of northern Europe, Asia and South America. Practitioners of this form of *ghu-ghabhasughar* stop short of devouring the flesh of humans, wolves and other werewolves. They likewise reserve the rite for use on the most powerful and dangerous enemies the pack brings down: a pack of Ridden alley cats probably don't merit the performance of the rite, but a powerful Azlu or manifested bear-spirit might. This variation is still considered heretical by more conservative Blood Talons, but is not typically stamped out with the same zeal.

Offer No Surrender That You Would Not Accept

The Blood Talons have at once one of the simplest and yet most subtly complex vows of all the Tribes of the Moon. On the one hand, "offer no surrender that you would not accept" is a straightforward concept: Don't disgrace yourself by surrendering in life or death battle, unless you've earned that surrender. Fight to the utmost, and if you must give in, give in with honor and make your enemy respect you.

On the other hand, there is considerable latitude to be had in the text. The mere presence of the clause "that you would not accept" renders the entire vow a judgment call. A pack leader in Detroit believes that mercy is for the weak, and never offers an enemy quarter. Is he, in turn, forbidden from surrendering to *anyone*? In rural China, tradition holds that a warrior may surrender to any foe in honorable combat if more than five drops of his blood have touched the floor. Is a Blood Talon then forbidden to surrender, even if he is badly beaten with blunt weapons that spill no blood or burned by mystic fire? A merciful Elodoth might accept the surrender of any who asks for it — what then of his cowardice in battle, if he surrenders at the first sign of struggle?

If all of the above questions are answered "yes," why does *Fenris-Ur* hold some of his progeny to more stringent standards of acceptable surrender than others? Is there a baseline for an appropriately acceptable form of surrender? Elodoth debate the issue whenever members of the tribe gather, and those discussions frequently end with a demonstration of the practical applications of their arguments when words escalate to duels.

Further adding to the confusion are those Blood Talons who simply interpret the vow in a different fashion. In western Europe, where the ideals of chivalry flowered in the Middle Ages, an equally common translation of the vow reads "offer no *terms of surrender* you would not accept." In other words, don't dishonor a beaten opponent by proffering terms so onerous (for example, "give up all your territory, surrender your fetishes and teach me every Gift you know") that they would goad an enemy into fighting to the death.

Similarly, around the world, some elements of the tribe twist the intent of the vow into proscribing surrender against particular enemies: in Russia, a Blood Talon will never accept the surrender of one who betrayed her pack, and consequently surrendering *to* a traitor is forbidden. In the Middle East, the same logic is applied to the Hosts (largely a moot point, since few Hosts would ever deign to offer *or* accept an Uratha's surrender), and the ban on surrendering to the Pure is nearly a global phenomenon.

Duels

In a wolf pack, disputes are settled swiftly and finally. If one of the pack challenges the alpha's authority, the alpha puts the challenger back in his place quickly and sometimes harshly — or else the alpha is bested, and the challenger assumes the leadership role.

Blood Talons look to that same speed and finality for settling disputes. All of the tribes, and even all of the auspices, have their own preferred methods of resolving inter-pack (or even intra-pack) disputes: riddle contests, debates, physical ordeals and the like, but among the *Suthar Anzuth,* the duel remains far and away the most popular.

Blood Talon duels take many forms, from the rigorously prescribed inter-pack rituals common in France and Spain (replete with seconds to negotiate the terms of the duel and highly ritualized encounters of "escalation" before the actual fight) to the knockdown bar brawls in grimy roadhouses common to the American West. In Japan, duels are fought only in Hishu, Dalu or Urshul form, with claws, fangs and swords as the permissible weapons. Taking the Gauru form during a duel is considered forfeiture and a grave dishonor. In Australia, on the other hand, duels are exclusively fought in Gauru form, and it becomes as much a test of who can wear the war-form the longest as about who can take down his opponent. In certain parts of the American South, pistols at dawn have remained the tradition for more than 200 years. In Chicago, formalized dueling is thrown out in favor of a straight-up brawl where the only rule is "maim, don't kill."

A Blood Talon duel, despite the name, isn't necessarily an all-out brawl between the combatants. Rahu, obviously, favor full-contact combat, but other auspices often use other forms of conflict to settle their disputes. The only common thread is that duels are always a direct contest. Blood Talons shun objective contests, in which the merits of each participant are judged by neutral parties. Most duels also include at least some element of physical challenge. Irraka engage in footraces through bad neighborhoods. Ithaeur test their prowess at summoning and binding spirits by conducting "proxy wars," summoning up Gafflings and Jagglings and setting them on each other. Elodoth test their endurance and their knack for persuasion in marathon poker games. Cahalith ingest massive amounts of psychotropic drugs and engage each other in twisting, mind-bending logic puzzles while hallucinations flutter and dance around them.

Names of Glory

Blood Talons are among the werewolves most likely to take deed names, and the most likely to have deed names that reflect their actual deeds. Blood Talon deed names are usually short, forceful and straight to the point: the sort of names easily shouted across a battlefield. It's considered terribly bad luck for a Talon to choose his own deed name: a deed name is a reflection of the warrior's Glory. Taking a name yourself is seen as shameless self-aggrandizement. Being given a deed name by your packmates is a sign that they respect you and recognize you as a brother or sister.

Deed names among the Talons are usually descriptive, but not so much so that they completely give away the meaning behind the name. A deed name is as much a bond to one's pack as it is an announcement of glorious deeds. The name "Bright Claw" tells other werewolves that its owner fought impressively enough to earn a deed name, probably something to do with using his claws in battle; it reminds his packmates of the time that crazy motherfucker picked up a handful of burning pitch and shoved it down into a nest of Azlu shards.

Geography and even specific pack affiliation can color a Blood Talon's deed name as well. Welsh Talons like to take deed names from the Mabinogion and other sources of Welsh mythology ("Olwen," "Rhonabwy"). In Mexico, names

inspired by desert predators prevail ("Coyote Smile," "Sidewinder"). In northern Canada, members of the Lodge of the Einherjar take on the deed names of Uratha who died with their tales untold, no matter the tribe or auspice of the deceased. In Colorado and much of the American West, names tend to imply gory acts of brutality ("Ripper," "Rib-Spreader").

From Recruit to Veteran

A warrior who doesn't learn from his past battles is asking to end up dead. Although the Blood Talons have roots in traditions older than the mountains, these werewolves adapt and thrive in the modern world, and the manner in which they train up their recruits reflects that. Drills with sword and shield are replaced with muskets, which in turn are replaced by drills with modern weaponry. With the demise of massed formations of infantry as the principal tactic in warfare, the tribe adopted and vigorously implements the latest doctrines of small-unit tactics, something the Uratha pack structure is ideally suited to.

Elder Blood Talons consider being asked to train raw recruits up into fighting men and women a great honor, even as they grumble about the tragic state of the new generation and lament how much better things were in their day. By tradition as much as practicality, the duties of instruction are broadly broken up by auspice. This isn't a hard-and-fast rule; if an Irraka happens to be a master of Tang Soo Do, she certainly wouldn't be barred from teaching the art to others. Likewise, a Rahu who served on the SWAT team might well be called on to teach infiltration and surveillance techniques.

• **Rahu:** Full Moons most often teach advanced combat techniques. The warriors of the Blood Talons assume that all of their charges have at least a basic understanding of how to fight and kill; Rahu teach their brothers more sophisticated and subtle arts. (In game terms, a Blood Talon wishing to learn a Fighting Style Merit or the fourth or fifth dot in Brawl, Weaponry or Firearms would probably learn from a Full Moon.) A Rahu's instruction is intensely physical, stressing endurance and power as much as technique. A Rahu boxing instructor teaches his pupils where to defend by subjecting them to punishing body blows; one teaching the arts of stealth and ambush emphasizes remaining motionless in uncomfortable positions for hours at a time. "Pain is the best teacher" is a common axiom students hear from their Full Moon teachers.

• **Cahalith:** The Moon-Dancers of the Blood Talons sing tales of the glory of the tribe, of great deeds performed by past heroes and of tragedies that befell the People. When a Cahalith instructs, he teaches through parable and historical precedent. It isn't enough that a pupil learn the Gift of Father Wolf's Speed or the special tricks of fighting with a knife; she must also learn how Andrew Long-Run used the Gift to warn all of his neighbor packs of the Beshilu swarm that broke loose in '95, or how Long-Nail Jack killed a raging Predator King alpha with just an ordinary survival knife. Cahalith teachers embody the old saying, "If you don't learn from history, you're doomed to repeat it."

• **Elodoth:** Wisdom and balance mark a Blood Talon Elodoth's teachings. The Half-Moons are the most vocal proponents of the idea that not every victory comes from battle, and they take pains to break their students out of old, stagnant tactics and approaches to combat. Elodoth love to set up trick scenarios, such as arranging a sparring match against a vastly superior foe or presenting a problem that seems obvious but fails to present its full complexity on first glance. They do this not to humiliate or punish, but to force their charges to *think*. If the enemy cannot be beaten in a straight fight, find his weakness outside the arena and exploit it. If an enemy forces you to choose whether he will kill your lover or your packmate, kill the bastard before he has a chance to hurt either. These tactics may seem to run counter to the precepts of Honor, but Blood Talon Elodoths are quick to point out that there is more honor in treating a vanquished foe with respect than in deliberately ignoring a potential advantage.

• **Ithaeur:** The Crescent Moons know that the Shadow is a counterintuitive place, and that spirits don't always hew to the concepts of logic or order. When teaching their tribemates, Crescent Moons talk in riddles and non sequiturs, forcing their pupils to adapt to the thought processes of spirits. This technique can be maddening to the student, but once the connection is made and the student understands the point of the lessons, this technique is an invaluable resource when trying to understand and anticipate the actions of enemy spirits. In contrast to an Elodoth's teachings on the art of finding clever ways to defeat enemies outside of combat, Ithaeur tend to

teach their brothers how to exploit a spirit's bans and weaknesses in battle.

• **Irraka:** The silent, deadly New Moons of the *Suthar Anzuth* are often distant from their brothers. Many disdain sharing their skills with any but other Irraka, not out of any elitism, but because they recognize that what they do is necessary for the tribe, but it isn't exactly what one would call Glorious. Many take on a sort of martyr's mentality, seeing members of their auspice as the ones who do what is necessary so their brothers and sisters can reap the Glory the tribe holds in such high esteem. When an Irraka does take on a student, she stresses patience, subtlety and guile: some pointedly ignore a prospective student for weeks at a time; others simply seem to disappear or deny each request for teaching on the premise of the tiniest failure in etiquette. Only the most persistent supplicant earns the right to study with an Irraka tutor.

The Lodge of the Einherjar

This is the story of the pack called Five Lizards. I don't know why they called themselves that, I just know their story. The Five held a modest territory in central Oklahoma — a few hundred square miles of wheat fields, almost reaching up to the oil wells. There wasn't a lot more to say about it. They had the same problems any territory did — spirits getting uppity, maybe the occasional bored kid poking around places he shouldn't, but mostly it was pretty quiet.

Till one day back in aught-two, when the Devouring Cloud woke up. Seems some Cherokee medicine men sometime in the last century called it up and then couldn't put it down again. They bound it with signs and sigils and prayers, but I guess they weren't as good at it as they thought. It was some kind of spirit, but not really a spirit, if that makes any kind of sense — a big ol' cloud of locust things, big as the sky and hungrier than a school of piranhas. Folks started dying right off the bat, and the Lizards didn't know what to do to stop it. When the bodies started getting up and going out to devour anything they could lay their hands on, the pack knew they had to make a stand. They burned the fields to herd the Ridden corpses into the little town of Cherry Tree, and when the Devouring Cloud rolled in out of the Shadow, they met it with everything they had: fang and talon, rite and Gift, strength and cunning. And by the time the next dawn broke, there wasn't a living thing left in that little town — but there was no Devouring Cloud, either.

How do I know all this if no one survived? Well, now, son, I'm glad you asked…



It's a simple and unavoidable fact that life as an Uratha tends to be nasty, brutish and short. Blood Talons certainly aren't the type to shrink from a glorious death in battle, but it comes to pass often enough that there just aren't any survivors to spread the word of those glorious deaths.

The Lodge of the Einherjar is devoted to tracking down packs that were wiped out to a man and discovering what their ultimate fate really was. Sometimes it's an easy task, as in the case of a pack in Delhi that were overrun in battle with the Pure — the pack's allies who survived the battle knew the story, and shared it with the lodge. Other times it's considerably harder, as in the story of the Five Lizards pack told above.

The Lodge of the Einherjar uses Insight Gifts, spirit-binding rites and good old-fashioned detective work to piece together what happened and reconstruct the story as best the lodge members can. They don't restrict their task to Blood Talon packs, either: all of the glorious dead deserve to be remembered.

The lodge was founded 20 years ago, by a Cahalith named Ghost Howl. An historian before his Change, Ghost Howl was fascinated by stories such as Roanoke, the *Mary Celeste* and other unexplained disappearances. After he joined the Blood Talons, he turned his studies to the disappearances of Uratha packs in northern Canada. The Lodge of the Einherjar (named for the souls of fallen Viking warriors who feasted in Valhalla) followed

as a natural outgrowth. A spirit called the Glorious Dead serves as the lodge's totem: once, the spirit was the pack totem of a pack of Bone Shadows up in the northern Rockies. Ghost Howl and his pack, the first members of the lodge, swore to spread the story of the Bone Shadows' last stand against an *idigam* in return for the spirit's patronage. It is partly due to this bargain that the Lodge of the Einherjar has a global presence today.

Prerequisites: Glory ••, Honor •, Investigation 2

Membership: While the Lodge of the Einherjar isn't an exclusively Blood Talon lodge, to date all but a handful of members belong to the tribe. A Bone Shadow Cahalith called Ivan Grave-Eyes runs a chapter of the lodge in San Diego, and a Storm Lord Rahu in Tennessee joined to honor a pack that died containing a dangerous spirit plague, but the vast majority of members are Blood Talons.

Lodge members usually join nomadic packs, or form packs with other lodge members. The lodge's mandate, after all, is to uncover the mysteries behind the destruction of werewolf packs. Unless the lodge member is unfortunate enough to hold territory in the middle of a war zone, such total decimation of packs isn't likely to happen in the vicinity of the member's territory — at least not often enough to justify membership in the lodge. The Lodge of the Einherjar is proactive. The lodge members get out there and search for the stories of lost packs; they don't just wait for some unspeakable evil to rise up and wipe out the pack next door.

The actual process of joining the lodge is surprisingly painless. One need only demonstrate a reverence for the dead and a knack for investigation and historical research; the lodge is small enough that new blood is almost always welcomed. Whenever possible, the lodge arranges a field test for a prospective applicant. A senior lodge member, or better yet, an entire pack, will take the initiate with them as they go to discover the fate of a missing pack. Throughout the investigation, they test and question the initiate and task him with providing explanations for the facts the lodge uncovers. If the initiate's reconstruction of the saga of the slain is astute and agrees with the senior members', the prospective member is almost assured a place in the lodge.

There are, however, two "hidden" qualifiers that must be met before the initiate earns a final acceptance. First, the initiate must present his version of the story to the lodge. Ideally, the audience for this tale is not the same group that participated in the investigation, but sometimes it's unavoidable. If the prospective member tells the tale in a way that honors the dead and glorifies their final hours, he passes. He isn't expected to lie, or sugarcoat the actual facts, but the purpose of the Lodge of the Einherjar is to *honor* the fallen warriors, not drag their names through the mud by exposing their every fault or tactical mistake.

Finally, the initiate must travel to northern Canada, to the former territory of the Glorious Dead's deceased pack (the territory is now claimed by the lodge; Ghost Howl's daughter leads the pack there). There, under the light of the gibbous moon, the assembled members of the lodge, however many are present, recount the tale of the deaths of the pack that once held the territory. The Glorious Dead manifests in the form of a nebulous, spectral horde of dead warriors from every period of history, and the initiate swears to carry the tale with him until his death, and share it with any pack that will listen. The assembled werewolves join in a howl of remembrance, and the initiate is fully and formally welcomed into the Lodge of the Einherjar.

Benefit: Members of the Lodge of the Einherjar can learn Insight Gifts as though they were tribal Gifts. Members may substitute their Glory Renown for their Honor Renown when using the Gift: Echo Dream or for their Purity Renown when using the Gift: Soul Read (provided their Glory Renown is higher). Finally, all members of the Lodge receive a free Occult Specialty in Uratha Lore.

The Lodge of the Shield



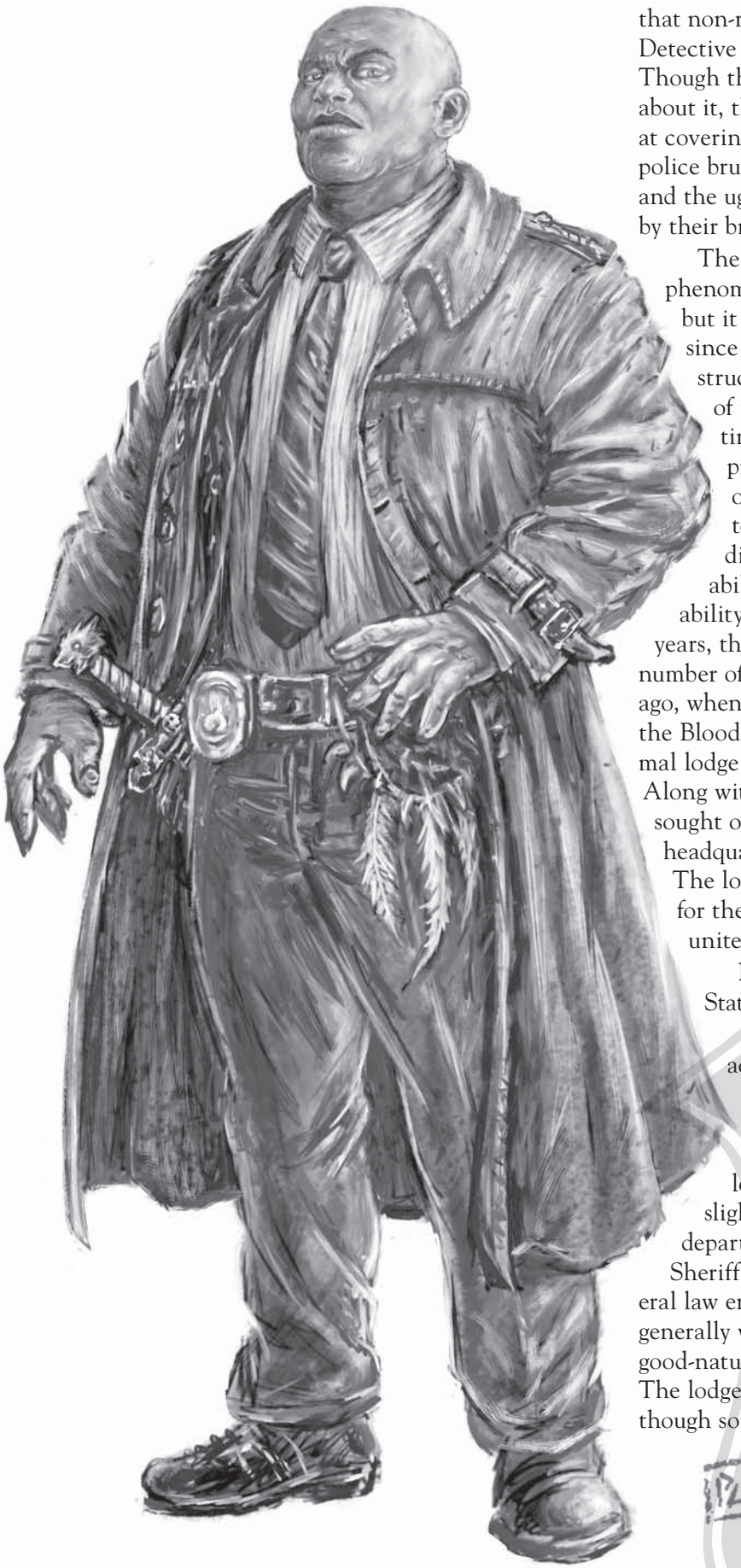
In the city of Los Angeles, a dozen wars are being fought right now. Yeah, that's right. Gang war, war on crime, war on drugs, war on poverty — you name it, seems like the humans have declared war on it. Wonder if they know what that does to the Shadow? Yeah, probably not, but that's not my point. The point is, there's a war on, and we tend to get sucked into them, whether we like it or not.

It's not exactly a surprise that our kind tends to run with the gang life. Think about it: insular, tight-knit groups, turf you stake out and protect against other sons of bitches encroaching on it, that code of loyalty. Hell, except for the turning big and furry thing, your average street gang looks a hell of a lot like your average Uratha pack.

And maybe that's not such a good thing. Me? I've been on the job 15 years. I've seen what these punks do to their neighborhoods. And I can't help thinking that maybe we do the same damn thing.

But there are other options. Like I said, I've been a cop for a decade and a half. I'm not the only one, either. There's a decent bunch of us, mostly Blood Talons, that work in law enforcement. It's not an easy job, what with the Rage and all. But we're out there, trying to make a difference. If you're interested, I've got some pull with admissions at the police academy…

The Lodge of the Shield is a small lodge currently found only in Los Angeles. More of a fraternal organization than anything else, the lodge's membership is entirely composed of Uratha actively serving in or retired from the Los Angeles Police Department, California Highway Patrol and other law enforcement agencies. The lodge serves as a support network, a place to vent the unique frustrations of a werewolf on the job, and a good old-fashioned old boys' network. Need to explain to your captain why you abandoned your patrol to go put down a Ridden killer? One of your brother officers will cover for you. Need backup that won't question your "questionable tactics" or write you up for psych counseling because you burned a fistful of incense to cleanse a drug den after you busted the perps? As long as you agree not to ask questions about



that non-regulation dagger with the bizarre runes Detective Kowalski carries, he'll back your play. Though the lodge members don't much like to talk about it, the Lodge of the Shield is a dab hand at covering up and smoothing over instances of police brutality, both the kind attributable to Rage and the ugly, everyday variety sometimes inflicted by their brother officers.

The Lodge of the Shield is a fairly recent phenomenon as far as formal organizations go, but it grew out of a tradition that has existed since 1955. When the LAPD completed construction on its new headquarters, a section of the building was declared *tur.* At the time, there was a fairly sizable Blood Talon presence on the force, and the members of the tribe agreed that having a place to compare notes on their territories and discuss strategies would improve their ability to do their day jobs as much as their ability to maintain their territories. For 60 years, this tradition waxed and waned with the number of Uratha on the force, until three years ago, when Captain Aaron Williams, an Elodoth of the Blood Talons, suggested the creation of a formal lodge for Uratha serving in law enforcement. Along with other long-time officers, Williams sought out and bound the spirit of the LAPD's headquarters, Shield-of-Law, to serve as totem. The lodge was named the Lodge of the Shield, for the totem and for the police badge that united its members.

Prerequisites: Honor •, Investigation •••, Status (Police) •.

Membership: The Lodge of the Shield accepts as members only Uratha who are currently serving or retired law enforcement officers in Los Angeles, California. Because the tradition that led to the lodge began with the LAPD, slight preference is given to members of that department over CHP, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and other agencies. Federal law enforcement agents stationed in LA are generally welcome, but subject to much ribbing, good-natured or otherwise, by the "local boys." The lodge does not otherwise discriminate, although some women have claimed that the lodge is very much a boys' club (most of the membership is male). At present, the lodge is found only in LA, but

there is nothing stopping a member from taking the lodge elsewhere.

The lodge holds its members to a high standard of excellence, both as cops and as Uratha. Lodge members know full well the dangerous line they walk, and what a devastating effect it could have if "The Herd Must Not Know" were breached by the police. Internal Affairs investigations are the last things lodge members need, quite apart from professional pride as police officers. Occasionally bending the law to do one's duty to Father Wolf is acceptable, but any evidence that a member is taking bribes or engaging in otherwise questionable behavior is grounds for ejection from the lodge. Likewise, allowing one's territory to get out of control is grounds for dismissal.

Despite the high standard members are held to, joining the lodge is extremely easy. One need only be a member of the police and express an interest in joining. Captain Williams keeps an eye on the LAPD's duty rosters and has contacts doing the same in other agencies, and the lodge itself usually initiates contacts with Uratha who join the police force, and especially with officers who undergo the First Change. Once an officer has expressed a desire to join the lodge, someone high up (usually Williams) makes a few phone calls regarding the character of the officer. Provided the applicant is clean and given a good review by his superiors, Williams invites him to the next meeting of the lodge at LAPD headquarters, and he is formally welcomed into the lodge.

Sometimes, when a lodge member meets a fellow Uratha who isn't on the job but has the makings of a good cop, an exception of sorts is made. The lodge member usually begins by talking up the benefits of police work and membership in the lodge, appealing to the civilian's attachment to his human life and community and to his Uratha territoriality. If the werewolf is receptive, several lodge members have contacts with the admissions boards overseeing the city's police academies, and can usually guarantee the werewolf a slot in the next class. Lodge members make a point to check in on the trainee and take him under their wing during his training. Assuming he graduates and is offered a job, he is made a full member of the lodge straight away (the usual entry requirements are not waived, but anyone exceptional enough to warrant this offer probably had most of them to begin with).

Benefits: The Lodge of the Shield teaches its members to honor and respect the badge, and to maintain the self-control expected of a law enforcement officer. As long as a member has his badge on his person, he gains a +1 bonus on rolls to resist Death Rage. In addition, he may buy the Merits Status (Police) and Fighting Style (Police Tactics) at half cost.

Fighting Style: Police Tactics (• to •••)

Prerequisites: Strength ••, Dexterity ••, Stamina ••, Brawl •• and Weaponry •

Effect: Your character has picked up some of the mixed bag of subdue and compliance tricks that cops learn in the academy and on the street. If he doesn't have law enforcement experience himself, he's most likely learned these maneuvers from someone who has. Dots purchased in this Merit allow access to special combat maneuvers. Each maneuver is a prerequisite for the next. So, your character can't have Weapon Retention until he has Compliance Hold. The maneuvers and their effects are listed below.

Compliance Hold (•): When trying to overpower an opponent you have grappled (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, pp. 157–159), you gain a +2 bonus to your Strength + Brawl roll if you attempt to immobilize or disarm him. You must choose your maneuver before making your roll, rather than after it, to gain this bonus.

Weapon Retention (••): An opponent who has grappled you must score successes equal to your Weaponry score on his Strength + Brawl roll to choose a "disarm" or "turn a drawn weapon" maneuver against you.

Speed Cuff (•••): If you have a pair of handcuffs or equivalent restraints drawn while grappling, you may choose "cuff" as an overpowering maneuver. With a success, you get the cuffs on one of your opponent's wrists. With exceptional success, you cuff *both* wrists.

Lodge of the Lone Wolf



This is the story of Thomas Coldfire.

Thomas was a Blood Talon warrior born and bred, scion of a long line of true-breeding Talons. He Changed, like his father did, under the light of the half-moon. He was initiated into his father's tribe at the age of 16, and by 17 he already had a dozen kills to his name. He refused to live in the shadow of his family's legacy, and joined a pack along with three other newly-Changed cubs. They held a few blocks of territory in downtown San Francisco, which they kept free and safe and clear of wicked spirits. But unbeknown to Thomas and his pack, in the depths below their streets, a brood of cunning Beshilu lurked, gnawing steadily away at the Gauntlet.

When Thomas's pack traced a sudden rash of spirit infestation to the sewer where the Rat Hosts nested, the sheer numbers of their foes overwhelmed the Uratha. They fought bravely and well, and paid the ultimate price to contain the threat: Broken Sword, the pack's Rahu, brought down the ceiling, burying the shartha *and his packmates under tons of rubble. Only Thomas survived, and he was gravely injured. But Uratha are strong, and the Elodoth healed quickly in body, but his spirit was broken by the deaths of his packmates. Thomas Coldfire still lives, though his territory has been taken by others long since. Now he walks the path of the lone wolf: packless, brotherless, alone.*

And we? We are the poor wretches who walk in his shadow.

Uratha are pack animals by nature, sharing the lupine instinct for group behavior and the human need for socialization. Lone wolves, those who walk without a pack, are looked on with a mixture of distrust, pity and sometimes fear. It's unnatural, in the same way that it's unnatural for a human to shut himself away in his home and never emerge for human contact of any kind.

Blood Talons tend to be especially mistrustful of lone wolves. A warrior is made stronger by his brothers and sisters who fight alongside him, and to walk alone is to put himself at the mercy of his enemies. If a werewolf cannot or will not join a pack, better that he do the honorable thing and end his own life.

And yet, Blood Talons *can* find themselves without a pack to call their own. Some simply Change in isolated, lonely places and never know their kin until much later in life. Others, like Thomas Coldfire, survived the annihilation of their packs and find the idea of joining a new one too painful. Still others are simply broken in some way, and never feel the call of the pack instinct in their hearts.

The Lodge of the Lone Wolf is a loose, informal organization of these *usu-ur* (literally "alone wolf") across much of North America and Europe. Since many lone wolves are nomadic, the lodge has no real geographic presence, but members can be encountered along the highways and back roads of the world.

The lodge is watched over by a patron wolf-spirit that calls itself *Ya-Dumu*, "the Fifth Son." *Ya-Dumu* claims to be the fifth-born offspring of Father Wolf, who was driven from the Firstborn's pack for being smaller and weaker than his brothers. Thomas Coldfire encountered the spirit in the Rocky Mountains five years ago, and convinced it to serve as the totem of a lodge that would look out for others like themselves.

Prerequisites: Cannot be a member of a pack.

Membership: Only *usu-ur* may be members of the Lodge of the Lone Wolf. Joining the lodge is difficult, only inasmuch as it's difficult to find an established member to learn about the lodge from. *Ya-Dumu* is known to roam the Shadow of the world's

great mountain ranges — the Rockies, the Alps, the Andes and the like — and a lone wolf traveling through such territory may chance upon the totem and be initiated.

Membership in the Lodge of the Lone Wolf is fluid: new members join occasionally, old members die out or, much less frequently, decide it's time to rejoin society and forge a new pack. While former members who have rejoined a pack are no longer considered to be part of the Lodge of the Lone Wolf, they often maintain contact with other members and tend to be favorably disposed toward aiding their former lodge brothers.

Lone Wolves occasionally travel together in groups, especially through hostile territory, but they do not (and cannot, if they wish to maintain the benefits of membership) take the step of binding a totem and formalizing a pack bond. As far as lodge membership is concerned, the binding of a totem is what makes a "group" of werewolves into a pack.

Benefits: *Ya-Dumu* teaches his lodge members to be self-reliant and alert, as they have no brothers to watch their backs. All lodge members receive a free dot in Survival and a +1 bonus on Wits + Composure rolls made for perception.



New Rites

The Blood Talons have a reputation, one not entirely deserved, for being without mystical inclination. Although their rites tend to have a more martial bent than other tribes, Blood Talon ritualists are no less adept at their art. The following rites were developed or discovered by the *Suthar Anzuth*, and for the most part are exclusive to the tribe. There's no particular reason members of other tribes couldn't use them, but the Talons don't teach these rites to outsiders often, either because they deal with specific tribal rituals (Rite of First Blood) or because they are embarrassing secrets the tribe would rather not share with outsiders (Courage of the Fallen).

Rite of First Blood (•)

When a cub takes his first wound in battle, the Blood Talons celebrate. To face death and survive, to be wounded in service to the memory of Father Wolf, is a glorious thing. Blood Talons perform this rite the first time a cub newly initiated into the tribe is severely injured in battle. The Rite of First Blood commemorates the event, which is considered a major milestone in a Blood Talon's life and a truly Glorious event.

Performing the Rite: This rite can be performed only on an Uratha who has been severely wounded in battle (that is, who has suffered an aggravated wound), and an individual can be the recipient of this rite only once.

The ritualist gathers the tribe, ideally at the site of the battle or at a location designated *tur*. The ritualist stands in the center of the assembled tribe with the honored initiate kneeling beside him, and the ritualist declares the initiate's deeds and injuries. The ritualist then pulls the initiate to his feet, proclaiming him to be unbroken and a worthy inheritor of *Fenris-Ur*'s legacy. The assembled werewolves howl their approval, and each takes his turn marking the initiate's wounds: some merely trace a talon over the wounds; others paint the wounds with handfuls of mud or smear their own blood over the wounds (especially common if the wounds came from the same battle). When each member of the tribe has made his mark, the ritualist proclaims the cub "blooded in glory," and leads all the assembled werewolves, the cub included, in a howl to the Destroyer Wolf.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (15 successes; each roll represents one minute of extolling the honoree's virtues)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The ritualist dishonors or inadvertently insults the initiate. The honoree loses one point of Glory Renown.

Failure: The ritualist fails to extol the virtues of the initiate's deeds. The initiate gains no experience points.

Success: The ritualist honors the initiate's suffering. The honoree receives three experience points, which may be spent only on improving Glory Renown.

Exceptional Success: The ritualist's performance is so spellbinding and tells of such epic prowess in battle that it attracts the attention of a Lune of the honoree's auspice choir. The Lune immediately grants the honoree one free dot of Glory Renown.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
–3	The initiate's wounds have already healed when the rite is performed.
–1	The honoree received only one or two points of aggravated damage.
+0	The honoree suffered two or more points of aggravated damage, but was not pushed into wound penalties.
+1	The honoree has an aggravated wound marked in one of his last three Health boxes.
+1	All Uratha present are Blood Talons.
+2	Blood Talons from multiple packs are present.

Rite of the Blademaster (••)

The Blood Talons expect every member of the tribe to be a warrior. Even the less martially-inclined auspices are expected to be competent in a fight. The tribe's more established members know, however, that competence in battle doesn't just spring up overnight. Training takes time, and the unfortunate truth is that a battle rarely waits around until all the recruits are fully trained and prepared. The tribe developed this rite for emergencies when even the most raw, untested cubs must be pressed into service to defend a territory.

This rite is a popular one, especially in dangerous territories that see a high rate of turnover among packs. While use of the rite carries no stigma on its own, many Talons consider it lazy or disrespectful to invoke the rite casually. A warrior should earn his skill at arms through effort, not simply magic them into existence with tattoos

and drumming. Ritualists counter that summoning and binding spirits of violence with this rite require just as much effort as hitting the dojo five times a week.

Performing the Rite: The ritualist lines up all prospective beneficiaries, almost like a military company standing at attention. Tradition dictates that all should be nude, but since this ritual is often performed on *nuzusul* who still cling to human modesty, it's acceptable to wear a modicum of clothing. As long as the beneficiaries' arms, legs and torso are mostly bare, the rite can function. The ritualist grinds up a paste of blood, honey and various herbs and plants thought to represent courage (the borage flower is a popular choice in Europe and North Africa), then paints glyphs representing strength, skill at arms and glory in battle along the recipients' arms, legs and chest.

Through intonation of ancient First Tongue words of binding, the ritualist commands a war-spirit or a spirit of violence to go with the cubs and guide their hands and feet in battle. The spirit is ideally one found naturally near the site of the battle, but one summoned and bound using other rites may be used if necessary. In effect, the spirit "Rides" the marks painted on the recipients (although Blood Talons tend to get testy at that implication).

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (five successes per beneficiary; each roll represents 10 minutes of painting glyphs and binding the spirit)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The spirit is improperly bound. All recipients suffer a –1 penalty on all combat dice pools for the next scene.

Failure: No progress is made toward completing the rite.

Success: The ritualist makes progress toward binding the spirits into the painted glyphs. Five successes are required to affect each beneficiary, and a character may gain only one benefit of this rite for a time (see below).

Exceptional Success: Not only is significant progress made, but each beneficiary of the rite receives *two* of the benefits listed below, or a single benefit at double effectiveness.

A werewolf who receives the blessing of this rite gains one of the following benefits (ritualist's choice):

- One dot of Brawl, Weaponry or Firearms
- One dot of any Fighting Style Merit (the recipient does not need to meet any prerequisites of the Merit)
- One point of armor
- Three Specialties in Brawl, Weaponry and/or Firearms

Skill dots and Fighting Style dots may be conferred only if the recipient has no dots in the given Skill or Merit. The purpose of this rite is to give new cubs a fighting chance, not to empower already-gifted warriors. Note that this restriction applies to specific Merits and Skills: a *nuzusul* with Firearms 3 can still receive a dot in Brawl from this rite (assuming he's untrained in Brawl), and a character with Fighting Style: Boxing 2 can still learn Fighting Style: Kung Fu through this rite. Specialties may be granted even in Skills the recipient has training in.

The benefits of this rite last for one scene. If the painted glyphs are erased, the effect ends immediately.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
–1	Each participant has more than two dots in Brawl, Firearms or Weaponry.
+1	All participants are Blood Talons
+1	The beneficiaries are *nuzusul* less than a month from their First Change.

Courage of the Fallen (•••)

Some small sects of the Blood Talon tribe, mostly in isolated corners of the world, perform a bizarre and borderline blasphemous practice known as *ghu-ghabhasughar* (see p. 28). When a warrior of the *Suthar Anzuth* defeats an enemy, he ritually consumes the flesh of his vanquished foe to take in its courage and ferocity. Certainly, the act of eating one's kills is not inherently bad, but many followers of this practice simply do not discriminate based on Harmony. Packs deep in the practice of *ghu-ghabhasughar* will devour slain humans, Pure Tribe werewolves and even Forsaken rivals.

Because of this rite's association with cannibal cults, the Courage of the Fallen rite has a dark reputation in the tribe. The rite itself is innocuous, and can be used on any sort of prey without causing a Harmony violation except humans, wolves or werewolves. Nevertheless, few ritualists will teach this rite, and merely knowing it is enough to get a Blood Talon run out of a territory or even killed in certain parts of the world.

Performing the Rite: This rite is almost always performed on the spot the werewolf felled her quarry, and is brutally simplistic in its performance. The ritualist stands over the fallen adversary and speaks a prayer to *Fenris-Ur* in the First Tongue. As she praises the Destroyer Wolf and entreats him to watch over her as she devours her foe, she tears out gobbets of flesh and devours them whole. Since the rite requires continuous chanting and prayer, the ritualist must remain in Hishu or Dalu form for the entire rite, depriving her of the lupine digestive system that is so much better at handling fresh, raw meat. Most hardcore practitioners of *ghu-ghubhasaghar* have the Merit: Iron Stomach. When the meal is complete, the ritualist throws back her head and howls a paean to Father Wolf and the Destroyer — an eerie, blood-chilling sound when it comes from a mostly human throat.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (see below; each roll represents one turn of prayer and feasting)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The ritualist's prayers offend *Fenris-Ur.* For the next 24 hours, each time the character eats meat she loses a point of Willpower. If she has no Willpower remaining, she loses a point of Essence. If she has no Essence, she takes a point of lethal damage.

Failure: No successes are added.

Success: The ritualist consumes one "Health-point" worth of flesh per success rolled. Each point of flesh consumed gives her one Willpower point. Willpower points in excess of her normal maximum are lost at the end of the scene. If the flesh belonged to a wolf, werewolf or human, the ritualist also gains Essence as described on p. 77 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**.

Exceptional Success: The Destroyer Wolf is greatly pleased by the ritualist's prayers. In addition to consuming a truly prodigious amount of flesh, the ritualist regains one Willpower point for every point of damage she inflicts with the express purpose of devouring her target for the next 24 hours. The character also gains a temporary fixation derangement regarding the consumption of raw flesh. If she already has a similar fixation, she instead gains a temporary obsessive compulsion. The derangement also lasts 24 hours.

The ritualist may consume a number of "Health points" worth of flesh equal to the victim's total Health rating. If the corpse is dismembered or badly mutilated, the Storyteller may reduce this amount by one quarter, or by half in extreme cases. More than one werewolf may partake in this rite; if multiple Uratha feast on the victim, the ritualist's successes denote the total number of "Health points'" worth of meat that can be devoured per turn with this rite. The ritualist may automatically consume one point of flesh per success rolled; other characters must roll Strength + Brawl as a bite attack each turn. (Nothing stops a werewolf from eating more than the number of successes rolled if he can inflict that much damage with a bite attack, but any excess meat consumed is wasted.) Unlike the ritualist, additional participants may wear any form.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
–5	The victim was not killed or taken in battle.
–3	The victim was not a worthy foe; the ritualist took no damage during the battle.
–2	The victim was an easy kill; the ritualist took only bashing damage during the battle.
+0	The victim fought well; the ritualist took lethal damage during the battle.
+1	All Uratha present are Blood Talons.
+1	The victim was a worthy adversary; the ritualist took aggravated damage during the battle.
+2	The victim was nearly victorious; the ritualist took an aggravated wound in one of his last three Health boxes.
+3	The ritualist entered Death Rage during the battle.
+5	The victim was alive at the beginning of the rite.

Rite of the Battle Brand (••••)

A pack of howling, snarling Uratha wearing the war form and charging out of the darkness with Rage in their eyes is an intimidating sight. Most any human, and more than a few of the supernatural denizens of the World of Darkness, would flee in abject terror at such a vision of death bearing down on them. But when the natural intimidation factor of a werewolf's Rage isn't enough, the Blood Talons employ this rite, to pump themselves up before a battle and to intimidate their foes.

Although many Blood Talon ritualists agree that the Rite of the Battle Brand is an original creation of their tribe, this rite has a bad reputation in some areas contested by the Pure. The imagery of the ritual *is* undeniably similar to that used in the rites of the Fire-Touched, and the *Izidakh* are known to employ similar pre-battle rituals. Whether this is a case of parallel evolution or one tribe appropriating the rituals of their enemies, ritualists are advised to step lightly when performing this rite in territories where war against the *Anshega* is common.

Performing the Rite: On the eve of battle, the ritualist and any participating werewolves gather in a large, open space and build a fire. This could be anything from an inferno in a clearing in the woods to a burning trash can in an empty parking lot, as long as the fire is at least bonfire-sized. Once the fire is banked up to its full intensity, the werewolves begin to circle around it, moving in a stuttering, uneven counterclockwise loop. As the shadows dance and flicker, the pack members change shape at random, striving to match their changes to the shifting firelight. The ritualist stands in the center of the ring next to the bonfire and shouts exhortations to Glory and Honor in battle. The ritual often takes a call-and-response form, with the ritualist bellowing a challenge that the participants answer with shouts, roars or howls. Finally, when the assembled werewolves are judged to be suitably worked up, the ritualist calls each forward in turn and sears him with a brand from the fire. The brand is usually made on the chest or arm, but some Blood Talons prefer to mark themselves on the brow. The brand inflicts a minimum of one point of lethal damage, but it is considered a point of pride to wear a more severe brand into battle. The recipient of the brand may choose how many points of lethal damage he suffers. Mark any Health boxes filled with lethal wounds by the brand with a small dot below the box to more easily track the rite's Duration.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (at least two successes per Uratha to be blessed; each roll represents five minutes of psyching up)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The ritualist fails to properly stoke the blood of the assembled warriors. All present take a –1 penalty on shapeshifting rolls and attack rolls until the next moonrise.

Failure: No successes are accumulated.

Success: The ritualist makes progress toward working the assembled werewolves into a battle-hungry mindset (see below).

Exceptional Success: Not only is significant progress toward the ritual's completion made, but the total number of successes assigned is doubled when compared to the Composure of any enemies (see below).

Each success rolled must be assigned to one Uratha beneficiary (including the ritualist himself). For every two successes assigned to a character, the beneficiary receives a +1 bonus to any Brawl or Weaponry attack made to attack an enemy (round down). In addition, compare the total successes assigned to the beneficiary against the Composure of any enemy who attacks him. If the number of assigned successes is greater, the target takes a penalty on any attacks against the beneficiary equal to the difference.

Example: Jack Snake Tooth performs the Rite of the Battle Brand for his pack before they go into battle against the Pure. Jack assigns five out of his total 15 successes to Stone Eyes, the pack's Rahu. Until his brand heals, Stone Eyes receives a +2 bonus on all of his attacks. When Stone Eyes faces off against the Pure pack's Predator King war chief with a Composure of 3, the Predator King suffers a –2 penalty to hit Stone Eyes.

The effects of this rite last until the wound from the branding heals. When none of the boxes filled with lethal damage by the brand have a wound marked in them, the brand is considered healed.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
–1	The fire used is no hotter than a candle (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 180).
+1	All participants are Blood Talons.
+1	The rite is performed by a Rahu.
+1	The rite is performed under the full moon.
+1	The fire used is inferno-size (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 180).
+1	The fire used is as hot as a Bunsen burner (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 180).
+2	The fire used is as hot as a chemical fire (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 180).

Rite of the Last Stand (•••••)

Horatius at the bridge over the Tiber. Leonidas and his 300 at Thermopylae. The Swiss Guard during the sack of Rome. The Five Lizards pack at Cherry Tree. The story of the last, epic stand is a powerful one for humans and Uratha alike. The Blood Talons in particular admire the glory of a life given in unwinnable battle so that others may live, and the Talons' greatest ritualists have devised a rite to aid their warriors in their final battles. Only the most skilled ritualists can perform this rite, and only the greatest warriors of the tribe are blessed with its power. To use this rite in any but the most dire of need is considered a grave insult to the Destroyer Wolf and *Urfarah* himself.

Down through the ages, dozens of tales have been told about the use of this rite. During the Brethren War, a pack of veteran Blood Talons

in Detroit invoked the Rite of the Last Stand on Devil's Night in 1984 as seven packs of *Anshega* rolled over their territory. During the First World War, a pack trapped in the Ardennes made a last stand against a phantom army conjured up by an enormous Wound in the heart of the forest. Those who face the final battle with courage and honor are glorified in song by the tribe's Moon-Dancers; the Lodge of the Einherjar is especially interested in these stories.

Performing the Rite: The Rite of the Last Stand has the air of a funerary rite. The ritualist gathers his packmates, fully armed and girded for war, and reminds them that it is their duty and obligation to lay down their lives in defense of their territory and their loved ones. Each pack member steps forward, and recounts his memory of the pack's greatest victories. As each pack member finishes his tale, he breaks his weapon in two and throws it to the ground, announcing that he needs no weapon to destroy his enemies. Those who do not have a personal weapon to break typically carry a club or a similar crude weapon to break for the purpose of the rite. When the entire pack has finished the ritual, they take on Urshul form and howl to the sky, asking *Fenris-Ur* to witness the destruction of his enemies and to see how true warriors die.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (10 successes required per affected character; each roll represents one minute of preparing for death)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Destroyer Wolf takes umbrage at the misuse of this rite. Each pack member takes seven points of aggravated damage.

Failure: No successes are accumulated.

Success: Progress is made toward the completion of the rite.

Exceptional Success: No additional effect beyond extraordinary progress.

The effects of this rite are triggered the first time the character assumes Gauru form within 24 hours of performing the rite. The character immediately enters Death Rage, no roll required, and remains in that state until all enemies are dead or gone. Most significantly, though, the Uratha simply *does not die*. He ignores all wound penalties, and suffers no ill effects for having any type of wound in his rightmost Health box. Even having his Health track completely filled with aggravated damage doesn't put him down. Only complete and utter annihilation of his body will kill him before this rite's effects end. (At the Storyteller's discretion, grievous destruction of the character's body may inflict additional drawbacks that are not wound penalties in the strictest sense — a Rahu who loses a leg very likely suffers a Speed reduction, for example.)

When all enemies are either slain or retreated, the character comes out of Death Rage and immediately shifts back to Hishu form. Any and all injuries he suffered while in *Kuruth* now take full effect, meaning that he is very likely dead.

Due to the intimate nature of the rite's performance, the ritualist may perform it only for his own packmates. Any attempt to grant the benefits of the rite to a werewolf not linked by totem-bond to the ritualist is treated as a dramatic failure.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
–5	The ritualist's pack is not completely outmatched by the impending battle.
–3	The pack members are not fighting to defend their territory or their loved ones.
–1	For each member of the pack that does *not* participate in the rite.
+1	The pack faces overwhelming numbers of enemies.
+3	The pack is the last line of defense against an impending threat (for example, the last Forsaken pack still resisting a Pure takeover of the city).

New Fetishes

Blood Talons, just as soldiers around the world, tend to fetishize (in both the literal and metaphorical sense) their weapons and armor. The following are some examples of fetishes created and employed by the *Suthar Anzuth*.

War Draught (Talen)

This rough, fiery whiskey is bound with a spirit of rage or violence. Blood Talon warriors often drink this whiskey before going into battle to "put the fire in their blood." A werewolf drunk on War Draught fights harder and longer than his more sober-minded brethren: for the duration of the scene, the Uratha reduces all wound penalties by 1, and he adds +1 to all his attack rolls. Drinking one dose of war draught counts as two alcoholic beverages for determining the effects of intoxication (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 177).

Action: Instant

Ephemeral Shot (Talen)

Many Blood Talons prefer the traditional weapons of war: swords, spears, axes and so on, but some prefer to modernize their tactics. This talen allows the tribe's sharpshooters to bring the latest in modern warfare to the spiritual battlefield. An Ephemeral Shot resembles a single shotgun shell (similar but rarer talens exist in the form of full magazines for automatic weapons) carved out of a cloudy, wax-like substance that may be solidified ephemera. Any sort of spirit may be bound into it, but the most common is a gun-spirit or a violence-spirit. When activated, the Shot becomes partially ephemeral itself, allowing the character to damage non-manifested spirits or ghosts with the firearm. In the case of a full magazine of Ephemeral Shots, the entire magazine must be activated at once as a single instant action. If the bullets are not all fired by the end of the scene, they evaporate back into Twilight.

Action: Instant

Hero's Blood (•)

This simple fetish is a small vial of blood collected from an Uratha who died bravely in battle. Glyphs of heroism are etched into the glass, and the whole thing is usually attached to a leather thong so the fetish can be worn around the neck or a wrist. A spirit of valor is bound into the blood, which has the additional side effect of causing the owner's heart rate to accelerate slightly when he holds the fetish. Whenever the character enters Death Rage and would suffer the effects of a fox-ridden Rage, he may spend a point of Essence to instead go into berserker frenzy.

Action: Reflexive

Subtle Armor (•• or •••)

In the old days, when a pack of Uratha girded for war, they could don armor and carry weapons with relative impunity. Today, with the increased urbanization of society and the glut of surveillance and law enforcement found in cities, walking down the street in a flak jacket tends to attract almost as much negative attention as taking the war-form in public. This fetish was developed to allow packs of Blood Talons to maintain a low profile while still protecting themselves. Subtle armor resembles modern body armor (flak jacket for the two-dot version, full riot gear for the three-dot version), decorated with symbols of stealth and cunning and various natural objects representing the spirit bound into it. This spirit is usually a chameleon-spirit or another animal with a deceptive appearance, such as a stick insect or a king snake. When the fetish is activated,



any human viewing the armor must make a Wits + Composure roll to perceive the armor as what it really is. This roll suffers a penalty equal to the successes on the activation roll (treat as 3 if the owner spends Essence to activate the fetish). Failure means the mortal sees a bulky but otherwise innocuous article of clothing, such as a large jacket or a set of football pads. This effect lasts for a scene.

Action: Instant

The Devil's Right Hand (•••)

Stories of cursed guns are common, especially in the American West. According to lore, the pistol that would come to be known as the Devil's Right Hand began life as a Walker Cold owned by a cruel U.S. cavalry officer named Uriah James. Uriah was a commander in the Indian Wars, and although it was never proved in a military court, it was something of an open secret that he and his men employed horrific terror tactics in their campaigns against the native tribes. When Uriah finally died, they say his soul was so wicked even the Devil was shamed to have him, and so his soul slumbered in the gun he'd worn on his hip for so many years.

Whether the original gun truly was possessed by the ghost of Uriah James or not, Blood Talons west of the Mississippi took a shine to the story, and several "replica" fetishes have been crafted over the years. The gun is always a heavy revolver, though specific make and model varies, with a spirit of cruelty or bloodlust bound to it that makes the weapon seem as though it might leap into its owner's hand at any minute. The Devil's Right Hand may be loaded with regular bullets, but should the chambers run empty, it can be activated to fill the cylinder with semi-tangible bullets formed out of ephemera. Because the ephemeral bullets are only quasi-real, the gun's damage rating is reduced by 1. In addition, the owner may activate the fetish and cause the spirit bound within to surge into wakefulness, firing a blistering hail of bullets. Treat this attack as a medium burst autofire attack, even though the revolver does not hold 10 bullets. After using this ability, the fetish falls inert for 24 hours and cannot be used as anything but an ordinary gun.

Action: Instant

Klaive — Charging Bear (••••)

Skill and finesse are all well and good, but some Blood Talons favor sheer brute force and stopping power. This klaive is usually fashioned in the form of a large, heavy bladed sword, although some warriors carry versions made as large axes or maces. The weapon is richly decorated with bear motifs, and often sports a large claw or tooth hanging from the pommel on a leather thong. Bear-spirits are obviously the most common used in these fetishes, but any strength-spirit will do as well. When wielding a Charging Bear klaive, the owner may choose to subtract a number from his Defense and add that same number to his next Weaponry-based attack. The owner cannot reduce his Defense to less than zero, and cannot use this ability in the same round in which he uses a maneuver that denies him his Defense (such as an All-Out Attack).

My Brother's Shadow (•••••)

When a Blood Talon warrior dies, his packmates sometimes choose to honor his memory by crafting one of these fetishes. My Brother's Shadow is a small, easily portable representation of the fallen pack member; a photo is acceptable, but traditionally the pack members carve a small statue or paint a portrait themselves. A spirit of remembrance is placed into the fetish, representing the bond that will never be forgotten. Any pack member may hold the fetish and automatically remember in perfect detail any event that he and the deceased pack member shared, with no roll required. In times of great need, the fetish may be called upon to conjure forth the memory of the dead warrior to fight alongside his brothers. When the fetish is activated, a shadowy reflection of the deceased werewolf manifests, looking exactly as he is remembered by the viewer (characters who have no memory of the deceased see only an indistinct shape). This shadow-double is not the ghost of the dead werewolf, merely an ephemeral construct. It never speaks, cannot use Gifts, rites or fetishes, and is incapable of taking any action other than fighting alongside the fetish's owner. The double has the same Traits as its living counterpart, but all values are one dot lower. The double possesses ephemeral versions of any equipment the dead Uratha carried, which lack any supernatural properties and cannot be used by other characters. The double fights for one scene, then dissipates. The immense energy required to call up this double means that the fetish may be used only once per story.

Action: Instant

Milestone Gift: The Destroyer's Jaws

Prerequisites: Glory 5, Honor 3, Harmony 6 or greater

This Gift is granted by *Fenris-Ur* himself, in recognition of a Blood Talon who embodies the warrior ideal. This blessed personage need not be a Rahu the Destroyer Wolf recognizes the role of the warrior in all his children. This Gift allows the Blood Talon to take on an aspect of his patron spirit's terrible destructive rage, losing himself in a killing frenzy that inspires witnesses to recall stories of Shiva, or the Fenrisulfr of Norse mythology.

Once earned, this Gift is permanent and requires no activation roll. Any time the Talon enters Death Rage, he takes on the Destroyer's Jaws: his muzzle becomes a huge, distended mass of razor-sharp and saw-edged fangs, and when he opens his jaws to bite, witnesses see only an utter, absolute blackness like the end of all things. His howls seem to make reality itself shake on its foundation, and in the power of his limbs, it seems as though the glory of Father Wolf is come to the world once again. The Destroyer's Jaws is devastating in combat: whenever the Blood Talon fills an enemy's rightmost Health box, that enemy dies instantly. Even if the wound was only bashing or lethal, it is instantly fatal. The recipient of this Gift gains a point of Essence for every creature he kills while in Death Rage.

As a Milestone Gift, the Destroyer's Jaws is available only to a Blood Talon who performs some great service to his tribe or pack, usually heroically defeating a superior enemy or destroying a grave threat to the tribe (see "Milestone Gifts," p. 12). If the character's Harmony drops below 6 after he learns this Gift, he has one cycle of the moon to regain this level of spiritual balance, during which he must perform the Rite of Contrition to the Destroyer Wolf. If the character fails to do this, he loses the Destroyer's Jaws and can never regain it.

Heroes of the Tribe

The following are some examples of famous (and infamous) Blood Talons.

Jackson Morris



Auspice: Elodoth
Tribe: Blood Talons
Lodge: The Shield
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 4
Physical Attributes: Strength 3 (4/6/5/4), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/6), Stamina 3 (4/5/5/4)
Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 2
Mental Skills: Academics (Criminology) 1, Computer 1 Investigation (Crime Scenes) 4, Medicine 1, Occult 1
Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Subdue) 3, Drive 2, Firearms (Pistols) 3, Larceny 1, Stealth 2
Social Skills: Intimidation (Violence) 3, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 3
Merits: Danger Sense, Fame 1, Fighting Style: Police Tactics 3 (see p. 36), Iron Stamina 2, Language (First Tongue), Status (Police) 2
Primal Urge: 3
Willpower: 6
Harmony: 6
Essence Max/per Turn: 12/1
Virtue: Justice
Vice: Wrath
Health: 8 (10/12/11/8)
Initiative: 5 (5/6/8/8)
Defense: 3 (3/4/4/4)
Speed: 11 (12/14/18/16)
Renown: Glory 2, Honor 3, Purity 1
Gifts: (1) Crushing Blow, Father Wolf's Speed, Sense Malice; (2) Mighty Bound, Scent of Taint

Jackson Morris is one of the founding members of the Lodge of the Shield, and a 20-year veteran of the LAPD. Among the Uratha, he's known as the hard-nosed no-nonsense alpha of the Copper Dogs, a pack composed of his fellow detectives Chris Lewis, Richie Guzman, and Sam Valentino. They hold as their turf much of the inner-city police precinct Villa Rancho, and any werewolf unfortunate enough to be caught in their territory is hauled back to the station house and put in interrogation for "suspicious activi-

ties." The bruises usually heal by the time they let the "perp" go.

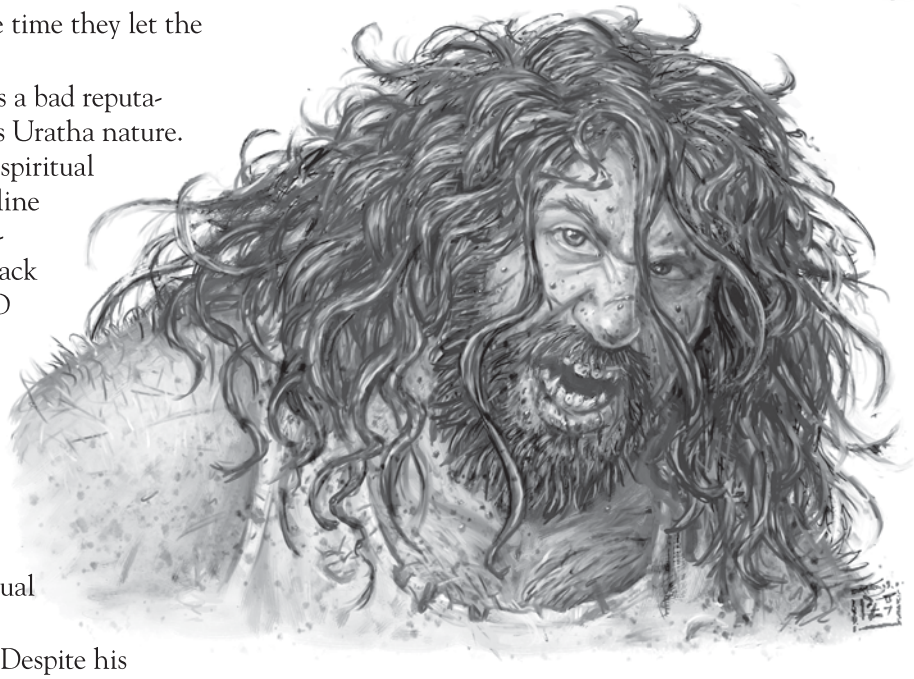
To his human colleagues, he has a bad reputation only partially attributable to his Uratha nature. What his tribemates see as quelling spiritual threats and keeping the Shadow in line all too often looks like police brutality to an outsider's eyes. His entire pack has been the subject of multiple IAD investigations, which have all come back clean because, ironically, the Copper Dogs are all clean cops.

Morris is a short, bullish man with a thinning head of gray hair he keeps in a military-style buzz cut. He seldom wears the suits and ties other detectives favor, preferring casual clothes that blend in on the streets.

Using Jackson in a Chronicle: Despite his no-bullshit attitude and notorious poor treatment of interlopers in his territory, if properly approached, Jackson could be a useful ally for an inner-city pack. His pack's totem, the Madonna of the Ranch, is the spirit of the Villa Rancho community and an provide a great deal of information about the neighborhood. Jackson might also sponsor a young, up-and-coming werewolf into the Lodge of the Shield.

The Coulee Ridge Cannibal

Auspice: Rahu
Tribe: Blood Talons
Lodge: None
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 5, Resolve 3
Physical Attributes: Strength 5 (6/8/7/6), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/6), Stamina 4 (5/6/6/5)
Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 1
Mental Skills: Crafts (Traps) 2, Medicine 1, Occult 1
Physical Skills: Athletics (Chases) 4, Brawl (Urshul) 3, Stealth (Stalking) 4, Survival 3
Social Skills: Animal Ken 4, Expression (Howls) 1, Intimidation (Implacable) 2,
Merits: Danger Sense, Direction Sense, Fast Reflexes 2, Fleet of Foot 3, Iron Stamina 3, Iron Stomach
Primal Urge: 1
Willpower: 4
Harmony: 0
Essence Max/per Turn: 10/1
Virtue: Fortitude
Vice: Gluttony
Health: 9 (11/13/12/9)
Initiative: 6 (6/7/9/9)
Defense: 3 (3/4/4/4)
Speed: 16 (17/19/23/21)
Renown: Cunning 2, Glory 5



Gifts: As Zi'ir, the Cannibal cannot use Gifts.
Rituals: 3; **Rites:** (1) Banish Human, Rite of the Spirit Brand; (2) Banish Spirit; (3) Courage of the Fallen

The Coulee Ridge Cannibal is an urban legend in rural Washington State. According to the lore, he's some kind of crazy Leatherface-style slasher who killed and ate his mom when he was eight years old and got a taste for it. Or maybe he's a Sasquatch, angry at the white man's encroachment onto sacred ground. Or maybe he's a demonic spirit loosed by man's wickedness. Ironically, the word "werewolf" doesn't come up all that often, since he doesn't restrict his attacks to the full moon. Local Uratha suspect that the Cannibal is one of their own, a *Zi'ir* practitioner of *ghughabhasughar* who treats anything within 50 miles of Coulee Ridge as his prey.

The Coulee Ridge cannibal is a hulking brute even in Hishu form. His hair and beard are long and wildly matted, and on the rare occasions when he bothers to wear clothes, they are filthy, tattered and bloodstained. Madness shines in his green eyes, but there is an unmistakable cunning there as well. In his wolf forms, the Cannibal is a deep, russet red that almost hides the blood that cakes his shaggy fur.

Using the Cannibal in a Chronicle: The cannibal is a classic horror-movie werewolf made flesh. He's savage and mindless in his killing frenzies, but not without a certain brute cleverness. On his more lucid days, he builds crude but fiendish traps to maim or kill anyone foolish enough to cross his territory. Pack members working together could bring him

down and claim his territory, which is quite large for the area and in a desirable location. Alternately, the pack might try to bring him back from the brink of madness and restore his soul to Harmony, possibly at the request of Don Stiles (see p. 112).

Snake-Eyed Eddie

Auspice: Irraka
Tribe: Blood Talons
Lodge: None
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 2
Physical Attributes: Strength 3 (4/6/5/4), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/7), Stamina 3 (4/5/5/4)
Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 4, Composure 3
Mental Skills: Computer (Internet Investigation) 3, Investigation 2, Medicine 1, Occult (Vampires) 3
Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl (Urshul, Urhan) 3, Drive 1, Larceny 2, Stealth (Shadowing) 4
Social Skills: Animal Ken 2, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 3
Merits: Contacts (Vampires) 1, Fame 1, Fast Reflexes 2, Fetish 4, Inspiring 4
Primal Urge: 4
Willpower: 5
Harmony: 4
Essence Max/per Turn: 13/2
Virtue: Hope
Vice: Pride
Health: 8 (10/12/11/8)
Initiative: 7 (7/8/10/10)
Defense: 4 (4/4/4/4)
Speed: 12 (13/15/19/17)
Renown: Cunning 3, Glory 2, Honor 1, Wisdom 1
Gifts: (1) Feet of Mist, Loose Tongue, Sense Weakness; (2) Father Wolf's Speed, Ghost Knife, Sand in the Eyes; (3) Distractions

They tell his story in bars and roadhouses across the Southwest: Snake-Eyed Eddie, the fearless vampire killer. Some say vampires killed his family, others that they made his family like them. Along Interstate 10 as it runs through Arizona, the story goes that some vampire mystic stole the skull of Eddie's grandfather, and he aims to get it back. Down Texas way, they say he just plain thinks bloodsuckers are better sport than spirits or Pure. Eddie himself, in true New Moon fashion, doesn't talk about it much with anybody outside his pack. He just says it's something that needs doing, and he's the one to do it.

Eddie's made a name for himself both good and bad over the last five years. Good, because vampires are rarely anything but a malignant influence on a pack's territory, and eliminating them often improves the local resonance; bad, because a pack of werewolves rolling into town and assassinating



one of their own makes the established vampires twitchy. Uratha relations with the *muth luzuk* are sketchy at the best of times, and more than once Snake-Eyed Eddie has left a full-fledged shadow war in his wake.

Physically, Eddie's just about the polar opposite of how his stories make him out: He's average in height and build, with curly brown hair and nondescript features that blend in with just about any crowd of white guys. He favors casual but sturdy work clothes, mostly denim coveralls and cowboy boots. He seldom carries a weapon on his person, preferring to fight in Urshul or Urhan form instead.

Using Snake-Eyed Eddie in a Chronicle: Since Eddie and his crew move around a lot, they're easy to insert into a chronicle at just about any point. He might be a tall tale the pack hears about at gatherings of the local Forsaken, sort of the werewolf equivalent of Pecos Bill. He might be the catalyst that touches off a conflict with the local vampire population, or his brazen disregard for territorial boundaries might draw him into a conflict with the players' characters. Even if he doesn't come into direct conflict with the pack, his presence in their territory might convince rivals (Forsaken or Pure) that they are incapable of holding their domain sacrosanct.

Snake-Eyed Eddie needn't be an antagonist; he might well be a source of valuable intelligence. He

knows a lot about vampires, after all, and for a guy who supposedly (depending on the story you believe) hates bloodsuckers with the entirety of his being, he sure seems to know a bunch of them around the Southwest. Perhaps a pack member's wolf-blooded sister has gotten herself addicted to vampire blood, or bizarre spirits have been trickling out of an area known to be controlled by a band of vampiric blood-cultists. In either case, Eddie might be able to point the characters in the direction of a solution.

Snake-Eyed Eddie belongs to a mixed-tribe pack of nomadic Uratha who mostly range from California east to Texas and from the US-Mexico border north to Colorado. In addition to Eddie himself, the pack consists of Johnny Reb (Hunter in Darkness Ithaeur), the Ghost of Tom (Bone Shadow Rahu) and Aaron Fairhand (Blood Talon Elodoth). Their totem is Night-Taker, an owl-spirit that emphasizes speed and silence.





Chapter 11

The creature dipped its fingertips into the growing pool of blood, and licked them off one by one. The look on its face was rapturous, orgasmic joy. The creature dipped its fingers again, just to have the sticky, delightful feeling of sucking the last dredge of blood from under its nails.

Once, this creature had been the wife of the man whose blood was oozing out onto the floor. That was before the spirit crawled into her and broke her.

One finger at a time, she licked them clean. "I need a name," she said to the room. It didn't answer, and that puzzled her, before she remembered that here in the not-Shadow, rooms don't talk.

"Maybe Bloody-Fingers-Jenny?" Dip, dip, suck, suck. This would never get old.

"Boring," said a voice.

The creature's head snapped around so fast its neck cracked. There was a werewolf in the corner. It was wearing its four-legged form, the huge one that it used for chasing and killing. The creature stood up and stepped into the puddle of blood, ready for the fight, but still reveling in the feeling of the bloody carpet squishing around her toes. "You can't fight me if I'm standing in the blood of my kill, Uratha. You know I'll win."

The werewolf leapt. The creature tried to call down its power, but couldn't — nothing happened. The werewolf's paws connected with her shoulders, and it landed on her, pinning her. She tried to flee, but couldn't.

"Two things, *Juguthim*," it growled. "First, you're not standing in the blood of your kill. He's my kill. I poisoned him this morning. All you did was cut him open." The creature's eyes grew wider. "Second, you're not welcome here. I told you that last year, when you killed my packmate's sister. I told you I'd find a way to hurt you."

The creature tried to free itself, but it couldn't. The poison was in its system now, slowing its heart — oh, why did it ever think it needed a heart? — and making its body cold.

The werewolf sensed this, and laughed, a hideous, gravely sound. "Not so great, having all that meat around you, is it? Don't worry. I'm going to remove some of it for you." It changed to its human form, grabbed the tablecloth and wiped the blood from its hands. "You'll still have enough left to feel something when my pack gets here, though."

"But..." The creature faltered. Its lips were numb. "But this is... me."

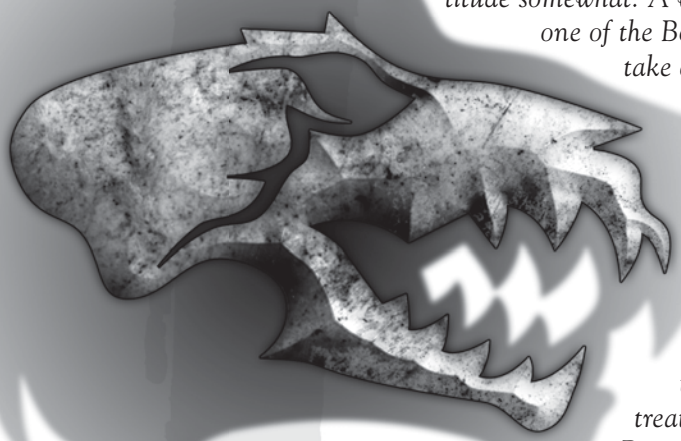
The werewolf leaned down. "I know, *hithfir*. You kill because it's what you are." He bared his teeth, and shoved a slim blade through the creature's ear. "*Su a sar-hith sa*, you bastard. That's what I am."

Bone Shadows

Hirfathra Hissu

"Now a promise made is a debt unpaid/And the trail has its own stern code."
— Robert W. Service, "The Cremation of Sam McGee"

Call me strange if you want. Tell me I've got a morbid streak. It's true. I've got a thing for death. I've stared it in the face, just like you, but the difference is that when you look death in the eye, you're a few seconds from finding out about it. Me, I look death in the eye every time I see the moon, every time I howl, because death is my mother and mistress. Death Wolf, the Hungry One, she's the one I sing to. When I take on the Gauru and kill, she's the one who gets my thanks. When the spirits give me Gifts, it's because they know that I'll give as good as I get.



Sure, I go looking for trouble, and I might wind up carrying some weird scents. But I learn. I know bans for spirits that the Crescent Moons of your tribe don't even know exist. I carry talens forged from my blood that would take your ritemasters a week to make. I hunt down the truth and shake it by its neck like a rabbit. I feast on the blood of knowledge, and I bury its remains for later. Secrets are my prey, and they taste sweeter than anything you've killed.

So call me weird, if it makes you feel safer. Look at my pale skin and my hollow eyes and tell me I'm different, like I don't already know.

But don't you ever, ever, tell me I'm not Imru, *or I swear it's your secrets I'll hunt down.*

The Bone Shadows are sometimes called "the Crescent Moon tribe." They aren't all Ithaeur, obviously, but every child of Death Wolf knows one thing about spirits: they must be treated fairly. The tribal vow of the Hirfathra Hissu *states that the tribe "pays each spirit in kind," and that means more than repayment of debt or honoring promises. It means those things, but it also means that when a spirit wrongs a Bone Shadow, it cannot be allowed to escape unscathed. The tribe generalizes this attitude somewhat. A werewolf who crosses one of the Bone Shadows must take care to apologize, lest the werewolf treat her like a spirit.*

How did the tribal vow come about? Why is it so important to Kamduis-Ur that her children treat spirits thus? The Bone Shadows tell many different stories of this law, some of which cast the tribe's originators in a flattering light. Other stories, though, posit that the tribe has, well, evolved since the vow was created.

Stories of the Tribal Vow

Understanding the tribal vow of the Bone Shadows is crucial to understanding the tribe. During initiation into the tribe, young werewolves hear several different reasons for the tribal vow, three of which are articulated below. No one story is presented as the "truth" (in fact, Bone Shadows are usually told that all of these stories really happened), but all of the perspectives are considered valid to remember. Curiosity *can* be fatal, and the tribal vow helps to mitigate it. Not every werewolf *is* honorable, but the tribal vow helps even an unscrupulous werewolf to keep honor in mind. Spirits *do* usually respond better to werewolves

with reputations for giving as good as they get (apart from spirits of the deception and the like, of course).

Death Wolf Saves the Tribe

We were always curious. Other tribes think that our defining characteristic is being morbid, but that's not true (and are we really that morbid? Come on). No, if our tribe has a weakness, it's insatiable curiosity and the desire to uncover every rock and name every crawling thing we find there.

And that got us into trouble, of course. We bound Death Wolf, finally, after creating a ritual so powerful and so intriguing that she couldn't resist. We knew that she had the right to extract a vow from us, and we saw that the other Firstborn did the same for their beneficiaries. There's Fenris-Ur, demanding some gobbledygook about accepting surrender or surrendering to acceptance. Here's Hikaon-Ur, keeping it basic — we can appreciate that. But Kamduis-Ur, well, she decides to hold off on the vow thing until she gets to know us a little better.

And it's just as well, because meanwhile we're getting utterly demolished in the Shadow. Our defining curiosity is getting us killed, because there are plenty of spirits that are pissed off at us and they're luring us into the dangerous bits of the spirit wilds (which don't take a lot of effort to find) and then attacking. A Bone Shadow's packmate might go after the spirit that killed him, but that by itself doesn't mean much. And so Kamduis-Ur sees this and realizes that she either needs to set up some kind of check on our curiosity or she needs to make the spirit world understand not to fuck with the children of Death Wolf.

So she does both. Su a sar-hith sa, *she tells us, pay each spirit in kind. And she doesn't make that a secret at all. She howls it from the mountaintops, and every spirit in the world knows now that you can't mess with a Bone Shadow and not expect retribution. But, at the same time, she sends us a message, too: Don't go interacting with spirits unless you're prepared for it. Don't take anything from a spirit that you can't repay. Don't get into a fight you can't win.*

If our tribal vow is about anything, it's about temperance. Not temperance from the desire to kill things — all werewolves have to cope with that on their own. For us, it's temperance in dealing with spirits, because the denizens of the Shadow absolutely will screw you over if you give them the power to do so.

The Honorable Bone Shadows

There's only one way to deal with spirits, and it's been obvious to the Bone Shadows since Pangaea. You have to pay each in kind. That means you don't let the moon rise on a debt or a slight. A spirit gives you something, you repay it. We've always known that.

In fact, that's how we got to be a tribe. You've probably heard that the Firstborn weren't exactly easy to bargain with. The Uratha had to come up with all kinds of weird methods of finding and locking down their associations with the children of Father Wolf, but Death Wolf was the trickiest. I'm not going to say that she was the smartest, because I wouldn't want to insult any of the Iron Masters in attendance tonight, but I will say that she just didn't have the same weaknesses as the other Firstborn.

So the werewolves who would become the Bone Shadows followed her and watched her. They crept through the dark places that she did. They pawed through her leavings and the remains of her kills, looking for some way to appeal to her. Where was her pride? It wasn't her strength or her speed, her honor or her virtue. It was in something a little harder to define, and finally we nailed it.

We approached her and made a simple vow — we would always treat her as she treated us. If we didn't, she was free to abandon us, singly or as a whole. And Death Wolf, knowing when she was on the good end of a bargain, accepted. Of course, the vow got generalized to the entire spirit world, because Death Wolf wanted us to be able to navigate the Shadow as well as she did, but the fact remains: our tribal vow is the way it is because it's how we became a tribe in the first place.

The Unbound Tribe

Here's a story that we don't repeat in front of other tribes, but you need to know. You need to know because I see you messing with spirits, learning the bans and then fucking with them, and that's got to stop, okay?

Here's why. When the Bone Shadows were first made a tribe, when Kamduis-Ur chose us for her own, she didn't give us a ban. She wanted us to be the "Unbound Tribe," not hemmed in by big, heavy promises. She figured that the things that the other tribes' Firstborn patrons made them swear were intuitive enough, and why ask for something that a right-thinking person would know anyway?

So there we were, in the spirit wilds, messing with spirits just like you do. And we knew enough from being Death Wolf's children to mess with them pretty good, exploiting bans and compulsions to get them to serve us. But what we forgot was that the spirit world is a whole, not a sum of parts. You know what I mean? You fly off into Death Rage enough, and it's not just individual spirits that start to avoid you, it's the whole

Shadow. And so the whole Shadow stopped trusting us, to the point that loci wouldn't even admit us or give us strength anymore.

Well, that would've been the end of the tribe but for Death Wolf. She worked out a compromise, really. More of an ultimatum. She told us that we could either start treating spirits appropriately, or we could fuck off.

Now, the wording's important here (that is, "appropriately," not "fuck off"). She didn't — and doesn't — want us to treat spirits better than they deserve. She wants us to treat them as they treat us, and that's fair. That's not some arbitrary "don't eat bacon" kind of bullshit rule, that's one you can live by. And so we did, and here we are — we still use our knowledge of spirits against them, but only if they piss us off.

So it's great that you know how to mess with spirits. But I'm here to say — they can mess with you, too. So you either treat them appropriately, or you can —

Yep, you got it.

Early Life

The Bone Shadows are Uratha through and through, but admit that the popular perception of "werewolf" doesn't often seem to apply. To the tribe, though, this is a victory. The Bone Shadows have managed to keep their methods and culture secret from humanity (in fairness, humanity knows little about the tribes per se, but the notion of "bloodthirsty beast" so often associated with lycanthropes does seem to apply less to the Bone Shadows than to, say, the Blood Talons). The *Hirfathra Hissu* are, as a tribe, interested in the Shadow and the denizens thereof, though the focus of that interest depends on, among other things, auspice.

• **Rahu** of the tribe, perhaps predictably, focus on facing spirits in battle. This isn't necessarily out of bloodlust on their part, but more a fulfillment of Father Wolf's ideals. Being able to outsmart a spirit just doesn't send the same message as being able to pin the spirit down and shake it until it collapses. Even when this isn't logistically possible (no werewolf is going to be tackling dump truck-spirits and shaking them, no matter how mighty), the ability to stand up to a spirit in a fight sends a powerful message about the werewolf's abilities, and about how he intends to observe the tribe's vow. Noteworthy, too, is that Bone Shadow Rahu are likely to learn how spirits fight, and then use the same tactics that spirits do in fights with other beings. Indeed, while the best fetish-crafters of the tribe might be Ithaeur, the Rahu invariably come up with clever ways to use fetishes, as well as Gifts, rites and the blessings of their totems.

• **Cahalith** Bone Shadows are historians and lorekeepers, and where spirits are concerned, knowing the right story could save your life. Gibbous Moons of the tribe don't tend to be rousing battle-singers so much as reclusive sages — they are willing to share what they know, but it isn't the sort of knowledge a younger Uratha seeks until he *really* needs it. Bone Shadow Cahalith know the stories that don't end well for the Uratha, because although tragedy might be painful to recount, there's as much (or more) wisdom in failure than in success.

• **Elodoth** live and breathe by the tribal vow. Half-Moons must maintain their honor regardless of tribe, lest the Elunim visit wrath upon the Half-Moons, and in the tribe that has a decree of honor as its most sacred vow, the Elodoth must weigh each decision regarding a spirit carefully. When a young Bone Shadow seeks a second opinion on an interpretation of "paying a spirit in kind," he should seek out an experienced Half-Moon.

• **Ithaeur** are renowned for Wisdom in a tribe that values Wisdom over all. They are the only ones taught the secrets of the crescent moon, able to manipulate the Gauntlet and analyze spirits with a glance. A pack without a Crescent Moon is lost, especially among the *Hirfathra Hissu*, and some such packs have been known to travel far from their home territories searching for an Ithaeur. In a tribe that so heavily focuses on spirits, the Ithaeur are, in a way, generalists — they are expected to be able to fight, reason with, bargain, trick and befriend spirits.

• **Irraka** follow Death Wolf's lead in skulking through the darkest places of the *Hisil*. The New Moons are called upon to find the spirits that do not wish to be found, to lead their packs to the *hithim* that make their lairs in places that no wolf should be able to reach. And, sometimes, Ithaeur are the werewolves that must hunt down and enact brutal, fatal bans upon spirits that have violated the trust of the tribe.

Before the Change

Almost all Bone Shadows have some experience with the supernatural before the First Change comes upon them. Many *nuzusul* receive attention (or torture) from spirits before Changing, but some

werewolves seem prone to such visitations to a much greater degree. The Bone Shadows often say that these werewolves are born to be Bone Shadows not because tribe is predestined, but because the kind of personality that drives a tormented soul looking for answers (even if those answers can be found in strange and terrifying places) also makes her perfect for the *Hirfathra Hissu*.

Not all of this supernatural exposure is spiritual in nature, though the precipitating event usually is. Consider: A young werewolf (pre-Change) sees bats every time she leaves her home at night. The bats hang in trees and under awnings and building eaves, and when she investigates, she finds blood droplets beneath their perches. She doesn't know anything about bat-spirits, much less *these* bat-spirits and their strange connection to blood as sustenance, but she does some digging and winds up researching vampires. Compelled to learn more, she goes out at night to crypts, and then to nightclubs, looking for the undead. She might well find them, but that has no bearing on the bat-spirits.

When such a person undergoes the First Change, the experience is often something of a relief, despite its horror. Yes, the *nuzusul* has experienced the pain and brutality of becoming a werewolf, but in those few moments of blood-soaked rage, she has discovered that there really *were* creatures tormenting her, that she wasn't just imagining all those things she saw. That doesn't mean that such people are better able to adapt to life as werewolves than other Uratha, just that these people don't look back on the night of their First Change with the same sorts of feelings as others. While other Uratha see the horror of the experience without rhyme or reason, the Bone Shadows see their First Change as one step in a greater sequence of events. They have some context for the Change, and this eases their minds a bit.



Of course, some werewolves suffer slightly more detailed supernatural exposure before the Change. It's not unknown for a person to Change after serving as the knowing blood doll for a vampire, or the servant of a mage. And indeed, there are mortal lines that carry the Wolf strong in their veins, and not all such lineages are ignorant of the Uratha. While most tribes don't make a habit of cultivating mortal families (though every tribe has done so at one time or another), the Bone Shadows find that a family that incorporates the supernatural into its identity, even as a curse, is easier to use and track through the years. Thus, Bone Shadows maintain families across the world with Uratha blood as breeding partners, contacts and storehouses for fetishes and other secrets. The Pickerings (see p. 304 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**) are one such family, and are probably the most extensive and knowledgeable about the tribe, at least in the New World.

Recruitment Tactic: Self-control

No werewolf is free from the threat of *Kuruth*, but the Bone Shadows make a point of avoiding it more than the other tribes. This isn't (necessarily) out of any desire to protect the humans around them, or out of loyalty to pack, at least not more so than the werewolves of other tribes. The Bone Shadows are just keenly aware that every time a werewolf flies into Death Rage, the spirits of the area become that much more easily spooked. Avoiding Death Rage is a matter of practicality. While a werewolf of any tribe might appreciate this, to the Bone Shadows approaching spirits from a position of strength is important in maintaining Harmony due to the tribal vow, and so avoiding Death Rage merits some special attention.

Nuzusul, of course, aren't immediately concerned about keeping spirits docile. *Nuzusul* tend to put effort into avoiding Death Rage because they are still close to their families (any that didn't die in the First Change, that is). A young werewolf who discovers that the *Hirfathra Hissu* make a point of teaching their recruits to stay calm under stress might well see this as a major point in the tribe's favor, even if the motive doesn't have much to do with Uratha-human relations.

Bone Shadow tactics for avoiding *Kuruth* differ from, for example, the Blood Talons' notions of controlling and reveling in Death Rage. A werewolf can *fight* while in Death Rage, after all, and so a Blood Talon who flies into the frenzy doesn't lose much except strategy and target discernment (which aren't small things, of course). A Bone Shadow, though, lives by one part gut instinct and several parts factual analysis, and cerebral workings are completely out of a werewolf's purview once Death Rage hits. Therefore, the Shadows focus on avoiding Rage altogether, rather than directing it.

One of the ways in which they do so is to teach the recruit some basic anger management techniques. Learning to choose one's battles (leave the room if things get intense, count to 10, breathe deeply and so on) can help to gain a sense of perspective, and thus avoid losing control. This might be represented in game terms by spending a Willpower point, or if the player takes a moment to explain or demonstrate the character's control, the Storyteller might grant a die or two on the roll to avoid Death Rage.

Another technique is the "false fetish." This lesson was born in New York City, where a mixed pack of Bone Shadows and Iron Masters found their duties routinely taking them into the hustle and bustle of the subways, the markets and the nightclubs of the Big Apple. Death Rage would spell disaster for the pack, but it included three very young and inexperienced members. The Ithaeur of the pack handed out touchstones and told the other members that the objects were actually fetishes designed to suppress the killing rage. It worked for a while, but only until a member of a rival pack informed the younger werewolves that they'd been duped (at which point, of course, two of them entered Death Rage, resulting in a riot that took hours to quell). While the technique is still occasionally employed for new werewolves, it's normally just a temporary affair until they can learn to better control themselves. This placebo effect might be worth an extra die on the roll to avoid Death Rage, if the character concentrates on the "fetish" for a few seconds.

Recruitment Tactic: Explaining the Shadow

The Shadow is terrifying, and for the vast majority of *nuzusul*, it's new. Yes, some human religions posit that "everything has a spirit," but no human tradition really prepares someone for the pure strangeness of the spirit world, or the unpredictable-yet-natural way that spirits behave. Other tribes might teach recruits how to fight spirits, or just ignore the issue until the werewolf is ready, but the

Hirfathra Hissu recognize that an ignorant werewolf is a prime target for *hithim*.

So, if a Bone Shadow pack picks up a *nuzusul*, the pack takes the time to teach her about the Shadow. The werewolves take her into the spirit wilds and point out the different types of spirits, interact with a few (especially if the new werewolf is a Half- or Crescent Moon), and show her how to reason in the Shadow. It takes a different mindset to wander the spirit world, because a car might be an ephemeral vehicle, or it might be a car-spirit with a taste for blood. These lessons stick with a werewolf whether or not she winds up joining the tribe.

A werewolf who received a bit of training from the Bone Shadows has a good justification for learning First Tongue (above and beyond the cursory ability with the language that all Uratha instinctively grasp), and probably for the selection of a Specialty in Occult or Survival dealing with spirits.

Recruitment Tactic: Putting Ghosts to Rest

Werewolves create a fair number of ghosts, especially during the First Change. Being torn apart by a frenzied lycanthrope is a painful and terrifying way to die, and such methods of death are the ones that commonly induce human souls to linger. Most Uratha encourage new werewolves to leave their human lives behind, and the Bone Shadows find that helping a new member of the People put her ghosts to rest — literally — does wonders to ease that transition. It also has the advantage of showing the supernatural to the new werewolf in a way that puts her at comparatively little risk. While some ghosts are dangerous, "young" ones don't tend to be powerful enough to cause serious harm to werewolves.

The tribe takes the *nuzusul* to wherever the death occurred and scours the area for evidence of haunting, often employing Death Gifts and fetishes such as the Ghost Salt (see p. 75). They investigate, hunting down the ghost's anchors and destroying or killing them. If the ghost is anchored to the werewolf herself, the pack might try to persuade the ghost to move on, or might simply help the young Uratha to destroy the shade. This lesson is harsh, but necessary — when someone undergoes the Change, it isn't just that body that's altered. *Everything* changes, including responsibility.

Shining Bones

What makes a Bone Shadow? The tribe looks for certain qualities in a potential member. These aren't hard-and-fast rules, and they don't dictate game Traits, necessarily, but a werewolf who is the polar opposite of the profile presented here is probably not a good fit for the *Hirfathra Hissu*.

- **Curiosity:** A Bone Shadow needs to have a drive to *know*. This drive allowed the tribe to learn the secrets of Death Wolf in the ancient past, and this drive moves Bone Shadows to find spirit bans and uncover dangerous spiritual activity in the modern era. It is possible, of course, to be *too* curious, but the tribe doesn't turn werewolves away for that.
- **Intelligence:** Members of the tribe don't have to be bookworms, but they do have to be capable of retaining, assimilating and using facts. Going by instinct isn't necessarily a bad thing, but the Bone Shadows would rather have members who rely on experience and knowledge *before* instinct. Instinct can be manipulated and fooled. Fact is immutable (though it can certainly be falsified or misrepresented, but part of being intelligent is seeing through such deception).
- **Vindictiveness:** A werewolf who just lets things go isn't a good fit for the tribe. The tribe's very motto — *Pay Each Spirit in Kind* — is a cry for justice and vengeance as much as payment. Bone Shadows need to have long memories, and forgiveness is *always* conditional. If someone wrongs a Bone Shadow, the one who wronged should be prepared for retribution at some point. This refusal to let matters drop is something the tribe sees as critical, because spirits are not generally capable of compromise or forgiveness unless it is explicitly in their nature to be so.
- **Open-mindedness:** A Bone Shadow cannot have all the answers. Being willing to learn, and being will to say, "I didn't know that," is important to the tribe. Being knowledgeable is good. Being a know-it-all is not, because it drives werewolves to take undue risks, to volunteer for jobs for which they aren't qualified and to stifle the creative process instead of enhance it. A Bone Shadow must be willing to learn, to try a new approach and to discard methods that linger only because they are traditional.
- **Lateral Thinking:** Hand-in-hand with the last point, a Bone Shadow has to think outside the proverbial box. Logic is all well and good when dealing with humans and even werewolves, but spirits do not always follow a logical progression, or if they do, it's so circuitous that it's impossible to follow. A good grasp of inductive and deductive logic, as well as a willing-

ness to throw both out the window when necessary, is helpful to the tribe.

• **Morbid:** Everything dies. The Bone Shadows are fascinated with death — the process of dying and killing, the afterlife, funerary rites and so on. That doesn't mean that they are all serial killers, but it does mean that they might show a strange fascination when the time to kill an enemy does arrive. They aren't suicidal, but they might have made peace with their own deaths long before the day actually comes (or might *believe* they have, which has different results).

• **Ruthless:** There is a difference between being ruthless and being completely amoral. The Bone Shadows aren't looking for prospects who will throw the Oath of the Moon to the winds when they feel like it, but the Bone Shadows do appreciate some perspective. A werewolf who is ambitious and tenacious makes a good Bone Shadow. A werewolf who only has to get hungry to start eating people makes a *Zi'ir* (but see the Lodge of the Reaping, p. 69). That said, the Bone Shadows aren't unduly concerned with honor, and spirits lie, cheat and break their word unless it is in their nature not to. A Bone Shadow isn't concerned with rising above such behavior, on the whole, but with coming out of the situation intact. Sometimes that means doing something that the werewolf normally wouldn't, but that's what makes being ruthless different from being a monster — being able to say, "I normally would not do this, but in these circumstances, I can justify it."

Secrets Past and Present

When Bone Shadows trade stories, it's for one of two purposes. The first is simple entertainment and boasting, and this duty falls, naturally, to the Cahalith. Bone Shadows aren't above bragging and telling tales to increase their own reputations, though their tales for this purpose tend to resemble ghost stories in structure — a bit of history, some lead-in and then a twist or jump at the end. It wouldn't be entirely accurate to say that this style of storytelling is designed to make other werewolves see the Bone Shadows as mysterious and uniquely suited to handle dangerous spirits, but it wouldn't be entirely *in*accurate, either.

The other type of story, though, is the type that the *Hirfathra Hissu* share amongst themselves first before involving any other Uratha (packmates included). These stories involve debts and pacts, promises that the teller has yet to discharge. This information is dangerous, but sometimes the Bone Shadow needs others to know. If he falls in his attempt to settle a debt, the tribe must pick up where he left off.

Below are a few stories that the Bone Shadows trade. Some are rousing tales told around the fire, meant to spook and thrill the other tribes and, perhaps, remind them subtly what being a child of Death Wolf means. Some are the last requests or confessions of *Hirfathra Hissu* who signed markers they couldn't cover to creatures from beyond the Gauntlet. It should be fairly clear which ones are which.

Shorty's Search

They call me Shorty, and I let them, because it's easier than stabbing everybody. Nicknames grab hold of you like a skunk's spray sometimes, and then you can't get them shed. So I'm Shorty, I guess.

A few years back I was trekking up into Canada. There are a lot of places in that country that are just a million miles from the ass of nowhere, you know that? But I had a reason for going up there, so I kept on driving, and then when my car finally quit I walked it. I left the road and went into the forest. It was winter, but the big snow hadn't hit yet — just about three inches on the ground. It was cold as your mom's crotch, too, and I was thinking maybe I'd build a fire and carry on in the morning.

No, I didn't shift because I was carrying too much crap with me and I didn't feel like losing it. Shut the fuck up.

Anyway, I was walking through the woods, and I heard a soft, sad coughing kind of sound. It sounded like a death rattle, not that I'd expect any of you fucks to know what that sounds like. It's this wet, empty cry that means somebody's about to get some important questions answered, but then I heard it again, and it sounded just the same, and that's mighty weird because folks don't death-rattle twice unless they're planning to die twice. I followed the sound, rifle first, and that's when I found him.

He was Uratha, not a doubt, and he was probably Farsil Luhal, *judging by tattoos and so on. He was also covered in blood, all his own. He's got stab wounds over his back, chest and face, from something long and sharp — maybe an ice pick. And the weird thing is, he's not healing.*

I introduce myself, and he says his name, and I ask him, you know, what the fuck. And he tells me that he tussled with a pack of Pure a few months back, and they did this to him.

Now, you're all thinking what I did, right? Months? How's that possible? I mean, he's fucked up, sure, but he's not mortally wounded, so why hasn't he healed? Failing that, why hasn't he died? And then he tells me something truly fucked up. He says that when they did this to him, they took his howl away. They took it and fed it to their pack totem, this insane pack-of-wolves-spirit called "the Breathless" or some shit, and then they left him to die. Which he did, seems only fair, but when he died, he saw Death Wolf. And Death Wolf said, "No way are you dying without your howl. Go get it back."

But he'd already died, see, so he couldn't change shape. He was just stuck there, in the middle of nowhere, unable to die but too wounded to move, and no longer able to heal.

Well, this is all just too much for me, right, so I tell him that sure, I'll go get his howl for him. And I'll bring it back, and then he can either die or heal up, whichever makes him happy. So I've been looking all over for this spirit, but I can't find it, and I keep thinking, suppose somebody else got to those Pure fuckers before I did? Suppose they stumbled over into Blood Talon turf and you dudes cut them up? Hell, suppose they converted and they're all Storm Lords or something now? What then?

I made a promise, though, so if any of you have seen a Pure pack with a totem that looks like some skinny-ass wolves that don't howl, speak up. Otherwise, thanks very much for the beer, but I've got to run.

A Mother's Love

Hey, come here. I wanted to get you away from the others so I could talk at you a bit. I saw the way you pinched your packmate's ass back there.

No, shut up and listen. You see that big guy over there? The dude with the axe? That's Branch, my packmate. He's a Blood Talon, and he takes the Oath very *seriously. So, you're better off listening to me for a while than taking the same lesson from him, 'cause when he's done with you, you'll be humiliated and bleeding.*

Okay, so, I used to know a pair of werewolves out on the West Coast. They weren't sisters, but they might as well have been. Very close. They're hippies, too, free love and everything. I mean, still Uratha and good People — not like they're vegetarians or anything — but they've got this touchy-feely thing going on, and it was creepy to be around them. You're around guys like Branch, you never know when they might just haul off and slug you, and that's normal. These people, you felt like they might kiss you, and it was just weird.

They got pregnant within about a week of each other, and everybody figures it's the same guy, this wolf-blooded dude they've been hanging all over for a month. And that's a safe bet, because he's fucking them both on a regular basis. But as it happened, it was just the one — call her Ivy — that he knocked up. The other one — Jenna — her baby-daddy was a werewolf. I didn't know who it was, but I knew what pack he belonged to, because when I brought it up to them they all got real quiet, and then got up in my face. Storm Lords, those guys. Call themselves Lightning on the Ocean. They're still out that way, I think. Minus one member.

Anyway. So they're pregnant together, except the spirit pregnancy isn't the same thing. Jenna's sick all the time, while Ivy's fat and happy. Finally the day comes, and they start labor at the same second. Jenna's labor is just one long bout of crippling pain, while Ivy goes natural and comes through it just fine, but at the exact same second, both of their "kids" are born.

Ivy's got a bouncing baby boy. Jenna just loses a lot of blood. But we all knew what it meant. Unihar. *Ghost Child.*

The sick thing is, Jenna thought that her nephew, Ivy's son, was hers. She couldn't stomach what she'd done, and she got a little too aggressive in trying to help Ivy care for her kid. We had to take Jenna away, put her right, and in the end it was Branch who did most of the "talking." No, we didn't kill her, you fucking idiot. One violation of Oath doesn't justify another. But she got the point.

Go to town. Get some pussy if you need it. Shit, I'll come with you, if you want — I know a good bar. But leave the People alone. You'll ruin the woman, and you'll be fucked, too. Remember I said that the Lighting on the Ocean pack was down one member?

Yeah. The other kid went home to Daddy.

Witness to the Oath

Be careful what you swear to.

You might have heard of the Lodge of the Hunt. No, it's real. The members band together in packs and hunt down the enemy that ruined their lives, that's how it usually happens. You'll see Ivory Claws and Storm Lords hunting together. It's nuts.

But what if your enemy doesn't conveniently have four other enemies that want to hunt alongside you? Well, you can swear vengeance. You can swear it to the Witness.

The Witness is a spirit that listens to vows, oaths, declarations, that kind of thing. But once you've sworn to the Witness, you'd better be prepared to follow through. The Witness is a spirit, so it doesn't understand "I changed

my mind" or "My quarry is dead" or "Irreconcilable differences" or anything like that. All it understands is: You made a promise. If you don't keep it, you're dead.

Just a spirit? Are you fucking crazy? For one thing, this spirit is powerful. Most cities don't have spirit guardians this powerful. For another, it can drain the life right out of you. It can rot your flesh with a glance. And if you break your vow, if you even talk about it, it's coming for you. And no force on Earth can hide you, because you can't hide from your own words.

That's why I have these scars. That's why I'm still looking for a way into the darkest part of the Shadow, to the home of the Maeljin. Because that's where that fucking Asah Gadar *bastard that killed my friend went, and the Witness didn't want to hear, "They don't let Forsaken use those pathways, so I can't get him."*

I swore before the Witness, and now I'm going to Hell. Be careful what you promise, and who you promise it to.

Butcher's Valley

Son, you smart off again like that, and you're going straight to Butcher's Valley.

Oh, yeah? I'll tell ya, then. In the Civil War and right before, Butcher's Valley was downstream from a little town, and the local butcher owned most of it. He'd slaughter his animals down in the valley because then he could wash the carcasses, and that way the townsfolk didn't hear the screams of the livestock. Sentimental fellow, that butcher.

Anyway, over time, as you can probably guess, that valley got mean. The spirits loved that death and screaming, and they came to expect it. The valley was full of death-spirits and pain-spirits and all manner of predator-spirits, and when that butcher started walking down the valley, oh, how they did rejoice!

But then the war hit. The butcher was a progressive, you see. Here in the Deep South, where we still get nooses in trees every now and then, this butcher didn't think people should own people and he said so. That was just a quirk until the war, and then he was a nigger-lover, and we all know what the good ol' boys did to them.

They led the butcher down into the valley, and they cut him open. And the spirits rejoiced, until they figured out who had just died. And one of the smart ones reckoned that the party was over.

But there was a battle here in 1863, you see. The Union backed the rebel forces into this valley, but then those Rebs dug in like ticks. The Union troops backed off and waited for nightfall, figuring to maybe sneak around, but come nightfall they all heard screaming, wailing, horrible roaring and gunshots. Then the morning came, and they found nothing but blood, gibbets and torn-up uniforms. Butcher's Valley Massacre, they called it. Doesn't get much business with the reenactment crowd.

Those spirits are still down there, and they still like to hear the screams of the dying and lap up the blood. We keep 'em happy, but hungry.

So don't smart off to me, boy. You wouldn't last a minute down there.

Nightly Concerns

A Bone Shadow reveres *Kamduis-Ur* no matter where she's from, but the method of that reverence can have a great deal to do with her place of origin. Cultural practices among humans are assimilated into werewolf tribes, warped and changed, passed down packmate to packmate and eventually given names. The Bone Shadows have their share of tribal quirks, some of which are regional, some of which just seem instinctive.

Naming Conventions

Naming conventions for any of the Uratha tribes vary by region, among other factors. The Bone Shadows are likely to keep their human names when dealing with humans, but whether they take on a second name for their lives among the werewolves is another matter. Leaving aside the short, descriptive nicknames that many werewolves acquire, consider these three naming conventions that crop up among the *Hirfathra Hissu* often enough to be noteworthy:

- **Spirit Name:** The werewolf takes a name in First Tongue. This name functions much as a descriptive nickname or deed name would, but a spirit name underlines that connection to the *Hisil* that all Bone Shadows should have. In some places, it's considered rude to verbally translate the First Tongue phrase into a human language, even for the benefit of a werewolf who doesn't understand First Tongue well. Note that spirits don't often relish the idea of werewolves naming themselves in this manner. A spirit's name isn't an arbitrary label, it's a condensed description of what the spirit truly *is*. Werewolves who choose spirit names need to be aware that spirits, upon hearing this name, will react to it as though the phrase sums the werewolf up completely. A First Tongue phrase that translates to "Spirit Slayer," therefore, is probably going to be met with fear and hostility.
- **Event Name:** More common in the American South and Southwest than elsewhere (although the practice exists in parts of central Europe, too), the event name is distinct from a deed name because an event name doesn't necessarily refer to something the

Uratha did. A Bone Shadow calls himself "Ten-Six," because he underwent his First Change on the sixth day of October. Another might be known as "Crash," short for "Crash at Market and Eighth," to remind herself of the car collision that claimed the lives of her family. The event in question *can* be a deed for which the werewolf is responsible, but more often, an event name is a memorial rather than a boast. Since werewolves are often in the position of knowing the truth behind the final fate of deceased friends and family, the event name is one way to honor someone's loss without revealing the secret of the Uratha to humanity. In some areas, too, an event name can serve as a punishment — the Bone Shadows of northern Mississippi bestow embarrassing nicknames on tribe members (and *only* tribe members) who violate the Oath of the Moon or the tribe's vow. These nicknames normally fall out of use, but sometimes they stick, and the only way to get rid of them is to formally request the Uratha of the area to stop using them. (This request is normally accompanied by challenges, Rites of Contrition or spiritual intercession following a gain in Renown.)

• **Dead Man's Name:** This naming convention is most common in New England, Europe and parts of the Middle East. The Bone Shadow chooses the name of a dead person (invariably a human rather than a werewolf) and uses that name among the People. The Uratha must learn about her "namesake," though. In Europe, it's common for the werewolf to visit the person's grave and meditate at least once a week. In the Middle East, the werewolf often learns about the person's family and dedicates five days out of the month (one for each phase of the moon) to protecting the youngest member(s). In the United States, custom dictates that the werewolf takes the name of someone who has left a ghost behind, and makes helping that ghost move on peacefully a personal goal. The reason for the dead man's name is threefold. First of all, a werewolf using the name of a dead person is reminded on a daily basis about the fragility of life (this is why the werewolf is required to learn about the person, not just take the name and be done with it). Second, using the name of a dead human is helpful in diverting the attention of baleful spirits. And third, older Bone Shadows find that this method of naming helps new werewolves become involved in the community, which, in turn, helps them learn about the local area from a spiritual perspective.

The Den of Secrets

The practice of keeping a private den isn't unique to the *Hirfathra Hissu*, but the Den of Secrets is specific to the tribe. The Den of Secrets is a quiet, out-of-the-way place where the werewolf collects objects that are near and dear to her heart but that have no crucial bearing on pack business (as she would be expected to share such things). A Cahalith finds a locus located under a family's porch and claims it as her den. Over time, she writes down stories and stores them in skulls that she has collected. An Irraka finds that he can slither into a window at City Hall and takes over a disused storage closet, in which he stores maps of the city, some current, some decades out of date.

The Den of Secrets often serves as a focus, too, for a Bone Shadow's compulsions if her Harmony drops too far. While it isn't something that the tribe discusses, if the Bone Shadow's packmates suspect that she is growing too close to becoming *Zi'ir*, other Bone Shadows in the area might direct her packmates to the Den.

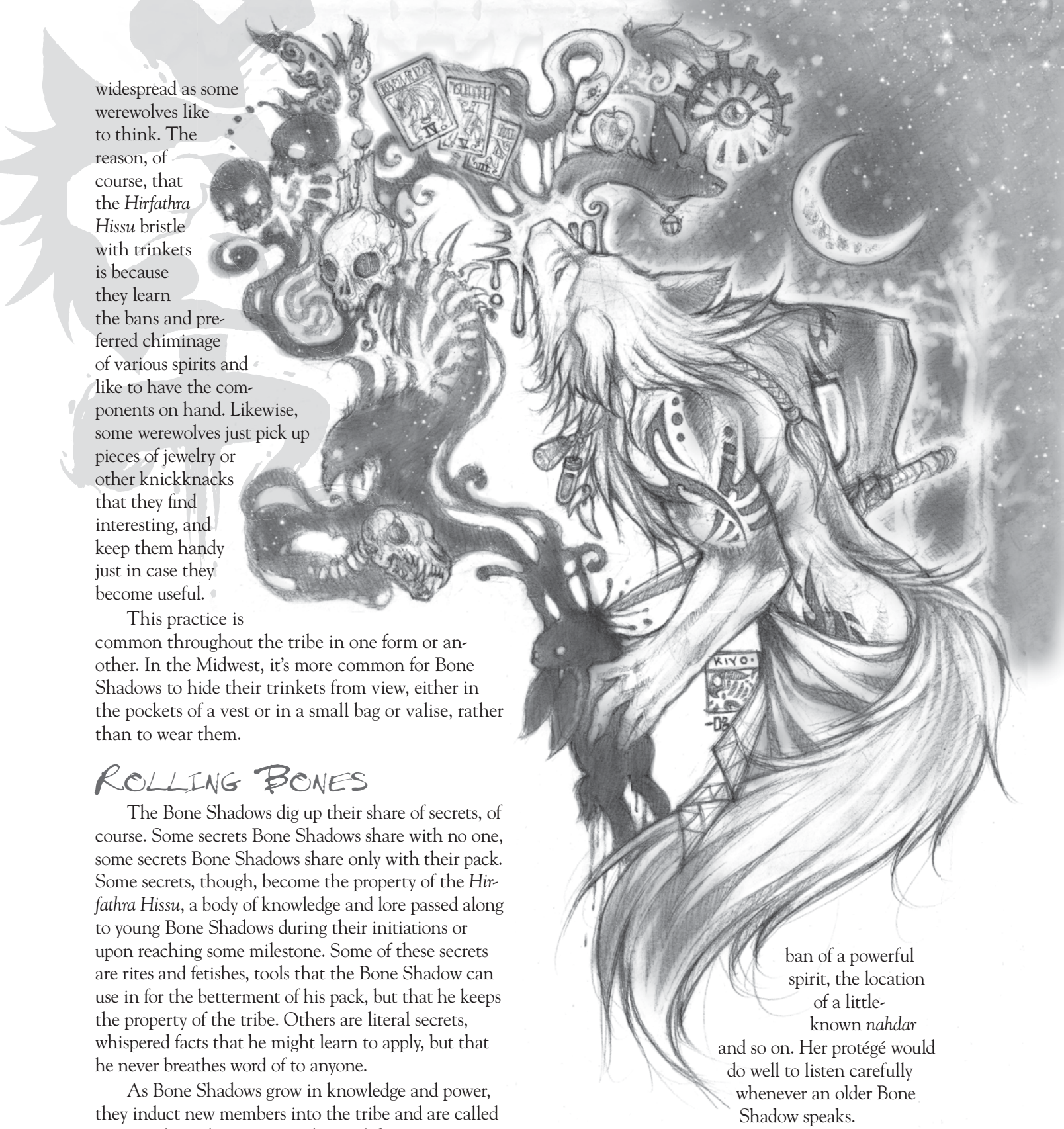
Divination

The Bone Shadows have a lodge dedicated to oracular ability (the Lodge of Prophecy; see p. 88 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**), but the practice of divining the future is common throughout the tribe. Every human culture has various methods of doing so, and it's not uncommon for fetish-crafters in the tribe to bind owl-, cat-, time- and other appropriate spirits into objects such as Tarot decks, pendulums and dice or bones (see the "Shadow Tarot" on p. 76).

The attitudes about these practices, though, vary from place to place. In some areas, even if a werewolf has no Gift or fetish that allows divination, others put stock in her ability to use mundane methods with accuracy. In other places, it's accepted that a human's Tarot deck is no more grounded in fact than astrology or reading tea leaves (or blind guesswork), but it can be helpful to go through the motions because it allows time to think through possible permutations of a problem and look at it from another angle. In any case, Cahalith of the tribe enjoy a great deal of status in areas where divination is taken very seriously, and Gibbous Moons of other tribes are generally given deference as well.

Trinkets

The image of a Bone Shadow that many experienced werewolves have is of an Uratha with dozens of rings, necklaces, charms and trinkets on her person. This isn't an unfair assessment, though it's not as



widespread as some werewolves like to think. The reason, of course, that the *Hirfathra Hissu* bristle with trinkets is because they learn the bans and preferred chiminage of various spirits and like to have the components on hand. Likewise, some werewolves just pick up pieces of jewelry or other knickknacks that they find interesting, and keep them handy just in case they become useful.

This practice is common throughout the tribe in one form or another. In the Midwest, it's more common for Bone Shadows to hide their trinkets from view, either in the pockets of a vest or in a small bag or valise, rather than to wear them.

Rolling Bones

The Bone Shadows dig up their share of secrets, of course. Some secrets Bone Shadows share with no one, some secrets Bone Shadows share only with their pack. Some secrets, though, become the property of the *Hirfathra Hissu*, a body of knowledge and lore passed along to young Bone Shadows during their initiations or upon reaching some milestone. Some of these secrets are rites and fetishes, tools that the Bone Shadow can use in for the betterment of his pack, but that he keeps the property of the tribe. Others are literal secrets, whispered facts that he might learn to apply, but that he never breathes word of to anyone.

As Bone Shadows grow in knowledge and power, they induct new members into the tribe and are called upon to share their secrets. The *Hirfathra Hissu* aren't secretive by nature; they just appreciate the value of exclusive knowledge. Thus, a mentor of the tribe is likely to parcel out a great deal of information that others might regard as common knowledge, but every now and again release a real gem — a new rite, the ban of a powerful spirit, the location of a little-known *nahdar* and so on. Her protégé would do well to listen carefully whenever an older Bone Shadow speaks.

An experienced Bone Shadow has a great store of unique information to pass along, but the method by which she shares this knowledge and the type of knowledge she thinks is important vary. The easiest way to categorize how an elder *Hirfathra Hissu* teaches her protégé is probably by auspice.

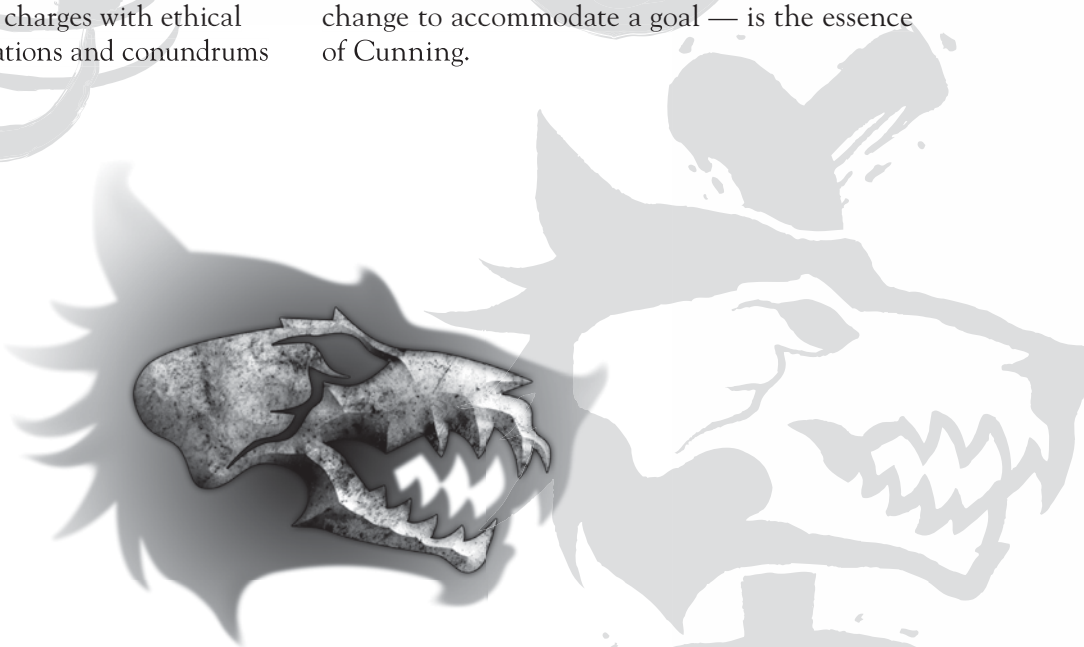
• **Rahu:** Werewolves outside the tribe might look at the Full Moons of the Bone Shadows as vicious spirit-fighters, but that's not really their role. The Bone Shadows, as a tribe, aren't overly concerned with Purity. They maintain the Oath of the Moon, yes, but they tend to have goals other than Harmony. The Rahu realize that maintaining Harmony is critical to maintaining a position of strength among spirits. The Rahu instruct their charges in fighting spirits, yes, but also in recognizing superior foes, the better to honor the high, and in controlling *Kuruth*. Any werewolf can fight, but maintaining Harmony isn't just idealism, it's a strategic measure.

• **Cahalith:** Everything reminds a Cahalith of something else. Gibbous Moons among the Bone Shadows know legendry and history, but true to the tribe's form, Cahalith look for ways to connect different tales, to weave disparate legends into a grand chronicle. What is the ultimate truth behind the stories? How might the bans of all spirits of a given choir be connected? Stories aren't just entertainment, they are ways to explain the world, and so a Cahalith mentor advises her charge never to look at a tale as simply a way to pass the night. That's all it might be, yes, but if that was the storyteller's only *intent*, wisdom might still lie therein.

• **Elodoth:** The Elodoth of the tribe often wind up making the judgment about what "in kind" means, where the tribal vow is concerned. Half Moon mentors present their charges with ethical dilemmas, hypothetical situations and conundrums from the Shadow and see if they come up with good solutions. If the young werewolf just isn't "getting it," the mentor might drag him into the *Hisil* and present him with a *real* challenge.

• **Ithaeur:** Wisdom is paramount. The werewolf must learn about spirits, and since the variety of spirits is infinite, the lessons are never completely learned. An Ithaeur mentor must make clear to her student that spirits can *always* surprise werewolves, and that making statements such as, "All river-spirits are bullies," is asking for trouble. Wisdom is not about learning every fact in the world, it's about being able to draw conclusions based on the facts that one *does* know. Lesson, Bone Shadow Crescent Moons teach, is different from fact. Application is different than knowledge. Both are useful, but over-reliance on knowledge can paralyze a werewolf just as easily as action *without* knowledge can kill one. Ithaeur mentors stress the value of rites to gain information and manipulate spirits. In many ways, Ithaeur fill the role of "spirit-slayer" more than Rahu.

• **Irraka:** Hunting spirits is difficult. Irraka among the Bone Shadows are taught how to track beings that don't leave trails, how to mark beings without bodies and how to sneak up on creatures that embody the concepts of perception. In many ways, Irraka of the Bone Shadows are taught to alter what they are in order to best beings that *cannot* alter what they are (i.e., spirits). That — change to accommodate a goal — is the essence of Cunning.



Lodge of the Hundred Days

Massacre. You know the word comes from the French? Means "butchery."

I was there, you know. I was there when it started. I was there when they shot down the president's plane. I watched as a wolf when the Hutu started cutting up Tutsi children with machetes. I didn't leave Urhan form for days at a time. I taught myself to sleep as a wolf so that I wouldn't be attacked. Yes, I could have killed dozens of them, perhaps, before they did me in, but these were men with blood in their eyes and war in their voices, and more to the point, automatic weapons in their hands. And I didn't want to die.

I was there when the Tutsi overthrew the government in July of 1994. I was there when the massacre ended. I didn't leave for Congo or Burundi afterwards. I had a vision from Death Wolf, and she told me what I had to do. I had to stay in Rwanda and help fix things.

The world failed. The United States failed. The West failed. I know that, and I'll never get tired of hearing Bill Clinton admit it on TV or seeing French volunteers here cleaning up. But I also never forget this — people picked up machetes and guns in April of 1994 and started killing their fellow countrymen, and they didn't stop for 100 days. I was just one man.

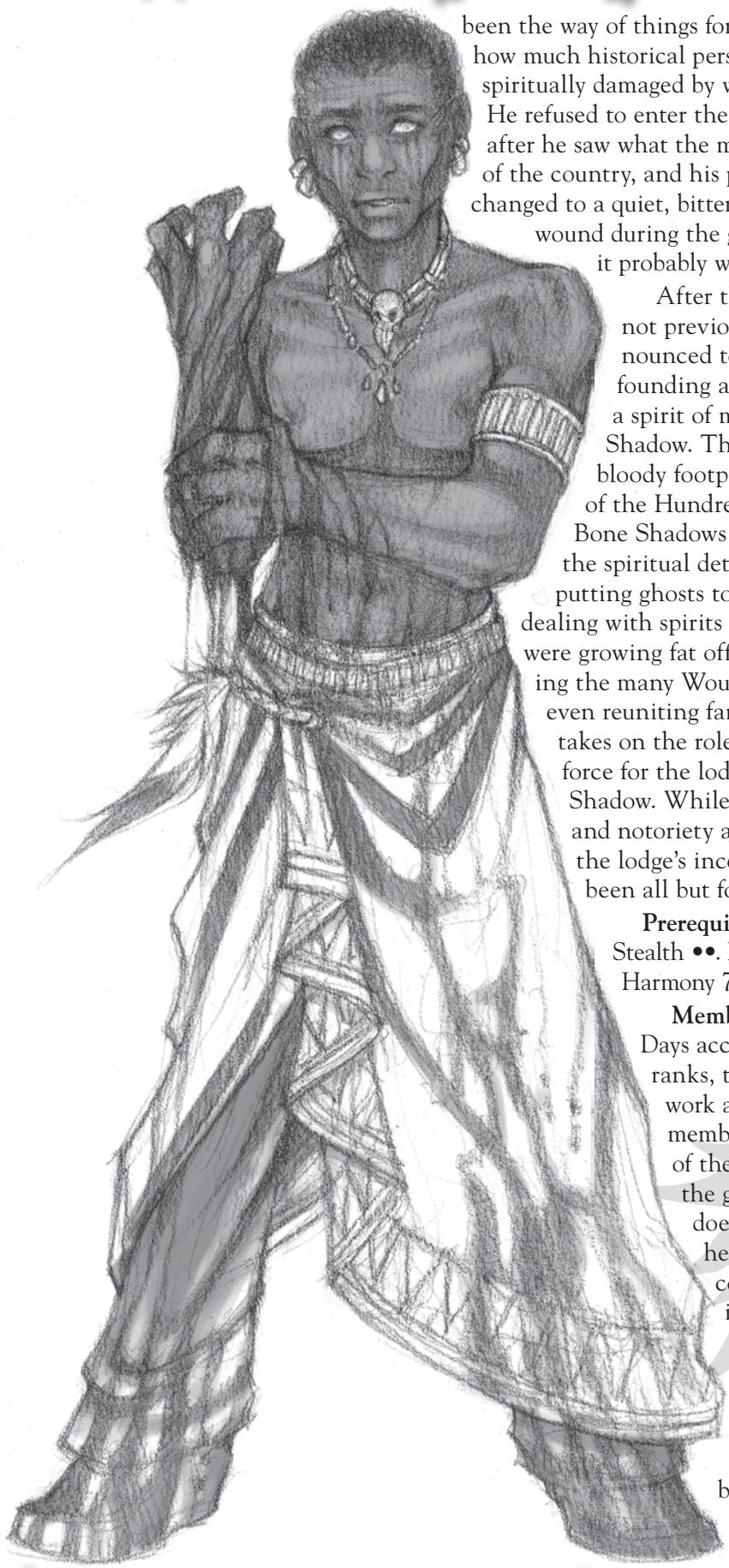
I might be Uratha, but I'm just one. One man, and one hundred days.

In April of 1994, the Rwanda genocide began. It lasted 100 days, during which time an estimated 800,000 (possibly as many as a million) people were murdered. The genocide was not a military conflict — most of those killed were civilians, many of them women and children. The killing was swift, brutal and highly organized.

The reasons for this horrible event aren't simple, and have much to do with the country's history and colonial management by Germany and then Belgium. The real-world history of the Rwanda genocide, particularly the failure of much of the rest of the world to intervene, is relevant and easy to learn with a trip to your local library or some time on the Internet. This section focuses on the effect the massacre had on the Shadow and the response of the Rwandese Uratha.

In April of 1994, Rwandese president Juvénal Habyarimana was assassinated, his plane shot down as it prepared to land in Kigali, Rwanda. The killing began almost immediately. Rwandese werewolves at the time noticed that in the weeks leading up to the massacre, the Shadow became more dangerous than usual. Murder-spirits, grief-spirits and pain-spirits seemed to breed more easily, and Cahalith in the country dreamed of roads drenched in blood and hands holding machetes. But violence is hardly unknown in Africa, and while the werewolves might have expected a military coup or a civil war, they did not anticipate what was about to happen. They were caught just as unawares as the humans of Rwanda, with the exception of one werewolf, a Bone Shadow named Jean Sehene. A Gibbous Moon, Sehene had violent dreams that left him drenched in his own sweat for weeks leading up to the massacre. He was in Kigali and witnessed the plane crash that served as the catalyst, and he wandered the countryside after the killing began. Sehene never claims to have intervened at any stage of the genocide, but stories still circulate throughout parts of Rwanda about a "demon from the dark" that "tore the Hutu murderers to pieces, taking their machetes and right hands with it."

As for why Sehene didn't interfere, he felt that it wasn't his place to do so. The killing wasn't born of any supernatural cause, not that he could see. It was humans killing each other for what were, at base, spurious reasons, and that had



been the way of things for hundreds of years. Still, no matter how much historical perspective he had, Sehene was deeply spiritually damaged by what he saw during those 100 days. He refused to enter the Shadow (and continues to do so) after he saw what the massacre had done to the spirit wilds of the country, and his previous cheerful, loud demeanor has changed to a quiet, bitter manner. If he suffered any physical wound during the genocide, it doesn't show… but then, it probably wouldn't.

After the massacre ended, Sehene, who had not previously been a member of a pack, announced to the Uratha of Rwanda that he was founding a lodge. The totem for the lodge was a spirit of mourning called *Sal Hissu*, the Thin Shadow. This spirit was invisible, and left only bloody footprints to mark its passing. The Lodge of the Hundred Days, Sehene said, was open to Bone Shadows only, for it involved clearing away the spiritual detritus of the genocide. That included putting ghosts to rest, tracking down murderers and dealing with spirits and other supernatural entities that were growing fat off the results of the massacre, cleansing the many Wounds made during the 100 days and even reuniting families torn apart. Sehene himself takes on the role of recruiter and motivational force for the lodge, but he refuses to set foot in the Shadow. While his lodge has gained momentum and notoriety among the Uratha of Africa since the lodge's inception, the name of Jean Sehene has been all but forgotten.

Prerequisites: Honor ••, Wisdom •• and Stealth ••. Members are expected to maintain Harmony 7 or more.

Membership: The Lodge of the Hundred Days accepts only Bone Shadows into its ranks, though members of other tribes often work alongside the lodge members. The members must live in Rwanda, and many of them Changed during or shortly before the genocide. Everything that the lodge does is directly or indirectly related to healing the country, and while the country's development has continued in the years since the massacre, the spirit wilds are still in chaos. The fearsome swiftness of the killing allowed ambitious murder-spirits to become Greater Jagglings in mere days, and some of these spirits began cults or possessed (or Claimed) Rwandese citizens during the genocide. The lingering effects on the

Hisil of Rwanda have kept the lodge busy for more than a decade, and the lodge members have much more work to do. They have, however, made some progress, and nowadays just as much of their work deals with tracking down fled war criminals or helping families find each other as it does closing spiritual Wounds or driving off *hithim*.

Thin Shadow doesn't ask for much in the way of initiation, especially for werewolves who witnessed the genocide. Foreign Bone Shadows wishing to join must travel into the Shadow and visit the spirit wilds of Kigali, where the massacre began. This dangerous wasteland, dotted with the smoldering wreckage of the plane crash, shows the werewolf exactly what he is in for if he joins the lodge. If he still wants to help, then Thin Shadow welcomes him. The spirit does demand, though, that members of the Lodge of the Hundred Days don't accept rewards or seek acclaim for their deeds. In fact, they must avoid *notice* as much as possible.

Benefits: Members of the Lodge of the Hundred Days must pass unnoticed by both man and spirit to do their work. All members receive a free Specialty in this Skill (player's choice). Also, all members of the lodge, regardless of auspice, receive the Gift: Gauntlet Cloak (provided that they can learn three-dot Gifts). Finally, Stealth Gifts can be purchased as though they were tribal Gifts.

Other Massacres

The Rwanda genocide is hardly the first event of its kind in human history (it wasn't even the first one in *Rwanda*). It was chosen as the focus of the Lodge of the Hundred Days because it was more recent than, say, the Holocaust, but still enough of a distance from the current day to grant some historical perspective.

That said, any other similar event might serve as the focus for a similar lodge. The Holocaust in Germany and Poland (1938-1944), the Armenian genocide (1915-1917), the Rape of Nanking (1937-1938), the Darfur conflict (2003), the Massacre of Bangladesh (1971)…

The list goes on.

Lodge of Hallowed Halls

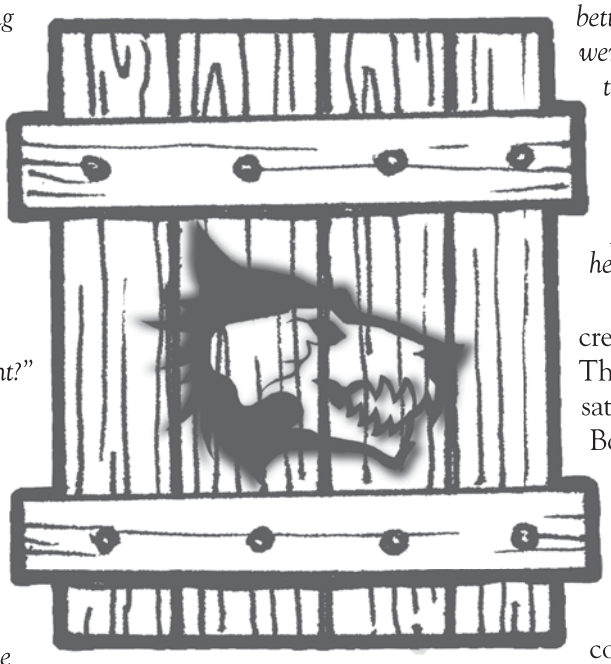
"You weren't at the meeting this morning."

Phil looked up from his work. Kathy Mizen, his boss, stood in his doorway. None of the museum employees ever actually entered his office; the ward he'd placed there saw to that.

"No, I wasn't. The minutes will get emailed around later, right?"

"That's not the point, Phil." Kathy forced herself across the threshold. Might have to redo that mark later, *mused Phil. "You're an employee here. You have responsibilities."*

Phil glanced down at the book he was translating. The language was early French, but the markings in between the lines, the ones that he could smell better than he could see them, were First Tongue, probably written by a duguthim. *"Yes, I do," he said, narrowing his eyes.*

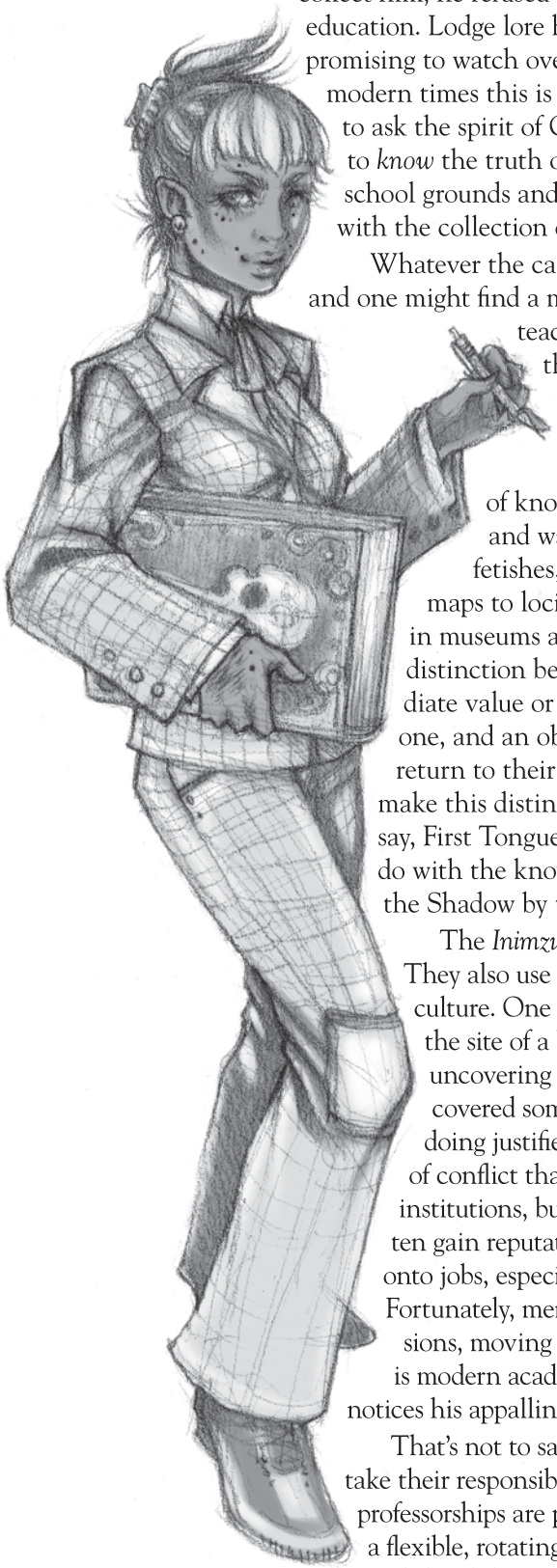


Kathy backed out of the office. Phil looked down at the page. "Shut the door, please," he said.

Werewolves are physical creatures first and foremost. Their preferred method of sensation is scent, and even the Bone Shadows find their way among spirits by intuition and visceral understanding rather than cerebral problem-solving and dry research. But the Change comes upon learned people — doctors, scientists, professors and others who are trained in academia. The Bone

Shadows claim a good number of these folks (the Iron Masters do also, of course), and some wind up joining the Lodge of the Hallowed Halls.

The Lodge of the Hallowed Halls has a venerable history stretching back to the 12th century. A young man enrolled at Oxford University underwent the First Change, and when a pack of Bone Shadows arrived to collect him, he refused to go with them, saying that he wanted to stay and finish his education. Lodge lore has it that the spirit of Oxford itself intervened on his behalf, promising to watch over him until he had completed his time at the school, but in modern times this is considered apocryphal at best (for what it's worth, attempts to ask the spirit of Oxford for the truth have led nowhere; the spirit doesn't seem to *know* the truth of the matter). Another story has it that Thomas fled into the school grounds and the Bone Shadows, upon following him, became fascinated with the collection of knowledge present there.



Whatever the case, the lodge has spread across the world over the centuries, and one might find a member in any university or place of learning, including teaching hospitals and museums. The members of the lodge call themselves *Inimzu-Ur*, from a First Tongue phrase meaning "wolves who speak with words," and they pride themselves on being capable Uratha and learned individuals.

The main goal of the lodge is not just the acquisition of knowledge but the reclamation of knowledge from the libraries and warehouses of humanity. It amazes the *Inimzu-Ur* how many fetishes, descriptions of rites, warnings about dangerous spirits, maps to loci and other artifacts from the culture of the People wind up in museums and private collections. Some members of the lodge make a distinction between an artifact that the People created but has no immediate value or danger and thus is "fair game" for any owner, even a human one, and an object that has real and direct value to the Uratha and must return to their possession immediately. Most members of the lodge do *not* make this distinction, and feel that humanity shouldn't be allowed to study, say, First Tongue, for fear that they start to learn it. What would humanity do with the knowledge of the spirits' language? How might humans change the Shadow by this information? Best not to find out.

The *Inimzu-Ur* thus take the roles of protectors of the People's culture. They also use the resources of human places of learning to *find* that lost culture. One member of the lodge used his museum backing to excavate the site of a long-ago battle between Forsaken and Pure, resulting in the uncovering of powerful fetishes from that era. As a bonus, he also uncovered some artifacts made by the native people of the area, and in so doing justified his expenditures. This touches on one of the major areas of conflict that lodge members face — they have responsibilities to their institutions, but the People must first see to the People. Thus, *Inimzu-Ur* often gain reputations as mavericks (at best) or sloppy researchers, and holding onto jobs, especially those that require keeping a regular schedule, is difficult. Fortunately, members of the lodge tend to be adept at making first impressions, moving within social bureaucracies and navigating the viper pit that is modern academia. If the werewolf plays his cards right, by the time anyone notices his appalling attendance record, he's already got tenure.

That's not to say that the members of the Lodge of the Hallowed Halls don't take their responsibilities seriously, just that they have other priorities. Adjunct professorships are perfect for them, as is any position that allows them to work a flexible, rotating or truncated schedule. Allowances like this are made often, and the ability to make such allowances often comes down to one or two

people. The members of the lodge aren't above bribing, blackmailing or threatening other professors to make sure such allowances are made.

Iminzu-Ur are often members of packs, and it's very rare that their packmates are also members of the lodge (though rumors suggest that at a prestigious New England university, the History Department is entirely staffed by a Bone Shadow pack, all members of the Lodge of Hallowed Halls). Uratha with more physical leanings might make fun of the werewolves who wear suits and teach classes, but when a creature that no werewolf in the area has even seen crawls out of a Verge, it's the historian who's going to hit the books to find out what human culture has to say about it. When the pack discovers spider-like beasts hiding underground near the park in their territory, it's the archeologist who can find a sonar transducer (a "thumper") to find them. When a pack member triggers a bomb and is taken to the hospital before she can heal herself, it's the doctor who can rearrange paperwork so that no one notices when she walks out the next day unscathed. Moving within the human world is an indispensable skill, and being able to access the finest scholarship of that world is likewise crucial.

The Lodge of the Hallowed Halls doesn't have a totem, but the members usually become acquainted with the spirits of their places of employment. Such spirits are usually human-like in appearance, though spirits of universities sometimes take on the forms of the school's mascot (during homecoming week particularly). These spirits can sometimes lend a hand to a werewolf seeking to balance his pack duties with his employment.

Prerequisites: Academics ••, Wisdom ••, Cunning •, Subterfuge • and the Merit: First Tongue.

Membership: Though the lodge is most commonly associated with the Bone Shadows, other tribes are not excluded from membership. The only other tribe that petitions for membership with any regularity, however, is the *Farsil Luhal*.

A werewolf who wishes to join the Lodge of the Hallowed Halls must contact an existing member and ask to be admitted. The members of the lodge are usually pressed for time, and so the test to join isn't a complicated affair. The test has three parts — Body, Mind and Soul. The Body portion of the test is, as the name suggests, physical in nature and involves a race, a fight, a test of endurance or pain tolerance or some other measure that allows the werewolf to demonstrate his abilities in this arena. The Body portion of the test is frequently tailored to the prospect's abilities. In many cases, the prospect is given some say in the particulars of this test, or allowed to have the test "waived" if he has performed some great feat of physical prowess in the past (and can produce witnesses to that effect).

The Soul portion requires the werewolf to enter the Shadow and interact with a spirit (other than his pack totem); the lodge uses this as a gauge of the prospect's commitment to the tribal vow of the Bone Shadows, as well as his general ability to deal with the *Hisil*.

The Mind section is probably the most important to the lodge. Only academics with some credentials or some good research behind them are admitted. The werewolf presents a curriculum vitae (essentially a resume of his published works) and a dissertation, the subject matter of which must be of interest to the prospect's chosen field *and* to the People. If the research is sound and the subject matter contributes something to the lodge, the werewolf receives word that he has been accepted. If not, he is rejected, but may re-apply after six months.

Members keep in close contact through written correspondence (email, of course, is the commonly used method nowadays). Since travel to conferences is common for academics, members are expected to help their fellow members find lodging and safety in strange areas, should the need arise. This includes getting access to loci, avoiding the Pure and other dangers and navigating the local Shadow, should it become an issue. Likewise, a visiting *Iminzu-Ur* is expected to contribute anything he can to whatever problems a local member's pack might be facing.

Benefits: Members of the lodge benefit from their association. Academics have access to slush funds, scholarships that no one ever touches and material resources that can be converted to cash. In game terms, a member can draw on monies equal to Resources 2 for a few weeks (but is expected to pay into these accounts when he has his own income again). Also, members of the lodge receive the Merit: Contacts (Lodge of the Hallowed Halls), which gives them access to information on almost every scholarly field imaginable. This might be worth a bonus of one to three dice on an Academics, Medicine, Science or Politics roll if the character has time to consult with a fellow lodge member. Finally, the lodge members learn to deal with bureaucracies in such a way as to avoid notice. The Subterfuge, Socialize and Persuasion Skills can be purchased at a lower rate (new dots x 2 rather than new dots x 3).

Lodge of the Reaping

Steven sat on his couch, staring at the TV. The images there were blurred and distorted, but every now and again he could make out a pair of breasts or the motion of a woman's mouth.

"This is pathetic," he muttered to himself.

He glanced at the gun sitting next to him, and thought again about picking it up, putting it to his eye and pulling the trigger. He'd read somewhere that if the bullet went into his right eye, his stood less chance of surviving.

He stood up, threw on a coat and left his apartment. He wasn't sure where he was going. The liquor store would be closed, but he might be able to buy some other form of relief if Dan was on the corner tonight.

A tall, slim woman watched him from across the street. She wasn't alone. A creature without a true form, without height or weight but certainly possessing depth, sat on her shoulder. "That's him?" she said. She watched the way he walked, the purposelessness in his stride, the way he looked down and barely noticed the world around him. She nodded. "Go start it. Wait until he gets to the corner — there's more cover."

The spirit flew off. Stella took a small clay jar out of her rucksack and sprinkled herbs into it, readying it for Steven's soul.

Some people are useless. It's a harsh fact of life, but it's true. Not every person can be born on the high end of the curve, and some don't even make the middle. Some members of the species are just dead weight.

Most species have a way to correct this, but humanity has managed to breed imperfections *into* itself. Being useless isn't an inborn trait, not entirely, but the fact remains that humanity doesn't force the drains on its society out. Humanity just ignores them, or worse, coddles them.

The Lodge of the Reaping has found another use for them — sustenance.

Eating the flesh of humans provides werewolves with Essence, much like what happens when spirits consume each other. Werewolves are often told that eating people drives Uratha mad, but that's not exactly true, the Lodge of the Reaping says. Eating people makes werewolves act *more like spirits* — they develop the odd compulsions and bans that are the hallmarks of the spirit "mindset." Feasting on humanity is a natural act for werewolves, but that doesn't make it safe. By playing to that nature, the werewolf loses his other nature (the man), and that's dangerous.

The Lodge of the Reaping was founded by a pack of Bone Shadows that was forced to put one of their members down after he developed a fondness for human flesh and went completely insane. How, they asked, could this have been prevented? Was it possible to take sustenance from humanity in a way that *didn't* threaten Harmony? As they asked this question, under the new moon, miles from anyone who would hear this blasphemous discussion, a spirit appeared to them. This spirit, called Prey's Death or *Thimús*, told them that there was a way for them to do what they wished to do, and it would help them. Thus the Lodge of the Reaping was born.

The Lodge of the Reaping is arranged into small cells, often not more than two or three members (when more than three constitute a cell, they usually also form a pack). Each cell serves a death-spirit similar to *Thimús*. The spirit uses its Soul Snatch Numen to remove the soul of a mortal that the werewolves and the spirit agree is useless, or is going to die soon anyway. The werewolves can then kill the mortal, or let him live on without a soul (which is usually fatal anyway). The spirit takes a tithe from the soul, and the werewolves take the rest.

The Lodge of the Reaping believes that it is trimming the herd, dodging the usual issues related to eating humans in the process. Whether the lodge members are doing anyone any good by killing humans off is questionable, but Harmony loss is another matter. Participating in the removal of a person's soul is a sin against Harmony 4 (roll three dice). Consuming the soul of a human being is a sin against Harmony 2 (roll two dice). Why, then, does the lodge persist?

First, consider that the lodge is very small, containing perhaps only 50 members worldwide. For the lodge to work, a spirit powerful enough to pull out a person's soul needs to patronize a group of werewolves, and this is uncommon.

Second, the death-spirits that make up the true leadership of the lodge don't usually introduce the notion of eating souls to a werewolf right away. They make it enticing for the werewolf to eat humans, and then present another option — and look, a whole lodge already exists dedicated to the practice, and *they* aren't *Zi'ir*!

Finally, the death-spirits pace themselves. They allow members of the lodge to build up their Harmony before attacking another victim, and the spirits avoid letting their charges violate the precepts of Harmony in other ways.

All of that said, the Reapers do become *Zi'ir* fairly frequently. The death-spirits, then, encourage them to recruit other Bone Shadows, not to spread the lodge, but to make sure that it doesn't die out.

Prerequisites: None, though the death-spirits prefer werewolves with high Manipulation, Subterfuge and Stealth ratings, as this allows the spirits to stay inconspicuous.

Membership: The Lodge of the Reaping is open only to Bone Shadows, but there is a reason for this beyond the fact that it started with the *Hirfathra Hissu*. An ancient pact between *Thimús* and Kamduis-Ur prevents her from taking action against the death-spirit, or her wayward children. Likewise, this pack prevents the pack totems of the lodge members (who are often aghast at the werewolf's actions) from informing on them.

Members of the Lodge of the Reaping are sometimes abject monsters, but sometimes they have good intentions. They want to help humanity by clearing away some dead weight, and they want to become better werewolves without endangering their sanity. Their methods are flawed, of course, but no Uratha enters the lodge with the intention of eating souls.



Thimús's Brood and the Soul Snatch Numen

Prey's Death is a very powerful spirit, probably Rank 5 or even 6. While the death-spirits that serve the lodge (or vice versa) don't always resemble *Thimús*, it is responsible for elevating them beyond the status of mere death-Gafflings. They tend to be Rank 3 or 4, and are powerful spirits in their own rights. They report back to *Thimús*, wherever it currently is, using the dreams of the lodge members to communicate. *Thimús* seems to have a plan for the lodge beyond just sustenance, but what it is remains, for now, unknown.

The Soul Snatch Numen is a rare but terrifying Numen, allowing the spirit to steal the soul of a mortal. This acts just as the Claim Numen (p. 276 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**) except that success on the spirit's part means it grasps the victim's soul instead of riding its body. The spirit can then do with the soul what it will, though in the Lodge of the Reaping the spirit hands it over to a werewolf, who then seals it in a specially prepared jar. The soul provides twice the victim's Willpower dots in Essence. The death-spirits of the lodge usually consume two points and allow the werewolf to take the rest. They absorb Essence from the very act of the mortal's degradation and death, so they don't have to be greedy.

It just happens as things progress, and the influx of Essence and the other benefits often blind the Uratha to what she is really doing.

Reapers have to keep their affiliation secret, of course, even from their packs. In addition, they are expected to act in a manner consistent with Harmony (with the exception, of course, of eating souls, which isn't specifically part of the Oath). Therefore, many Reapers appear to cleave to the Oath far more faithfully than other werewolves, and so are above reproach for something so base as cannibalism.

Benefits: Reapers all learn special rites that allow them to prepare jars to hold human souls. These rites don't require purchase with experience or dots in Rituals, and can't be used for other purposes (assume such a jar takes about one hour to prepare). The lodge's practice of eating souls ensures a secondary source of Essence, of course. Finally, the lodge members enjoy the protection of powerful death-spirits. The Storyteller should design a death-spirit that looks after the character's cell (not necessarily pack; it's possible for a member of the lodge to belong to a pack that knows nothing of his predations) of werewolves, and consider that this spirit is prepared to use its Numina and Influence on the werewolf's behalf. The spirit also lets the werewolf know if she is about to take an action that might cause degeneration. Since the spirit doesn't have a sense of how high the character's Harmony trait is, though, the spirit warns the werewolf when she is about to eat prepared food or reminds her to shapeshift, as well as bringing more serious breaches to her attention. This constant spiritual attention hones the werewolf's perceptions where spirits are concerned, and the character receives a +2 on any roll to see or reach across the Gauntlet, and a +3 to any roll made to notice spirits or spirit activity. These modifiers apply to perception rolls, Gifts, rites and Skill-related rolls.

New Rites

The rites described below were created by the *Hirfathra Hissu*, and they aren't in the habit of sharing rites. This isn't out of selfishness, per se, but more out of concern — many of the rites that the tribe keeps secret were the results of agreements between the Bone Shadows and certain powerful entities of the spirit world. While not all specifically prohibit the tribe from sharing their knowledge, the Bone Shadows aren't convinced that doing so wouldn't result in revocation of privilege (or worse).

Regardless of any consequences the Storyteller sees fit to impose should the Bone Shadows let these rites out of their control, the rites are difficult for other werewolves to attempt. The player of a non Bone-Shadow attempting to mimic any of these rites suffers a –4 to the Harmony roll to enact them.

Rite of the Spirit's Promise (•)

Bone Shadows deal with spirits on a regular basis, and it helps to speak from a position of strength. The best way to gain such a position, of course, is to know a spirit's ban, but finding out this information is a matter of careful investigation (the Gift: Read Spirit works, too, but not every pack has a Crescent Moon). The Rite of the Spirit's Promise determines a spirit's ban fairly quickly, but the rite also risks reprisal — spirits don't *like* being so closely investigated by Uratha. A Bone Shadow performing this rite on a spirit more powerful that he is had better have his pack handy.

Performing the Rite: The werewolf need not be able to see the spirit in order to use this rite, but he must be in the spirit's presence *or* know its name.

The Bone Shadow intones a quiet First Tongue phrase asking for insight, and draws a symbol in the dirt or on a wall. If the ritual succeeds, knowledge of the spirit's ban becomes clear to the werewolf. In any case, though, the spirit might notice what is happening, and it can use the connection created by the rite to attack the ritualist.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (successes equal to the spirit's Rank; each roll represents one turn of concentration)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The connection works, but in the wrong direction. The spirit knows some damning fact about the ritualist — a dark secret, the location of his family, his Vice, the ban that his totem imposes, etc. The spirit can do what it wishes with this information.

Failure: No successes are garnered.

Success: Progress is made toward the goal. When the player accrues successes equal to the spirit's Rank, the spirit's ban comes to the character in a flash of insight. The Storyteller does *not* provide the mechanical aspects of the ban, however. For instance, a garbage-spirit might suffer three points of damage to its Corpus per turn of contact with cleansing chemicals. If the character uses this rite, though, all she knows is that the spirit "cannot abide the touch of cleansing chemicals," not that it damages the spirit.

Each turn that the character rolls to accrue successes for this rite, the targeted spirit has a chance to notice what's happening. The Storyteller rolls the spirit's Finesse. If the roll succeeds, the spirit realizes what is happening and can use its Numina on the werewolf as if it possessed the Reaching Numen (see p. 278 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). The spirit can use its powers *only* on the ritualist (unless the spirit actually knows the Reaching Numen, of course), and only as long as the rite continues.

Exceptional Success: Significant progress is made toward the goal. If the rite concludes with successes equal to the spirit's Rank + 5, the Storyteller must inform the player of the mechanical aspects of the ban.

Create Talen (••)

Creating a talen is usually a matter for a fetish-crafter, and requires the Fetish Rite. But the Bone Shadows make frequent use of these minor fetishes, and discovered that a less complicated rite suffices for creating such fetishes, providing that the Bone Shadows "grease the wheels" a bit. A sacrifice of blood and pain is necessary to create fetishes without using the tried-and-true ritual, but sometimes it's worth it to get a useful tool quickly.

For this rite to function, the spirit that is to power the talen must enter the object willingly (the spirit can be coerced, bribed, threatened or even lied to for this to take place, but it can't be forced). Once the talen is created, it lasts for one lunar month, and then the bindings loosen and the spirit escapes. The spirit escapes if the talen is used, as well. Most spirits simply flee upon their release, but some hold a grudge and try to find a way to exact revenge upon the Bone Shadow. Some even grow accustomed to being in a talen and volunteer to undergo the process again.

Performing the Rite: This rite was designed to be performed relatively quickly, and using cheap, simple and easy-to-handle materials (unlike its more powerful cousin; see p. 162 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). The object must be prepared in a manner appropriate to the talen. The ritualist doesn't necessarily have to be the one to do this, but doing so requires a roll of Wits + Crafts. The ritualist gathers the material in front of her, slashes her palm or wrist open with a blade (inflicting two levels of lethal damage) and bleeds in a circle around the object(s). The werewolf must already have negotiated terms with the spirit that is to power the talen, whether that means threatening the spirit with its ban or promising to reward the spirit after service is complete (failure to follow through on this promise, of course, is a violation of the Bone Shadows' tribal vow).

After the blood circle is complete, the werewolf instructs the spirit to "enter." The blood acts as a kind of minor locus, allowing the spirit ingress to the objects, and boils off in a foul-smelling smoke as this happens. If the rite is successful, the object becomes a talen for one lunar month.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (10 successes; each roll represents one minute of concentration)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The spirit has a change of heart, or a more-powerful entity sees what the werewolf is doing and takes offense. The rite fails, and an attack may be in the offing.

Failure: No successes are gained toward the total.

Success: Progress is made toward the total. If the player accrues 10 successes, the spirit bonds with the object and becomes a talen. For talens that have doses (such as Decay Dust or Ghost Salt; see p. 205 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken** and p. 75 of this book,

respectively), the rite creates one dose per success on the Crafts roll to fashion the talen (see above). The talen retains its power for one lunar month.

Exceptional Success: The spirit is comfortable in its temporary home. The talen retains its power for one lunar month, after which the werewolf can spend one Essence point per week to keep the talen functional. The talen remains empowered until one week goes by without a point of Essence being spent for it, or until it is used.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+2	Spirit has empowered a similar talen in the past.
–1	Spirit is inappropriate for this type of talen.

Rite of the Grave's Bounty (•••)

Graves are seldom anchors for ghosts. Many ghosts don't even realize that they are dead, and so don't know they have graves. And yet, a person's grave is the focus of a great deal of emotion, and that energy has to go somewhere. Years ago, a Bone Shadow Ithaeur learned that the energy tends to "soak" into the headstone or monument, and that a patient werewolf can harvest it.

The Bone Shadow who discovered this rite was a member of the Lodge of Death (see p. 88 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**), and he made a vow that if anyone teaches the rite to a werewolf outside the tribe, there must be a price extracted in blood. It's not a very commonly known rite anyway, and Bone Shadows tend to be possessive of it, but sometimes a werewolf teaches it to a non-Bone Shadow packmate. If she does so, she must make the learner bleed, usually by slashing, biting or just punching him in the nose. If the werewolf exacts *any* retribution, even a snarl or a curse, the rite will never function for either of them (which is one reason that it doesn't spread beyond the tribe very often). The Bone Shadow isn't forbidden from explaining the rules to her packmate, but werewolves respond instinctively when attacked (and the Storyteller should call for a Resolve + Composure roll from the recipient's player to make sure the character doesn't respond).

The rite itself allows a werewolf to harvest a tiny carving from a monument and gain a bit of Essence. When Bone Shadows learn this rite, they are admonished not to be greedy. It could be fatal.

Performing the Rite: The werewolf sits in front of the grave, lays a palm on the monument and makes a silent invocation to Death Wolf. She also thanks the person who lies there interred (it is customary to lay flowers on the grave at some point in the future, but this isn't required for the rite). The werewolf then scrapes a bit of dust or dirt from the headstone and places the dirt under her tongue. If the rite works, she feels a sudden influx of emotion — grief, pain, loss and even joy, depending on what sorts of emotions the monument has absorbed.

The werewolf can attempt this rite more than once in the same night in the same graveyard, but this carries some serious risks (see below).

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf has chosen a gravestone that, for whatever reason, has no emotional energy in it at all. She feels a terrible emptiness fill her. The player immediately rolls Resolve + Primal Urge. The character keeps a number of Essence points equal to the successes, but loses the rest. Any further attempt to use this rite on the same night incurs a –3 penalty.

Failure: The rite fails; either Death Wolf doesn't approve or the werewolf just can't concentrate. She can try again with a different gravestone, but each subsequent attempt incurs a –1 penalty.

Success: The werewolf gains a number of Essence points equal to the successes the player rolled. She can try to gain more Essence by performing the rite on a different headstone, but she runs the risk of offending the spirit of the graveyard. For every successful attempt at this rite after the first, the player rolls Manipulation + Occult. If this roll fails, the graveyard-spirit attacks the werewolf's Essence directly, turning it into caustic, black *nothingness*. The character suffers one point of aggravated damage per point of Essence she has gained from this rite while in that particular graveyard on that night.

Exceptional Success: No effect beyond the larger bounty of Essence.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+2	The character attended the funeral of the person interred in the grave
+1	The grave has flowers laid during that day (by someone who know the deceased personally).
+1	For every dot of the Fame rating the deceased had at the time of death.
–1	The deceased has been dead for more than 5 years.
–2	The deceased has been dead for more than 10 years.
–3	The deceased has been dead for more than 20 years.
–4	The deceased has been dead for more than 50 years.
–5	The deceased has been dead for more than 100 years.

Rite of Slaying the Truth (••••)

Some secrets should remain secret. But information, the Bone Shadows note, seeks to flow into places of lesser concentration. This means that people seem to have a way of learning things that they shouldn't, and sometimes it rankles the werewolves' consciences that someone who learned a truth that they *cannot* be allowed to possess should die for it. This is especially true if the offending person isn't a scholar or an investigator, but just a normal human who picked up the wrong book or turned down the wrong path.

The Rite of Slaying the Truth provides a way to hide the secret again *and* prevent needless killing. The rite is highly esoteric, and werewolves without a good grounding in spiritual matters and medicine often have trouble learning it. Everything has a spirit, as every werewolf knows, and every thought, feeling and memory in the human mind has a chemical representation. Therefore, each individual memory must have a spirit and a chemical that represents the memory. If the spirit of a memory can be targeted and destroyed, the memory can be erased entirely.

The Bone Shadow who developed this rite, a surgeon and a member of the Lodge of the Hallowed Halls (see p. 65), originally created the rite to remove a comparatively innocuous secret. He wanted his daughter to forget that she had seen him change shape (because she was *uragarum*, she hadn't fallen to Lunacy). His attempt worked too well, and she forgot her father entirely. The werewolf, broken-hearted, set out to refine the rite so that it worked properly from there on out, but his daughter's memory was never restored.

Now, the Bone Shadows teach this rite only to those with great standing — pack alphas, guardians of important loci, high-ranking members of lodges, etc. Using the rite is a serious undertaking, and only done when the alternative is killing a person whose death would be detrimental to the tribe. If successful, the rite removes the targeted memory and leaves the victim confused, but intact. Used incorrectly, though, the rite leaves the target a *tabula rasa*, a blank slate with no memories at all.

Performing the Rite: The target needs to be present and unconscious for this rite to work. Normally, the Uratha drug the target or abduct him while he sleeps. The ritualist and any assistants have to work in complete silence — even a cough will disrupt the rite. They surround the sleeping target and trace glyphs in the air above his body, and then release a small insect onto his skin. The insect becomes infused with the power of the rite, buries into the target's ear and poisons the spirit of the targeted memory. The spirit then dies and is absorbed into the target's body. The target awakens a few hours later, but has no recollection of whatever event or knowledge the werewolf removed. Of course, the werewolves need to make sure that the target doesn't simply relearn the secret.

Dice Pool: Harmony versus subject's Resolve

Action: Extended and contested (30 successes; each roll represents five minutes)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The insect that the werewolves used is too potent, and kills *all* of the target's memories. When the target awakens, he is a complete amnesiac. He recalls nothing about his previous life. He can eat, speak and function (he retains his Skills, though he might not know he has them until called upon to use them), but has no recollection of who he is. Doing this to a person causes degeneration at Harmony 6 (roll three dice).

Failure: No successes are made toward the goal. If the target reaches 30 successes before the ritualist, the rite fails and the target wakes up. At this point, the werewolves might need to reconsider whether they can really let him live.

Success: Progress is made toward the goal. If the ritualist reaches 30 successes before the target, the spirit-insect kills the spirit-memory, the information disappears and the target awakens in the morning feeling confused but otherwise intact.

Exceptional Success: Significant progress is made toward the goal. If the ritualist reaches the goal with 35+ successes, the target "smoothes out" his own memory. The information disappears, but the target has no lost time, holes in events or incongruous recollections that would tip him off that something is wrong.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+3	Subject already suffers from amnesia of some time.
+1	Ritualist has a Medicine Specialty in Neurology.
−1	Subject has never seen the ritualist's face.
−3	Ritualist does not possess the Medicine Skill.

Rite of the Spirit Clay (•••••)

This rite is reserved for powerful spirits that have offended the tribe, and usually used only on spirits whose bans are complex, arcane or extremely difficult to enact. The Rite of the Spirit Clay allows the Bone

Shadow to reshape the targeted spirit and bestow a new ban upon it.

Learning this rite is an undertaking in and of itself. It requires a journey into the Shadow, a quest to find a deep, dark cave — a Den of Secrets (p. 61) belonging to Death Wolf herself. This quest can take weeks or years, but some werewolves have reportedly completed it sooner. It depends on how much time and energy the Uratha wishes to devote. In any case, the werewolf must give over a small piece of her own Essence to Death Wolf. She replaces this Essence with a portion of her own, bestowing the power to reshape spirits. Uratha *cannot* teach this rite to each other, and although a werewolf might mimic the motions of the rite, it is impossible to perform without blessing from Kamduis-Ur.

The ban that the werewolf imposes upon the spirit is the same each time the werewolf performs it. The werewolf chooses the "sculpture" she makes in the spirit clay when Death Wolf teaches her the rite, and it is usually indicative of the challenges she faced while finding the den. The ban can be simple and potent, but must be something that requires deliberate action. That is, a werewolf can name "A wave of my hand banishes the spirit" as the ban, because a wave of the hand can be accidental. A particular hand gesture, though, one too complicated to make without intent, would work.

This rite, predictably, earns the enmity of any spirit subjected to it. The Bone Shadows use this rite as retribution against powerful spirits, or sometimes as a way to impose a check on a spirit that might cause them trouble in the future.

Performing the Rite: The spirit must be bound in order for the rite to proceed (see "Bind Spirit," p. 157 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). The werewolf calls out the name of the spirit and recites its choir, descant and any wrongs the spirit has committed against the *Hirfathra Hissu*. The ritualist then pours a small amount of liquid onto bare earth (water, normally, though some werewolves have been known to bleed or urinate if it would offend or intimidate the spirit) and forms a small chunk of dirt in a soft, clay-like substance. The character reshapes the clay into a form representative of the spirit's new ban, and holds the sculpture up for the spirit to see. At the culmination of the rite, the werewolf hurls the sculpture at the spirit, and spirits the First Tongue phrase *Ne me-a su hifil har* — "This is your new form."

Dice Pool: Harmony versus spirit's Resistance

Action: Extended and contested (35 successes necessary; each roll represents one minute)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The binding shatters, and the spirit bursts free in a blast of spiritual power. The ritualist and any werewolves in the area are momentarily stunned, and the spirit can take one free action (flee, attack, etc.) before the werewolves can react.

Failure: No successes are garnered toward the goal. If the spirit reaches 35 successes before the ritualist, its ban remains intact, and the Storyteller can make a Power + Resistance roll for the spirit. If this roll succeeds, the spirit shakes free of the binding circle and can act as the spirit sees fit.

Success: Successes are gathered toward the goal. If the ritualist reaches 35 successes before the spirit, the spirit's makeup is reshaped, and the spirit takes on the new ban. The Storyteller can roll Power + Resistance as explained above for the spirit to escape the binding, but the spirit generally flees if it does escape.

Exceptional Success: Significant progress is made toward the goal. If the ritualist finishes the rite with 40+ successes, the spirit *cannot* attempt to escape the binding.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+1	Werewolf outranks the spirit (see p. 158 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**).
–1	Spirit outranks the werewolf.

New Fetishes

Below are some sample fetishes that Bone Shadows might create. Many of the tribe's fetishes help to overcome the disadvantages that werewolves face when dealing with spirits.

Ghost Salt (Talen)

Ghost Salt is a special mixture of herbs, crushed bones and (of course) salt for those *Hirfathra Hissu* who don't make use of Death Gifts. Sprinkled around an area suspected of harboring an unquiet shade and activated, the salt begins to glow slightly if a ghost is indeed present. The salt can also be used to detect a ghost's anchors in the same manner — a pinch or two sprinkled on the object (or person), and if a ghost has a connection to it, the salt becomes faintly luminous. Bone Shadows usually use cat-spirits to empower Ghost Salt.

Action: Instant

Obituary (Talen)

A useful investigate tool, especially when dealing with ghosts, the Obituary takes the form of a single, thin piece of paper. The werewolf writes the name of a deceased person down on the paper and activates the

talen, and seconds later, an obituary appears there. It states the deceased's age at the time of death, the cause of death and any surviving family that he had (though not their locations). Once used, the paper retains the data permanently. The spirit of any loud, "talkative" bird can be used to create an obituary.

Action: Instant

Protective Charm (•)

This fetish goes by many names — *gris-gris*, ward, talisman, luck charm, etc. The form varies, but it is always something that the werewolf can wear, usually on a necklace. Protective charms are common among the Bone Shadows, and fetish-crafters often use such charms as currency with other tribes, since they aren't complicated to make. Upon activation, a protective charm can do *one* of the following:

- Add 3 to the character's Initiative
- Add 1 to the character's Defense for a number of turns equal to the successes on the activation roll (if the player spends a point of Essence to activate the fetish, the effect persists for a number of turns equal to the character's Primal Urge)
- Add 1 to a Social dice pool for dealing with a spirit
- Grant 9-again on a single roll (this requires the expenditure of one point of Essence)

A given charm has only one of these effects; the player can't choose a different effect each time the charm is used.

A wide variety of spirits can be used to power protective charms. Cat-spirits and wolf-spirits are common choices.

Action: Reflexive

Shadow Tarot (••)

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the Bone Shadows in many areas make frequent use of divination tools. A Shadow Tarot deck is one such tool, specially empowered to give insight and information to the tribe. The user activates the deck and performs some kind of reading,



anything from the circle and cross to a single-card draw, depending on how much time the character has what he wants to know. The images on the cards of the deck loosely match the traditional Tarot deck, but when the deck is activated, the character can see a crude representation of himself moving from card to card, in sequence, and encountering the challenges therein. In game terms, the reading gives the character an oblique hint as to what is happening, couched in the symbolism of the Tarot (the Storyteller might give the user's player an Intelligence + Occult roll for some help in interpreting what the character sees). At some point in the future, if the character recognizes an element from the reading (and the player specifically calls attention to it), he can regain a point of Willpower *or* apply a +3 modifier to a relevant roll. A raven-spirit is usually used to create a Shadow Tarot deck.

Action: Instant (though performing the reading might take as much as 10 minutes)

Death Wolf's Howl (•••)

Some Bone Shadows carry small, glass jars, sealed with wax and marked with the tribal glyph. Werewolves that have heard of the Death Wolf's Howl often give some measure of deference to such werewolves, for fear of the Howl's release.

Creating this fetish requires a wolf-spirit that has consumed at least a bit of Essence tainted with death, either directly from another spirit or from an appropriately tinged locus. The ideal candidate would be a magath made from a wolf-spirit eating death-spirits, but obviously those aren't easily found. The spirit empowers the jar with a long, eerie howl, and then the werewolf seals the jar. When the seal is broken (and the fetish activated), the Howl is released. Everyone who hears it must roll Stamina + Composure minus the user's Wisdom + Primal Urge (the roll for spirits is Resistance minus the user's Wisdom + Primal Urge). The roll results below are for the victim's Stamina + Composure roll, *not* for the activation of the fetish.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The user suffers *aggravated* damage equal to the fetish user's Wisdom (but no other loss) as the Howl pierces his heart and freezes the blood in his veins.

Failure: The victim loses Willpower, Essence or Health in any combination equal to the fetish user's successes. Health lost in this way is considered lethal damage.

Success: The Howl inflicts no damage, but the victim suffers a –3 penalty to all rolls involving hearing for the rest of the scene.

Exceptional Success: The Death Wolf's Howl has no effect.

Once used, the fetish has to be recharged. The user must open the jar and howl to Death Wolf (the player rolls Presence + Expression), and then let the jar sit in darkness for three nights. At that point, the Howl returns and the werewolf can seal the jar again.

Action: Instant

Spirit Anchor (••••)

Spirits are notoriously hard to destroy. Attacking with claws and fangs typically discorporates them, and that's a temporary fix at best. The Spirit Anchor, a fetish taking the form of a square piece of fabric about two feet on a side with metal weights affixed to the corners, prevents a spirit from discorporating for any reason. The spirit can flee using whatever means of locomotion are available (a spirit resembling a bird can fly, a spirit with legs can run, while an abstract spirit with no real form usually just falls to the ground and remains there), but the spirit's Speed is greatly impaired.

To use this fetish, the werewolf must throw it on top of the spirit, after successfully activating the fetish. Throwing it onto a spirit requires the player to roll Dexterity + Athletics minus the spirit's Defense (armor does not apply). If this roll succeeds, the spirit rolls Resistance, contested by the werewolf's Presence + Primal Urge. If the spirit wins, it shakes off the anchor. If the spirit loses, its form solidifies. The spirit cannot discorporate, even if reduced to zero Corpus (any further damage comes of the spirit's Essence, which of course can destroy it — see p. 275 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). Furthermore, the spirit's Speed is reduced by half (if it has any visible means of movement) or reduced to 5 (if it does not have legs, wings, etc.).

When the Spirit Anchor is in place, a werewolf attacking the spirit must take care not to damage the fetish. The werewolf's player can take a –2 modifier (above and beyond Defense) to avoid hitting the Spirit Anchor, unless the spirit is Size 7 or larger, in which case the werewolf is assumed to have ample space to avoid the fetish. If the player does not take this modifier, the Storyteller rolls a die every time the spirit is successfully attacked. On a roll of '1,' the Anchor is damaged, and the effects end. The Anchor can be repaired (extended Dexterity + Crafts, 10 successes necessary; each roll takes one day).

The spirit of any large, heavy animal can empower this fetish.

Action: Reflexive

Grand Klaive — Tooth of the Death Wolf (•••••)

A Tooth of the Death Wolf is a fetish weapon created employing a death-spirit. These weapons vary in form, but sickles, scythes and other curved blades are common. Upon activation, a Tooth of the Death Wolf imposes an aura of ghostly menace over the wielder. The Bone Shadow becomes Death Incarnate — fury disappears, emotion disappears and all that remains is inevitability. In game terms, the Bone Shadow's player receives three extra dice on all Intimidation rolls (including Gifts that use the Skill), and receives a +2 modifier to avoid Death Rage.

A Tooth of the Death Wolf inflicts aggravated damage once activated, and lethal damage otherwise. Using an activated Tooth of the Death Wolf against another werewolf causes a roll to avoid degeneration at Harmony 4 (roll three dice).

Action: Instant

Milestone Gift: Eyes of Death Wolf

Prerequisites: Wisdom 5, Harmony 6 or greater

Death Wolf herself bestows this Gift upon deserving Bone Shadows, and the method isn't at all pleasant. The Bone Shadow has dreams for a month, during which Lunes and other spirits congratulate him on receiving the honor of the Eyes of the Death Wolf. Then, when the werewolf steps into the Shadow, a great wolf-spirit pounces and drags him into the darkness. His packmates can give chase, but wind up pursuing phantoms and smoke. Death Wolf has the Uratha now.

Back at her den, Death Wolf attacks the werewolf and plucks out his eyes, consuming them. The Uratha spends hours (though to her, the wait is interminable) blind in the den of his tribal totem. At last, Death Wolf instructs the werewolf to pluck out her eyes — carefully! — and replace his own with them. From that point onward, the Bone Shadow can see into or out of the Shadow merely by concentrating. He can't see both areas at once, but he can identify Ridden and other possessed beings on site, and the player can spend one Essence point for the character to know the name of any spirit he encounters.

As a Milestone Gift, Eyes of the Death Wolf is only available to Bone Shadows who perform some great service for the tribe or their packs, usually in the name of protecting werewolves or wolf-blooded from spirits or otherwise upholding the tribal vow (see "Milestone Gifts," p. 12). If the character's Harmony drops below 6 after he learns this Gift, he has three cycles of the moon to regain this level of spiritual balance, during which he must perform the Rite of Contrition to Death Wolf. If he fails to do this, he loses the Eyes of the Death Wolf and can never regain it — which unfortunately means he goes blind, forever.

Shadows Over the Moon

Rounding out this chapter, you'll find some characters. One is a Bone Shadow who has gained some notoriety within the tribe, despite his own best efforts. The rest belong to a pack of Bone Shadows, suitable for use as allies, rivals or mentors in any **Werewolf** chronicle.

Doctor Laurence

Auspice: Ithaeur
Tribe: Bone Shadows
Lodge: Hallowed Halls
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2
Physical Attributes: Strength 2 (3/5/4/3), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/5), Stamina 3 (4/5/5/4)
Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 4, Composure 3
Mental Skills: Academics 4, Computer 1, Investigation 3, Medicine (Diagnostics) 3, Occult (Human-Mimics) 2, Politics 1, Science 3
Physical Skills: Brawl 2, Drive 1, Larceny 1, Stealth (Quick Exits) 3, Survival 1, Weaponry 1
Social Skills: Expression (Sarcasm) 2, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge (Lies) 3
Merits: Barfly, Contacts (Lodge of the Hallowed Halls), Encyclopedic Knowledge, Language (First Tongue), Resources 1, Status (Medical) 2
Primal Urge: 1
Willpower: 5
Harmony: 6
Essence Max/Per Turn: 10/1
Virtue: Prudence
Vice: Sloth
Health: 8 (10/12/11/8)
Initiative: 6 (6/7/8/8)
Defense: 3 (in all forms)
Speed: 10 (11/14/17/15)
Renown: Cunning 3, Wisdom 3
Gifts: (1) Death Sight, Partial Change, Two-World Eyes; (2) Scent of Taint, Ward vs. Humans; (3) Echo Dream, Sculpt
Rituals: 3; **Rites:** Banish Human, Banish Spirit, Bind Human, Cleansed Blood, Rite of Renunciation

Doctor Jacob Laurence underwent his First Change fairly late in life. He was 35 when the crescent-moon shone through his office window, illuminating his body surrounded by paperwork, case files, an empty bottle of pills and a suicide note. The Rage swept through him, and he scattered the despair- and apathy-spirits that had been clinging to him. Then he



stormed through his clinic, destroying everything he could touch.

In the morning, he was still there, and was initially questioned in the destruction of his empty offices. It became clear, though, that a slight, frail man like Laurence couldn't have done such a thing.

Laurence joined the Bone Shadows shortly after his Change, but only because the local Bone Shadows had recently lost a crescent-moon and figured a respected doctor would be a good addition to the tribe. Laurence allowed himself to be talked into joining, but never particularly cared. He made a point of learning the Rite of Renunciation just so he could change his mind, if he ever decided that he hated his tribe that much. Other *Hirfathra Hissu* challenged him and even injured him, but his Uratha constitution protected him from lasting harm. Laurence was probably the only werewolf in the world who just didn't *care*, but that was nothing new. He hadn't attempted suicide that fateful night because he was depressed, but simply because he was tired of working all the time.

It was five years after his Change that Laurence finally found a purpose. While drinking an evening away (his pack generally left him alone, as his contributions weren't worth the effort to get him to change forms and join them), he saw a woman open her mouth to laugh. Her teeth weren't teeth, but white stalks, each with a perfect blue eye at the end. Horrified and intrigued, Laurence followed her, and discovered that she was an exceptionally powerful and vicious Ridden. He studied her for several more nights, learned the ban of the spirit curled up inside her (a spirit of voyeurism and violence, it couldn't let her sleep — nothing a bottle of ether couldn't fix), then brought her head back to his pack.

They were impressed, but not as much as he thought they should be. Annoyed, he started looking into other "human-mimics," creatures that looked human but were assuredly *not*. His work brought him into contact with vampires, Ridden and stranger creatures still, and he approached the question of identifying them in a scientific manner. He even wrote papers on the subject, but they were far too technical and dry for his pack to understand. A werewolf in the Lodge of the Hallowed Halls, though, got hold of one of Laurence's abstracts and contacted him to collaborate. Within a year, Laurence was a member.

Laurence still likes to complain about work, and he's not crazy about the fact that in order to support his pack, he has to see patients occasionally. But he does like having access to the city's finest hospital

Using Doctor Laurence

Laurence has some clout at a hospital, and he might well be called upon to change or lose paperwork in the event that a werewolf gets admitted. He's not especially good at that kind of thing, though (secretaries and interns do the paperwork, not him), and he'll expect heavy recompense. It's more up his alley to collaborate on a strange creature pretending to be human, or on a spiritual manifestation or disturbance in a medical setting. Laurence is intelligent and has a sharp, incisive mind, and he does like to be flattered, so presenting him with an intellectual problem that "only he can solve" is a good way to get him to help.

On the other hand, an interesting story with Dr. Laurence might involve him finally breaking with the Bone Shadows to pursue his own interests full time. The characters might be asked to talk him out of it, or give him the final push he needs to perform the Rite of Renunciation.

resources, and he loves the fact that even werewolves have their academics and diagnosticians.

Doctor Laurence is thin, sallow and constantly in need of a shave. He eats almost constantly, but never gains weight — his werewolf constitution allows him to mistreat his body in any number of ways. He wears slacks and buttoned-down shirts to work (hospital policy), but changes into jeans and faded T-shirts almost immediately when his shift is over. He wouldn't want people to think he's a doctor — they might ask him questions.

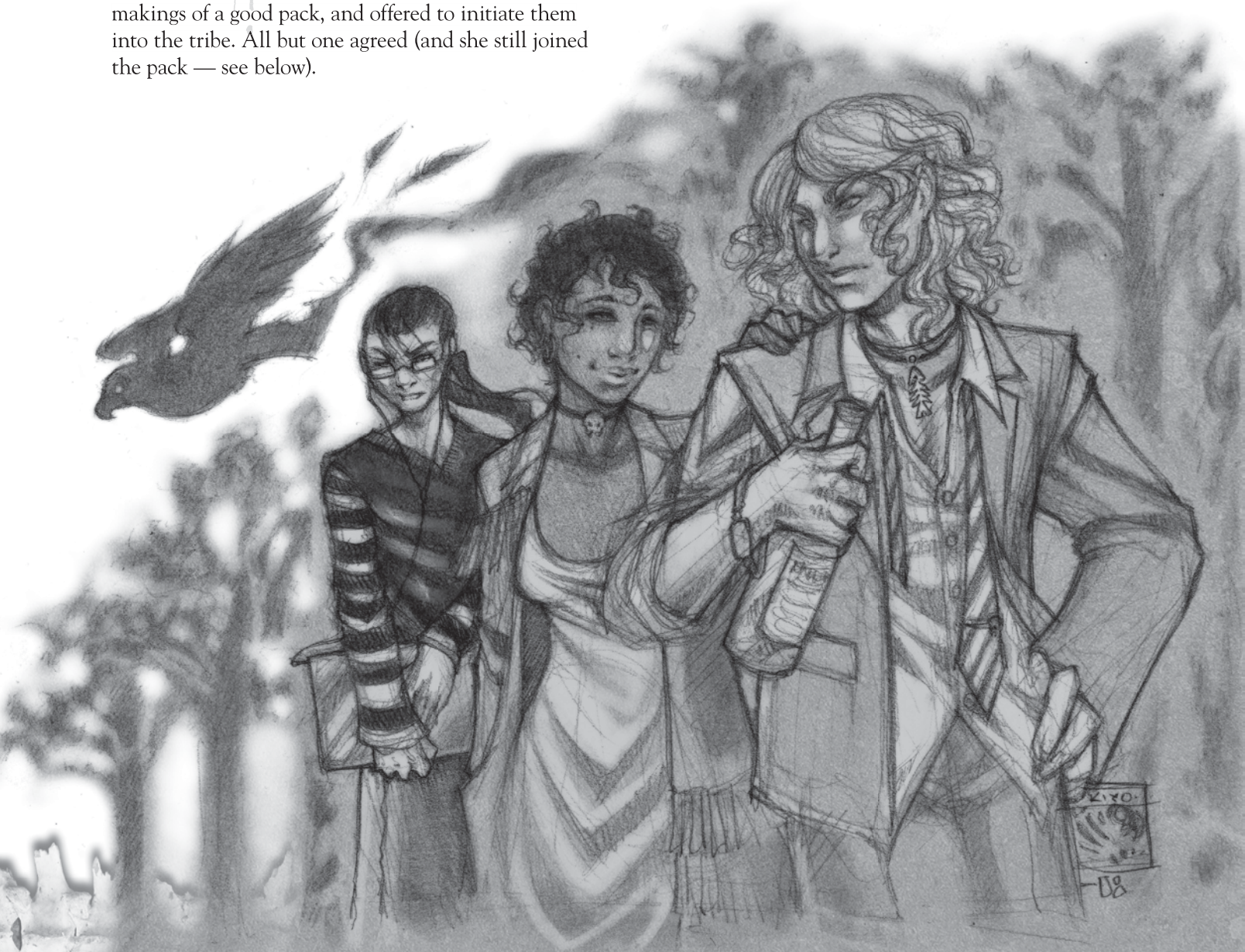
Sample Pack — The Ramblers

The Ramblers pack came together outside Toronto about 10 years ago. Before that, most of the pack members had been Ghost Wolves, unwilling to join any of the packs in that city for whatever reason. Zane, a member of the Lodge of Harbingers (see p. 200 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**) passing through the area, saw in this collection of lone wolves the makings of a good pack, and offered to initiate them into the tribe. All but one agreed (and she still joined the pack — see below).

The Ramblers, as the name implies, refuse to claim territory. The pack focuses on the spiritual dangers that aren't anyone else's problem — spirits that wander, monsters that other packs drove away but didn't finish, *Zi'ir* that escaped from their packs or never had them and so on. When the Ramblers arrive in a new area, they seek out any Bone Shadow packs or pack alphas first, and then look for other tribes. The Ramblers do their best to remain hidden, though, until they know that the Forsaken claim territory. The pack lost a member to the Predator Kings last year when the pack members responded to a scent mark without checking closely enough, and Zane still blames himself for that Uratha's death.

"Murky" Zane Coolidge

Auspice: Irraka
Tribe: Bone Shadows
Lodge: Harbingers
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2
Physical Attributes: Strength 3 (4/6/5/4), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/5), Stamina 3 (4/5/5/4)



Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 3
Mental Skills: Computer (Chat Rooms) 1, Crafts 2, Investigation 3, Occult 3
Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Drive 1, Firearms 1, Larceny (Silent Entry) 3, Stealth 4
Social Skills: Animal Ken 1, Persuasion (Fast Talk) 2, Streetwise 3
Merits: Danger Sense, Fleet of Foot 3, Language (First Tongue)
Primal Urge: 3
Willpower: 5
Harmony: 7
Essence Max/per Turn: 12/1
Virtue: Hope
Vice: Greed
Health: 8 (10/12/11/8)
Initiative: 6 (6/7/8/8)
Defense: 3 (in all forms)
Speed: 14 (15/18/21/19) with Fleet of Foot
Renown: Cunning 3, Honor 1, Purity 1, Wisdom 3
Gifts: (1) Death Sight, Feet of Mist, Partial Change, Sense Malice, Sense Weakness; (2) Blending, Father Wolf's Speed, Scent of Taint; (3) Corpse Witness, Running Shadow
Rituals: 3; **Rites:** Create Talen (see p. 72), Rite of Initiation, Rite of the Spirit Brand

Folks call Zane "Murky" because of his eyes. They have this odd gray coloration to them, and not in the common not-quite-blue range. They look like fog or storm clouds, and Zane always seems to be thinking about something more important than the conversation he's having. He almost never makes eye contact, either.

It's not that Zane is rude, or even overly distracted. It's just that he stays *ready*. He knows how fast things can boil up out of nowhere, especially when Uratha gather, and he doesn't like to be on the defensive. He rarely stays still, and as the pack alpha, he makes sure the Ramblers remain on the move, never resting for more than a few hours if he can help it. Of course, the pack does sometimes get stuck in the same area for a bit, while dealing with some problem or other, but any longer than a month and Zane is ready to chew the walls.

Since the death of his friend and packmate, Zane has taken to drinking. As a werewolf, it doesn't impair him much or for very long, but it slows him down *just* a bit. The other Ramblers haven't decided if this is a bad thing or not.

Zane is in his early 30s. He has blond hair reaching to his shoulders and dresses for the road. The only propriety he cares about is werewolf propriety, but he is quite willing to dress in a three-piece suit if that's the protocol for Uratha in the area.

Roslyn Leff

Auspice: Rahu
Tribe: Bone Shadows
Lodge: Harbingers
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 4
Physical Attributes: Strength 2 (3/5/4/3), Dexterity 2 (2/3/4/4), Stamina 3 (4/5/5/4)
Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 2
Mental Skills: Crafts 2, Science (Chemistry) 2
Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Multiple Opponents) 3, Stealth 2, Survival 1, Weaponry (Club) 1
Social Skills: Empathy 2, Expression (Impassioned Speech) 2, Intimidation 3, Streetwise (Trouble) 3, Subterfuge 1
Merits: Barfly, Direction Sense, Fighting Style: Kung Fu 1, Language: First Tongue
Primal Urge: 2
Willpower: 6
Harmony: 8
Essence Max/per Turn: 11/1
Virtue: Justice
Vice: Wrath
Health: 8 (10/12/11/8)
Initiative: 4 (4/5/6/6)
Defense: 2 (in all forms)
Speed: 9 (10/13/16/14)
Renown: Cunning 1, Purity 2, Wisdom 2
Gifts: (1) Clarity, The Right Words, Ward vs. Predators; (2) Mighty Bound, Ward vs. Humans

Roslyn was a mousy, quiet girl studying chemistry in Buffalo, New York. Her friends always said she had a wild side waiting to break loose, but it wasn't until the full moon rose over campus on a winter's night that she discovered how wild it was. The Change hit at the stroke of midnight, but even before that she had lost most of her inhibitions (what happened at the campus bar that night is still the stuff of collegiate urban legend). A bit mortified, and not able to step back into her reticent life, she traveled north, eventually settling into the Toronto bar scene.

She refused to join a pack while there, largely because most of the Uratha who approached her were Iron Masters, and she never really felt that their tribal philosophy suited her. Why was territory so important, anyway? She'd just left her hometown behind, and felt little remorse about it. When Zane finally arrived and introduced her to the Lodge of Harbingers, she had found her calling. She joined immediately and never looked back.

Roslyn is only 21, but she's an old 21. Her time working the night shift in bars has made her pale and a bit worn, but she's got an infectious smile and a nice

singing voice. She has short brown hair and is never without her Buffalo Bills jacket.

Cloz

Auspice: Cahalith
Tribe: Bone Shadows
Lodge: Harbingers
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 2
Physical Attributes: Strength 3 (4/6/5/4), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/5), Stamina 2 (3/4/4/3)
Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 4, Composure 3
Mental Skills: Academics 2, Crafts 2, Computer 2, Investigation 1, Occult (Possession) 2, Politics 2
Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Larceny 1, Survival 2, Weaponry (Knife) 1
Social Skills: Animal Ken (Rats) 2, Empathy 2, Expression (Writing) 3, Persuasion 1, Socialize 2, Subterfuge (Hidden Agenda) 2
Merits: Contacts (Conspiracy Theorists, Occult Community), Fame 1, Fetish, Language (French), Meditative Mind
Primal Urge: 1
Willpower: 5
Harmony: 6
Essence Max/per Turn: 10/1
Virtue: Faith
Vice: Envy
Health: 7 (9/11/10/7)
Initiative: 6 (6/7/8/8)
Defense: 2 (in all forms)
Speed: 11 (12/15/18/16)
Renown: Glory 1, Wisdom 4
Gifts: (1) Death Sight, Know Name, Pack Awareness; (2) Traveler's Blessing; (3) Sagacity; (4) Shadow Flesh
Rituals: 1; **Rites:** Shared Scent

"Cloz" is short for "Closet," and the young werewolf puts up with jokes about *that* on a daily basis. The name is important to him, though (he's only recently stopped grousing when people call him "Cloz" rather than "Closet," in fact). It represents the fear he can't conquer. During his First Change, Cloz discovered that his bedroom closet contained a locus — a weak one, yes, but a locus nonetheless, with a resonance best described as "hidden." The locus awakened in him a desire to *know*, to uncover hidden truths… and unfortunately, he started seeing those truths everywhere.

Cloz has a pet theory for just about everything, and he's always looking for ways to link those insane ideas. His most persistent notion is that all closets, cupboards and similar spaces are connected. Entering one should allow egress from another, if he could only figure out the name (and ban) of the elusive Spirit of the Closet. The pack used to laugh at him, but Cloz has managed to produce some compelling evidence for his theory. The most important piece of evidence is that weak spirits often refer to closets with the First Tongue phrase for "shared space."

Cloz is getting on his packmates' nerves, though, since the loss of the pack's Elodoth member. Cloz believes that the Predator Kings who killed the Elodoth were tipped off by spirits that didn't want Cloz making any more "progress," and he's been trying to find out who or what informed the Pure ever since. He can't seem to accept the truth: his packmate died because he followed a scent mark without checking closely.

Cloz is only 18. He is thin and pale, and wears thin glasses for reading and working at his computer, which is never far from his person. His storytelling ability takes the form of oddly compelling rambles rather than true narrative.

The Pack's Ghost Wolf

John Ventner experienced his First Change under a barely visible crescent moon one night in Toronto. He dug his way into a hollow beneath an oak tree, and unearthed the bodies of four women — victims of a serial killer that a local Blood Talon had killed some years before. This put the women's souls to rest, but before they departed to the hereafter, they gave Ventner a vision. They told him that when the time came, he would walk under the shadow. That didn't mean anything to him until Zane arrived in the city and formed a pack, and then Ventner knew he had found the "shadow" to which the ghosts had referred.

But the time hasn't come yet, and Ventner is beginning to wonder if it will. He's expecting a *moment*, a truly auspicious occasion that will show him, once and for all, that he is meant to be a Bone Shadow. But now his packmate is dead, and Zane is drinking, and Cloz is getting ever crazier and Roslyn is looking more haggard by the day. Did he miss his chance? Should he just join the tribe now, prophecy be damned?

Pack Totem: Restless Falcon

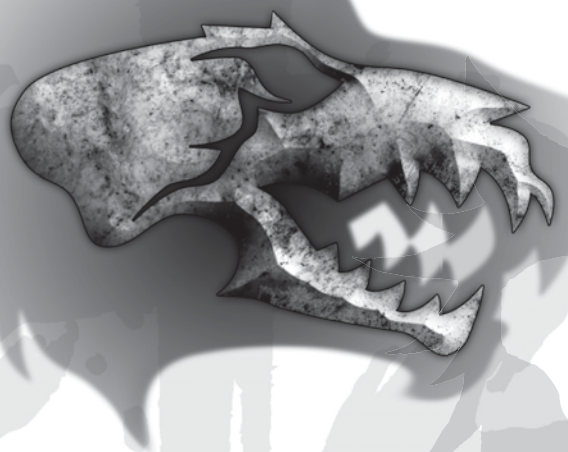
Attributes: Power 2; Finesse 5; Resistance 2
Willpower: 4
Essence: 15
Initiative: 7
Defense: 5
Speed: 21 (species factor 14; flight only)
Size: 2
Corpus: 4
Influences: Endurance ••
Numina: Call the Breeze (as the Gift), Material Vision
Bonuses: Athletics 2 (given); Stamina 2 (story); Willpower pool — 2 points (story)
Ban: Once a month, the pack must stay awake and moving for 48 hours straight.
Cost: 20

Restless Falcon is a small, black falcon-spirit. It never sleeps, and seldom lands, preferring to lazily circle the pack from the air. The spirit fears sleep because it thinks it will miss something important, and has been known to wake the pack from a sound slumber if the spirit sees something it thinks they need to see. As a spirit, of course, its idea of what is important remains somewhat different than the pack's. Since the death in the pack, the totem has lost some of its vibrancy, and its restlessness seems a bit more like paranoia.

Using the Ramblers

The simplest way to use this pack, of course, is in the pack members' capacity as Harbingers. They arrive in the chronicle's setting, share some news about a coming crisis and leave again. They might stay long enough to teach a Bone Shadow rites, or even help a werewolf join the Lodge of Harbingers, but otherwise they don't become part of the scenery.

Another possibility, though, is that a Bone Shadow character ran with the pack for a while, but didn't want to join the lodge or continue wandering. The Ramblers, then, might show up only days after the death of the Elodoth packmate (whose name and personality have been left up to the Storyteller). The character then needs to cope with reunion under unfortunate circumstances, and might need to help the pack members overcome their grief. If you use this story hook, though, it might be wise for the Bone Shadow character to receive some correspondence from Zane ahead of time, or to run through some flashback scenes, just so the character has an idea of what the pack was like *before* the tragedy.





Chapter III

Hunters in Darkness, Meninna

The gibbous moon shines down on the fields. The dreamer's moon, the storyteller's moon. Everything in the field has a voice tonight. Crickets sing and frogs chirp, the night-birds jeer at their sleeping, diurnal cousins and the deer rustle in the underbrush, quietly sizing up the garden over the fence.

Everything goes quiet, though, as the wolf passes.

Is the wolf thinking with a human mind? Does the wolf feel grief for the creature whose blood stains its teeth, whose flesh lies wedged under its claws? Does the wolf look to the gibbous moon, the moon under which it first found its paws, and wish to sing, to add its own story to the night?

The wolf glides through a thicket brush. The twigs don't snap, out of deference to the wolf's silence. When the wolf is ready to add its story to the night, the wolf will do it.

The barn is white, and the roof sags a little. In the rafters, squirrels build nests and spiders weave their endless webs. In another five years, this barn will collapse under its own weight, if the present owner does not to strengthen the roof. The wolf, perhaps, knows this, for the wolf has a human mind buried somewhere beneath tooth, claw and night-sounds, but the wolf can't wait five years. Inside the barn is a human man who has done something terrible.

For in a place over the fence that the deer are even now crossing, across the fields so alive with night-song, beyond the church parking lot and past the fairgrounds, in this place, the body of a little boy is buried. And that boy's soul cannot leave this place, for he is alone, cold and frightened. The wolf, perhaps, recognizes the anguish of a cub's fear, but the wolf's concern is for the place itself, for that place is where the wolf brings her own child... when the wolf walks as woman, when she laughs and speaks, when the sun shines on her and her own little boy.

The man is in the barn. The wolf is at the door. The wolf will add her song to the night, and then she will leave, silently, and not even the wind will whistle, out of deference to the wolf's silence.

Hunters in Darkness

Menninna

"Hunting humans ain't nothing but nothing. They all run like scared little rabbits. Run, rabbit, run!"
— Otis, House of 1000 Corpses

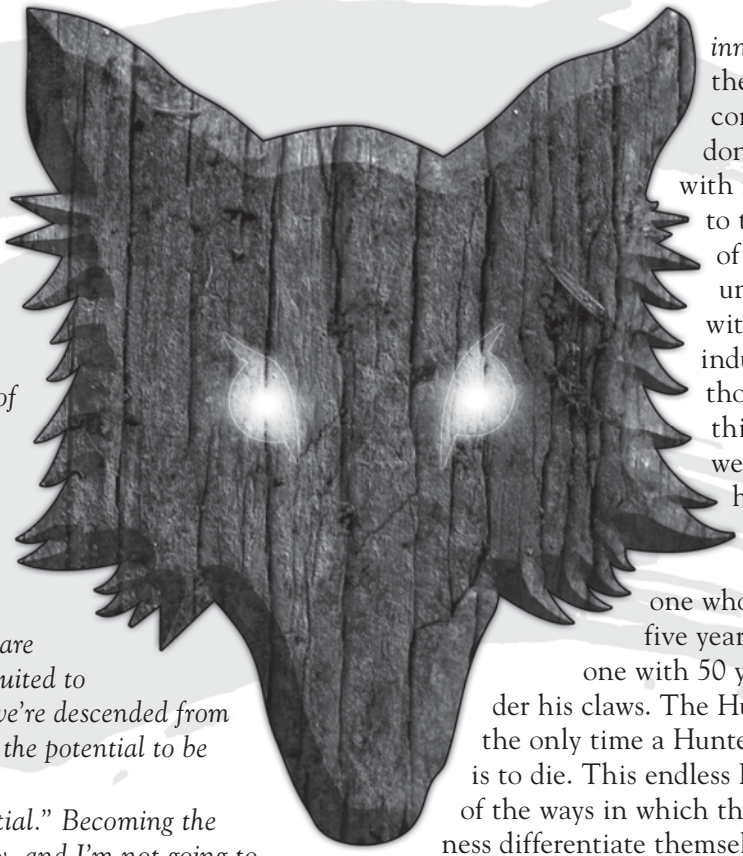
We are the Hunt.

Ever hear a cop say that he is the job? What he means by that is that when he goes home, kisses his wife, plays with his kids — if he's got time for family — he's still a cop. He never loses his instinct, his agenda, because it's become so much a part of him to do what he does.

Human beings who try to define themselves so narrowly burn out. We don't, and that's because we're as much spirit as flesh. Humans are just flesh, so they're ill-suited to that kind of focus, but we're descended from spirits, and so we've got the potential to be the Hunt, forever.

Yeah, I said "potential." Becoming the Hunt isn't for everybody, and I'm not going to knock the Uratha who choose other tribes. They just don't have our focus. They hunt, but they aren't Hunters.

If one were to reduce the Hunters in Darkness down to an essential concept, it wouldn't be difficult. It's right there in the name. All werewolves hunt; it's part of them, it's right there in their most sacred oath and it's what they were designed by evolution and the Firstborn to do. The Hunters in Darkness, though, are those werewolves who, upon stalking their first prey after the First Change, felt a sense of self that they had never felt before.



Experienced *Menninna* often refer to the Hunt as a broader concept, and they don't usually bother with much explanation to the newer members of the tribe. No one understands the Hunt within a month of induction into the tribe, though most werewolves think they do. A werewolf who has been hunting for a decade understands the Hunt better than one who has hunted for only five years but not as well as one with 50 years of hunting under his claws. The Hunt never stops, and the only time a Hunter abandons the Hunt is to die. This endless Hunt, in fact, is one of the ways in which the Hunters in Darkness differentiate themselves as werewolves from ordinary humans and, more importantly, from wolves. Wolves don't hunt if they don't have to. Werewolves must hunt, even if everything is provided for them.

Understanding the Hunt

A constant hunt might imply that the werewolf is searching for something, but that isn't necessarily the case. A Hunter in Darkness does not hunt simply because she is missing something; she hunts because it is in her nature to do so. The Hunt is in her blood and soul every night, and in the accomplishment of the Hunt, in the strike and

the kill, the werewolf sees not the end of one hunt but simply the end of one cycle of the larger Hunt. The Hunt might take her down darkened paths stalking an enemy, through the forest searching for food, or between the concrete towers of the city looking for a wolf-blooded mate. In some territories claimed by the Hunters in Darkness, werewolves greet each other with the First Tongue phrase *Ni-zu tag?* ("What are you hunting?"). An answer of *nu-nih* ("nothing") is interpreted to mean that the werewolf is either depressed and lethargic, or has just completed a hunt and is resting before the next one. The werewolf conveys this difference through body language and tone of voice.

The Hunters in Darkness understand that other tribes hunt as well, but they just don't make the same commitment to the Hunt. For young werewolves joining a multi-tribal pack, this doesn't tend to be much of an issue, since young packs are more likely to be mobile and constantly active (and thus, always hunting, in some form). As the pack becomes more established, though, it needs to stay active and to seek out things to hunt, lest the *Meninna* in the pack become bored and seek her own quarry.

The Hunt changes focus a bit as a *Meninna* progresses through her life. Just after a First Change, the Hunt tends to be visceral and physical — the werewolf hunts for food, prey, mates, enemies and so on. The Hunt is one of Rage and hunger, as the werewolf reconciles the flesh and the spirit. Some werewolves never leave this stage of their development, and no werewolf ever abandons it.

As a Hunter matures, she begins asking questions of her world. She learns about the spirit wilds and their native creatures, and looks at them within the context of her auspice (and her pack). She sees some of the strange denizens of the World of Darkness, and she must decide how they fit into her Hunt. Are they prey? Rival predators? Other werewolves need to be subject to this kind of scrutiny, too, because the werewolf is hunting for information, for truth, rather than simply fact. This more esoteric Hunt doesn't really end, but it lessens in importance as the werewolf learns what she needs to know to function within her territory. Once the character has learned the history of her area and has become part of the area, spiritually as well as physically, she normally spends less time searching out secrets and more time dealing with the present. Some Hunters, of course, become fascinated with this stage of the Hunt. Cahalith, especially, find the lure of secrets and how they all link together to be their favorite quarry.

Finally, the Hunter in Darkness reaches the stage where the pack (or lodge or tribe) is the most important thing in her life. If she takes a mate and raises a family, that family might become her focus and the reason for her Hunt, but as raising a family is dangerous for a werewolf, this stage of her life is much more likely to involve her affiliations as one of the Uratha. A Hunter at this stage of life defines her Hunt chiefly by what her pack or lodge asks of her. If these groups don't make this kind of demand on her (rare), then she often considers how best her tribal vow can be served by the Hunt.

All of the above assumes, of course, that the werewolf keeps chiefly to the precepts of Harmony, is a member of a pack and has the freedom to follow this progression. Hunters in Darkness are just as capable of becoming *Zi'ir* as any other werewolves, should they allow their spiritual balance to degrade itself. Indeed, a *Meninna* whose Harmony dips low enough that she develops a ban or compulsion (see p. 185 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**) usually finds that she must hunt for increasing periods of time: an hour a night at Harmony 5, three hours a night at Harmony 4 and so on, until the Hunter, should she become a Broken Soul, does nothing but hunt from sunset to sunrise. This sad creature doesn't necessarily eat what she hunts, but assuredly kills her quarry.

Early Life

A human being who undergoes the First Change is a cub, a *nuzusul*, untested and unaffiliated. Luna marks the Uratha, but those marks aren't indelible, since the Pure can strip them away. The Hunters in Darkness don't feel that joining the tribe is a matter of fate or obligation; they simply present the truth as they see it — the Wolf Must Hunt, and they produce the best hunters.

A werewolf who finds the Hunters in Darkness soon after his First Change is likely to become one, simply because the Hunters don't always present themselves as a tribe (that is, they present themselves as werewolves first and last, and if there are no Ghost Wolves or representatives of other tribes around, Hunters in Darkness use the terms "Uratha," "werewolf" and "Hunter" synonymously). A *nuzusul* in that kind of situation often undergoes

the Rite of Initiation without realizing that other options exist, and how that werewolf responds when he learns that there are other tribes depends very much on how that young werewolf was treated and whether the *Meninna* really were the best fit for him. A werewolf who falls right into the Hunter mindset, lurking in the shadows, patiently hunting his prey and so on probably would have joined the tribe anyway, and isn't likely to get too upset once he meets a member of another tribe. But a werewolf who would rather fight than hunt, who always reveals his position so that his prey has time to prepare, might well grow angry at the Uratha who mentored him when he meets a pack of Blood Talons and finds his "true" calling.

The Hunters in Darkness don't usually begrudge werewolves who want to leave the tribe. The Hunt is tiring, after all, and the pack requires warriors and mystics and leaders as well as hunters and warders. Individual Hunters might feel pity, scorn or simply loss if a tribemate turns his back on Black Wolf, but actual reprisals are rare. Once the Uratha has left, however, he won't be allowed back. The trail of the Hunt has grown cold, and he must make his way on his new path.

The Hard Sell

Lest the reader think that the Hunters in Darkness are easy-going, flexible hippies who let potential recruits do as they may, consider this: the Hunters in Darkness are taciturn, demanding and unforgiving. All werewolves were born human, and so a pack of *Meninna* isn't likely to take a new cub into the wilderness and leave him there, since few human beings have any good idea of how to survive in the wilds. But the Hunters don't do much in the way of explanation. Intuition is very important to the tribe, because the Hunt requires not only skill, but also heart. A Hunter must be able to follow clues without taking the time to analyze them intellectually, because on the hunting trail the few moments used in analysis could be all the quarry requires to escape. Likewise, young Hunters aren't given a great deal of opportunity to ask "why?" Why does a taste of blood allow a werewolf to scent his prey for miles? Why will the rat-spirit only accept quarters minted before 1974? Why must a werewolf use claws and not fangs to kill a certain foe? These questions have answers, but to the Hunters, those answers are beside the point. A simple taste of blood *does* enable werewolves to hunt forever… so they hunt. The rat-spirit has his reasons for his preferences, and arguing with him wouldn't help matters. If an elder werewolf howls, "Claws, not teeth!" at the start of a fight, the *Meninna* can surmise that this foe is one that they *don't* want to bite. Analysis comes later, when a hunt (not the Hunt) is concluded. Many young werewolves, fresh from their human lives, have trouble understanding that.

A werewolf who asks too many questions and tries approaching the Hunt as a human being rather than as a werewolf probably winds up dropped off with members of a different tribe or simply remains a Ghost Wolf until he comes to appreciate the Hunters' ways of doing things. Sometimes, too, a werewolf becomes intoxicated with the feeling of becoming a wolf and neglects his human side. Such Uratha don't think through problems like human beings, letting instinct take over at inappropriate times, and the *Meninna* don't approve of that, either. Mentors of the tribe sometimes require their charges to "hunt" someone down without changing forms, and reward the Uratha who realizes that, while hunting by scent in human form is impossible, hunting by logic and employing tools such as computers and other technology are advisable.

Recruitment Tactic: The Hunt and the Howl

Some werewolves might try to help a *nuzusul* get a handle on his new condition by explaining things. The Iron Masters refer the new werewolf to films and books that portray shapeshifters in a somewhat positive light, while the Storm Lords call upon legends of their tribe's strength and nobility. The Hunters in the Darkness, though, simply help the cub to change into Urhan form and take him on a hunt. If the new werewolf stops to ask a question, the Hunters nip at his heels and get him running again. They don't bother changing into human form, and let the instincts of the new werewolf handle the communication. This usually turns out to be easier than the *nuzusul* would think, and communicating as a wolf has the advantage of helping the werewolf get comfortable in his new skin.

The target of this hunt varies depending on the surroundings and the feelings of the Hunters on the matter. Some *Meninna* take new werewolves hunting for food — deer, rabbits or whatever other appropriate game is nearby. The notion of chasing down a rabbit and eating it is alien enough for most people without adding in any more of the strangeness that werewolf packs usually deal with. Some Hunters,

though, feel that an introduction to the supernatural is better. A *nuzusul* asked to hunt down a vampire, a Host or a hostile spirit must show what he can do not only on the hunt but in a fight. Instinct, after all, can't be taught, and so it's important to learn what the cub's instincts tell him. Of course, fighting as a shapeshifter *does* take some skill, and so if the *nuzusul* winds up getting into a scrap with another werewolf or some other supernatural creature, the Hunters make it a priority to get him out (reasonably) unharmed, and to avoid letting him rampage in *Kuruth*. As with so many other things in the life of the Hunters in Darkness, this initial hunt is a balancing act.

After the hunt comes the howl. The *Meninna* throw their heads back and howl to Mother Luna, teaching the new cub how to howl and recognize the "words" and inflections within the sounds. In urban environments, this phase is difficult, because wolf-cries in the city or even the suburbs tend to arouse human suspicion. Some packs feel that to deny the werewolf his howl is to stifle his soul; others feel that learning discretion is too important of a lesson to be tossed aside for the sake of ceremony. Obviously, the feelings of the pack help to color the *nuzusul*'s own opinions on the matter.

The *Meninna* find that the Hunt and the Howl tactic helps to drive home several important lessons for new Uratha: First, that they must hunt, and should learn to do so quickly and quietly. Second, that the pack is important, and that a werewolf who hunts alone does so at a disadvantage. Finally, that the life of a werewolf is joyous, at least at times.

Recruitment Tactic: Counting Coup

Hunter territories tend to remain in *Meninna* hands, given how possessive the tribe can be about territories. But in areas where multi-tribal packs are the rule rather than the exception or in areas large enough that many different packs claim territory, the *Meninna* sometimes adopt a more subtle recruitment tactic. As mentioned, they place a high priority on instinct, and if a werewolf's instincts say that he would be better suited to, say, the Bone Shadows, the Hunters normally wish him well and point the way. Better to have him make this decision now than renounce Black Wolf later.

If a given *nuzusul* is especially promising, though — a Hunter Cahalith might have a dream that indicates the cub is destined for greatness, or he might simply possess skills or status that makes



him a desirable recruit — the *Meninna* might demonstrate the benefits of allying with Black Wolf in their inimitably subtle way. While the cub is out with other werewolves, being groomed for membership, being trained in shapeshifting or simply trying to come to grips with the whole affair, the Hunters appear to him. They don't allow any other werewolves to spot them, but try to get close enough to the new werewolf to touch him without otherwise drawing attention. They don't appear threatening, as the point isn't to scare the *nuzusul*, but the implied message is, "If we *wanted* to harm you, we could, because these people would never see us coming."

Stooping to obvious recruitment tactics, threats or bluster is better suited to the other tribes. The Hunters in Darkness can simply demonstrate their prowess, and let innuendo do the rest: Join us, and you become and invisible, silent hunter. Join them, and take your chances.

Recruitment Tactic: Coping with the First Change

The First Change is one of the most traumatic events of a werewolf's life. On the rare occasions that Uratha try explaining it to non-werewolves (usually wolf-blooded relatives or mates), they make feeble comparisons to losing one's temper or being on various kinds of drugs. But no human experience prepares someone for the exhilaration of changing into a wolf, or for the horror of tearing the people nearby into bloody chunks. Some tribes try to treat this experience as a rite of passage, telling the *nuzusul* that he has found his true place at last, and this is perhaps true, but it does nothing to console the young man who has attacked and slaughtered his friends or the woman who has torn her husband's head from his shoulders. The Hunters in Darkness usually prefer to deal with the horror first, and give perspective later. A *nuzusul* is in no position to understand the significance of Pangaea or *Urfarah* within an hour of the Change, after all.

The Hunters don't always treat *nuzusul* kindly, but Hunters do treat cubs with consideration rather than condescension. A werewolf who is years past her First Change might have difficulty remembering that she was once so horrified by the act of shapeshifting, something that has probably become as natural as breathing since then. But to a new werewolf, concepts such as "the Hunt" and "tribes" don't occur. What occurs are terms such as "demonic possession" or "damnation," if the *nuzusul* is even functioning that well. More likely, the cub is in deep shock, staring down at his blood-soaked hands. And in instances like this, the Hunter usually stays in Hishu form, speaks quietly and non-threateningly, and if the *nuzusul* will let her, touches him gently on the face and hands. Some *Meninna* are adept at coaxing new werewolves into changing shape, and if the Hunter can get the *nuzusul* into Urhan form, instinctive wolf-speak takes over and allows for a much easier bond to form between the Uratha.

A priority for the Hunters is to remove the *nuzusul* from the site of the First Change. One reason for this is practicality. First Changes are usually loud and messy affairs, and in the modern world that kind of noise attracts attention. But the more important reason is to get the werewolf moving, thinking about something other than what has just happened, so that the first night as one of the People isn't bound up entirely in blood and death. This attitude causes some friction between the Hunters and the more martial tribes (the Blood Talons and Storm Lords in particular), but the *Meninna* reason that the cub has his whole life to be a werewolf. A few hours of straddling the line between werewolf and mortal isn't going to hurt.

Hunters-to-Be

Werewolves aren't especially common, and tribe isn't an inborn or genetic trait, so drawing generalities about who will or will not become a Hunter in Darkness is difficult. That said, if 10 random people were to suddenly undergo the First Change on the same night, which one(s) would wind up as Hunters, all else being equal?

- **Patience:** A werewolf who cannot sit still, cannot stalk slowly and cannot *wait* is no Hunter. Being a Hunter in Darkness requires delaying gratification and thinking ahead. Impulsive Uratha are poorly suited to the tribe.
- **Joy:** While some *Meninna* are dour, most revel in the life they have been given. To outsiders, this joy might be terrifying (since a werewolf can find joy in some truly brutal places), but the ability to love the Hunt is important.
- **Reverence:** "Let No Sacred Place in Your Territory Be Violated" assumes that the werewolf in question has a sense of what "sacred" means and is willing to protect it. A werewolf who believes that nothing is sacred has no place among the Hunters in Darkness (but see the Lodge of Carrion, p. 102).

• **Inhumanity:** Hunters in Darkness should not be cruel for the sake of it (no werewolf should; torture is a violation of Harmony). Excess mercy, however, is a flaw. A Hunter in Darkness can present as a bit of a contradiction to a non-werewolf. She might be a loving mother, but indifferent to children other than her own. She might be willing to help a stranger, but abandon him if helping him poses any true risk to her.

• **Attention:** Werewolves who focus only on what is in front of them don't make good Hunters. A Hunter in Darkness must be aware of everything around her, for danger (or the prey's next spoor) could be found anywhere.

• **Discretion:** This quality is important for all werewolves, since their lives depend on secrecy. The Hunters make a special point of drilling the art of not saying anything important (which is different, of course, than not saying anything at all) into their members. A werewolf who can remain taciturn or be garrulous without actually saying much is a natural.

• **Subtlety:** Hand-in-hand with keeping one's mouth shut is appreciating the value of nuance and innuendo. The Hunters in Darkness don't kill unnecessarily, and if they can scare their targets into changing behavior, they will. But threatening humans often just makes them circle their wagons or call in the authorities. Supernatural targets might do the same, or might retaliate directly. Therefore, when sending the message that a given target needs to change his ways, the *Meninna* need to convey that a) the target is being watched, b) that someone can reach him and kill him anywhere, at any time and c) changing a given behavior is the most expedient and safest way to get out of danger. If the last caveat is missing, if the Hunter gives the target no indication of how he might rectify things, then the announcement is worthless — it serves only to announce the Hunters' presence (which isn't smart) and terrify the target. If the target believes he can make himself safe in some other way, the Hunter still has more work to do. In any event, the tribe prizes creativity and the ability to send messages in such a way that doesn't give away the existence of the Uratha, but makes the point unmistakably clear.

• **Possessiveness:** It's not something the Hunters in Darkness specifically look for, but the Uratha who join the tribe have an undeniable tendency to jealously guard what belongs to them. This proclivity shows up pre-Change in various ways. A *nuzusul* who travels either as part of a career or simply because he has no home might have a small bag or box in which he keeps his most sacred treasures, and woe betide anyone who touches it. A teenager's room becomes her den; the artifacts under the bed aren't forgotten but safely hidden. Another *nuzusul* might live mainly out of his car, and that car contains everything he truly cares for. The Hunters in Darkness aren't greedy, necessarily, and aren't looking for more objects to fill their coffers. They are simply protective of what is theirs, and this attitude transfers readily to fetishes, loci, mates, territories and other tribe and pack members once the First Change hits.

• **Ferocity:** Finally, the *Meninna* are werewolves, and the tribe expects its recruits to fight when necessary. A werewolf who hesitates before joining battle or a hunt had better have a good explanation for that reticence. Sizing up the situation is a good explanation; fear is not. When something of value to the Hunter is threatened, he must respond appropriately, that is, violently.

Stories, Songs and Howls

The Uratha have a vibrant oral history, and the Hunters in Darkness enthusiastically participate in this tradition. While Cahalith of any tribe are, by nature, the best storytellers, all werewolves relate their experiences to the People when they have the opportunity. These tales might take the form of bragging, warnings or requests for information — a werewolf who wishes to get something out of a reticent Uratha might break the ice by telling her own story first (and given how taciturn the *Meninna* usually are, that's not a bad idea).

The Hunters in Darkness aren't much for bragging. Yes, it's sometimes a good idea to have legends about one's pack circulating, as it can keep away unwanted trouble, but just as often it *attracts* other werewolves looking to prove something. Since the Hunters in Darkness often guard powerful loci (and, more to the point, since they take the notion of protection of such areas so seriously), any story that they tell with the intent of having it spread is probably loaded with false details and misinformation. Giving away too much about one's territory or even one's history can be considered a violation of the tribal vow, or even, in some extreme cases, betrayal of the pack.

Meninna break stories into two categories. Stories that are related firsthand — that is, stories told by the person who actually experienced them — are considered "true," presuming that the teller is trustworthy. Stories that are related anything other than firsthand are "legends," and the Hunters in Darkness are often instructed to take whatever general truths out of such stories as might be there, but be very careful looking for literal truths. Tribemates usually get a bit of latitude in this department (i.e., a Hunter relating a story that happened to a packmate), but something is *always* lost in retelling, and the Hunters are careful to remember this.

In situations in which the Hunter does not know the werewolf relating a story, she sometimes asks, "Did this happen to you?" and watches for signs of lying (even going so far as to employ a Gift such as Scent Beneath the Surface, should she know it). This isn't meant as an insult, and a werewolf who feels that the teller is being less than truthful won't "call" the speaker on it unless she intends to start a fight (or just feels like being difficult). She just wants to know how she should listen to this story — is it information that can be applied tonight in a literal sense, or every night in a general sense?

Tales from Antiquity

The *Meninna* are just as invested with the history of Pangaea and the death of Father Wolf as any of the other tribes, and the Hunters in Darkness have their own set of legends surrounding the time before the Sundering and the rise of the Gauntlet. Of course, the stories that the Hunters circulate feature Black Wolf fairly heavily, and all such stories definitely fall under the heading of ëlegend' rather than ëtruth.' Some of these carry morals relating to the Oath of the Moon, while others are supposedly historical accounts of significant events. The stories of Black Wolf hunting down the totems of the various lodges usually fall into this category, but more recently formed lodges, such as the Lodge of the Empty Den (p. 100), blur the line between stories of antiquity and recent history.

The Oath of the Moon

Each tenet of the Oath of the Moon has its own legend, and each of the tribes of Luna emphasizes some tenets over others. The Hunters in Darkness are by no means the only tribe that passes along the following story, but when other tribes tell it the focus changes to whatever tenet that tribe favors.

The Firstborn agreed on the Oath of the Moon. They had to — the spirit world has a hierarchy, you know, and in order for us to be allowed to swear the Oath, it had to go through our totems first. That's why when we're initiated, we swear our Oath to Luna, Father Wolf and our tribal totem.

Anyway, the Firstborn realized that their spiritual protégés — us — would have a great deal of trouble keeping our spirits and bodies in balance. Plainly put, we go nuts if we're not careful. You know that, and I know we don't like to talk about it, but face facts. If we don't keep ourselves in check, we kill and eat and fuck, and pretty soon we just don't do simple things like talk human tongues or shake hands anymore. And that was true even back in the day when the Firstborn were just getting used to us, so they figured out what kinds of behaviors would well and truly screw with our balance and put together our commandments.

But in the original draft, as it were, there was nothing saying that we had to hunt. And the reason for that omission was exactly what you're all saying right now — it's obvious. It's what the kids would call a ënobrainer.' But that's the thing about spirits and spiritual matters. You have to spell everything out, you have to name your terms, or you get weird exceptions to the rules. Without that tenet in the Oath, we'd have the urge to hunt but no rights to do it. Or maybe we'd lose the urge and go crazy that way, not hunting but just killing, over and over again. I'm not going to say that the Predator Kings could do with a little more emphasis on hunting over blind aggression… well, okay, I am *going to say it.*

So it was Black Wolf, our spiritual Mother Wolf, who made sure that the Oath included that little privilege. She reminded the Firstborn and Mother Luna and all that The Wolf Must Hunt. *And you know, I'll bet you they thought the same thing you did. It's a no-brainer, but it needed to be said.*

The Tribal Vow

The Hunters in Darkness are occasionally accused of trying to be wolves rather than werewolves, but nothing could be further from the truth. As proof, they offer their own tribal vow — Let No Sacred Place in Your Territory Be Violated. This concept, with the exception of the "territory" part, means nothing to wolves. "Sacred" and "violated" are notions that require a spiritual

understanding, and although wolf-spirits might have such a context, natural wolves do not. No, the *Meninna* do not want to be wolves. They are werewolves, and their tribal vow is an exultation to that state, at least according to legend.

The first of the Uratha to be Hunters in Darkness tracked down Black Wolf. They had tracked her across rivers and blasted plains, across rock and tundra, across lands that would hold no scent, and yet they had found her. They approached her den, and she snarled at them that she would not allow them to enter.

Had the first Hunters been killers or brutes, they might have fought her and taken her home. And had they done so, they might have driven Black Wolf off to favor the Pure Tribes. But the first Hunters did not. One of the Uratha stepped forward, and he said:

"Silent Mother, we have tracked you across the world, and here we stand in your territory, looking upon you under the light of Amahan Iduth. *We will not come further, for as you say, this place is yours. But we have found you, and so you must come out to meet us."*

And Hikaon-Ur was impressed by this werewolf's understanding and reason, and she came forth from her den to meet them. The werewolves there howled with her, and she took them as her sons and daughters, and she taught them to know the forests and to hunt silently through the night — they became the Hunters in Darkness. But they made a promise to her that they, like their totem, would not allow their homes to be violated, for a wolf must have somewhere secret to flee to if the Hunt should turn against him.

Over time, the notion of "sacred place" has evolved. Where it once might have meant "home," it has come to refer to any place truly important to the *Meninna* in question. This is discussed further on p. 95.

Tales from History

The Hunters in Darkness relay stories about actual events in history for their morals and lessons first, and for historical value second, much as human beings do. In the telling, the tale becomes more important than the truth. The unfortunate effect is that exaggerations, misstatements and outright falsehoods can become "common knowledge." (American tradition, for instance, holds that the decision to adopt English rather than German as the country's official language passed by a single vote — not true, but often cited as a reason to get out and cast one's vote on election day.) When dealing with matters of the *Hisil*, however, this kind of false knowledge can be deadly. *Meninna* usually therefore regard historical stories, even if they can be traced to concurrent events in human history, with the same mindset as legends. It didn't actually happen to the teller of the tale, so the wisdom garnered should be general.

Of course, werewolves being the strange and mystical creatures that they are, it's not impossible for a Hunter to be relating a historical tale from experience — see the Wolf of the Woods on p. 115.

Murder Holes

You know what "murder holes" are, right? They're slits cut into the walls of castles and keeps and whatnot. They let the guards on the inside fire arrows at attackers on the outside, and you can't hardly see them to fire in. I was in Europe a few months back, and I met a Hunter there who told me a story about one of us, born French, back in the 13th century or so.

Seems this Uratha was fairly important in the area, kind of an alpha-of-alphas. He had his own pack, and they were the elite Hunters of the area. But he also had a human family, and they were important to him, too. So when they decided they'd go away on pilgrimage — I don't know where, Canterbury or something, it's not important — he went with them. He told his pack to make sure that this one particular locus didn't get violated, and his packmates agreed. It was sacred to all the Hunters.

But it's not like you get on a plane to go on a pilgrimage, right? This Hunter was gone for years, and when he came back, there's a goddamn castle on his locus. His packmates are all dead. Seems that some local lord or baron or something took over the land, but he had backing — some huge hithim, *a monstrous thing like a leech and a bear, had helped him take over so it could take the Essence.*

So our hero — the fellow I heard this from didn't know his name among the People, but just called him Guy — takes on the form of the shadow, and he melts right through the murder holes. And he slaughters every goddamn person in that keep in a single hour, and he takes the baron's head off with one bite, and then it's just him and the spirit. And guess what — there they still are. I walked through that keep, and on the floor of the main room there's a series of cracks. Look at 'em just right, and you see a wolf and a great wyrm, wrestling with each other, the wolf just about has his fangs into the thing's head, and the wyrm just about has its claws to the wolf's gut.

Manifest Destiny

Everybody's heard of the Donner Party, right? And I bet you're expecting me to say something about how there was a werewolf involved. Nah. Humans can eat each other just fine if they get hungry enough. But we — the Hunters in Darkness — were involved in a much weirder story about crossing the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

A party of maybe eight families was crossing the mountains, trying to get to California or someplace. One of the families consisted of John Miles, an Irraka of our tribe, and his wife. I think she might have been wolf-blooded, but in any event, they hadn't had any luck conceiving, and they'd been married for a good many years. Now, everybody steered clear of Miles — you know how it is — but they sure ate the food he brought home every night.

But the wagons got stuck in the mountains during a rainstorm, and then came the plague outbreak. I don't know what the sickness was, but without supplies, it was enough to wipe them all out. John's wife died last. John, of course, was Uratha and the disease didn't take, but he was about out of his mind by the time his woman died.

When the wolves came that night to feed on the bodies of the dead, Miles fought them off. But he couldn't be everywhere at once, and the wolves in those parts were hungry — seems the game wasn't doing so well, maybe because of the same illness? I don't know. Anyway, Miles spent most of his time in Urhan or Urshul, fighting off wolves, until one night he found himself chasing a bitch that happened to be in season. Yeah, you can guess, right?

Miles' line still lives out there in the Sierra Nevadas, I hear. They don't come down from the mountain and they don't take human form much, but they're Hunters by nature, if not by initiation. They're born wolves, but when they Change they can reason like humans. They know that the gravesite of Miles' wife is sacred, and there amongst the rotted wagons and crumbling bones is their locus, her crude headstone, with the earthly remains of John Miles curled up beside it.

Tales from Life

While some legends might exist to put some perspective on a tribal custom or to highlight a moral or simply to entertain, "true" stories serve a different function. To the Hunters, these stories convey specific, factual information about an area, a person or a situation. They are always firsthand, and are given priority at a gathering since they are assumed to be useful. Some Hunters begin such stories by saying, "This story is true," but most don't bother, since claims of truth are common for everything from urban legends to myths from antiquity. Instead, they usually say, "This happened to me."

The Spirit Courts of Philadelphia

It's the city that really symbolizes democracy, and for humans that's maybe a great thing. For us, though, it means that the city is a symbol of compromise, of collection decision… of too many cooks in the kitchen. I was there last month, and I was wandering around South Philly trying to find a locus, or one of the People to tell me what was up. I found this barbershop in the middle of a god-awful neighborhood, and I noticed that the pole — yeah, this old-fashioned, striped barber pole — was a locus. I didn't see anyone around, so I tried to meditate a bit.

The door to the place opened. Remember, it's maybe one in the morning, and the street's empty. The door opened, and an old black man in a barber's smock comes out. I knew right away he was a spirit, so it was weird that he opened the door, but whatever. I did a quick read on him and realized he was a Jaggling and a strong one at that, so I tried my best to look polite.

He said to me, "You got permission for that?"

And I said, "From who?"

He didn't like that much at all. Next thing I know, there are a dozen guys — teenagers, obviously locals, probably gangbangers — with guns pointed at my face. They all have this spaced-out look, and I realized that this Jaggling was controlling them all. I didn't feel like getting shot, so I apologized and said I was from out of town, and he — the spirit — says that I'm an illegal and he needs to call a vote among the city spirits to figure out what to do with me.

What happened with the vote? No idea. I got out of town. I don't even know if there are any Uratha living there. All I know is that democracy is alive and well and living in the spirit courts of Philly, but it's got this weird feedback loop effect going. The spirits support each other by supporting the system, and that gives them a lot of power over their respective areas. If you go to the city of Brotherly Love, you'd best find out who's in charge and fill out whatever forms they want. Me, I get the distinct feeling I jumped bail somehow, so I'm very careful when I step into the Shadow anywhere in the East.

Wolves of the Rooftops

I saw something amazing recently. I was just over the border in Latvia, and as you know, burned-out

buildings and abandoned tenements are common in many cities. As I was walking through the city, I saw a pack of werewolves above me, leaping from building to building. I followed them as best I could, for I could tell from their tattoos and markings that they were not Pure, but Hunters.

I was amazed at their skill. They would often change shape in the middle of a leap, moving from Urhan form (allowing them to leap farther) to Hishu (enabling them to grab a ledge at the end of the jump). I even climbed a flight of stairs to catch up with them, thinking to follow them across the roofs and ledges of the city. I failed, however, and I fell six stories.

As I lay there on the ground, my bones starting to knit, I looked up and saw those wolves still in motion. One of them stopped and yelled down to me, and in that instant my blood ran cold. "Stay on the ground," he screamed. "It can't get you there!"

Something stalks the Uratha of that city, my friends, and the Hunters there have developed a way to outrun it. I don't know the nature of this monster, or why the Uratha feel they must brave the rooftops, but I know the terror of the hunted, and I saw it in that young werewolf's eyes.

Nightly Concerns

The Hunters in Darkness can be found the world over, and a Hunter in Japan is as much a child of Black Wolf as a Hunter in Saskatchewan. That said, the two Hunters will exhibit some extreme differences in cultural paradigm and behavior. Tribal practice varies greatly in different places, and in areas where the Hunters have claimed territories for multiple generations, the culture becomes so specific that even other tribe members might feel out of place.

Below are some cultural practices of the Hunters in Darkness. While these practices might not be widespread, they aren't derived from a given human culture or geographical location, and could therefore be easily applied to Hunters in any area.

Black Wolf — Silent Mother or Dark Father?

Hikaon-Ur is variously referred to as male or female in the legends of the Hunters in Darkness (and, you might have noticed, in **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). Most Hunters see Black Wolf as female, and refer to her as the Silent Mother, the she-wolf capable of nurturing her children tenderly but protecting them fiercely. Some *Meninna*, though, see their tribal totem as male, the Dark Father, a true embodiment of the terror of the night, defending his territory with the zeal of a man guarding his legacy.

But a third opinion exists, though it is uncommon. A few *Meninna* have noticed a slight linguistic difference in the way that spirits, wolf-spirits especially, pronounce the name "Hikaon-Ur." This difference seems to indicate *plurality* — Black Wolf is not one spirit, but two, a mated pair, Silent Mother *and* Dark Father. Uratha who have heard and believe this story aren't necessarily secretive about it, but the notion has yet to gain widespread support throughout the tribe. And even if it did, it wouldn't necessarily change anything — unless it's true.

Werewolves who put stock in the "mated pair" theory of Black Wolf are careful to revere both the male and female aspects of Black Wolf. Generally, the crescent moon and gibbous moon belong to the Silent Mother and the half-moon and full moon are the province of the Dark Father, while they both hunt under the new moon. Thus, Irraka Hunters are considered especially favored by *Meninna* who hold this philosophy. These werewolves also commonly put emphasis on honorable mating; many are married or in long-term partnerships, and most have children.

An unpleasant rumor has attached itself to this philosophy, though. Supposedly, the Hunters who believe in the Mated Pair also believe it possible, with the approval of the tribal totem, for two Uratha to mate and produce a true offspring rather than a Ghost Child. If this is true, it hasn't happened yet, and the very attempt would horrify any other werewolf who discovered it. But performing actions that would otherwise be taboo in emulation of one's gods is nothing new, and so it isn't too hard to imagine two Hunters, trying to call down the Silent Mother and the Dark Father and in turn creating something horrible.

Sacred Places

The tribal vow of the Hunters in Darkness is one of the areas in which the tribe is most diverse. In fact, any given *Meninna* probably has an idea of what a "sacred place" is and what precisely would constitute a "violation" of that place. Below are some examples of what a Hunter in Darkness might consider sacred:

• **Home:** Probably the most obvious example, most Hunters in Darkness consider their living space sacred. Not all do, though. A Hunter might

keep an apartment because he doesn't relish the idea of sleeping on the street (or because he hasn't let go of his human life yet), but might feel no particular connection to it. A living space that a Hunter shares with his pack is invariably a sacred place.

• **Site of the First Change:** As brutal or horrifying as it probably was, many werewolves look back on their First Changes as the night that they were truly born. The *Meninna* sometimes return to this place with a strange sense of nostalgia, sniffing for their own blood (or that of their victims) on the ground.

• **Family Ties:** Werewolves often leave their human families behind, out of concern for their safety, but that doesn't mean the werewolves don't check up on them. A child's favorite playground, a mother's home, a favorite uncle's trailer — all of these might be sacred to the *Meninna*.

• **Loci:** Opinion in the tribe is heavily divided on the subject of loci. Certainly, they are spiritual, but are they sacred? A locus might form from the site where a serial rapist claimed his 100th victim — is that place really *sacred*, even if it can be useful? Some Hunters argue that whether a locus is sacred or not, it deserves protection under the tribal oath because of what loci represent to the Uratha and the *Hisil*. Others feel that while it might be prudent to prevent a locus from being claimed by, say, the Pure or the Rat-Hosts, or from becoming a Wound, the *Meninna* need invest no special emotion in the task (and thus the *nahdar* is not sacred per se).

• **Historical Sites (Uratha):** A werewolf might not care about a site that is important to human history (see below, however), but the valley in which the local Uratha united to fight off a swarming horde of Azlu is almost assuredly sacred. Hunters in Darkness, Gibbous Moons especially, often use the tribal oath to make sure that the history of the territory stays alive in the minds and hearts of the *Meninna*, and often the Uratha of other tribes as well.

• **Historical Sites (Human):** The Uratha might feel apart from humanity, but it's hard to escape one's roots entirely. Likewise, humans can appreciate what happened on, say, a Civil War battlefield, but the Uratha can step into the Shadow and see the ongoing effects of the slaughter. While it's not nearly so common to claim as sacred sites with purely human history attached, the Hunters do so occasionally.

• **Pack Territory:** It's not a common notion, but every so often a powerful pack of Hunters considers the sum of its territory to be sacred. This means, though, that most of the pack's waking hours are spent patrolling and protecting it, since a larger territory is by nature easier to violate. A pack that considers its territory sacred is likely either protecting something very important or just an extremely prideful group of Uratha.

With all of these possibilities in mind, what does it mean to "violate" a sacred place? This, like the very notion of what makes a place sacred, is in the eye of the Hunter. A Hunter Rahu who keeps an herb garden in a nearby forest might consider the garden sacred because it is the only place that he allows this part of himself to show, and thus the garden can be violated simply by entering it uninvited. (This brings up another interesting point — during the winter, when the garden isn't recognizable, is it still sacred? The Hunter in question needs to decide for himself.) A locus, though, might be violated if it is drained dry by werewolves or other beings that can use Essence, or if the physical object that comprises the locus is damaged.

The Tribal Vow in the Chronicle

How can a Storyteller use the tribal vow of the *Meninna* in a **Werewolf** chronicle to best effect? What the Storyteller should *not* do is use the vow as a way to box a player in and force degeneration (it won't work for very long, anyway, seeing as how violating a tribal vow is only a sin at Harmony 7 or more). Instead, use it as a way to define the Hunter's attitude toward his tribal obligation, and to determine what is so important to that character that he feels he *must* protect it.

Players, work with the Storyteller to define your characters' notions of "sacred" and "violation." Be aware that these can change over time. An event that causes a change in this attitude might serve as a good Learning Curve experience point away (see p. 217 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**).

Can violation be corrected? It has to be, if the werewolf is to keep to his tribal vow. Doing so depends on the nature of the violation. A werewolf who sees his home as sacred might need to spend weeks fixing the place up if a battle erupts there, but if he wishes to avoid Harmony loss, he needs to do just that. The Rahu in the example above might be placed in a truly uncomfortable position if another werewolf catches the Rahu tending his herbs. He can't kill the interloper without risking Harmony loss, but it might be enough to beat the interloper soundly and demand an apology. A human trespasser, of course, doesn't cause this kind of consternation at all.

Naming Conventions

Many werewolves, *Meninna* included, keep their human names after the Change. Some, though, take deed names, titles that are descriptive of a werewolf's accomplishments as a werewolf, her beliefs, her appearance or even some serious mistake she has made. The Hunters in Darkness aren't necessarily more prone to taking deed names than members of other tribes, but when Hunters do, their deed names tend to be descriptive of appearance or belief rather than literal deeds. The reason for this is twofold. First, the *Meninna* favor Purity, not Glory, and so they don't feel the need to brag. Advertising one's deed is often regarded as a shameless grab for fame from other werewolves, when of course it is the Lunes who recognize such things. Second, and more practically, bragging brings reputation, and reputation brings enemies. A werewolf who names herself in accordance with her appearance isn't giving anything away that isn't already obvious. A werewolf who names herself after the enemies she's killed, however, is, and those dead foes might have live friends.

Specific styles of naming vary from place to place, and pack to pack. A pack of *Meninna* outside Syracuse, for instance, use their human names while in Hishu or Dalu forms, but use short, descriptive names ("Black Foot," "Mist Eyes") while in Urshul or Urhan. (They don't bother with names at all in Gauru.) Another pack, members of the Lodge of Harmony, takes short deed names that do refer to events in the werewolves' lives but are too brief and obtuse for outsiders to grasp ("Locksmith," "Wolf's Grin," "Night"). Finally, the *Meninna* in and around Denver have long had a tradition of taking poetic and lengthy names as Uratha, regardless of pack affiliation ("Haunting Howl of Peril," "Sky's First Defender," "Night's Watchful Eye" — see Appendix II of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**).

Parkour

Parkour is a philosophy and an art. Originating in France, the practice involves crossing distance with as little distraction or hesitation as possible. Practitioners of the art form (called "traceurs") leap from building to building, jump from great heights only to roll on concrete and keep running, and scale sheer walls in seconds. The goal is to use structures of the city (or wherever; the art form works just as well in rocky terrain or even forests) in new ways to help shape movement.

Those Hunters in Darkness who dwell in cities often embrace the art form, largely because it enables a fluidity of movement that simply walking along the streets does not. Beyond that, though, parkour has an element of chase that appeals to Uratha. Traceurs are sometimes told to think of the art as though an invisible creature were in pursuit, and if they stop, they die. The Hunters in Darkness who practice the art might be the "invisible creature" or the quarry in that example.

The Rounds

The practice of "making the rounds" isn't limited to the *Meninna*, but they are easily the most aggressive and enthusiastic about it. Making the rounds involves traveling in a great circle around the territory that the werewolf or the pack claims, replacing any wards or pack markings that have been put in place and checking in with contacts and allies on both sides of the Gauntlet. In urban areas, where territories tend to be smaller, this can be performed in a single morning. In rural areas, it might take several *days* to complete the rounds (in fact, some Australian Hunters use the term "walkabout" in roughly the same manner, which is a much different meaning from the human one).

The werewolf making the rounds doesn't have to walk, but the general feeling is that you miss too much riding in a car. A bicycle or motorcycle might be acceptable, since it frees up the radius of vision and hearing a bit, but the main issue is one of speed. Territory is something to be cherished and protected, and that means that zipping through it isn't doing it justice. Of course, packs with more pressing matters on their plates might give the rounds a miss for a while, but the *Meninna* tend to get uncomfortable about doing that for too long.

New Merit: Parkour (• to •••••)

Prerequisites: Dexterity •••, Athletics ••

Your character has become proficient in the art of parkour, whether by specific training with a club or simple necessity because of enemies in his city. Dots purchased in this Merit allow access to special athletic maneuvers. Each maneuver is a prerequisite for the next. So, your character can't have "Cat Leap" until he has "Flow." The maneuvers and their effects are described below, most of which are based on the Athletics Skill.

A note on parkour and werewolves: since werewolves can shapeshift reflexively, whether by taking advantage of moon phase or simply expending Essence, they can change form in mid-leap. This allows a Hunter (or any werewolf, as this Merit is by no means limited to the *Meninna*, or to the Uratha, for that matter) to jump using a strong form such as Urhan or Urshul and then switch to Hishu or Dalu to catch a ledge or another handhold as the jump ends. You can easily find videos of parkour using an Internet search; watch a few and imagine what would be possible with the Gifts and shapeshifting of the Uratha mixed in.

Flow (•): Your character has some basic training in the techniques of parkour, allowing him to react instinctively to obstacles and jumps. When using running or using the Foot Chase rules (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 65), your character may negate hazardous terrain penalties equal to his rating in the Merit: Parkour. In addition, the roll to gauge a jump distance (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 67) is a reflexive action.

Cat Leap (••): Your character has mastered some of the twisting leaps, landing rolls and wall taps used by traceurs. When using a Dexterity + Athletics roll to mitigate damage from falling (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 179), your character gains one automatic success. In addition, add one per dot in this Merit to the threshold of damage that can be removed through this roll. Thus, if the Storyteller decrees that only three successes may be garnered to reduce falling damage, the traceur with three dots in this Merit may actually use six successes (assuming the player accumulates that many, including his automatic success).

Wall Run (•••): Your character has mastered the quick wall-run and leaping climb techniques of parkour. When using Athletics to climb (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 64), your character is capable of scaling heights of 10 feet + five feet per dot in Athletics as an instant action (rather than the normal 10 feet), though every full 10 feet beyond the first imposes a –1 dice penalty.

Expert Traceur (••••): Your character has trained so extensively in this athletic discipline that its maneuvers are normal and instinctive for him. Your character may designate any Athletics roll that involves running, jumping and climbing as being a rote action (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 134). **Drawback:** When doing so, he is less able to react to events that don't have to do with navigating the environment, causing him to lose his Defense for that turn.

Freeflow (•••••): Your character has achieved the freeflow that is the holy grail of traceurs everywhere — he acts without thinking, his movements flowing, graceful and quick when he enters "the zone." He can perform any Athletics action that involves running, jumping or climbing as a reflexive action, rather than an instant action. Doing so requires that the character has been running for at least a full minute previously; any use of this ability before that minute mark requires the expenditure of one point of Willpower, however.

Learning Through the Hunt

Over time, a Hunter grows in experience and knowledge. She learns new Gifts as she becomes known to the spirits, and can, if she so chooses, learn rituals from her fellow Uratha. Hunters in Darkness who reach a certain level of experience and Renown often become mentors to younger (or less experienced, at any rate) werewolves. These students might not be *Meninna* themselves. Some Hunters believe very strongly in keeping their knowledge within the tribe, while others believe that all *Imru* have a right to benefit from the lives of more knowledgeable Uratha.

The style of instruction from a *Meninna* mentor varies, of course. Every werewolf is unique, but a few generalities based on auspice can be noted.

• **Rahu:** Full-moon mentors stress Purity over all. The Oath is inviolate, and they aren't interested in excuses such as, "Well, the Pure kill *us*" or "Why should I respect some old fogey if he doesn't respect me?" These mentors are generally quite willing to beat their lessons into their students' heads, if that's what it takes, but they'd rather teach in more traditional ways first — children might accept what adults tell them "just because," but werewolves are not children. Rahu *Meninna* usually teach when to apply violence, rather than how, as they assume that

werewolves in general have a decent grip on the finer points of fighting.

• **Cahalith:** Some Gibbous Moons talk their protégés' ears off, but this isn't so often the case with the Hunters in Darkness. Hunter Cahalith try to teach their students to *listen*, and if everything is an anecdote, sooner or later it all sounds the same. These mentors would rather stay quiet, listen to the world and collect information — until it's time to howl. Hunter Cahalith usually know the history of their territory down to the dirtiest little secret, and because of that familiarity, they often count an inordinate number of places as "sacred." A student of such a Hunter can expect to spend some time helping guard such places, often without knowing why the area is so important.

• **Elodoth:** Half-Moons among the Hunters are students of spiritual behavior and allegiance (as opposed to Ithaeurs, who tend more toward study of spiritual nature). The Elodoth of the tribe who choose to mentor want to make sure that their protégés can tell when something is off-kilter in the *Hisil*, when an area is experiencing a higher-than-normal incidence of spiritual possession and other "tells" that a place might become tainted somehow. Elodoth Hunters tend to be students of creatures such as vampires and mages more than other *Menninna*, and while Elodoth might not converse with these beings, these Hunters certainly teach their students how to identify, avoid and, if necessary, hunt and kill such beings.



• **Ithaeur:** While not as focused on knowing everything about spirits as, say, the Bone Shadows, the Crescent Moons of the Hunters in Darkness do want to understand spirits on an individual level. It's all very well to know that the bans of death-spirits tend to involve silence (or sound), live plants (or dead ones) or blood (or the absence thereof), but without knowing specifics, that information is useless except as a curiosity. Ithaeurs of the tribe thus teach their students to observe each spirit not only as a unique being but in conjunction with the territory. A spirit that might be horribly corruptive out in the country might fit right in with an industrialized territory. Ithaeurs, then, typically have an understanding of "violated" that means "thrown out of balance."

• **Irraka:** Hunters among the Hunters, New Moons teach their protégés how to be silent, invisible and effective. Irraka don't always add "lethal" to that list, because not every Irraka is an assassin. Some New Moons simply watch and wait, noting people and beings that might one day *become* violators of a sacred space or dangers to the territory. Training in memory, then, is also a key component to an Irraka's lessons within the tribe.

Lodge of the Empty Den

Here is the story of Hattie Irons.

Hattie was a Hunter in Darkness. Changed under the full moon, she did, and a mighty Rahu was what she became. She was pure in a way that those bastards who call themselves "Pure" would never understand. She loved her pack and she loved her tribe, and if you insulted either of them you'd get her hands on your throat faster than you'd blink. She took many a beating sticking up for her fellow Uratha, but for all that, there was something she loved more.



See, Hattie was a mom. She'd been married nearly 10 years before the First Change came around, and her husband died the night she Changed — but it wasn't her that killed him, it was the Pure who came to collect Hattie. They killed her husband, but she killed one of them, and the Hunters arrived and drove off the others. Hattie's kids were five and eight at that point, and the wolf ran strong in their blood. She told them what she was, and they learned, over the years, to recognize spirits and whatnot. Hattie never said it, but she had a strong feeling that one or both of her boys would Change, too.

But they never got the chance. Hattie got home one night and found her house all smashed up and her kids murdered. It was the Pure that did it, but listen — that's not really the point. What mattered was, there wasn't anybody who was watching out for those kids while Hattie was off being Uratha. This might have driven a weaker werewolf totally mad, but Hattie was strong, and she still that love for her tribe in her heart. She decided that the oath to Black Wolf wasn't enough. It wasn't enough to guard the "sacred places," because really, who cares about the places when what's truly sacred isn't safe?

The Lodge of the Empty Den is very small, and its members meet each other only when a new Hunter is initiated. The lodge is also recent — Hattie Irons, Rahu of the Hunters in Darkness, formed the lodge a scant 10 years ago. Since then, though, the lodge has spread gradually, until one could conceivably find a member anywhere on the North American continent, and perhaps elsewhere.

The lodge is dedicated to protecting children. The members are quite willing to protect children of normal humans and even of dire enemies, for to them, a child is innocent. Lodge members place priority, however, on their own children, followed by the children of packmates, then children of mortal family, then children of friends, then children



in general. Lodge members seldom have to make choices that require this kind of prioritization, but it happens occasionally.

The Lodge of the Empty Den is founded on grief and rage, and the members tend to be werewolves who have lost children or who have given up any hope of having them due to their Uratha status. The totem of the lodge is a strange, terrifying spirit known as the Anguished Howl. While Uratha outside the lodge view this spirit as a conceptual-spirit, probably of grief or rage, the lodge members know the truth. Hattie Irons disappeared into the Shadow after the tragedy, and she communed with Black Wolf directly. She begged Black Wolf to help her ease her grief, to send her to fight a foe that she had no hope of besting, even to take her throat out. But Black Wolf could not do this — the Wolf Must Hunt, and Hikaon-Ur could not send her child to her death. The mighty Firstborn did take pity on Hattie, though, and changed her into a spirit, removing her flesh half and leaving behind only Essence. Hattie Irons herself is the Anguished Howl, and she manifests only as sound and sorrow to the *Meninna* who choose to follow her.

Prerequisites: Purity •, Honor • and Empathy 3

Membership: Thus far, the only members of the Lodge of the Empty Den are Hunters in Darkness. That could possibly change, but as Hattie Irons (in her new spiritual form) is the totem spirit of the lodge, it would require a phenomenal demonstration of love for children for her to admit a member of another tribe.

Lodge members are not expected to give up any part of their pre-lodge lives. They are expected to be dedicated to their packs, tribes and families, if they have them. Lodge members must also be always watchful for children in need of protection or assistance, and must render such aid immediately and without excuse. A member of the lodge who sees a man berating his young daughter is bound by her oath to the lodge to scare that man straight, which often means tailing him home, breaking into his house, dragging him outside and showing him what it feels like to be bullied. And then, of course, the Uratha must check up on him to make sure he isn't taking out his fear on his children. Protecting the innocent can easily become a full-time job, but the *Meninna* of the lodge swear that the work is its own reward.

Joining the lodge is difficult, simply because there aren't many lodge members to be found. A werewolf who wishes to join must seek out either a member of the lodge or Anguished Howl herself in the Shadow (the home of Hattie Irons, now a burned-out shell and a powerful locus, is a good start) and petition for membership. The prospective member is then subjected to a round of questions designed to test her empathy and compassion and to test the limits of her self-control. If at *any* time during this questioning process the member succumbs to Rage, even if the loss of temper provokes nothing more than a glare and a growl, the lodge rejects him. In theory, any Hunter in Darkness is eligible, but in practice only werewolves who have borne or raised children are allowed in.

After the questions, the werewolf goes on a hunt for a child who needs help. In the World of Darkness, she isn't usually long in looking. That hunt might end with the death of a child molester or with a veiled threat to a mother to take a greater interest in her son's life. Children need help of many different varieties, and sometimes that help has to come from monsters.

Benefits: Members of the Lodge of the Empty Den can learn Insight Gifts as though they were tribal Gifts. Lodge members also receive a +1 to all rolls made to avoid Death Rage, except if the trigger for the Rage is the death of a child. In that case, the roll receives a –3 penalty.

Lodge of Carrion



Black Wolf paced the ridge overlooking the valley, gazing down. Everything in that valley was sacred to him, and over the years he had repelled many different invaders. He had let no one violate that territory, and so little had changed there. As he watched, a huge black bird circled and then dove. Black Wolf ran to find its landing site.

He found the bird — the massive, foul-smelling beast called Hungry Buzzard — feasting on the flesh of a doe that had fallen down the valley and broken its back. He growled at Buzzard to leave the valley, but the Buzzard merely gave him a snide look and said, "I will leave when I have stripped away what is worth having from this corpse, wolf, not before. I never leave the dead to rot, useless."

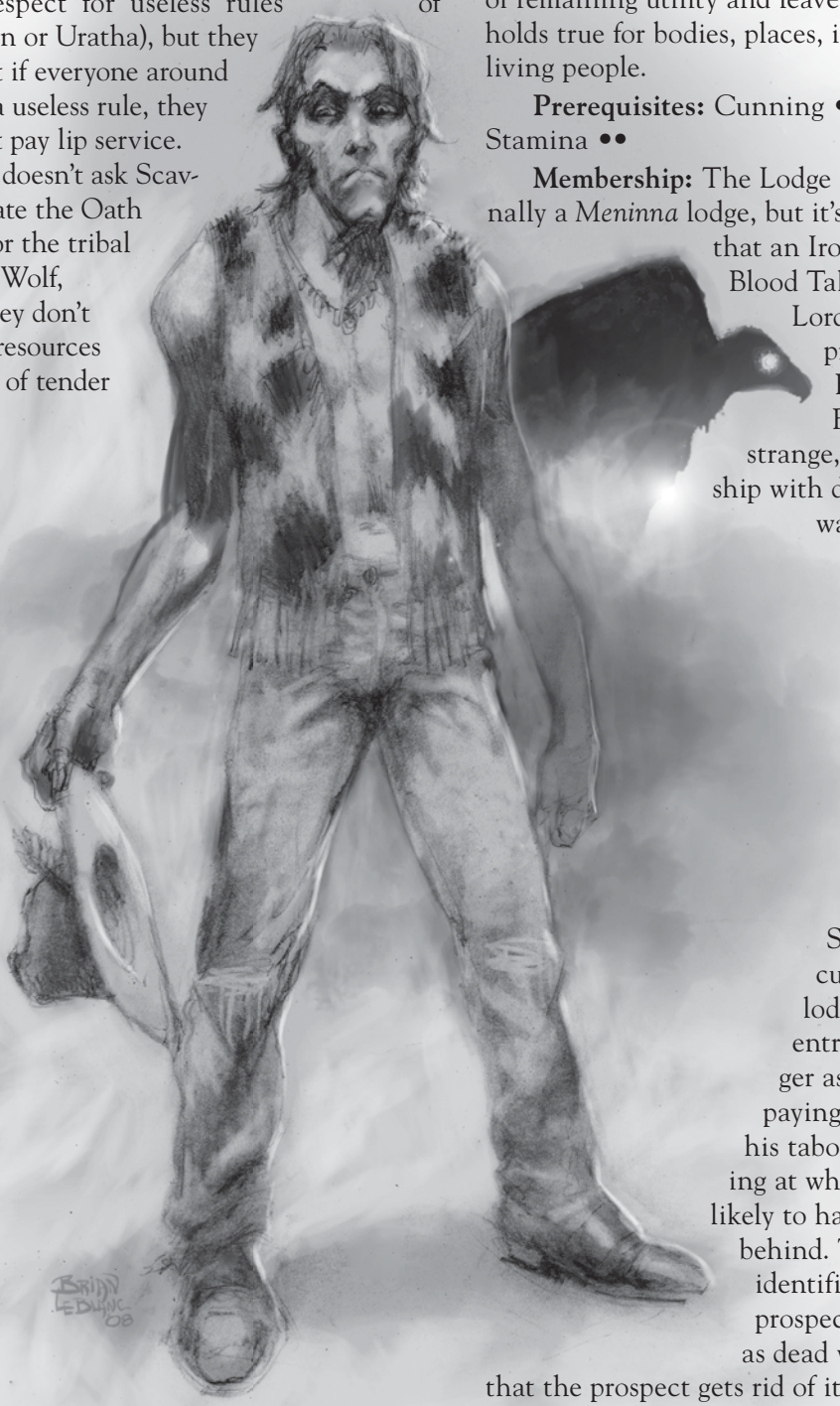
Black Wolf thought about this, and he realized that everything worth having — to him, at least — had long since gone from the valley. He stayed in conversation with Buzzard and even shared the bird's foul repast, and Buzzard agreed to share his lessons with Black Wolf's children. That was the beginning of the Lodge of Carrion.

The Lodge of Carrion is composed of Meninna who believe that nothing and no one are sacred. That doesn't mean that they forsake their tribal vow, simply that they are much more conservative in naming a site "sacred" than their tribemates. The Scavengers, as the lodge members are usually called, feel that naming a place, person or object "sacred" is dangerous, as it allows that thing to outlive its usefulness. Holy sites, Scavengers note, often have significance as trade routes or sites of miracles, but those applications aren't really valid anymore, so why does the place remain sacred? Likewise, among the Uratha, a particular locale might be "sacred" if it contains an important locus, or the den of a pack or the resting place of a dangerous creature. But if the locus is destroyed, if the pack finds a better home or the creature awakened, why should the site still be sacred? It has died — strip its carcass and move on.

Hungry Buzzard acts as totem to the Lodge of Carrion, and he is not a demanding master. He merely asks for honesty and a certain degree of callousness from his followers. Detractors of the lodge (and it has many, both within the tribe and without) say that the Scavengers would eat their own packmates rather than bury them if they didn't

risk Harmony from the act. The Scavengers agree, but point out that the risk of Harmony is no small matter. Human beings eat each other if the need is great enough, and only their omnivorous ways and cultural taboos let them see the corpses of their kind as anything but meat.

Scavengers are opportunists. It would be unheard of for a Scavenger to bury a powerful fetish with its owner or let a suitable structure go uninhabited simply because of propriety. Lodge members have little respect for useless rules of society (human or Uratha), but they do realize that if everyone around them follows a useless rule, they should at least pay lip service. Also, Buzzard doesn't ask Scavengers to violate the Oath of the Moon or the tribal oath to Black Wolf, simply that they don't ignore viable resources solely because of tender feelings.



This obviously leads Scavengers into some ticklish situations. Some Scavengers are brash, crude and boorish, changing to wolf form and gorging on the meat of roadkill (whether or not the dead animal's former owner is nearby). Others are more tactful, but only insofar as they don't wish to burn bridges by revealing their proclivities. All Scavengers will eat carrion, and are practiced at finding gems in refuse. What others throw away, the Lodge of Carrion sifts through, finds anything of remaining utility and leaves the rest to rot. That holds true for bodies, places, information and even living people.

Prerequisites: Cunning •, Survival ••, Stamina ••

Membership: The Lodge of Carrion is nominally a *Meninna* lodge, but it's not unthinkable that an Iron Master or even a Blood Talon might join. Storm Lords are probably too proud, and Hungry Buzzard feels that Bone Shadows have a strange, fetishistic relationship with death, one that he wants no part of.

Joining the lodge is simple enough. Buzzard doesn't have time for fanfare and he's easily bored, so he doesn't like long apprenticeships. A prospective Scavenger locates a current member of the lodge and makes an entreaty. The Scavenger assesses the prospect, paying special attention to his taboos or mores, looking at what that werewolf is likely to have trouble leaving behind. The Scavenger then identifies something in the prospect's life that she sees as dead weight, and demands that the prospect gets rid of it. If the prospect truly feels that the object (or person, or place) is of real

and ongoing value, he can make the case to the Scavenger (if she accepts the explanation, she'll choose something else). Otherwise, the prospect must strip whatever he can find of value from the "dead weight" and then leave it behind. Scavengers normally target favored objects and places rather than people for this initiation; since people are dynamic and ever-changing, it's hard to say when a person contributes *nothing* to a werewolf's life. In any event, a good Scavenger *never* indicates that the prospect should leave his pack, and Buzzard might well intervene if she tries.

Benefits: Scavengers gain the Merit: Iron Stomach at no cost. They can eat anything organic, no matter how foul or rotten, without ill effects, and their gustatory and olfactory senses change (but do not deaden) to accommodate this ability. They also receive a +2 modifier to any rolls made to glean information or resources from an area or source that has already been visited once. That is, if another character searches a room for clues to a murder, the Scavenger can do so again with a +2 to find any remaining pieces of information. Foraging rolls also receive this benefit.

Lodge of the Sleeping Bear



The Mother Bear and her two cubs swam across the mighty lake, fleeing from a forest fire. The Mother Bear reached the beach and turned, exhausted, to see her cubs struggling. She tried to wade after them, but she was so tired from her swim, and they started to sink.

Desperate and mad with grief, the Mother Bear cried and howled for help, and Luna answered. She changed the bear cubs into islands, so that they could regain their strength. She changed the Mother into the sand, so that she wouldn't worry about her cubs while they slept.

That was many, many years ago. The cubs are still there, and you can see them if you look carefully through the fog. You're standing upon the Mother now. She's waiting for her cubs, and someday she'll awaken. And when that happens, it will be us, the Hunters of the Lodge of the Sleeping Bear, who will reunite the Mother and her children.

And then we will hunt, my brother. Oh, how we shall hunt.

The Brethren War did a great deal of damage to the Forsaken of North America, but the Pure didn't claim victory everywhere. In some areas, the Forsaken were able to repel the Pure, but in others, the battles just opened a vacuum. The state of Michigan is one such place.

Everything north of Detroit is lost, except for the Sleeper Bear dunes and the surrounding area. The loci of the state feed spirits that repulse and terrify the Forsaken, and crossing the state on foot (or stopping to rest) is inviting death. The Lodge of the Sleeping Bear, a small pack of Hunters in Darkness that dwells in and around Traverse City, is the last holdout. The lodge loses a member a year from attrition from the enemies in the area, but Hunters from other parts of the country sometimes join and keep the lodge alive. The lodge members are patient. When the Mother Bear awakens, she will help them take back the state.

The Lodge of the Sleeping Bear is not stringent in its membership requirements, but it does ask a great deal of its members. They must remain in the area until the Mother Bear awakens, which the older members assume will happen on a spiritual level rather than a literal one. They don't think the massive sand dunes on the shores of Lake Michigan are really going to stand up and become an immense bear one day… not in the material world, anyway. But in the Shadow, the werewolves watch the North and South Manitou Islands carefully for signs that the cubs have awakened and are swimming to shore,



because that should trigger the Mother's awakening as well. When that happens, the *Meninna* intend to do everything they can to make sure the cubs reach their mother, even swimming out into the frigid waters of the great lake to help them. The lodge members feel that by doing this, they can win the Mother's favor, and she will help them take back the state from their enemies.

This is all, of course, a matter of faith and hope. But that is all the werewolves have left.

Prerequisites: None except the willingness to stay in the area. Leaving the area surrounding the dunes, even for a moment, means leaving the lodge. This means that if a member chases an enemy out of her territory, she needs to stop before she leaves the dunes (and all members can sense these boundaries).

Membership: The Lodge of the Sleeping Bear accepts any Hunter in Darkness who wishes to join, and might accept other tribes as well, if they were willing to take the oaths of membership. The lodge has only between five and a dozen members at any given time, but the dunes would support more than that. They consist of almost 50,000 acres along the shores of Lake Michigan, and contain numerous small loci and enough game for several wolf packs. The area towns are somewhat expensive to live in, but the members of the lodge are willing to live simply for their cause.

Benefits: Apart from having access to the natural resources of the dunes, the lodge doesn't offer much in the way of benefit to its members. They share everything, however, and are quite willing to instruct each other in Skills, rites and anything else that would be helpful. In game terms, anything that one lodge member can learn from another costs three-quarters of the normal experience, rounding up. So, if one member were to teach another the level-three rite Bind Spirit, the cost would be four experience points instead of six.

Who's the Bad Guy?

It's up to you. If you choose to use this storyline about Michigan, you'll need to decide who it is that swept in after the Brethren War and started killing werewolves. Some suggestions:

- **The Pure:** Maybe the *Anshega* simply claimed the area, and packs of Predator Kings roam the state looking for Forsaken prey, or the Fire-Touched have wormed their way into the mega-churches of the Midwest and are on the prowl for converts.
- **Bale Hounds:** Is there some massive Wound in central or northern Michigan that allows the *Asah Gadar* to keep their numbers up and their power base strong?
- **Hosts:** The Beshilu or the Azlu (or another Host of your own design) might have the whole region riddled with their own lairs, waiting for Uratha to appear.
- **Other Strangeness:** The war in Michigan is meant to allow members of the Lodge of the Sleeping Bear to continue their desperate struggle against a powerful enemy, in hopes that the Mother will save them. Any enemy will do, if it is powerful enough to kill werewolves and it could conceivably live in Michigan.

New Rites

The rites listed below were designed (or discovered) by Hunters in Darkness, and for the most part, the rites remain the sole province of the tribe. A member of another tribe could learn them, but cannot learn such a rite as the free rite that comes with increasing Rituals score (see p. 148 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). Also, a non-Hunter (or an ex-Hunter) who performs one of these rites does so at a penalty equal to the rite's level.

Rite of Fair Warning (•)

In the modern world, Uratha can't always be expected to notice when they've crossed into another pack's territory. Scent marks and visual tags might help, yes, but unless a werewolf knows what to look for or changes to Urhan form (not always feasible in the city), she'll probably miss the markings. Getting upset when territory is thus "invaded" is ridiculous, but the *Meninna* do have their tribal vow to think about. Thus, this rite was developed for the benefit of werewolves new to an area.

When a werewolf crosses into an area protected by the Rite of Fair Warning, she immediately feels a sense of subtle threat. The threat isn't severe — the Uratha doesn't feel as if her life is in danger — but she does feel *noticed*, even if she is under the effect of a Gift or other power that masks her somehow. The Rite of Fair Warning doesn't notify the werewolf who performed it; it merely lets the interloper know that she *is* an interloper. In addition, if a werewolf is actively looking for scent marks or other territory tags in an area protected by this rite, the player receives a +2 modifier to any rolls made to do so. This bonus also applies to other, non-Uratha powers meant to detect supernatural phenomena (a mage's detection spells, a vampire's Auspex Discipline or even a mortal's Unseen Sense Merit might apply).

Performing the Rite: The ritualist must walk the perimeter of the area to be affected, continually singing or chanting an invocation to the spirits to watch over her borders. When she comes full circle, she seals the area with a few drops of her blood, sweat or urine (the specific fluid varies from place to place), and marks the location with a visual or olfactory tag. Once performed, the Rite of Fair Warning lasts for one lunar month before fading.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (20 successes; each roll represents 10 minutes of walking)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes are lost. The character is attacked by a local spirit that takes issue with her "claim" of territory.

Failure: No successes are gained toward the total.

Success: Successes are gained toward the total. When the total reaches 20 successes, the character must continue walking and chanting or singing until she reaches her starting point, at which point she can finish the ritual.

Exceptional Success: The character makes considerable progress toward her goal. If the character has gained 25+ successes, the ritual is extremely potent. Any werewolf entering the territory suffers a –2 penalty to Wits + Composure rolls to avoid surprise (see p. 46 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**) until the ritualist or one of her packmates has officially welcomed the interloper to the area.

Rite of the Hunter's Howl (••)

A human saying advises: "Always have something to eat before attending a feast — a hungry man is not a good speaker." A similar sentiment serves

as the impetus for this rite. A wolf that hunts while ravenous isn't as effective, and finds its choice of prey narrowed. A werewolf who hunts while low on energy (i.e., Essence) is taking a risk. If the hunt goes poorly, that werewolf will have a difficult time healing himself, fueling his Gifts or changing shape. That, in turn, risks Death Rage and cannibalism. The Hunters in Darkness, before commencing a hunt, sometimes begin with this invocation to Black Wolf, granting a small measure of power as a blessing.

Performing the Rite: This rite can be performed only before a werewolf or a group of werewolves sets out on a hunt. The target of the hunt isn't important — the hunt could be for food, information, an enemy, a locus, etc. The ritualist stands in the center of the group, changes to Urshul or Urhan form (or, for hunts that are decidedly aggressive in nature, Gauru) and howls to Black Wolf. All of the assembled werewolves must howl as well, though they don't necessarily have to match the ritualist's form while doing so. If the ritual is successful, each member of the hunting party feels an oddly calm feeling. The ambient sounds fall away, a distinct scent of rain and earth wells up and the werewolves feel a burst of energy. And then, the hunt begins in earnest.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Every werewolf present *loses* a point of Essence as the howls to Black Wolf meet with her disapproval. The ritualist can choose to accept this loss of Essence himself, which is an honorable act (perhaps allowing the character to fulfill the Virtue of Charity or the Vice of Pride).

Failure: The howls to Black Wolf go unheeded. The Hunters in Darkness consider a repeat attempt at the rite to be cloying and pathetic, unless the hunt is of supreme importance.

Success: Each werewolf present regains Essence equal to the ritualist's Primal Urge. This Essence comes with a price, however — Black Wolf expects the hunters to be virtuous during the hunt (see below).

Exceptional Success: Each werewolf present also regains one point of Willpower.

If, during the hunt, any werewolf risks degeneration and succeeds, the player must roll Resolve + Primal Urge. If this roll succeeds, the werewolf keeps the Essence — whatever action he took to risk his Harmony, it was necessary for completion of the hunt and Black Wolf understands. If the roll fails, or if the degeneration rolls fails (meaning the werewolf loses Harmony), he immediately loses the Essence that this rite afforded him. If he does not have enough Essence to cover this debt, the difference is paid with his lifeblood (in game terms, he suffers aggravated damage equal to the Essence he cannot pay).

Suggested Modifiers:

Modifier	Situation
+1	Rite is performed in the wilderness.
–1	Hunting party includes any non-Hunters in Darkness (non-cumulative).
–2	The target of the hunt is a werewolf.

Mark of the Black Wolf (•••)

The Hunters in Darkness can't kill werewolves who violate the Hunters' territories. Rather, they can, but doing so is a violation of the Oath of the Moon, and the *Meninna* value their Purity. Long ago, the tribe (so legend has it) asked Black Wolf for a method to mark trespassers without killing them, so that other Hunters would know the interlopers and be wary. Whether it was actually Black Wolf who responded or simply one of her servants, the result was this rite.

The Mark of the Black Wolf doesn't require that the subject be physically present, but it's much easier that way. The rite marks a subject (who is usually, but not necessarily, another Uratha) with a spiritual brand similar to a Renown tattoo. Any werewolf can sense something wrong with a marked person with a successful reflexive Wits + Composure roll, and Gifts designed to detect lies or other malign intent (including Scent Beneath the Surface, Sense Malice or potentially even Death Sight, as well as any Gift that allows a werewolf to see Renown brands) perceive the Mark automatically. The Mark is usually in the form of a First Tongue glyph for "sacred" with a claw slash through it, since the Mark of the Black Wolf is most commonly bestowed upon werewolves who violated a Hunter's territory.

Occasionally, a werewolf violates such a territory or otherwise wrongs the tribe and comes to accept his mistake. If a werewolf willingly submits to this rite, the Mark remains, but it can *only* be seen if another werewolf specifically looks for it. That is, it doesn't trigger the reflexive roll to sense the Mark. Accepting just punishment this way is a mark of Honor, and the *Meninna* usually consider that the end of the matter.

The Mark of the Black Wolf can be bestowed upon beings other than werewolves, but doing so is more challenging to the ritualist. At the Storyteller's discretion, other supernatural beings might be able to detect the Mark with their respective powers, though they probably don't have any context for the symbol.

Performing the Rite: Some representation of the target must be present, even if it is only a footprint or an article of clothing. The ritualist invokes Black Wolf, explains the nature of the target's crime against the tribe and then changes to Urshul and steps down firmly upon the target's chest (or the chosen representation). The mark burns itself into the target's flesh. At that moment, the ritualist drags his foot backwards, scarring the target further. Even when the wound heals, the Mark of the Black Wolf is visible to those who know how to look, and it's always visible in the *Hisil*.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended and contested (10 successes; each roll represents one turn). Target can choose to resist, with the target's player or Storyteller rolling Harmony (or equivalent Morality score) with a negative penalty equal to the Purity of the ritualist.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Whether it's true or not, the spirits feel that the target was accused unfairly. The target regains all Willpower as if he had fulfilled a Virtue, and the ritualist loses one Willpower point. This rite will not function on this target again.

Failure: No successes are accumulated, or the target reaches 10 successes first. The rite fails, and may not be attempted again unless the target commits another crime against the tribe.

Success: Successes are gathered toward the total. If the ritualist reaches 10 successes before the target, the Mark is in place. The Mark inflicts two levels of lethal damage, and even after the damage heals, the Mark remains. It *might* be possible to remove such a mark, but that would require a Rite of Contrition to the werewolf who performed the rite and a special quest or show of apology to Black Wolf (if the werewolf is in fact guilty), or a special effort, probably a whole story's worth, to clear the target's name (if he's not).

Exceptional Success: Considerable progress made toward the total. No special effect.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+2	Target is guilty of the crime but did not lose Harmony for it.
+1	Target is guilty of the crime but *did* lose Harmony.
−1	Target is a human being (including ghouls and wolf-blooded).
−2	Target is a supernatural being, such as a vampire or mage (but not a werewolf).
−3	Target is not physically present, but the ritualist has a sample of that target's blood, skin or recently worn clothing.
−4	The ritualist knows only the target's name or has a photograph.

Rite of Hikaon's Trail (••••)

Black Wolf traveled the world over, learning the secret pathways of all lands and the hiding places of dark things. This rite, known only to a few knowledgeable *Meninna*, allows the Hunters in Darkness to find such secrets. Hikaon's Trail can lead anywhere that the werewolf needs to go, and find almost anything that she might need to find. Actually walking the trail can be dangerous, however, and requires the utmost tenacity and mental fortitude. Stepping off Hikaon's Trail can be deadly.

After performing this rite, the Hunter sees a set of paw prints leading off into the distance. These prints appear fresh, even if the medium in which they are found is concrete or wood. The prints lead directly to whatever the werewolf wishes to find, but the rite is much easier to perform when used to find a place rather than an object or (especially) a person or spirit. Once the werewolf begins following the trail, though, she cannot leave it. The journey doesn't take as long as it would if the werewolf were traveling without benefit of the rite (see below), but even if the werewolf sleeps, she must do so with the trail in sight. If she needs food, she'd better hope that the trail takes her near game or someplace that she can purchase a meal. Hikaon-Ur supposedly hunted without food or sleep for months at a time, but the Uratha, still half-flesh, are ill-equipped to do this.

Once the quarry is in sight, the trail starts to fade. The werewolf knows that her journey is at an end, but the Hunt is just beginning (for why call upon Hikaon-Ur except to find the target of a Hunt?). When the trail fades, the werewolf regains all Willpower as if she had fulfilled her Virtue.

Performing the Rite: The ritualist names the target of the rite, describing the target in as much detail as the ritualist can manage. As she does so, she punctuates the description with entreaty to Black Wolf (her packmates, if any, keep a constant howl to the mighty Firstborn going). The ritualist then changes to wolf form and performs a ceremonial hunt, chasing down and killing a rabbit or other small animal as a sacrifice. If the hunt is successful, the paw prints immediately appear, and the journey beings.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (10 successes necessary; each roll represents 10 minutes)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The trail appears, but it leads the werewolf into danger. Black Wolf apparently dis-

approves of the hunt, and wishes to test the werewolf. If she notices that the trail is leading her astray (and the Storyteller should provide opportunities for such), she can attempt this rite again with the same target. If she reaches the "end" of the trail, she may not, even if she survives what waits for her.

Failure: No successes are accumulated toward the total. If the player fails to roll 10 successes within a number of rolls equal to the werewolf's Harmony, the rite fails and cannot be attempted again on the same target for one week.

Success: Successes are accumulated toward the total. If the player reaches 10 successes within a number of rolls equal to the character's Harmony, the trail appears, leading to wherever the target can be found. The journey to reach the target takes only 1/10th the amount of time that it would normally take on foot, as the trail winds in and out of the Shadow and leads the werewolf down shortcuts that only Black Wolf remembers. The only requirement is that the journey be possible with land travel only; separate continents are too much even for Black Wolf.

The werewolf can stop to rest or take other actions as she wishes, but if the trail ever leaves her senses entirely (she cannot see, smell or touch it), the rite ends. The werewolf might be in the material world or the Shadow when this happens, and is probably miles from home.

Exceptional Success: Considerable progress is made toward the goal. If the rite ends successfully and the werewolf has accumulated 15+ successes, Black Wolf takes a special interest in this Hunt. As the werewolf walks the trail, wolf-spirits bring her gifts of fresh meat, and she always seems able to find a good source of water.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+1	Target is a place that the Hunter considers sacred.
−3	Target is an object.
−4	Target is a spirit.
−5	Target is a living (or unliving) being.

Name the Quarry (•••••)

This rite is invoked only rarely, as it is a death sentence for the target. The Hunters in Darkness use Name the Quarry only on enemies that the Hunters cannot allow to live to see sunrise, no matter what such bloody-mindedness might mean for the their Harmony. Once the Quarry is named, there's no turning back — the ritualist (and usually his pack) must see the Hunt through to its bloody conclusion.

A target named as the Quarry of the *Meninna*, though, is a desperate wretch indeed. No one will help him. Indeed, no one can *see* him. He becomes a non-person, shielded from view by powerful spirits of death (which, in recompense for their efforts, reap the Essence released when he dies). He might run up to people on the street, but find himself running past them. He screams, but no one hears. He throws objects, but they stop in midair and land harmlessly, unnoticed. The Quarry is alone in the world… until the Hunters come for him. If he can survive to feel the first ray of sunlight on his skin, he is free of the rite's effects, and by custom, the *Meninna* cannot harm him. But this is academic — if anyone has ever survived a night as the Hunters' Quarry, no tales exist as testament.

Performing the Rite: Because time is a factor, this rite is brief. The ritualist touches the Quarry and speaks his name, or as much of it as she knows, and finishes the rite with a First Tongue phrase — *Mu-se za nam-erin* ("I name you as my prey."). To the ritualist and her pack, the world fades in color, and only the prey seems real and vibrant. To the Quarry, the sky grows lower, the world becomes narrow and he feels the touch of death on his neck. The Hunters howl, and the Quarry runs. The Hunt begins.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Instant and contested (target rolls Composure + Purity + Primal Urge reflexively)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Quarry is unworthy of this rite, and the spirits take great offense to the werewolves who tried calling down such a curse on an undeserving person. The pack suffers under the curse for one hour, pursued by Wolf-Brothers (see p. 244 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**).

Failure: The ritualist does not exceed the target's successes. The rite fails to take effect. The pack can still hunt the Quarry, but without benefit of this rite.

Success: The ritualist exceeds the target's successes. Until sunrise, the target cannot interact with anyone other than the pack and cannot affect the world around him. Because this effect is made possible by powerful death-spirits, it is possible, however unlikely, that he might be able to drive them away and thus end the rite's effects. Doing so with a pack of slavering werewolves on his heels, though, would be a truly miraculous feat.

Exceptional Success: The ritualist exceeds the target's successes, and the player rolls five successes

or more. The target is so terrified by the rite that he loses a point of Willpower.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+2	Rite is performed in the Shadow.
+1	Ritualist knows the target's full, birth name.
–1	Ritualist knows only a nickname or part of the target's name.
–2	Ritualist doesn't know any part of the target's name.
–3	Target has never directly harmed the ritualist or her pack.

New Fetishes

The fetishes created by the Hunters in Darkness tend to help them protect their territories. Early warning systems, weapons and methods of blending in are common, as are fetishes that allow gathering of information from spirits (whether the spirits are willing or not). Hunter Ithaeur are usually insistent that any fetish they create incorporates spirits that can be found within the territory. Going on a protracted quest for a spirit to put into a fetish creates a fetish out of touch with the Hunter's territory, and that might well backfire. Questing for the materials with which to create the fetish is another matter, though, and Hunter fetish-crafters often leave their territories to find the perfect home for their chosen spirit.

Below are some sample fetishes that Hunters in Darkness might create.

Broken Sand (Talen)

Glass is simply heated sand, and with the proper spiritual assistance, one can become the other quickly. Hunters in Darkness scatter this coarse sand across the trail of a pursuer. When the pursuer's feet touch the sand, it immediately changes into broken glass. This inflicts one level of lethal damage to the pursuer, but also subtracts three successes from a pursuer involved in a Foot Chase (see p. 65 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**). If the pursuer's bare feet do not touch the sand (that is, the pursuer wears shoes), the sand does not change, and the talen loses its power after one scene. To create this talen, the werewolf smashes a glass bottle or object and then binds a minor spirit of earth into the fragments.

Action: Instant

Dedication Cologne (Talen)

Not every Hunter knows the Rite of Dedication, and even when a packmate does know it, a werewolf might not want to wear the same outfit every night. This talen takes the form of a thick liquid with a slight musky scent. When sprayed over a werewolf's clothes and activated, the talen dedicates the clothing (per the Rite of Dedication, see p. 150 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). The effect wears off after 12 hours, or if the outfit becomes soaked in water.

Action: Instant

Sirenhowl (•)

Howling in the city is dangerous — it alerts the Herd to the presence of wolves, and that typically brings attention of the wrong sort. Also, any of the werewolf's enemies or rivals can use a howl to pinpoint his location. But for all that, sometimes a wolf *must* howl, and so the Hunters in Darkness sometimes craft Sirenhowls to mask their cries. A Sirenhowl usually takes the form of a necklace with a piece of red or blue plastic on it. When the Sirenhowl is activated, only the werewolf's pack hears his howl for what it truly is. Any other listener hears a siren's wail. The fetish must be re-activated for each howl. A mockingbird-spirit can be used to create this fetish, but urban spirits of warning (which often follow ambulances and police cars) are a more popular and appropriate choice.

Action: Instant

Vandal Spider (••)

Mystical interference in a werewolf's territory is difficult to detect, and it's the sort of thing that the Hunters in Darkness would rather discover firsthand anyway, so as to gain as much direct ("true" — see p. 94) experience as possible with it. Mundane destruction, though — spray-painting, minor fires and other acts of vandalism — can easily constitute a violation of sacred space and is simple enough to understand. The *Meninna* recognize that spiders are among the most successful hunters in the world, and so they bind spider-spirits into headbands, bandanas and hats to allow the Hunters to feel when vandals strike their territory. Once activated, a Vandal Spider sends a quivering feeling through the werewolf's head and face whenever someone deliberately damages something in her territory. The werewolf has a general sense of the direction, and the sensation continues for as long as the vandalism persists. The Hunter is usually left trying to track down the vandal (unless she's quite close by when it happens), but at least she doesn't have a cold trail. Once activated, this fetish remains so for eight hours.

Action: Instant

Fear-Worm (•••)

This fetish drives away human beings, by instilling any who enter the fetish's range of effect (a one-mile radius) with a creeping sense of horror. The fetish takes the form of a snake's skin or skeleton. The head must remain attached with the fangs visible. The werewolf nails the fetish to a wooden structure at the center of the territory she wishes to affect, and activates the fetish. Once activated, the fetish imposes a –2 penalty on all Resolve and Composure rolls made for human beings within the area of effect, and ensures that their dreams while within this area are highly disturbing nightmares (a target receives no Willpower for sleeping while she is thus afflicted). When the human leaves the area, the effect starts to fade immediately, but the dread does not leave the victim entirely until the next sunup. The fetish remains activated until sunrise or sunset. The spirit of a snake, spider or other creature generally regarded as frightening empowers this effect.

Action: Instant

Klaive — Fangs of the Bat (••••)



These weapons take many forms — daggers, mauls, bows and even sickles. The Fangs of the Bat are sometimes produced in pairs and wielded together using the Two Weapons Fighting Style (see p. 112 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**), but this requires crafting two fetishes separately. These klaives incorporate the spirit of the bat, the precise, night-flying hunter who never misses his target no matter how small it might be. The Hunters in Darkness favor these weapons because they cut down on an enemy's chances to scream or otherwise alert others — one swipe, one shot, one strike and the enemy falls dead. In game terms, once activated, Fangs of the Bat reduces the penalties associated with striking a specific target (see p. 165 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**) by two. This benefit applies *only* if the werewolf specifies a target, and it can't grant a bonus to such rolls. That is, if the penalty for specify a target is –1, the fetish can negate that penalty but not raise it to +1.

Such targeted shots might include aiming for a victim's throat (removes enemy's ability to scream or speak), eyes

(blinding the victim), Achilles tendon or hamstrings (halves Speed) or back of the head (aggravated damage).

Action: Reflexive

Wolf to Her Den (•••••)

The Hunters in Darkness are proud, but not foolish. They know that there are threats in the darkness that can best even the Uratha, and Hunters know that if they fall in defending their territory, it will be violated just the same as if they'd surrendered. Retreat, then, is a viable option sometimes. The Wolf to Her Den fetish makes this possible. The fetish is crafted in two parts, but can take almost any shape. Often, the fetish resembles a small wolf figurine, made to fit together like a jigsaw puzzle. The werewolf leaves one half in a safe place (this place is *always* considered sacred, and must never have been violated) and carries the other with her. When activated, this fetish instantly transports the werewolf back to the location of the hidden half. The user must immediately spend Essence equal to her current Size rating (making Urhan the most economical form to use the fetish in), to assist the spirits of the fetish in their transformation and transportation of the werewolf's flesh. The werewolf's pack can be transported as well; the Essence expenditure still applies, though the packmates can spend Essence for each other. Once the fetish has been used, the two halves must be joined and remain so for a short while for the spirits to realign themselves (in game terms, this fetish can be used only once per story). Wolf-spirits are most often used to craft this fetish, but spirits of other animals that mate for life are also viable. Obviously, it takes two such spirits.

Action: Instant

Milestone Gift: The Hunter's Bounty

Prerequisites: Purity 5, Harmony 6 or greater

This Gift, granted by Black Wolf herself, allows the Hunter to replenish his spiritual energy simply by hunting and catching his own food. Any werewolf can hunt and kill wolves, humans or other werewolves and steal their Essence, but this is a grievous violation of Harmony and the Oath of the Moon, and those Uratha who practice such cannibalism wind up *Zi'ir* in short order. A *Meninna* with this Gift, however, can hunt and kill any animal that would serve as prey for a wolf and regain Essence from it. The Hunter's Bounty allows the wolf to consume prey animals only for Essence; while a wolf might conceivably eat other predators if it had the opportunity or grew hungry enough, Black Wolf frowns on hunting such animals for food.

This Gift, once granted, is permanent. The Hunter in Darkness regains one point of Essence for every point of Health that the animal possesses, provided that he strips all usable meat from the carcass (that is, the werewolf doesn't need to eat the bones). If the Hunter is part of a pack, he can regurgitate meat for his packmates (along with as much Essence as he wishes), which they can then consume to regain Essence. Since this treatment usually implies a mother-cub relationship, though, some werewolves don't feel comfortable accepting such treatment from another Uratha (to say nothing of the fact that some werewolves might feel disgusted by the prospect).

As a Milestone Gift, The Hunter's Bounty is available only to Hunters in Darkness who perform some great service for the tribe or their packs, usually in the name of protecting a sacred place (see "Milestone Gifts," p. 12). If the character's Harmony drops below 6 after he learns this Gift, he has one cycle of the moon to regain this level of spiritual balance, during which he must perform the Rite of Contrition to Black Wolf. If he fails to do this, he loses The Hunter's Bounty and can never regain it.

Becoming a True Hunter

The Hunters in Darkness don't maintain a global communications network, but stories do get passed along, if slowly. Some *Meninna* become legendary within a certain area, and some have legends that spread across a nation or a continent. The reality of such werewolves is often quite different from the legend, but the Hunters feel that if legend is all one has to go on, it's better to have an open mind than a disbelieving sneer.

Don Stiles

Auspice: Cahalith
Tribe: Hunters in Darkness
Lodge: None
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2
Physical Attributes: Strength 2 (3/5/4/3), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/5), Stamina 2 (3/4/4/3)
Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 3
Mental Skills: Academics 1, Computer 1, Investigation (Crime Scenes) 2, Occult 2
Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Drive 2, Firearms (Pistol) 3, Larceny 2, Stealth (City) 3
Social Skills: Empathy (Nuzusul) 3, Intimidation (Interrogation) 2, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 3



Merits: Danger Sense, Gunslinger, Status (Cop) 2
Primal Urge: 2
Willpower: 5
Harmony: 7
Essence Max/per Turn: 11/1
Virtue: Charity
Vice: Sloth
Health: 7 (9/11/10/7)
Initiative: 6 (6/7/8/8)
Defense: 3 (in all forms)
Speed: 10 (11/14/17/15)
Renown: Cunning 3, Glory 4, Purity 3
Gifts: (1) Pack Awareness, Partial Change, The Right Words; (2) Blending, Camaraderie, Traveler's Blessing; (3) Command Fire, Rallying Cry, True Leader; (4) Know the Path
Rituals: 3; **Rites:** Hallow Touchstone, Rite of Initiation, Rite of the Spirit Brand

Don Stiles was a city cop. He had finally graduated to detective after eight years in uniform, and was looking forward to the chance to *solve* crimes, rather than just react to them. Working his first case, Don saw the bloodied corpse of a man apparently torn apart by wolves, and the image lingered. He obsessed over that body, the thick puddle of blood on the ground, the way the limbs had pieces missing, and all the while felt as though something was pent up inside him. Finally, he let it go, and under the gibbous moon he found the truth — that man had been torn apart by creatures like him.

Using a combination of police work and Uratha instinct, Don tracked down the werewolf who had killed the man. It was a Blood Talon who had stooped to cannibalism once and then become addicted, a werewolf on the verge of becoming a *Zi'ir*. Don found the Talon just before a pack of *Meninna* did. The Hunters were ready to kill the deranged Uratha, but Don talked them out of it — due process, and all that. Over time, Don was able to help the werewolf to regain his sanity. The *Meninna* were impressed, and inducted Don into their tribe.

He remains an active member of the police force, and although he's not exactly a team player there, his sterling arrest record affords him a great deal of latitude. While the other guys on the force think he's a strange fellow, they can't deny that he's got their backs. The truth is that Don regards the police force as a kind of second pack, and he considers his police precinct a "sacred place."

Don has gained fame in his city and nearby cities as something of an expert in talking crazed werewolves down and helping them back to Harmony. Some Uratha even refer to him as *Zi Galah* ("Soul Mender"). Don has since formed a pack of urban werewolves, all of whom were at one point on the verge of losing their minds entirely. His packmates — two Blood Talons, two fellow Hunters (both of whom he initiated) and one Storm Lord — would be quite willing to kill or die for their alpha. He mended their souls, after all.

Don is in his late 30s, but is frequently mistaken for a much younger man. He has chestnut brown hair and somewhat sad brown eyes. Don always carries his badge, his service .38 and a backup piece (usually a .38 snubnose), and even people who don't spend time around the police can easily tell he's a cop.

Using Don in a Chronicle

If a character's backstory requires it, Don might have talked down one of the characters and initiated him into the pack (he'd easily be worth a dot or two of Mentor). If the pack moves into a new city, Don is almost guaranteed to be present in mediation of territory rights. A character who has lost enough Harmony to start exhibiting compulsions, bans and derangements might get sent to visit with Don and his pack as a kind of intervention.

Sensei Taylor, Autumn

Auspice: Elodoth
Tribe: Hunters in Darkness
Lodge: Seasons
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 3
Physical Attributes: Strength 4 (5/7/6/5), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/5), Stamina 2 (3/4/4/3)
Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 2
Mental Skills: Academics 1, Computer 1, Investigation (Uratha) 2, Occult 2
Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Drive 1, Larceny 3, Stealth (Stalking Werewolves) 4
Social Skills: Empathy 2, Intimidation (Cold Logic) 2, Persuasion 2, Subterfuge 2
Merits: Fighting Style: Boxing 5, Language (First Tongue), Meditative Mind
Primal Urge: 4
Willpower: 5
Harmony: 9
Essence Max/per Turn: 13/2
Virtue: Faith
Vice: Pride
Health: 7 (9/11/10/7)
Initiative: 5 (5/6/7/7)
Defense: 3 (in all forms)
Speed: 12 (13/16/19/17)
Renown: Honor 4, Purity 5, Wisdom 3
Gifts: (1) Know Name, Partial Change, Scent Beneath the Surface, Sense Malice, Wolf-Blood's Lure; (2) Anybeast, Father Wolf's Speed, Snarl of Command; (3) Aura of Truce, Forest Communion, Running Shadow; (4) Shadow Flesh, Soul Read (5) Primal Form
Rituals: 1; **Rites:** Funeral Rite, Rite of the Spirit Brand

Sensei Taylor isn't a sensei in the usual sense of the word (that is, a teacher of the martial arts). He does teach werewolves how to fight, sometimes, but it's usually by beating the snot out of them should he encounter them during summer. As a member of the Lodge of Seasons (see p. 201 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**), his behavior changes throughout the year, but he is always an Autumn, and he has a very specific agenda for his fellow *Imru*.

Taylor feels that Luna gave him a mandate when she selected him for the First Change. The spirit wilds in his rural hometown were in terrible chaos, and under the half-moon, he discovered that the turbulence stemmed from the Uratha in the area carelessly draining various loci and hunting down weak spirits for sport. Taylor, guided by the Elunim, attracted the attention of a powerful spirit of killing frost, and the spirit put the local *Hisil* into a kind of dormancy, giving the Uratha time to reflect on what they were doing. The offending pack members, mostly *Meninna*, were humbled by Taylor's



actions and initiated him into the tribe. He stayed with them for a while, but one spring a member of the Lodge of Seasons passed through town, and he followed her out. In joining the lodge, he remembered the power of autumn and the killing frost, and of the value of a sudden drop in temperature to allow time for reflection.

Taylor never joined another pack — he decided that there simply weren't enough werewolves training the younger Uratha in the proper respect for the spirit wilds. After all, the lot of the werewolf is not to dominate the spirit world but to look after it and make sure it stays in balance. As an Elodoth, he was

Using Sensei Taylor in a Chronicle

Obviously, Taylor would make a good teacher for a young pack. He can show the pack members how to fight, yes, but he's best suited to teach them things such as First Tongue and general respect for spirits. He has extremely high standards, though (as evidenced by his Harmony rating), and a werewolf who isn't keeping to the Oath had best keep his mouth shut around Taylor. If the Storyteller wishes to use Taylor to teach an unruly pack a lesson, take care: Taylor is a lone werewolf, and no match for a whole pack. That's why he takes the time to get to know the local spirits before approaching a pack — with a Rank 4 spirit or two at his back, Sensei Taylor is that much more intimidating.

skilled at dealing with spirits without manipulating them, and he had become skilled at understanding, finding and subduing other werewolves. He began visiting isolated packs, checking the spirit wilds and correcting imbalance where he found it. He was only one werewolf, and thus rarely engaged whole packs himself, but he found that if the situation in the *Hisil* really required his action, there was always a powerful spirit willing to help him.

The first werewolf to call him "Sensei" was an Irraka who meant it as a joke, but the name stuck. "Sensei" means "teacher," and Taylor accepted this as his role — teaching werewolves to learn, remember and cherish their place within the spirit wilds. He's quite willing to injure werewolves to make the point, but he keeps scrupulously to the Oath. The fact that his nomadic lifestyle doesn't allow him to claim his own territory rankles him, and he wonders how famous he would have to become before other Uratha came looking for *him*.

Sensei Taylor is nearing 40. He is barrel-chested and muscular, with thick arms and a square jaw. He lets his black hair grow wild (he claims that he looks even worse when he tries to comb it), and usually purchases clothes from a local thrift store when entering a new city. He prefers to fight in Urshul form, saving Gauru for when he really needs to make an impression on disrespectful werewolves. He *never* changes to Primal Form when he's fighting something he doesn't intend to kill.

The Wolf of the Woods

Auspice: Irraka
Tribe: Hunters in Darkness
Lodge: None
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 6, Resolve 4
Physical Attributes: Strength 4 (5/7/6/5), Dexterity 5 (5/6/7/7), Stamina 4 (5/6/6/5)
Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 4
Mental Skills: Crafts 2, Investigation 2, Occult (Spirits) 2
Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl (Urshul) 4, Stealth 4, Survival 7
Social Skills: Animal Ken (Wolves) 4, Expression (Howls) 2, Intimidation (Feral) 3
Merits: Direction Sense, Fast Reflexes 2, Fleet of Foot 3, Fresh Start, Language (First Tongue), Quick Healer
Primal Urge: 8
Willpower: 8
Harmony: 9
Essence Max/per Turn: 30/7
Virtue: Prudence
Vice: Gluttony
Health: 9 (11/13/12/9)
Initiative: 11 (11/12/13/13) — with Fast Reflexes



Defense: 5 (5/6/6/6)
Speed: 17 (18/21/24/22) — with Fleet of Foot
Renown: Cunning 4, Glory 4, Honor 3, Purity 5, Wisdom 3
Gifts: (1) Call Water, Feet of Mist, Partial Change, Speak with Beasts, Wolf Blood's Lure; (2) Anybeast, Father Wolf's Speed, Manipulate Earth, Plant Growth, Slip Away; (3) Command Fire, Distractions, Forest Communion, Primal Howl, Running Shadow; (4) Blend In, Invoke the Wind's Wrath, Shadow Flesh; (5) Ghost Step, Lament of the River, The Hunter's Bounty
Rituals: 5; **Rites:** Banish Human, Banish Spirit, Bind Human, Bind Spirit, Blessing of the Spirit Hunt, Cleansed Blood, Drawing Down the Shadow, Mark of the Black Wolf, Name the Quarry, Rite of Fair Warning, Rite of Hikaon's Trail, Rite of Initiation, Rite of the Chosen Ground, Sacred Hunt

He is the werewolf who defines "werewolf" to much of the world. He is the hungry beast from the darkness, the superlative hunter, one of the deadliest creatures on the planet. He is the symbol of nature's vengeance, the monster that stalks men's dreams. He is the Wolf of the Woods.

Who was the Wolf when he was born? Was he even human? It's hard to say. The Wolf of the Woods assumes Hishu form only rarely, and those few Uratha

who have met him say that he looks subtly different every time he does. Rumors abound about this mysterious creature. Some say that he wasn't born of humans, but of wolves, and learned to change into a human being when he reached maturity. Some say that he is a werewolf, but learned to subsist on wolf-spirits for sustenance, and in so doing became something of a fleshy magath, an amalgam of Uratha and spirit. Others trace his power to spirits in a different way, insinuating that he was born from the union of a werewolf and a wolf-spirit. One seldom-related tale claims that he is the child of Black Wolf herself.

Whatever the truth, the Wolf of the Woods has been around for at least two centuries. His territory is vast, and he cannot hope to protect it all, but he must keep constantly on the hunt or risk falling into a deep sleep (see p. 76 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). When he meets other Uratha, especially *Meninna*, he expects nothing less than total deference to a superior predator and a mighty Uratha. If he does not receive this kind of welcome, he teaches the upstarts a lesson, but he does so in a manner befitting a New Moon — disappearing and waiting until each pack member is alone before dishing out her comeuppance. No matter what, he does not kill Uratha, and will not extend his aid, advice or friendship to a werewolf who does so or claims to have done so (Bale Hounds and the Pure included). He has occasionally acted as mentor to Hunters in Darkness, and even entire packs, but he doesn't stay still for long and so anyone wishing to learn from him needs to keep up. Eventually, his protégés lose him, and the Wolf of the Woods vanishes back into the forests. He never enters the cities. The closest he comes is small, rural communities, and even then he shuns humanity because of the effects of his Primal Urge on people.

The Wolf of the Woods doesn't take human form often. When he does, he looks like a man in his late 50s. His hair is gray, and he is hale and healthy despite his age, with nary a scratch on him. He displays all of the classic werewolf "tells" — eyebrows grow together, index and middle finger the same length, almond-shaped eyes, etc. In his preferred Urhan form, he is a large gray wolf with oddly tinted blue eyes. The Wolf speaks in First Tongue to werewolves, even if humans are present, although he can speak English (and probably many other human languages).

Using the Wolf of the Woods in a Chronicle

The Wolf is the quintessential werewolf, the pinnacle of what a Hunter can become… and that's probably more than the characters *want* to become. He has left behind almost all of his humanity to become the perfect werewolf, and therefore, there are no other werewolves at his level to make up a pack for him. The Wolf is lonely, but he is a genius in a world of simpletons, a paragon in a society of lesser beings. He doesn't disdain other werewolves for not becoming as he is, and he doesn't want to be a Messiah to the Uratha. He does wish, though, for a quarry that he could reasonably attack but not catch, a battle that could end in stalemate. He doesn't want to die, he just wants to feel the thrill of the hunt again, as he did when he was a pup — that is, when he was young. He could be used as a mentor, a wake-up call or a mythical beast for the characters to find.

Rail

Auspice: Ithaeur
Tribe: Hunters in Darkness
Lodge: Carrion
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 4
Physical Attributes: Strength 3 (4/6/5/4), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/5), Stamina 2 (3/4/4/3)
Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 2
Mental Skills: Academics 2, Computer 2, Crafts (Traps) 3, Investigation 2, Medicine (Stitches) 2, Occult 3, Science 2
Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl (Dirty Tricks, Spirits) 3, Drive 1, Firearms 3, Larceny 2, Stealth 4, Survival 3, Weaponry 1
Social Skills: Animal Ken 2, Intimidation (Crazy) 2, Socialize 1, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2
Merits: Danger Sense, Fame 1, Fast Reflexes 2, Fleet of Foot 3, Iron Stomach, Language (First Tongue), Parkour 5 (see p. 98)
Primal Urge: 2
Willpower: 6
Harmony: 5
Essence Max/per Turn: 11/1
Virtue: Temperance
Vice: Wrath
Health: 7 (9/11/10/7)

Initiative: 7 (7/8/9/9)
Defense: 3 (3/4/4/4)
Speed: 14 (15/17/20/18)
Renown: Cunning 1, Purity 2, Wisdom 1
Gifts: (1) Feet of Mist, Two-World Eyes, Warning Growl; (2) Luna's Dictum, Read Spirit
Rituals: 1; **Rites:** Rite of Dedication, Rite of the Spirit Brand

One Hunter in Darkness has garnered more repute among humans than among the People. To the humans of her city, Rail is a thief, a burglar who sneak into high-rises and penthouse apartments, steals cash and food and leaves again. She is not, however, a cat burglar by any means — she is loud, fast and crude. She doesn't hurt the people she robs unless they make her, and she isn't interested in stealing jewelry or anything else that would require her to fence stolen goods. She's really just interested in surviving.

To the Uratha, her role is much the same. She's a scavenger (and she was even before joining the Lodge of Carrion; see p. 102). She finds loci after other werewolves have used them and drains the last dregs, picks up discarded or unattended fetishes and generally lives off other werewolves' leavings. Rail is almost impossible to catch, though — she was practicing the art of parkour before it had a name, and she never leaves the city. In seconds, she can be 30 feet up and four blocks away, leaving a now-broke werewolf wondering what happened.

Although she might violate the precepts of the Oath that have to do with honoring one's elders, she takes the rest of it seriously. She claims no place as sacred, because she knows she isn't strong enough to protect it (rather, she believes that she's not, although a lifetime of roof-jumping and fighting for survival have made her dangerous indeed). Rail is terrified of spirits, and won't enter the Shadow unless she has no other choice. If asked, she tells other werewolves that the Uratha aren't *meant* to enter the spirit wilds. Uratha are meant to prevent things from leaving, but not venture there themselves. To do so is to court a fate much worse than death. Most Uratha assume she's just being cowardly, for how would a city-dwelling Scavenger know anything so important?

Rail is, as her name might suggest, skinny and wiry. Her ribs are plainly visible if her shirt rides up (which it often does), and her features are pinched and drawn. She has thin, blonde hair, and her clothes



are ratty and worn, except for her sneakers — she breaks into shoe stores and steals high-end footwear every few months, since her life so often depends on being able to climb and run better than whoever is chasing her (she receives a +1 equipment modifier to Foot Chase and climbing rolls because of her shoes).

Using Rail in a Chronicle

Rail is a Hunter in Darkness who reveres the precepts of the tribe by twisting them. She cares about the notion of sacred space, but doesn't have one herself. She sees herself as the omega wolf, and she has become so good at it that she's probably strong enough to be an alpha. If a pack could convince her of her own skill, they might gain a powerful ally in Rail. Otherwise, she'd be quite willing to barter service or assistance for food or money (especially to a pack lacking a Crescent Moon).



Chapter III

Iron Masters, Farsil Luhal

At the top of the water tower, claw curled around the trigger of the rifle in hand, Black Eye Betty stared down at the labor protest. Chaos ensued; shouts whose meaning were lost beneath other shouts, protest signs from picketers thrust in the air like viking swords, men shoving at other men to get their chance to spit fire and insults. Like a boiling pot down there, Betty thought. Flame beneath stainless steel, water molecules moving faster and faster until it was all ready to explode.

Nothing wrong with chaos, she thought. She found truth in chaos, seen through the scope's eye.

Point in case: among the protesters, one of them tried to hide. But the madness around him was not something he could blend with, stupid Ridden. Human face, almost perfect; not like some. She'd been hunting this mad fuck for a while, but here, in the midst of such human passion, the Ridden couldn't compete. Stupid shit had a sign. Launching his fist in the air. But it wasn't the same. He couldn't manifest the same kind of chaos that humanity was so good at creating and embracing.

The mob would've exploded into violence sooner or later — storming the bosses at the worksite, beating him to death with their splintered signs or found tire irons.

But Betty didn't give them the chance.

The top of the Ridden's head disappeared like a champagne cork. She didn't silence the shot. As the monster toppled, the crowd screamed, boiled over and went into flight instead of fight.

Betty smiled, jacked the shell and stuffed the hot brass in her pocket. A souvenir, like all the others. Her tribemates would be pleased at the growing collection.

Iron Masters

Farsil Luhal

"Twenty tons of TNT. This is what change feels like."
— King Mob, The Invisibles

The city's a special place. The ultimate expression of human ambition, a citadel of change, a palace of the new. Ever seen a werewolf walking the streets? Like an atheist in church. Werewolves see it, maybe they even understand it, but they don't feel it. They're in the city, but not of the city.

We're not like them. When we hunt, the city moves with us. When we stalk our prey, the buildings tell us where it goes. The people tell us what they've seen. We're the children of change, and the city is our territory in a way that nobody else can understand.

It takes a special kind of mind to become change. A lot of Uratha can't think the way we have to think, can't bring themselves to watch as humanity ruins the Shadow and cities warp the world. That's our job. We're the witnesses of history, and we can't look away.

We do what we can. Red Wolf expects no less.

Other werewolves are rarely certain what to make of the Iron Masters. To some, they're the urban apex predator, the most dangerous creature in the cities of the world. To others, the Iron Masters are werewolves who can't leave the crutches of their human lives behind. Still others see the tribe as the wardens of humanity, the human side of the Uratha. The truth, as always, is somewhere in between.

The *Farsil Luhal* don't care what other werewolves think. Change is the Iron Masters' only constant, and when an Iron Master is tired of change, she is tired of life. A newly inducted werewolf thinks she knows almost everything. Ten years on, all she knows is how little she knows. Werewolves of the tribe are always looking for something new — an innovative way of dealing with a problem, a new idea for a fetish, a new interpretation of a tale from the past. The need for the new makes them question everything they see. The Iron Masters are whatever the other tribes think of them, for a time — then they change again, taking another step in the hunt for the new. They change because the world changes. *Urfarah* charged Sagrim-Ur with taking note of what changed, and the Iron Masters have taken up that duty with passion.

Viva la Revolucion

A revolutionary has to be careful, lest he become defined by his opposition. In much the same way, the *Farsil Luhal* need to center themselves on what they are, rather than what they are not. It'd be too easy to be the tribe that embraces everything the others do not, but that was never Red Wolf's intention. Sagrim-Ur is the ultimate trickster wolf, and his tribe follows in his footsteps. Werewolves who aren't smart don't make it through their initiation. Those who do must have some clue as to the tribe's true nature — Iron Masters are the bastards with a hand of aces up their sleeves and a gun under the table, ready and willing to make unspeakable deals with unknowable devils because it's the only way.

The Iron Masters live for change, something that few humans truly understand. Tribe members aren't mindless neophiles, embracing the

new just because it's new. Red Wolf questioned everything and so does his tribe. Often, something new doesn't offer enough of an advantage over the existing method to justify taking it up. Other times, the new is better than the old, and the tribe accepts it. Tradition is all well and good, but everything has to change. Without change, Father Wolf would still be alive. Without change, the Firstborn would never have become patrons of tribes. Without change, Luna would never have accepted the Forsaken. Change is the only constant, but the tribe understands the need for measured change.

Red Wolf's oath exemplifies the attitude that many *Farsil Luhal* have toward change: if it honors their territory, then it is good. If not, there's little point. Iron Masters do everything with their territory in mind. It might not always be obvious — many hunts are just one step of a complex process that would make Rube Goldberg proud — but the werewolf's territory is the end goal. When she does something that fucks with her hunting grounds, Sagrim-Ur knows, and makes his displeasure known. For all that the Firstborn is the totem of the Iron Masters, he is still a spirit, and his attitude to territory is something that most Forsaken will never understand.

The Changing Tribe

Being an Iron Master can mean a lot of different things, but some things are the same the world over. Werewolves who come into the tribe do so in the same way whether they're in St. Petersburg or Laos, and once they're in, they must contend with bonds of tradition and expectation that hold tighter than local concerns.

Recruitment

Some people think that the Iron Masters don't need to recruit. Any werewolf who can't or won't leave his human life behind joins up; who needs recruiters?

Those people are wrong.

Werewolves who can't leave their old lives behind or who otherwise can't get with the program are Ghost Wolves. The *Farsil Luhal* are members of one of the Tribes of the Moon. An Iron Master may live among people, but he is never really one of them. He's got a sacred duty to hunt down things that would shatter human minds, dealing with these entities because only he can. He accepts that he must put his past life behind him. That old life is gone. It takes a special kind of mind to live as a contradiction, too human for other werewolves and too alien for humans. Only Iron Masters have the agile minds necessary to ride that knife-edge without falling one way or the other — the exemplars being the Lodge of the Hidden Hunt (p. 139).

Some *Farsil Luhal* remain close to their past lives. A father lives on the streets, protecting his family's neighborhood from capricious spirits and rampaging *shartha*. Though he looks through the window at his wife and children, they think he's dead. It's the only way to keep them safe. A woman refuses to leave her partner when she learns the horrible truth of the world, but she must accept that her relationship will change forever. Between the great dangers facing the Forsaken and the Rage burning in the new werewolf's heart, things will take a turn for the worse.

If a newly Changed werewolf wants to join the Iron Masters, she has to demonstrate that she can think on her feet. Sometimes, one of Red Wolf's tribe will have singled her out before she even knows it. Other times, she proves that she should be a member of the tribe before anyone else can decide. Observers are always on the lookout for werewolves who just don't do what they're told. They mark those who question the world — especially those who question the veracity of Father Wolf's story. Some reject what they've learned without question or just accept it, and the Iron Master moves on. Others think around it. A new *Farsil Luhal* is likely to have a syncretic understanding of the time before the Sundering that combines her pre-existing worldview with the animistic world. A Christian werewolf may see Father Wolf as an animistic lupine Christ-analogue, an emissary of a higher power who gave his life so that the world could change. A psychologist may see the whole spirit world as a manifestation of the planetary unconscious. Atheists and sociologists both recognize tales of the time around the Sundering as a set of instructions encoded into stories. As a tribe, the Iron Masters have the greatest number of werewolves with divergent opinions of the Father Wolf story.

A new werewolf has to deal with a lot of information in a very short span of time. In addition to learning of the time when spirit and flesh were one, she learns how to control her form and the savage Rage burning within her breast. Iron

Masters feel that fury the same as anyone. They need rock-solid self-control as they're around people more than other tribes. All too often, Iron Masters have nowhere in the physical side of their territories where they can unleash their Rage, and the Shadow of a city is never friendly. A werewolf who would be an Iron Master must work around that. Maybe she breaks into an old warehouse and tears great rents in the walls. Maybe she finds a spirit to hunt when she's close to the breaking point.

If a werewolf proves that she is willing to question, and that she can channel her Rage even when it threatens to claim her, the Iron Masters may approach her. Many of those werewolves already have close ties with a particular place, community or institution. They know from their human life what it feels like to have a territory. Those who don't must learn. Red Wolf's oath binds Iron Masters to their territories in a way that few other Forsaken can truly understand. Sagrim-Ur requires the *Farsil Luhal* to always honor her territory. She must at least *consider* her territory in absolutely everything she does. Other werewolves can divide their time between their territory and other concerns, but Iron Masters don't have that luxury — unless they want to cross Sagrim-Ur.

For all that, not all Iron Masters live in cities. The two important things any prospective *Farsil Luhal* must recognize are the impact of humanity and the importance of territory. Humans are the architects of change. The Iron Masters claim that more spirits are born every day from human creativity than in a year's unattended growth. Many Iron Masters flock to the cities to check that growth, but others remain tied to smaller human settlements. Some Iron Masters in Africa blend their religion in with the twisted animistic world that a werewolf lives in. African American Iron Masters then learn from them, replacing hard-to-find ingredients with urban flotsam to make their own special kind of trash magic. Humans influence the *Farsil Luhal*, it's impossible to deny, but humans live everywhere, and most will never see a computer or a cell phone.

Some werewolves approach the Iron Masters, whether they've only recently undergone their First Change or spent 20 years as a Ghost Wolf. They've gone through their lives never really challenging anything, or they've never had a strong bond to a place or an ideal. These werewolves come to the Iron Masters to learn. While the tribe can try to teach them, the essence of Red Wolf runs in all those who go on to become Iron Masters. When it comes to the crunch, it takes a certain kind of mind to recognize — or manufacture — a chance to integrate something new, and some people just don't have that. There's no shame in that, but these werewolves will never be *Farsil Luhal*. Others discover a hidden talent when an Iron Master starts pointing out opportunities. These werewolves don't have it any easier, but at least they're in with a fighting chance.

The traditional initiation into the *Farsil Luhal* has a werewolf put in an impossible situation, left to adapt — and cheat — her way out of it. She has to find whatever opportunities she has, or make her own. If it were easy, anyone could do it. Often, the werewolf overseeing her initiation has left a loophole somewhere — but he can't control everything. Cunning spirits and *shartha* look for any chance to exploit

Initiations

Iron Masters the world over have different ideas of how to run initiations. These three are examples to spark your imagination for what your character may have to go through.

One pack in London is famous for dropping prospective Iron Masters in Trafalgar Square at noon, without clothes or any other equipment. At sundown, he must best a spirit chosen by the pack to the point that it will never trouble their territory again. He can use only whatever he finds that afternoon against the spirit, and often combat is not an option.

A pack in Vegas includes a game of poker in their initiation, with the prospective werewolf failing the initiation if she loses the hand. In addition to testing her resolve, the pack members make sure that the deck is stacked in their favor, though tradition demands nothing more than a human dealer could manage. Some Elodoth and Ithaeur get to the spirit of the deck beforehand, while others hope that they're better cheats than the dealers.

Iron Masters in Detroit test that their prospective members can keep their cool when dealing with humans. A prospective member must spend a single night in a club, surrounded by loud music and the smell of sweat as humans dance around her. Of course, things are never that easy. One found herself in a club that catered to vampires and had to fend off their advances. Another spent his night on top of a Wound, with spirits breaking through to possess revelers.



an Iron Master initiation. Worse, the Fire-Touched have a nasty habit of interrupting and trying to recruit — or kill — the cub.

The Ties That Bind

An Iron Master from Detroit may be very different from an Iron Master from Madras, but the Iron Masters share a common bond with Red Wolf. Some things don't change the world over: the *Farsil Luhal* have seen them from all angles and have decided to keep them.

Wherever *Farsil Luhal* may be, they keep in touch. Whether they send stories of their exploits by spirit or email, every member of the tribe knows how to contact at least three others outside his pack. Even if something bad happens, the tribe has a network in place, and the message will get out. More than a useful means of emergency communication, the tribal grapevine allows werewolves to share stories of their deeds and legends they have found, along with useful information. Beyond his emergency contacts, an Iron Master slowly builds up a list of others whom he trusts, along with a means to get in contact with them. Red Wolf's children never walk alone, and their decentralized system based on equal parts loyalty and trust means that there's no obvious target for anyone who wants to disrupt the system.

Many *Farsil Luhal* keep some kind of personal space away from their pack. Often, it's simple: a storage unit, or a room in the pack's apartment. Whatever form the space takes, it's the werewolf's private space. If she's only recently Changed, that space gives her somewhere to go where she can unleash her Rage in private. When she learns some measure of control, she may use it as thinking space, a place to put items that are fully hers as opposed to things that belong to the pack or as a private ritual space that she has infused with a resonance conductive to meditation. A werewolf performing a rite in such a dedicated ritual space ignores any penalties for carrying out a ritual in an urban area (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 149). If the pack moves, or the werewolf leaves her pack, she must condition another private space — it's as much a reflection of her as a member of her pack as it is of her individual personality. Setting up a space requires the werewolf spend at least six hours

a week there over a span of several months, during which time she imprints her personality on the area and brings the local spirits around to her way of thinking — often by force.

While the following customs aren't common among all of Red Wolf's children, it's a reasonable bet that those of the same auspice hold to these customs, no matter where the Iron Masters are in the world.

Irraka: By unspoken agreement, most of the No Moons in an area mark one day a year to remind them of why they are Iron Masters. On that day, they must hunt without any outside assistance. Their packs are under no such requirement, but the hidden hunter must reaffirm that he can do his job without any of the things that make his life easier. Scottish *Farsil Luhal* traditionally go without tools on Samhuinn, those in New York City go without on New Year's Day and Labor Day serves the same purpose in Detroit. The day chosen doesn't always make sense to humans: in Munich, the People finally bound a powerful spirit that had been terrorizing the city. Iron Master Irraka hunt without tools on May 17 to commemorate their eventual victory.

Ithaeur: Iron Masters born under the witch's moon attach special significance to the decoration that other werewolves of the tribe wear. Just as the spirits mark a werewolf's Essence with faint patterns when they bestow a Gift, Ithaeur mark their bodies whenever they learn a new rite. Some prefer tattoos, with the intricacy of the design or prominence of the location indicating how difficult it was to learn the rite. Others mark their ritual prowess with piercings or objects implanted under their skin, and a few brand themselves with sacred designs. While the ritual aspect is well observed, Crescent Moons aren't stupid, and use their regenerative powers to the full. The mark is the thing, not how painful the process.

Elodoth: Other tribes may make better judges, but the *Farsil Luhal* make the best investigators. An Elodoth's moon gives them empathy with spirits, and their tribe gives them empathy with people. In any situation where more than one pack gathers to pass judgment on any Forsaken — Ghost Wolves included — an Iron Master Half-Moon is honor-bound to investigate if asked. The ambassadors of their tribe among other Forsaken, the Elodoth must use their unique talents to inform judgment rather than passing sentence themselves. In cases in which too many people assume that the accused is guilty, an Elodoth of another tribe will ask an Iron Master for an impartial investigation out of fear of doing what's popular rather than what's right.

Cahalith: The masters of unconventional expression, Cahalith *must* express themselves. Several try new forms of music or sculpture, at least one pours his passion into making beautifully-forged handguns, and a small number of architects honor their territory with buildings that are pleasing to the spirits, if not the people living in them. Similar to the tribe's Irraka, those who embody Luna's howl sometimes need to cut loose. Every couple of months, they arrange to meet (perhaps via email or through spirit messengers). The area's Cahalith gather somewhere away from human eyes, and they howl from sundown to sunup. After that one night of release, they return to their packs and hunt with a ferocity normally seen only in the Blood Talons.

Rahu: An Iron Master who Changes under the warrior's moon fights dirty. It doesn't matter whether the conflict is a brawl over rights to a specific building, a contest for a girl's affections or a game of Go, she has only one objective: win at any cost. When a Rahu starts learning a new field, tradition demands that she makes everything she needs herself. Whether that involves making the weapons that she trains with or carving the pieces of a chess set, she learns self-reliance. While she relies on her pack in other circumstances, in conflict they rely on her and she must as well. When two Full Moons gather to share experiences or for one to train the other, tradition has it that the pair swaps small items symbolic of what they have learned. These trophies remind the Rahu of the journey she has taken — and of just how much she still doesn't know.

Roles

Around the world, some werewolves find themselves drawn to the roles that are archetypal to their tribe, within their packs and for the wider Uratha community. Four of the most common archetypes for the *Farsil Luhal* are as follows:

The Oracle: The collector of knowledge. Some oracles hold their knowledge in libraries of books and scrolls, while others prefer DVDs and web-accessible backups. The oracle heeds *Urfarah*'s words to Red Wolf: "Mark well how things go," and takes it upon herself to record everything that happens. Elodoth and Ithaeur quest into the Shadow to find spirits that might be able to fill in a gap in the oracle's understanding. Irraka and Cahalith hunt down records of

what has happened, liberating them from the clutches of ignorant mages or secretive vampires. Rahu liberate information by more direct means, breaking places or people to find the truth and place it in a defensible position.

Some oracles seek out the Lodge of Scrolls, dedicating their lives to the preservation of learning. They see it as their duty to record how times have changed and how the tribe has changed accordingly, hoping to learn from the past to help them in the future. Others actively try new things and record the results, working on their own personal record of history. One werewolf who takes this role in Delhi sits atop a black market data-haven, charging Uratha the world over to access a vast web of stories gleaned from spirits and other werewolves alike. A *Farsil Luhal* in Pennsylvania tends to a small-town library with a surprisingly large reference section that only the local packs are allowed to access. Werewolves who become oracles have to keep their presence secret, as many mages would kill for such a library of werewolf lore, and spirits of knowledge and learning flock to the oracles' hidden collections. Life is never simple for one who hoards information.

The Smith: For as long as humans have made tools, the shapers of stone and metal have held a special place in society. The Iron Masters were the first tribe to use tools, and around the world they're seen as the tribe most dependent on tools. The smith either builds new tools, or makes existing ones more useful. Some concentrate on outfitting the local packs with hard-wearing cell phones and reinforcing equipment to survive life with a werewolf. Others specialize in creating fetishes and ritual objects, often out of "reclaimed" material. Circuit boards and bullet casings are as likely to show up in a smith's creations as feathers and beads.

The Lodge of Metal is a logical destination for many who take this role, but many see the Lodge as being too focused. Smiths create things for their community and put them to use in service of that community. So has it always been. The *Farsil Luhal* who assume this role use their technological expertise as well as their creations to help their packs. An Irraka or Elodoth might be an expert in security systems, while a Rahu or Cahalith ends up the best auto mechanic in the state. An Iron Master among the Aleut tribes specializes in crafting soul-baskets — fetishes that trap troublesome spirits — woven from local grass, but he also has a sideline in making razor-sharp glass weaponry to modern standards. In the East End of London, a werewolf who has taken on the role of the smith specializes in customizing black-market firearms. While she doesn't create fetishes herself, her handiwork makes it easier for any of her clients who want to. Smiths become known among the local Uratha whether they want to be or not, and some have to adjust to more public lives.

The Face: The *Farsil Luhal* was the first tribe to live among humans. They are experts in dealing with humans, holding on to that part of themselves that other werewolves cast off in the interests of Harmony. Some Iron Masters take that further, gathering a network of allies and contacts that would put any manipulative vampire to shame. A werewolf playing the role of the face knows someone in every part of his territory and beyond, and acts as a liaison to the human world not just for his pack but for any local Uratha who ask. Some live apart from their packs, holding down jobs and apartments — a few even maintain families — but others interface with the mundane world only when they have to, whether in bars or coffee shops.

Many werewolves who become the face for their area are Elodoth, the auspice's natural ability to find balance in all things giving them an edge that the more confrontational Ithaeur and Rahu often lack. Any auspice can be a face, though their duty colors their dealings with people. Irraka use their networks for information, befriending useful people in a heartbeat and vanishing just as quickly. An Ithaeur's network often includes spiritualists, psychics and other fringe cases, but these werewolves rub shoulders with people chosen at random from areas of spiritual import, while a Rahu knows people in all walks of life who can keep him informed of likely threats. A werewolf who assumes this role must deal with a small dose of fame. It's impossible to spend a day in his territory without someone recognizing him — and quite possibly needing a costly favor.

The Contrary: Most legends of Sagrim-Ur have him questioning why things are. Every time he asks a question, Father Wolf replies, "This happens, and it is good. Nothing more need be known." The contrary embodies Red Wolf in those encounters, challenging everything. Some question the preconceptions of their packs, hoping to teach as a modern-day trickster archetype, but they must be careful to avoid pissing off those closest to them. Others attempt to live their lives as examples of contradic-

tion, living as the opposite gender, embracing things their packmates decry. A group of contrarian Iron Masters in the San Francisco Bay area recently formed the Lodge of Chaos, but others see the lodge as being too progressive.

Iron Masters who take this role are most often part of mixed packs. Their packmates give them more leeway, as they're just "being *Farsil Luhal*" and playing to tribal stereotypes. The contrary still manages to expose the weak points in his pack's plans, and suggest new ways of doing things, but often his packmates don't realize it. Among their own tribe, contraries focus more on larger questions. They re-examine (some would say "reinvent") tales of Red Wolf to make them relevant to life as a modern werewolf, seeking out more efficient rites and ways of performing existing rites that work better in the city. Some cut themselves off from their pack and tribe for a time, challenging the werewolf instinct to live with a pack. Others challenge their attitudes toward humanity, the *shartha* and spirits. All too often, contraries find that the old ways are the best, but they only remain that way thanks to the Iron Masters' constant tests.

Stories Old and New

Stories hold Uratha culture together, from tales of *Urfarah* and the Firstborn to legends and local mysteries. Without stories, a werewolf does not know what has gone before. The *Farsil Luhal* tell more stories than most, some of which highlight differences and others that bring the tribe together.

The Mists of Time

This story is true: Red Wolf was the original warden of humanity. These strange little mortals changed the Shadow with their stories and changed their environment with their tools. She watched as they learned first to harness fire, then to create it from naught but rocks and wood, and she knew that this was good. This fire brought with it new spirits, and many of them wanted to embrace their creators. A large gathering of these new elementals moved into the physical world, but Sagrim-Ur stopped them. Burned and in pain, she knew that not all changes are for the better.

Red Wolf was never satisfied with the world as it was. He yearned for things to change, for new things to find and new ways of being. To that end, he questioned Father Wolf on matters that ranged from inane to sacrilegious. The other Firstborn shunned him, but Urfarah *answered Red Wolf's questions the same way every time: "This happens, and it is good. Nothing more need be known."* Urfarah *never snapped at Sagrim-Ur, and never ignored him. Every question received the same answer.*

Nobody was there to see Red Wolf's reaction to the answer. Some stories say that he respected Father Wolf for having a certainty in the world that Sagrim-Ur lacked; others think he hated Urfarah*'s unthinking adherence to the way things are. One thing that the stories do agree on is Red Wolf's attention to humanity. These strange tool-using apes changed the spirit world around them, and changed themselves. Humans were agents of creation then as now, and Red Wolf couldn't help his curiosity.*

This story is true: Sagrim-Ur felt no pity when Urfarah *lay dying. Her heart was taken with joy, for from this moment things would never be the same as they had been. She stood proud, witnessing the moment that everything changed. Father Wolf spoke his final words to Red Wolf's ears:* "Things will not be as they ought. Mark well how they go, and remember what I told you was good." *From that moment Red Wolf knew fear, for change destroys certainty, and he knew power, for change creates hope.*

When the Forsaken came to Red Wolf, he tested them with riddles and tricks like no other. Mirroring the modern tribal initiation, those primal Iron Masters had to think fast — and more importantly, they had to cheat. Only the truly brave or the truly foolish try to cheat one of the Firstborn, and Sagrim-Ur saw within them the burning desire for redemption at any cost. They would say anything, think anything, and do anything in order to pick up where Urfarah *left off. They would have to: Father Wolf's death had twisted the world from the norm, and in Red Wolf's eyes only those werewolves who would change themselves to fit the world stood a chance of success.*

Red Wolf was no fool. He knew his Farsil Luhal *contained the risk-takers, the cunning, the devious and those who just didn't hold with doing things the traditional way — every werewolf that the other tribes didn't trust. To save them from themselves, he made them swear his oath alongside the Oath of the Moon:* Honor Your Territory in All Things. *These words keep the Iron Masters focused on why we try new things, why we strive for change. Though many of the original Iron Masters didn't realize it at the time, the oath kept them concentrated, and has done throughout the years. It's Sagrim-Ur's insurance policy, a cunning investment against the possibility of his children forgetting their purpose.*

This story is true: The Farsil Luhal *walked in the first human settlements. They bartered for goods with humans. When a human spirit-talker crossed into the*

Shadow, they dragged him back. When the shartha *stole people to use as human puppets, the Iron Masters' claws ran red. But they were not as strenuous as they should have been. In the first city, they ignored spirits walking in the world of flesh, only intervening if it caused a problem. An army of spirits built up the first spirit-cult in the very heart of one of the first Iron Master territories, and they let it happen. Red Wolf's vengeance was swift and terrible, casting them out so far that they were invisible to the eyes of the Forsaken. The story spread, and from that moment the tribe knew that Red Wolf's oath is binding in all dealings.*

We Iron Masters often disagree on our stories of Red Wolf, especially of the time when Urfarah *still walked the world. It doesn't matter. The tribe as a whole collects stories and legends of the great progenitor, whether praiseworthy or critical. Red Wolf has played every role in order to teach his children what we must know, and he still does so. While no Iron Master would admit to inventing a story of Sagrim-Ur, we will admit to changing an older story to highlight… new concerns. There's no dishonor in adapting these stories. Some Cahalith claim they dream of Red Wolf watching them when they work on a legend or fable, and they feel his approval.*

All these stories are true, even the contradictions. Examine the past as you examine the present. Find the stories that make sense, and learn from them. Throw away stories that no longer apply. And if you need another legend, write another legend. Without adaptation, extinction. If the stories don't work for you, change them. They don't matter as much as you think they do. Take what works and change the rest into something else that works. Change is the only constant. Change the past. Change the future. Change the truth. Change yourself. Change the world.

You are Farsil Luhal. *Change or die.*

The Mark of History

If the Iron Masters deliberately change the stories about their own past, how can they know what really happened? The simple answer is that they don't. No werewolf alive today was present when Father Wolf died, and those spirits that do remember would never tell a kinslayer what really happened.

The Iron Masters make public their recognition of the stories of *Urfarah* and the Firstborn as myth and allegory. They're not just stories; they're instructions. How to act as a werewolf, how to deal with spirits and people: all encoded in an easy-to-learn format designed to be passed down hundreds of generations without the recipient needing anything other than a pair of ears and a brain. Sometimes, the instructions need to change. Sometimes, the cultural background of the listener will get in the way of him learning from an existing story. The *Farsil Luhal* accept that the easiest way to go forward is to change the words.

That said, many among the tribe hold a few stories to heart. The others are allegory and instruction, but just a couple have to be truer than that. It's a rare comfort in the ever-changing world. Some go further, holding the stories that they know as fact. Other werewolves change their stories, but they don't know the truth. For a tribe predicated on change, a surprising number of fundamentalists believe that their legends are the One Truth.

What Has Been

Only a fool ignores what has gone before, and the Iron Masters are no fools. At some points in the past they have taken on board the influence of humans, whereas in other Iron Masters the catalyst for change is purely Uratha in nature.

Not all moments in the tribe's history showcase shining victories. Sometimes, werewolves fuck up royally. The *Farsil Luhal* tell the stories of those

Changing Times

Iron Master stories never agree on Red Wolf's gender. This isn't any kind of historic revisionism spurred by the human feminist movement — Sagrim-Ur's shifting gender shows up in the most ancient tribal legends. It serves two purposes for the tribe.

First, Red Wolf's shifting gender reinforces that even spirits close to the People are alien beings. Holding them to one gender assigns them normal, recognizable traits that just don't exist. Such anthropomorphizing makes werewolves drop their guard around spirits they "know," which is a big mistake — even a minor Gaffling is more alien (or god) than man.

Second, the constant change of gender — often within the same story — is a linguistic device reinforcing the idea that change is constant. Without it, the legends revolve around a relatively static Red Wolf in a changing world. With it, the storyteller rams home that Red Wolf changes just as much as everything else. Generally speaking, male Iron Masters think of Red Wolf as male, and female Iron Masters… well, you get the idea.

times, reminding themselves of what they have been through and reminding themselves that they must be better. Those who came before had the luxury of being dumb. Modern Iron Masters hold themselves to a higher standard. They are the tribe of change, and they frequently push themselves to be better than history.

The Coming of Law

Around 2050 BC, Ur-Nammu scribed his Codex, putting the law of the first city in words for all to see. A hundred and twenty years later, the Code of Eshunna followed suit. In 1760 BC, Hammurabi went two steps further. Anyone who could read could understand the Code of Hammurabi, and he had his laws inscribed in stone, making it perfectly clear that some commandments are beyond even the power of kings to change.

In the back streets of Sumeria and later Mesopotamia, the *Farsil Luhal* watched and learned. The Oath of the Moon was no secret even then, but too often werewolves raised expediency above other concerns. The Pure waged war upon the Forsaken, further troubling those who took Luna's mandate for the truth. How could they hope to beat the Pure unless they killed their foes? Honor and respect are all well and good, but a soldier must heed his general's orders. Confusion ruled, bringing weakness at its right hand.

The Pure initially used the fall of the Dynasty of Isin as cover for their shadow war, but it lasted long into the rise of Babylon. Many Uratha perished at their cousin's claws. Forsaken war-leaders came up with their own interpretations of the Oath of the Moon. They emphasized obedience and the need for swift retribution. Many of these interpretations bore little resemblance to the original tenets of the Oath. Other packs lost faith in the Forsaken's leaders, and the Uratha looked sure to fall.

One pack of *Farsil Luhal* — the Get of Nabu — challenged the war leaders. The pack members brought with them stone tablets on which they had scribed the Oath of the Moon — and which they had made into powerful fetishes. They brought a challenge to the war leaders, and had the support of many packs that would otherwise have retreated. The alpha pack stood down in the presence of the Oath, and the Iron Masters took the leading role. With consummate wisdom, they rallied werewolves to their side, and fought the Pure to a bloody standstill. The tablets with the Oath were lost to the mists of history.

The Tablets

Each of the seven tablets that the Get of Nabu brought to their challenge was a powerful fetish in its own right. While stories disagree on the specifics, each tablet had a power related to its tenet of the Oath. The tablets must still be in existence — the Get ensured that they were indestructible — but what has happened to them in nearly 4,000 years? What lengths would a pack go to for just one tablet? What if they found clues to all seven? And more importantly, who's giving them these clues?

A Center of Trade

A thousand years ago, Jorvik — the city now called York — was a bustling market town. Though it was the centre of a small Viking kingdom up to AD 954, by AD 1000 it was the second largest city in England. Everything came through Jorvik — merchants saw enough coins from Samarkand that forgers turned a tidy profit copying them, and traders commonly brought items from at least as far as the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. The free trade that started with the Vikings carried on, and York was a city where one could buy anything.

Jorvik was the second city, England's centre of trade. The Iron Masters couldn't keep away if they tried. When other werewolves were too wary of large groups of humans to spend much time in a city, the *Farsil Luhal* thrived. Red Wolf's tribe was already communicating far and wide, spreading stories and goods from distant territories through the worst parts of the Shadow. The packs of Jorvik sat at the centre of an ever-expanding web, goods and information flowing to them. The Uratha who walked as men learned from their human counterparts, sending information and merchandise to the packs that needed them. Unlike their human counterparts, these werewolves had something to lose.

Werewolves cannot return to the human world. The packs of Jorvik forgot that. They repressed the primal Rage burning within their hearts, ignoring what it meant to be a werewolf. Though humans were nervous around the packs, they didn't pay that a second thought: they were dealing with smugglers and travelers, people who have many good reasons to be on edge. One night, that all changed. Some apologists try to blame the wholesale slaughter of humans on spirits or *shartha*, but it was the *Farsil Luhal* of the city alone. Their Rage could be denied no longer,

the needs of the wolf within overcame them utterly. Three packs hunted and killed more than 60 people in a three-night orgy of spilled blood and cracked bone. When local Forsaken heard of this, they hunted and killed those responsible. Iron Masters remember the lessons of the *Khila'es Suthar*, the Three Nights of Slaughter.

Lessons Learned

The Iron Masters learned a valuable lesson from their folly, but a pack in modern York may find that there's more to the whole story than meets the eye. Was it really a failure of the Iron Masters to honor Harmony that lead to the carnage, or were spirits — or Bale Hounds — involved? York is the most haunted city in Britain, and word has it that at least one ghost could point the pack at the truth. If the pack members find out that it wasn't the Iron Masters' fault, does the pack clear the tribe's name or stay quiet so that others will learn from history?

The Lost Colony

The fate of the Roanoke Colony is one of the many great mysteries of the last millennium. A group of English settlers set up a colony on Roanoke Island. The leader of the group returned to England to bring supplies that the colony needed. Greed and war delayed his return, and when he returned to the island, the colonists had vanished. The only clue to the disappearance was the word "Croatoan" carved into a post of the fort, and "Cro" carved into a nearby tree. The only other fact that werewolves know is that the Wandering Claw — a pack of Iron Masters lead by Sharp-Eyed Kendall — were among the missing.

Different spirits have very different accounts of what happened. *Farsil Luhal* legends tell a combination of the many tales. Wandering Claw's spirit of adventure carried the pack members across the seas. They didn't pay American werewolves any heed; the pack members were guarding their colony, and would deal with the natives as and when they had to. This was a mistake. They believed that everywhere was like Britain, pressed for space. In America, werewolves had no need to hide in the settlements of humans. Iron Masters observed human settlements without ever traveling there in human guise. The local Forsaken tried to meet with the new pack, but Kendall turned them back. *"We work differently,"* he said. *"Your methods work for your people, and ours work for ours. We hold this island as our territory. You will not intervene."*

Other werewolves looked on in horror as the Wandering Claw ignored the Shadow of their territory. The pack cared too much for their humans, and the landscape of the *Hisil* was different enough that they did not see the omens of disaster, no surprise in a new world. Native Iron Masters redoubled their efforts to reason with Kendall, but they were too late. The Wandering Claw had freed the Croatoan, a spirit of vicious conquest long-bound on the island. Only after it was too late did Kendall agree to listen. Negotiations, already tense, weren't helped by his unwavering stance on the fate of the human colonists. He would not see them dead, and several times came to blows with other packs to defend his stance. A number of native packs ran interference, bringing as many of the colonists as they could to the local tribes. Those who remained volunteered to take a boat and try for England. The Wandering Claw remained, aided by the one pack of native Iron Masters who knew of the Croatoan. Theirs was the hardest task: a powerful ritual that would re-bind the spirit. Though they succeeded, the price was great. Both packs died, ultimately through the English werewolves' obsession with their pet humans.

The Cycles of History

Roanoke is not the only place where cultural differences have lead to catastrophe, but it is the one with most prominence in modern times. The Wandering Claw, and Kendall especially, placed the human above the shadow. Modern Iron Masters, especially those in large cities, often make the same mistake. Other follies have blighted packs of Chinese and British werewolves alike in Hong Kong, Russian werewolves who come to Alaska and the European Uratha who moved in to Africa. The *Farsil Luhal* who focus on the material parts of their lives, leaving the Shadow because it is different from what they are used to, invite another disaster.

Unparalleled Devastation

Farsil Luhal on both sides watched the world wars with nothing short of abject horror. All this progress, all this change, devoted to war and hate and pain and death — the true gods of humankind. Never has humanity changed so much as it did during the Second World War. The Iron Masters had to watch Father Wolf's last words burning in their ears. Casting their lot with Sagrim-Ur meant that they must witness the changes in the world. Several went slowly insane at what they saw. Others resolved that they must do something about it.

Some werewolves claim that the war united the Tribes of the Moon. Those werewolves lie. The pack is the fundamental unit of werewolf life, and each pack did what it could. Some Iron Masters just stoked the fires. A pack that held territory around Bletchley Park seized the opportunity to learn about the massive machines that humans used to trap and transform information-spirits. That pack stole some of the humans' techniques, setting up secure communications between disparate Uratha. In the snows of Chinese Manchuria, the Japanese Army had set up an Outdoor Frostbite Experimentation Station — a place where troops invented new ways to make people suffer. Their driven passion for inflicting pain created a Wound like no other. Three packs, lead by the Iron Masters who discovered the station, brought a swift end to everyone there. They sacrificed themselves to prevent the Wound breaking through into the physical world. Three separate packs around Los Alamos tried to kill Oppenheimer before the atomic bomb was finished. All three failed, killed by the soldiers and spirits resident around the Manhattan Project.

The Iron Masters didn't try to stop the war out of a desire to save human lives. Werewolves — Forsaken and Pure — fought for the end of suffering. The war heralded progress gone astray. Both sides brought new developments in anguish and murder. The world hung in flux, the unchecked march of change threatened to overwhelm the *Hisil*. Some Uratha, desperate to save their territories, fought side by side with the Pure. Others used the developments in communications and cryptography to manipulate the Pure into doing what the Forsaken could not. When the world is ending, it matters not who saves it, but that the world is saved. The *Farsil Luhal* fought with every weapon their unorthodox minds could bring to bear, and the state of the world is a sign that they succeeded.

The Birth of Now

Old ghosts of the Second World War still lurk, unseen by modern eyes. The People did not destroy every torture centre or cleanse every concentration camp; there simply aren't enough Forsaken and Pure combined to make such a task practical. The war left an unprecedented number of Wounds in the *Hisil*, both overt and hidden. What appears to be a new problem in a pack's territory may have been building below the surface for more than 60 years. Hidden remnants of the war — from fields of whispering ghosts to fetishes with hideous (but expedient) inhabitants — are still out there. How would a pack deal with finding something terrible, and then finding out that the "good guys" made it?

Global Reflections

Werewolves differ around the world. In addition to different human cultures, the Shadow changes depending on the fears and expectations of human and werewolf. An Iron Master in Brazil faces different problems than an Iron Master in Belgium — and has a different means of approaching her concerns. Though change is the tribe's only constant, *Farsil Luhal* in similar areas change in similar ways.

Wolf Among the Sheep

Western Europe has challenges for werewolves that their American cousins don't necessarily experience. Europe, including the United Kingdom, doesn't feature the wilderness that American werewolves take for granted. European Uratha must deal with humans on a daily basis. These *Farsil Luhal* must act as the bridge between werewolf and human. Whether she wants to or not, an Iron Master works her way into the community around her territory. Almost without thinking, a Rahu becomes respected and feared as a legbreaker or "gang boss," while an Ithaeur knows everyone with more than a passing interest in the occult by sight. No matter how hard the werewolves fight against their Rage, it doesn't work. They have an easy time scaring people, and many settle for intimidating rather than befriending. Iron Masters need to hunt just as much as any werewolf. Often, the prey is a *shartha* or an errant spirit, but occasionally a human finds his blood spilled by a *Farsil Luhal*'s claws. Some packs hunt monthly, which may contribute to legends of werewolves who Change only under the full moon.

Europe is crowded. Thus, packs hold territories that American werewolves would find impossibly small. Some werewolves, especially young packs, are lucky if they can hold more than a couple of apartment blocks to begin with. The pressure of so many people is too much for some werewolves: spirits can find people to claim while a pack bickers over who "owns" what street, and a Beshilu nest undermines the pack's territory and that of their Pure neighbors. There's too much going on for any pack to prioritize. Expediency makes strange bedfellows, and some European *Farsil Luhal* negotiate with Pure packs that hold neighboring territories. Iron Masters in mixed packs may do so without the

blessing of their packmates, if they see a benefit — reasoning that the other Tribes of the Moon would not understand. When a deal holds sway, the Forsaken and Pure agree that other threats are more important than each other, for the moment. Their hostilities are the lesser of many evils. Some Iron Master packs work with the Pure to bind spirits and close Wounds, making alliances that have lasted longer than a year. Others died when the Pure — or a packmate — decided that the deal was no longer profitable. It takes a lot of care to dance with the devil.

A Colder War

Deals with the Pure are never easy. At best, the two packs treat each other like cold war superpowers, each aware that acting against the other would lead to greater trouble, but each with no great love for such strange bedfellows. One pack has held such a treaty with a pack of Fire-Touched for several months when all of a sudden things go sour. Strange spirits infest the pack's territory and as they regroup the Pure attack. All the while, a Wound grows beneath both territories. Who broke the treaty, the Pure, or the pack's newest (and most idealistic) member? More importantly, why now?

Tradition and Challenge

In China, werewolves and humans remain apart. Iron Masters don't walk into a village or town and start making friends; they watch from the outside to see what they can learn. The only exception to the separation of werewolf and man is a werewolf's home. The ties of family are stronger than spirit, and Iron Masters who move away often try to remain in contact with their families. Tradition commands a werewolf who wants a fresh start to fake her own death and take on a new name, becoming a new person and allowing her family to move on. Those who don't are rare, and soon discover a number of spirits find such werewolves' lack of respect offensive. *Farsil Luhal* who keep in touch with their families have several spirits they can call upon, including Farseers — spirit-servants of Sagrim-Ur — that pass messages to other werewolves who are close enough to bring word to the Iron Master's family. The advent of cell phones means urban Iron Masters don't need to rely on the tribe's network as much, but tradition demands that spirit communications remains an option.

Many *Farsil Luhal* integrate pieces of human religion into their rites and dealings with spirits. In other parts of the world, such experimentation is a very individual process, fusing the werewolf's beliefs with his knowledge of animistic reality. Chinese Iron Masters, on the other hand, share notes and compare findings via spirit and website. Iron Masters in the country try new forms of existing rites that blend in local religious beliefs. The results differ based on location and the ritualist's beliefs, but the tribe has amassed a collection of rites that differ from human rituals only by their results. Iron Master ritualists in Beijing and Hong Kong can work their spirit magics in relative safety.

Hong Kong's handover to the Chinese in 1999 presented the tribe with a number of problems — the existing werewolves who hunted the streets between buildings of glass and steel had adopted the unique blend of cultures present on the island, and many resented their forced integration into the larger network of Chinese Iron Masters. Even today tensions run high on the island, with running contests between packs of *Farsil Luhal* trying to prove who knows best for "their" city.

Homecoming

Tradition demands that Chinese Iron Masters allow others of the tribe to pass through their territories if the traveler is visiting his family. The traveler takes only what he needs, and payment comes in kind when the hosts visit their families. Occasionally, an Iron Master — or a werewolf claiming to be one — abuses this privilege. A werewolf passing through the characters' territory claims he's going to see his family, but after a while he's still there and another pack shows up demanding that the characters hand the traveler over. His family is long dead, and he's using the tradition of hospitality to save his hide — and cook up something dangerous right under the pack's noses. Are the newcomers telling the truth? If not, what's their grudge? If so, what must the pack deal with while evicting the unwelcome guest?

Behind the Barbed Wire Walls

At least 26 cities in the Russian Federation remain closed by government decree. Foreigners cannot travel to these cities, and Russians from outside the region require extensive paperwork — when they're allowed to travel at all. Somewhere between 30 and 90 more cities simply do not exist. These unknown cities are the hidden by order of the Russian

Defense Ministry. Barbed wire fences restrict access to these places, with fortified checkpoints the only way in or out.

Russian *Farsil Luhal* hunt within the city limits, stalking streets no foreigner will ever see. The Soviet Union may have fallen, but many of its worst secrets live on. Iron Masters don't have many problems hunting. When necessary, they bypass the fences and hunt in the surrounding area. But inside the walls, Red Wolf's tribe holds on to many traditions left over from the Soviet years. Packs maintain safe houses within their territory, often owned by wolf-blooded family or friends. Werewolves mix the First Tongue with Russian when passing short messages given that spirits of vigilance and secrets still slip through into Twilight and are dangerous eavesdroppers. Iron Masters take advantage of the resonance of enclosure and secrets to stalk their prey. They don't hunt; instead they walk the streets, making sure that their target can see them following her. Every time she loses one, she gains another. The spark of Rage, visible even in human form, sparks fear in her heart. All the pack has to do is remain visible and vigilant. The pack members wait for the target to make a mistake, then capitalize on it, using whatever opening they have to kill her. Sometimes, they assassinate their marks, other times the pack members tear the marks limb from limb. The end result doesn't matter; the method remains a powerful tool. People still vanish in the closed cities, but often the Iron Masters are the cause rather than the victims.

Closed cities have a unique reflection in the *Hisil*, hidden as they are behind walls both physical and spiritual. The Shadow of these cities is a place of secrets and lies, and Iron Masters use their affinity for the city to learn all the secrets they can. A pack collects information on individual spirits, choirs and whole descants. There's a thriving network of information-sharing between packs in different cities, trading bans and tactics for dealing with different spirits. The *Farsil Luhal* sit in the center of information networks in the Shadow and the flesh, using what they know in the manner of the sharpest vampire.

Ice and Shadows

Closed in 2001, Norlisk is the northernmost city in Siberia. Between the ICBM silos and the sensitive mining operations nearby, Russian citizens need a permit to travel to the city, and



foreigners stand no chance of getting in. The city's *Farsil Luhal* have a larger problem: the pollution from the mines has tainted the city's resonance and created a humongous Wound. Other werewolves deserted the city a long while ago, but packs of Iron Masters remain. They don't expect to heal the Wound. They remain as witnesses to what happens when the rest of the People dare not look. When they send a message to other Iron Masters requesting assistance, anyone who decides to visit must first find a way to enter the city, before looking out on a Shadow that resembles Hell.

More Than Flesh

Uratha are creatures of more than one world. Werewolves police the separation between material and spirit — while some *Farsil Luhal* would rather leave spirits alone if they don't make trouble, often they're delaying the inevitable. The tribe draws strength from its oath, and from Red Wolf. Some rare few grow closer to Sagrim-Ur than they imagined possible.

The Oath

"Honor Your Territory in All Things"

With those words, Sagrim-Ur proves himself the most cunning of the Firstborn. His tribal oath, sworn by all *Farsil Luhal,* is instruction and insurance. Werewolves who become Iron Masters are the free-thinkers, the radicals. They question everything, taking after Red Wolf. They embody change, progress and the search for newer, better ways of doing things. They are the biggest group of idealists among the People.

With six words, Red Wolf grounded his tribe. He gave them focus and duty, a chance to direct their energy toward a concrete end. He turned his tribe from a bunch of radicals likely to fuck everything into an asset to the People.

Having sworn Red Wolf's tenet, the Iron Masters put their drive for change and improvement to work in the service of their territory. Whether pack or individual, a *Farsil Luhal* vets every plan and idea that she has with her territory in mind. Every time she reinvents a story, she does it because it honors her territory. When she introduces a new werewolf to the tribe, she does so because it honors her territory.

Sagrim-Ur's oath is the reason for a few werewolves becoming Iron Masters. They don't care for change or progress; they care for their territory. Hikaon-Ur would focus on their Hunt, but these few Iron Masters know that territory matters more than the hunt. A werewolf who joins the tribe because of Red Wolf's tenet often doesn't match up to what people expect of an Iron Master. She might not care for cities or humans as anything other than terrain features and animals — she accords them the same respect that she would a twisted forest or a dangerous pack of wolves, but they don't fascinate her as they do other *Farsil Luhal*. Her territory is what matters to her, not the changes wrought to make it how it is.

A werewolf's territory isn't just the hunting ground that her pack has staked out. Most Iron Masters feel a kinship to cities in the same way they do their hunting grounds. For some, it's just one specific city — London, Mumbai or Tokyo, for instance. Others feel a connection to *all* urban areas. These werewolves bully or coerce the alien spirits of the city, finding new rites that help the city thrive. They change other rites, making them easier to perform in an urban environment. Werewolves who take a city as their territory must often move through the hunting grounds of other packs. Some allow the incursion, and even offer assistance — especially if they have an Iron Master who feels similarly. Other packs tackle the problem themselves, in competition with the werewolf to see who can best honor their territory. Many more werewolves, Pure and Forsaken alike, resent the incursion. What matters to the city isn't their main concern, and the interfering werewolf should leave their territory well alone. Ignoring what they see as "human problems," these packs focus on matters that only werewolves can deal with. A werewolf who takes a whole city as his territory must face the Pure, even if he does not cross their territory directly. Every city has somewhere that the People dare not tread, places where the *Anshega* rule. An Iron Master must balance his duty to his territory against the repercussions of the Pure acting against him. Such a situation is a true test of his cunning.

Some Iron Masters do not believe that the city or the human community is an extension of their territory beyond their hunting grounds. Though the tribe learns from humans, Red Wolf does not require her followers to live in a refuse-clad city. These werewolves take the "territory" in their oath to a more conceptual level, believing that the identity of their tribe — the essence of the *Farsil Luhal* — is what they must honor in all things. A werewolf who takes on such a Herculean task never

looks back. Every time she tries something new, every change she makes, it must be for the good of the tribe. It must honor Red Wolf and her fellow Iron Masters. That's a very tall order, but it leads some members of the tribe to perfection. Despite their unconventional methods, Uratha of other tribes see the Iron Masters acting to honor Red Wolf, and most give them the respect they deserve — certainly more than other Iron Masters. The problem with trying to honor the idea of a tribe is just that — the *Farsil Luhal* are an idea, bound within the words and deeds of a powerful and alien spirit. Unlike those who choose a geographical territory, these werewolves have no easy boundaries. It's all too easy for a werewolf to ignore what's right, telling herself that what she's doing is in the name of her tribe. A surprising number of Iron Masters have gone Bale Hound in just that way.

A faction among the tribe aims for the middle ground. They don't confine themselves to a specific area or a concept, but the melding of the two. These werewolves remember that Red Wolf was the first to walk close to humanity, and they take specific communities as their "territory" alongside their hunting grounds. An Iron Master who takes this route could have grown up in her chosen community — especially common among immigrants in Europe and the United States. Across Asia and South America, a community tends to be more geographic — a single village, or an area of a city. In any case, she will honor her community by looking out for them. She will keep them safe, and use whatever means necessary to ensure that they do not despoil the Shadow or anger nearby spirits. She also bargains and browbeats nearby spirits, scaring them off the idea of interfering with her people. This goes for all members of the community, even if they move to another area — though if the distance is too far, she'll spread the word to nearby allies rather than making long journeys herself.

Birth and geography aren't the only ties that bind a community together. A number of Iron Masters watch over shelters for battered women, whether the werewolves are on staff or "silent partners" that the shelter will never know of. Some assist with youth projects, aiming to get kids out of gangs — though other Iron Masters see gangs as a better community, enforcing the right mindset to survive in a hostile world. A small number claim addicts, or visitors to drug rehab clinics — both especially common for werewolves who were addicts themselves. In some cases, the Iron Master (with or without her pack) makes herself known to the community she is protecting. She's the big bad wolf who protects them, making opposition disappear. Many who do demand loyalty in return. This is a dangerous way to go. The People have a lot of enemies, none of whom are above kidnapping, murder or worse if it furthers their ends. By going public, even just to some of the community, she may find the people are on her side. When she needs a bed for the night or a warm meal, they'll come through. The more that they know she has done, the more they will do for her, at least in theory.

Some Iron Masters confine themselves to the shadows. In addition to putting their community in less direct danger, by taking this path a werewolf helps her people to help themselves. If they rely on an Uratha — something that isn't human — people are setting themselves up for pain. At best, her pandering to humans weakens their community as they rely on her to do what they should. Far more likely for her chosen to encounter her in the madness of *Kuruth* and not live to tell the tale. A *Farsil Luhal* who believes in watching from the shadows will help her community against spirits, but when the cops come calling or protestors blockade a shelter, it's up to the people to help themselves. These communities end up the strongest of all, and by helping them to help themselves, the Iron Master has truly honored them.

No two *Farsil Luhal* agree on the true meaning of Sagrim-Ur's tenet. They argue over who has the truest interpretation of territory, and how best they should honor it. A few realize that it doesn't matter — Red Wolf's goal all along was to have his children use their unconventional minds to help the world. As long as a werewolf isn't obviously misguided, she's doing what Red Wolf wanted.

Home Advantage

Not all challenges to a werewolf's territory are obvious. For every spirit-urged attack on his territory, an Iron Master has to deal with 10 more with a distinctly more human cause. Attacks aren't necessarily physical — a werewolf who works closely with a shelter for battered women finds her territory under attack when a group of women rely on the shelter rather than themselves. Territory isn't just an area or a community or an idea, it's all three — and threats to it come from every quarter. A werewolf who focuses on just one is waiting for another to bite him on the ass.

Red Wolf's Bond

Sagrim-Ur pays attention to his tribe. It's rare for an Iron Master to spend a year without a lingering feeling of being watched when she's doing something truly innovative. Some cherish the attention of a spirit that does not hate them. They go just that bit further for the tribal totem's benefit. Others feel a twinge of guilt, the same impulse that makes a guilty school kid blurt out "it wasn't me" before he even knows what the teacher's asking about. Several *Farsil Luhal* joke about times when "Teacher is in" for just that reason, though others simply think of the vigilant totem as "the Audience."

Even when Red Wolf isn't watching an Iron Master, the werewolf's soul remains linked to her totem. The ultimate trickster wolf has a connection to her spirit that shows in her actions. Every time she does something for no reason or blindly accepts what another says at face value, she's compelled to question and dig deeper. Most don't even notice this change — it reinforces personality traits that brought them to the Iron Masters to begin with. Occasionally, the small things all build up. A werewolf who was quiet and reserved starts fact-checking everything he's told. After a while, he remembers enough basics to call people on obvious lies at the time. When he's right, his confidence builds, and he starts challenging people openly over statements that they cannot prove. A drastic change may take years, but Red Wolf's influence nudges it along.

Sagrim-Ur watches over the world. It's his duty to witness every change. Because of this, he appreciates gallows humor, especially bone-dry sarcasm and razor-edged satire. Those *Farsil Luhal* who play the clown feel Red Wolf's sense of humor and play to their audience — cunning applications of poetic justice are a specialty. The tricks that they play teach everyone involved a lesson, with the possible exception of the victim. Clever wordplay is just as necessary as clever actions, but Sagrim-Ur's favor quickly fades from a werewolf who grows too cocky or blasé. The power of language extends beyond humor. Some Iron Masters note changes in the ways humans refer to events. These shifting words alter the concepts behind them, subtly twisting the spirits of those concepts. Without a doubt, words can affect spirits. A few Iron Masters look for the right words, the *key* words that will start the grandest change of all: acceptance of the Forsaken.

A related group among the tribe ties human legends back to Red Wolf. They weave tales that turn human myths to the service of their totem. Sometimes, their tales pass back into human understanding and the original werewolf influence is no longer obvious. Tales of human trickster-gods from Enki to Coyote resonate with Sagrim-Ur and tie the *Farsil Luhal* closer to humanity. The totem's ties to human mythology aren't just nice touches; through Merits such as Synergistics (see p. 150), Iron Masters can twist human rituals to channel their own spirit magics.

The Bond Unbroken

Iron Masters are used to the attentions of their tribal totem. Something would be wrong if Sagrim-Ur *wasn't* micro-managing his tribe. Few werewolves of other tribes could conceive of such a close bond. What if the Iron Masters had to go without their totem? One day Red Wolf just goes away. Not slain, the whole tribe would know instantly if that happened. Worse, Red Wolf has stopped watching his children and the world they inhabit. Maybe he's finally sick of looking at a world that's been steadily going to shit since the Sundering. Maybe he wants his children to take on his role while he hunts the answers to other problems such as how to heal Rabid Wolf.

Some *Farsil Luhal* will want to bring Red Wolf back, refocusing their totem on the world and the Shadow that he promised *Urfarah* he would watch. Others would doubtless prefer to recruit another powerful spirit as their patron. With the tribe falling into disarray, what can the characters' pack do to advance their agenda — and save the Iron Masters?

Avatars of Red Wolf

Some werewolves come to Sagrim-Ur's attention through their cunning and dedication. If a werewolf performs a great service to his tribe, something worthy of Red Wolf himself, then the tribal totem may strengthen his bond with that werewolf. When that happens, he becomes an Avatar of Red Wolf. Sagrim-Ur refuses to lend his power to more than seven werewolves at one time, so some Iron Masters dub the tribe's Avatars the "Lucky Seven."

It's rare for there to be seven werewolves who have performed monumental deeds in service to the *Farsil Luhal* at any one time. Beyond mere tricks and new ideas, a werewolf who would be one of Red Wolf's Avatars must prove himself worthy. Conning favor from a whole court of spirits isn't enough — but learning powerful rites from them while simultaneously finding

To Walk with Gods

Becoming an Avatar is an obvious story challenge, but what do characters do once they reach that level of power? While some players would be happy with a character becoming an Avatar at the end of a chronicle, others see the touch of a god as a beginning rather than an end.

Sagrim-Ur's Avatars are the most cunning and adaptable of a whole tribe based on cunningness and adaptability. They, along with their packs, deal with problems on a larger scale than most others, but they're still not working on a worldwide — or even a countrywide — level. Some travel when they feel Red Wolf's urging but an Avatar is still a werewolf, part of a pack who must look after his territory. Admittedly, his territory will have a lot of powerful spirits looking for him, and local Iron Masters will look to him for advice, but honoring his territory comes before all that — though any Iron Master worth the title will find a way to do everything he needs to.

the conditions to strip the same powers from the Pure would count. It has to be innovative: a werewolf who fights, lies and cajoles her way into friendship with every aware spirit in the city would only come to Red Wolf's notice when she uses her ties to those spirits toward her own ends. She also has to be unique. Her deed could only win a Firstborn's favor if nobody else has ever performed the same deed. Other tasks that would attract the touch of Red Wolf include reuniting the fetish tablets made by the Get of Nabu (see p. 128) and unleashing their power, or unearthing the truth of what happened to the Roanoke colony and using that knowledge to best a powerful foe.

Tool and Claw

Farsil Luhal use tools more than any other tribe. Some are physical items, fetishes and otherwise, that increase the werewolf's effectiveness in safeguarding his territory and witnessing the changing world. Others are spiritual or conceptual, but serve the same purpose — the following rites and lodges are additional means to the dual ends that every Iron Master serves.

Lodge of Wires

The Eye watched everything. It was watching him right now. Jace Jenkins – Zero Boy on the forums – knew that the Eye was monitoring his every keystroke, his every download, his every emoticon. It would've bothered other, more skittish wolves.

Not Jace. No, Jace enjoyed the attention. To him, it was… comforting.

All werewolves have a human side, a skin that hides their true nature when dealing with the world. The *Farsil Luhal* are in closer touch with their human side than the other tribes, in much the same way that a Hunter in Darkness is in closer touch with the essence of the Hunt. Some humans think beyond their skin, imagining a world without boundaries and the technology and techniques that can make that world happen. The Lodge of Wires keeps a close eye on those people and the spirits they give birth to — not in case of danger, but because they think similarly, operating on the same "wavelength."

Born in the high-speed world pre-dotcom crash, the lodge originally studied the spirits of the Internet, hoping to turn it to the Uratha's advantage — just another startup trying to bend the 'net to their whims. A young but powerful spirit took umbrage at their meddling and nearly destroyed the Wireheads. One pack survived, in the San Francisco Bay Area. The pack members slowly rebuilt the lodge, focusing not on bending the Internet to their whims, but studying what it had become. Social networking and collaborative creation lead them to investigate humans who used the Internet to maintain distributed personalities. Soon, the lodge was home to the wolves at the heart of the burgeoning transhumanist scene. Wireheads immersed themselves in the culture, and the humans influenced the Wireheads.



Neophobia

The Lodge of Wires can be a hidden villain at the heart of the Iron Masters, a bunch of misguided kids who know what they want the future to be and have sold out the Forsaken to get it. Alternately, the lodge members could know exactly what they've done, and they're happy with their justification. Either way, it's an ugly secret that most of the *Farsil Luhal* don't even know about, and it's ripe for the characters to stomp, right? Not necessarily.

Tomorrow's Son believes in the Panopticon, a particular future where everyone is tracked and watched at all times. Despite all he's tried, most lodge members don't think his particular future is the best option. There's plenty of room for conflicting opinions, especially from characters who have a different view of the future. Other groups and lodges study the future in the short and medium terms, but the Lodge of Wires is the scary bastard thinking two steps beyond the cutting edge. Nobody likes the Wireheads, but for now they're a necessary evil.

They claimed that they were studying strange new spirits, but they ignored the changes that they were going through. The Lodge of Wires has slipped from its original remit. They're thinking about what might happen in the future, and how werewolves must change to deal with that. New technologies and new ideas spark debate on a daily basis. Would digital duplicates of living minds have spirits? How about digital duplicates of animals? If those humans died, would they leave ghosts? The Wireheads are certain that they would — and that such a phenomenon would be wondrous and horrific. They're certain that they will be the inheritors of Father Wolf's duty when their future becomes the present. The lodge's current leader, Tomorrow's Son, is a charismatic speaker who considers the future to be his territory, and damn anyone who stands in its way.

The Lodge of Wires pays lip service to Red Wolf, but members save their reverence for the Digital Eye, a vastly powerful spirit of the future. Only a few Wireheads know that their patron is also the Lord of Surveillance, and the lodge his chosen warriors. Most *Farsil Luhal* haven't heard of the lodge or assume that it was wiped out with the crash. Those who know of the Wireheads' continued existence don't know of their particular patron — and that they may be a danger to the tribe as a whole.

Prerequisites: All potential members of the Lodge must have demonstrated their affinity for cutting-edge technology (Computer •••, Science ••) and knowledge of when to be subtle in their enquiries (Cunning ••, Wisdom •). Those who would become Wireheads must be able to deal with humans without their hidden predator causing much trouble (Primal Urge 4 or less).

Membership: The Lodge of Wires approaches werewolves who may be interested, rather than vice versa. An Iron Master who wants to follow up the lodge's offer must meet with a member of the lodge in person to discuss politics, philosophy and technology. The lodge has four packs spread throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and Silicon Valley, and another pack has recently emerged in Edinburgh thanks to the concentration of science-fiction writers and futurists.

If the initial meeting goes well and the prospective member's views are compatible with the Wireheads' broad vision of the future, the lodge offers the werewolf a chance to join. If she's deemed incompatible, she never hears from the lodge again — and if she goes looking, powerful spirit magics obstruct her path. She's given a crash course in how Wireheads will take on the Uratha's duty in the future. She must also complete a range of assignments on how werewolves can make use of bleeding-edge technology and psychology. The current high point is a paper on using social collaboration tools such as MySpace, Facebook, and Ning to organize several unrelated packs into a distributed denial-of-service attack on a powerful Incarna who would otherwise have leveled a large part of Silicon Valley. During her training, the prospective Wirehead can contact only other forward thinkers — all of them members of the lodge. At least two members of the lodge use brainwashing techniques to bring new recruits around to their way of thinking. Once her training is complete, the recruit petitions the Digital Eye. If the Lord of Surveillance believes that she will advance his agenda, he erases all traces of her from the world's computers, welcoming her to the lodge.

Benefits: All members of the Lodge of Wires treat Information Gifts (see **The Rage**, p. 118) as Affinity Gifts. Wireheads can purchase the Computer, Politics and Science Skills at an experience cost of (new dots x2) rather than (new dots x3). No werewolf can raise her Primal Urge above 4 and remain a member of the lodge; the pressure of her Rage prevents true consideration of the future.

Lodge of Wires Fetish: Eyepiece (•• or •••)

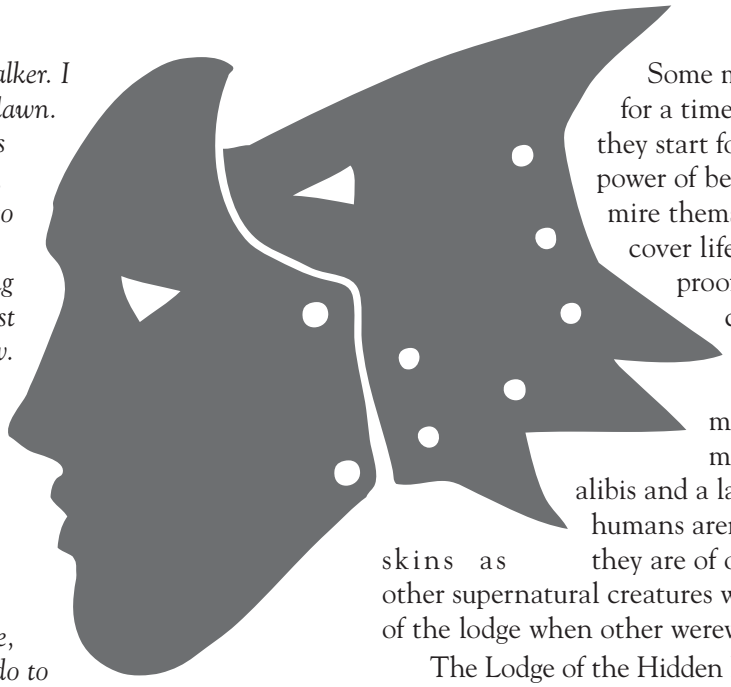
Most Wireheads create or inherit an Eyepiece shortly after becoming full members of the lodge. The werewolf must bind a spirit servant of the Digital Eye into a cutting-edge smartphone with runes of the future etched into the case.

All versions of the Eyepiece can call any phone or access the Internet from anywhere. A lack of phone signal is no problem, neither is the Gauntlet. Each Eyepiece also monitors news sources, flagging news stories that might be of interest to its owner. More importantly, the Eyepiece is the only way that a Wirehead can access the secure computer networks of the Lodge of Wires.

The three-dot version of this fetish gives a werewolf a measure of the Digital Eye's true power. He can use his Eyepiece to see through any surveillance camera within a mile. If he selects a specific target, he can seamlessly track that target using any camera in range, until the target moves more than a mile away.

Action: Instant

Lodge of the Hidden Hunt



My name is Tom Walker. I love my wife. I mow my lawn. I'm addicted to chai lattes from Starbucks, but geez, who isn't? Sure, I'd love to come over and watch the game. Absolutely I'll bring beer. Did you see Lost *last night? What a crazy show. Lynette can't get enough of that actor guy, the main one — what's his name? Doesn't matter.*

I'll see you at two, Jerry. Okay, have a good one, buddy!

(I know who you are, Jerry. I know what you do to those children, "buddy." And I'm coming for you. Maybe I'll even bring my claws out to play. It's been a while, after all.)

An effective hunter's targets never see him coming. He walks the same streets as his prey. He buys groceries in the same stores, drinks coffee in the same places. The *Farsil Luhal* all appreciate the benefits of the long hunt, stalking one particular target through the city for days on end, but only members of the Lodge of the Hidden Hunt give themselves over to the art of stalking the city streets, focusing on one target above all.

Members of the lodge (sometimes called "Sheepskins" by other Iron Masters) work hard to maintain a human identity. They have to hold down regular jobs, live in regular apartments, and be in all ways normal humans. When they identify a target, either through their own work, or a tip-off from a fellow Sheepskin, they gather intelligence. A lodge member gets to know his target well, all while cementing his cover. Only when he has identified the perfect time to eliminate the target does the hunt begin. Then, the werewolf can use all of the abilities he has denied himself for so long to eliminate the target, and dispose of the evidence.

Living the life of a Hidden Hunter is very stressful for a werewolf, and often leads to Harmony loss. Some members join the lodge for a time and then leave when they start forgetting the glory and power of being a werewolf. Others mire themselves in the undercover life, building truly bulletproof cover identities, at a cost of their Harmony and sanity. Living lives as humans gives members of the lodge more than just powerful alibis and a lack of suspicion — humans aren't as scared of Sheepskins as they are of other werewolves, and other supernatural creatures will pass over members of the lodge when other werewolves are nearby.

The Lodge of the Hidden Hunt reveres Red Wolf, but also takes spiritual patronage from the King of Invisible Webs, a powerful spider-spirit that embodies precision and subterfuge in hunting. Other *Farsil Luhal* worry that the Sheepskins' totem deliberately pushes them toward actions that cause them to violate Harmony, but nobody can argue that they have an incredible information network.

The King of Invisible Webs

The Sheepskin's totem is a strange creature. Most say it looks like a spider, though others claim to have seen a fat silkworm with human eyes. It demands that those werewolves who join its lodge repress themselves because that's the only way it will offer them its benefits. If they don't voluntarily repress their Rage, the spirit will not help them. Of course, some believe that the King of Invisible Webs wants a number of werewolves to damage themselves in return for a temporary benefit. Not all lodge totems are nice, after all.

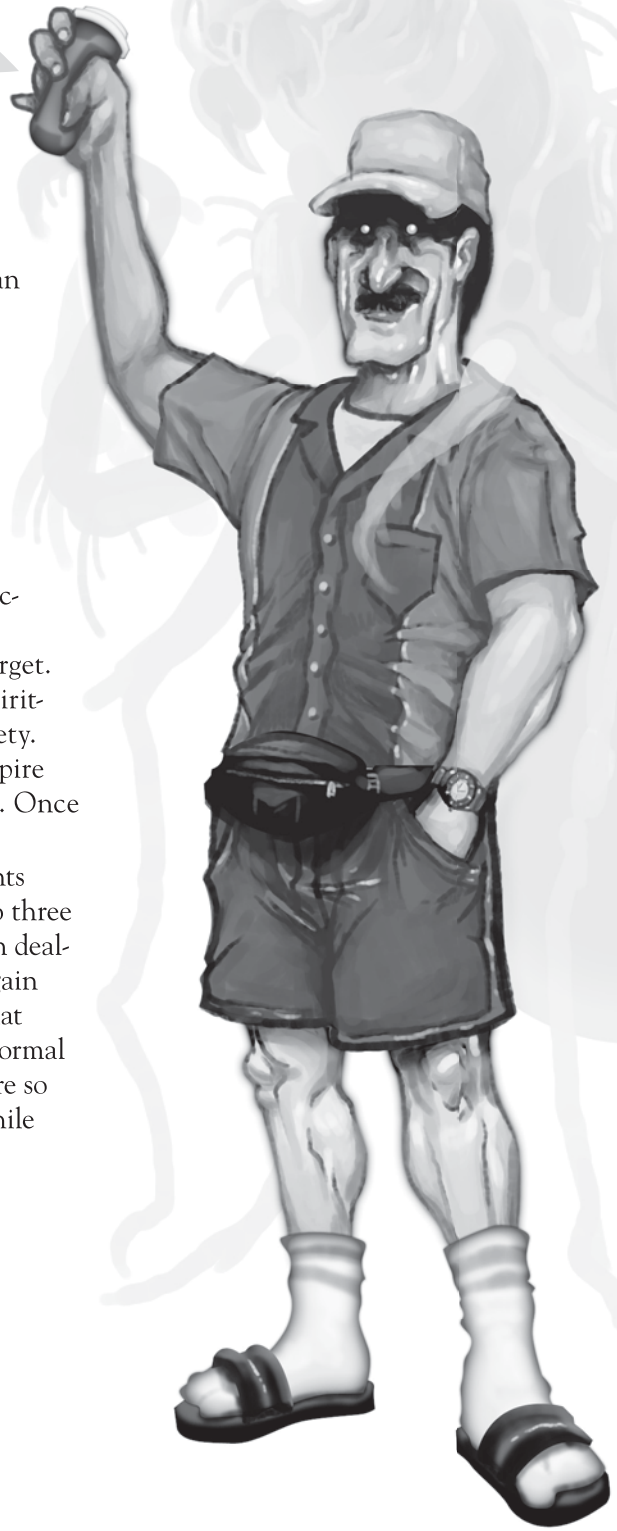
Prerequisites: All potential members of the lodge must have demonstrated their adaptability (Cunning ••) and ability to blend in to human

situations (Persuasion ••, Subterfuge •••). They must also be able to support a human cover identity at a reasonable level (Resources ••). While it's never stated, no werewolf with Harmony 8 or above has ever become a Sheepskin, and those with Harmony 7 often have a hard time maintaining that level.

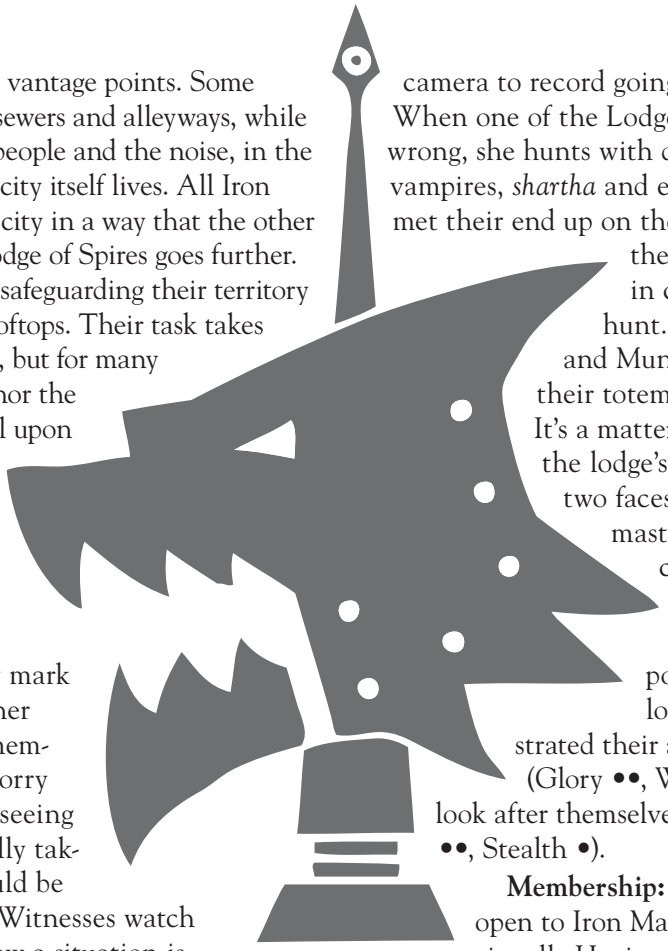
Membership: The Lodge of the Hidden Hunt is an open secret within the Iron Masters. Some outsiders suspect the lodge's existence, but the consensus is that Sheepskins are lone nuts rather than an organized group. The lodge would never accept a member who is not an Iron Master already, and one who was originally a member of another tribe has an even harder time of things.

Initiation starts with the werewolf having to build a new human identity from the ground up in a month. He must build his identity from scratch, using only what he can get his hands on. At the end of the month, other members of the lodge investigate the identity as thoroughly as they can. If they find any cracks, they kick the prospective werewolf out. If the initiators can't find any holes, they give the werewolf his first target. Often the target is one of the Hosts, or a Spirit-Claimed who still works within human society. Some members instead must take out a vampire or a Pure werewolf to prove their dedication. Once a werewolf kills his target, he's in.

Benefits: The King of Invisible Webs grants Sheepskins a powerful boon: they ignore up to three dice of social penalties from Primal Urge when dealing with humans. Members of the lodge also gain three dice to resist any supernatural powers that would identify them as anything other than normal humans. Sheepskins bury their werewolf nature so deep that they cannot raise their Harmony while they remain members of the lodge.



Lodge of Spires



The city offers many vantage points. Some are down low, hiding in sewers and alleyways, while others are up above the people and the noise, in the hidden places where the city itself lives. All Iron Masters are aware of the city in a way that the other tribes are not, but the Lodge of Spires goes further. They watch from above, safeguarding their territory and hunting from the rooftops. Their task takes them away from humans, but for many that's the point: they honor the city; the germs that crawl upon its surface are nothing more than prey.

Members of the Lodge of Spires combine their affinity for urban areas and Father Wolf's last request: they mark changes in the city. Other *Farsil Luhal* call lodge members "Witnesses," and worry that they care more for seeing what occurs than actually taking action. Nothing could be further from the truth. Witnesses watch only until they know how a situation is going. As soon as they know, they hunt. Other werewolves see these hunts only rarely, but when they do, they're hard to mistake. In preparation, Witnesses make their own weapons from whatever trash they find — as long as they find it above ground level. These strange trash-weapons often hit just as hard as a well-forged blade, at least for those who know the Rite of Permanence. Lodge members share an affinity for high places, and prefer leaping between rooftops and through windows. Many members practice parkour, and even those who don't focus on free running know enough to hunt their victims from the rooftops. Members of the lodge ignore technology that doesn't directly help their hunt. Though they make their own weapons, when watching a situation some Witnesses employ cutting-edge surveillance technology — they cannot be everywhere at once. Others rely on less modern means, intimidating minor spirits of the city to help watch. One member of the lodge claims to have persuaded a digital video camera to record goings-on in the Shadow.

When one of the Lodge of Spires sees something wrong, she hunts with deadly force. Spirit cults, vampires, *shartha* and even packs of Pure have met their end up on the rooftops. Witnesses feel the need to see everything, in case they miss a chance to hunt. They have taken Hugin and Munin, the ravens of Odin, as their totem in addition to Red Wolf. It's a matter of contention whether the lodge's patrons are two spirits or two faces of the same entity. Hard masters, the ravens require constant vigilance in exchange for their blessing.

Prerequisites: All potential members of the lodge must have demonstrated their ability to prioritize threats (Glory ••, Wisdom ••) and ability to look after themselves when up high (Athletics ••, Stealth •).

Membership: The Lodge of Spires is open to Iron Masters only, though occasionally Hugin and Munin will force the matter for a werewolf of another tribe. Mostly, they choose urban Ghost Wolves in a city without any Witnesses, but members of any tribe who think before acting and who hold special regard for the city as a whole stand a chance of being drafted.

Initiation into the lodge is a swift affair. Lodge members wait until sunset, then take the werewolf to a situation that they have already seen — an Azlu building a power base, or a spirit breaking through the Gauntlet. They tell her that she must "make things right" using only what she has to hand. Often, what she sees is not the real problem. She must spend time observing the situation, following subtle clues to something entirely worse. If the werewolf finds the correct problem and her hunt is successful, Hugin and Munin accept her into the lodge. She has until the sunset after seeing the first problem to resolve everything — the lodge rewards investigation, not laziness.

Benefits: Witnesses may purchase City Gifts (see **Lore of the Forsaken**, p. 119) at the same rate as

Tribal Gifts. In addition, a member of this lodge may purchase the Merit: Parkour (see p. 98) at a rate of (new dots) rather than (new dots x 2). A Witness can also purchase the Rite: Sacred Vigil with experience points (see below).

Lodge of Spires Rite: Sacred Vigil (•••)

This rite, powered by an ancient compact between a few werewolves and Hugin and Munin and rediscovered by the Lodge of Spires, lends an aspect of the ravens' sight to the werewolf. A werewolf who takes on a Sacred Vigil exists in an altered mindset where the individual threads that tie the city together become plain. It's a strange, often taxing experience that nonetheless is incredibly powerful in the right hands.

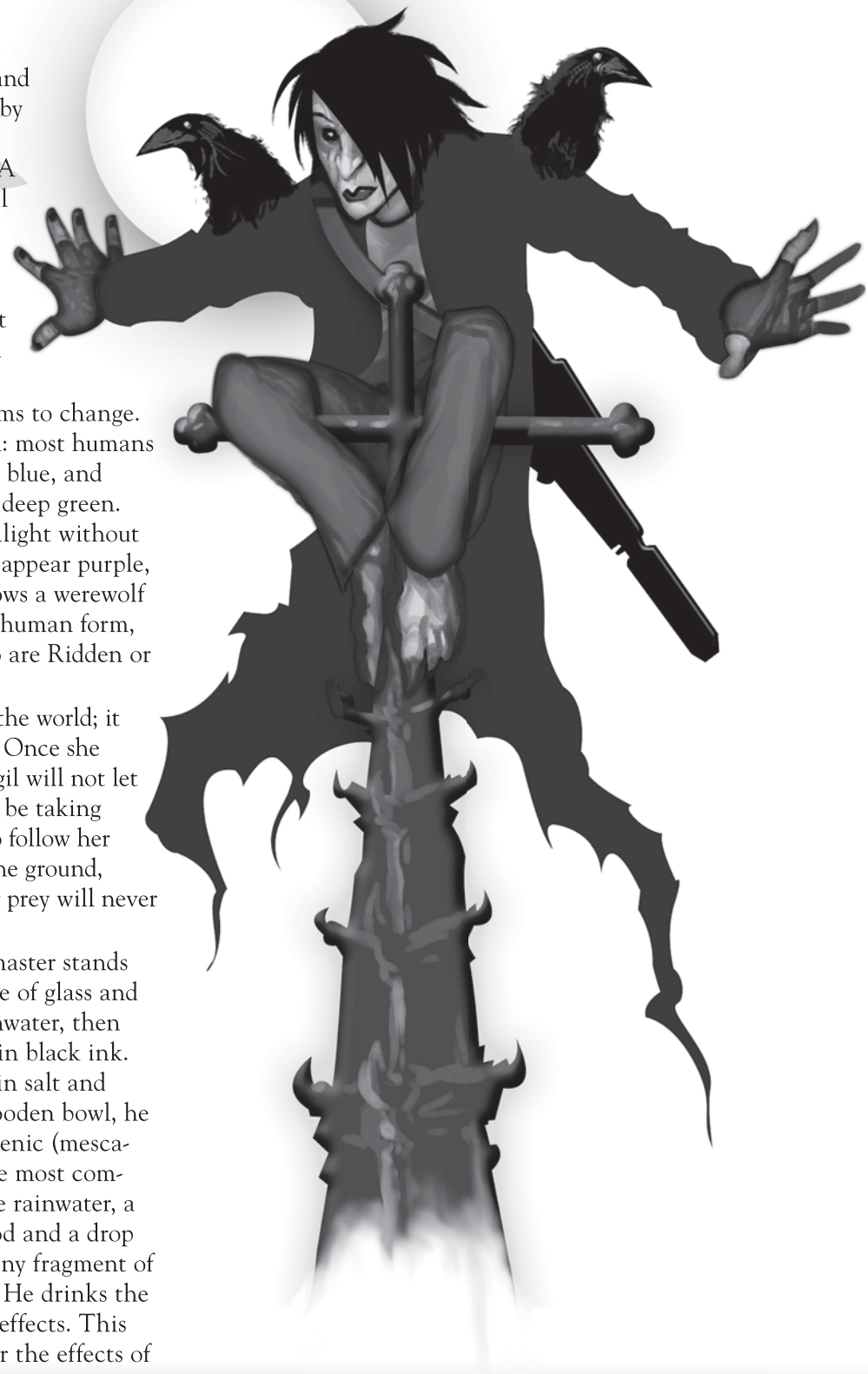
In a Sacred Vigil, the world seems to change. Everything possesses a glowing aura: most humans are white, vampires red, werewolves blue, and mages gold. Other werewolves glow deep green. The werewolf sees through into Twilight without effort: spirits and embodied *shartha* appear purple, while ghosts are grey. The sight allows a werewolf to identify Hosts that have taken a human form, as well as pointing out humans who are Ridden or Claimed by spirits.

The Vigil doesn't just highlight the world; it colors the werewolf's understanding. Once she sees a target, she must hunt. The Vigil will not let her sit by and watch when she could be taking action. She intuitively knows how to follow her target without ever setting foot on the ground, and if she can strike from above, her prey will never know what hit her.

Performing the Rite: The ritemaster stands under the open sky. He takes a piece of glass and cleans it with a cloth soaked in rainwater, then draws an ancient rune on the glass in black ink. He then places it in a circle drawn in salt and howls to Hugin and Munin. In a wooden bowl, he then combines a natural hallucinogenic (mescaline, ayahuasca or psilocybin are the most common) with salt from the circle, more rainwater, a drop of the same ink, a drop of blood and a drop of urine. The final ingredient is a tiny fragment of glass chipped from the larger piece. He drinks the concoction, and soon after feels its effects. This rite cannot be used by anyone under the effects of Eyes of Sagrim-Ur (see p. 144); likewise, a werewolf on a Sacred Vigil cannot perform the Eyes of Sagrim-Ur.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (15 successes; each roll represents 10 minutes)



Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Hugin and Munin are displeased. The glass shatters, and the werewolf suffers the normal effects of taking hallucinogens (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 177).

Failure: The glass shatters, though the werewolf feels no ill effects.

Success: Success imbues the werewolf with an incredible perceptive ability. The aura given off by physical creatures shines brilliantly against the darkened world. He can see humans, and identify common supernatural creatures that he can see (Hosts, vampires and mages) automatically. In addition, he can make a reflexive Resolve + Composure roll to beat magical concealment. He can also detect and identify ghosts, spirits and other creatures in Twilight without a roll.

When he hunts, the character gains a two-dice bonus to Athletics rolls made to follow a path that avoids the ground. If he manages to go the whole hunt without hitting the ground (except for the first step before attacking his prey), his prey does not apply his Defense for the first round of combat. The werewolf loses this bonus if he steps on the ground before finding his prey.

The werewolf must hunt when under the effects of this rite. If he spends six hours in the Sacred Vigil without hunting, he takes two points of lethal damage.

Exceptional Success: The werewolf can see the trail of his prey. Once he has selected a target for his hunt, treat all tracking rolls as if the werewolf had tasted his target's blood.

New Rites

The following rites exemplify the rituals and mindset of the Iron Masters. The spirits that lent their power to these rituals are under a ban to teach them only to *Farsil Luhal*, and those Iron Masters who know these rites have sworn to keep them as tribal secrets.

Rite of Hallowed Ground (•)

An Iron Master must never forget his territory. Without a place, a people or an institution to call his own, he will never truly understand Sagrim-Ur's tenet. Some werewolves find that honoring the spirit of their territory — whatever that territory might be — helps tie them to the words and the spirit of what they swore before Red Wolf after their initiation. Spirits that find themselves honored this way reward a successful Rite of Hallowed Ground with a small amount of Essence.

Some *Farsil Luhal* consider this rite pointless. They consider that a werewolf should honor his territory through hard work rather than sucking up to the spirits behind it. Many still use the rite, showing the spirits what the werewolves have done and claiming the Essence for doing so. A werewolf must treat the rite as an addition to everything else that he does to honor his territory, rather than the only thing.

Performing the Rite: The ritemaster calls to the spirits of her territory. She must burn something symbolic of her territory while she stands in an appropriate location (an Iron Master who considers the Catholic Church to be her territory can use any church). She howls tales of all she has done while the item burns, then must cut her palm, spilling three drops of blood on the ground. When the third drop hits the ground, the spirits judge her words. The rite normally takes only a couple of minutes to complete. A werewolf can use this rite only once per week unless she performs a great service to her territory in the meantime. The spirits see further attempts as glory-hunting, and those attempts automatically fail.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The spirits mock the werewolf's efforts. The character loses a point of Willpower.

Failure: The rite simply fails.

Success: The spirits are satisfied with the werewolf's actions and suffuse her spirit with Essence. The character regains two points of Essence, or the character's entire pack regains one Essence point each.

Exceptional Success: The ritualist is flushed with her success and the rush of Essence through her spirit. In addition to the effects of a success, she regains one point of Willpower.

Mark of Change (••)

Many Iron Masters decorate their bodies, changing the forms that they have worn since birth. For some, outlandish hairstyles are enough, others prefer tattoos or piercings and yet others go for branding, scarification or implants. A changed body indicates a changed mind, and some were-

wolves use this rite to channel spirit magics into their body modifications.

Rumor has that this rite comes from Mother Luna herself, but others speak of a darker source. Whatever the source, body modifications empowered by this rite give a werewolf the edge when using serving her auspice. Rather than bootstrapping a novice, a Mark of Change offers the most benefit to an Uratha who is aware of his role under the moon and wishes to become even more effective. An Iron Master Elodoth will often take a Mark before investigating a major event.

Performing the Rite: The ritualist intones words of binding in the First Tongue, commanding minor spirits into his tools. He also prepares a balm of honey, witch-hazel and night-blooming plants. The recipient of the Mark purifies herself by washing in cold running water before the ritualist starts the process.

Once the modification is complete, the recipient must mix some of the balm into a cup of wine, then drink the cup dry, before applying the balm to her Mark. She must keep the Mark covered for at least six hours, after which she reveals it to the world and reaps its benefit.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (10 successes required; every roll represents 20 minutes)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Mark is a twisted reflection of what it should be. The recipient takes a point of lethal damage.

Failure: The modification is not imbued with spiritual power.

Success: The character's body modification is empowered by spirits. She may apply the 9-again quality to any auspice Skill roll, and once a day may spend Essence to increase an auspice Skill, gaining one dot of skill per point of Essence. These added dots apply only to one die roll. The magics accompanying the modification last for a month before dissipating.

Exceptional Success: The body modification is a work of art. The recipient and the ritualist both regain one point of Willpower.

Eyes of Sagrim-Ur (•••)

Sagrim-Ur never missed a chance to question the established ways of things. She pestered Father Wolf constantly, driving her siblings mad because she wasn't content with the tried-and-tested ways of doing thing. This rite channels some of Red Wolf's mindset, putting the werewolf into an altered state of consciousness where she sees opportunities that she would otherwise have missed. Items that she could make into improvised weapons glow with a faint green aura. Electric blue threads wind along paths she's never taken through her territory. Ghostly visages overlay the faces of people, offering suggestions on new ways to deal with them. The rite's mindset expands to a higher level by meditating for a few minutes. As long as she has one specific situation in mind — how to deal with a nest of Azlu without the local authorities being aware, what she can do to get a pack of Fire-Touched to leave her territory alone — the ritualist sees potential courses of action that she had not considered. The rite doesn't tell her what will happen, only what she could try.

Iron Masters seek out others who know this rite when they feel like they're stuck in a rut, or when they are faced with a problem and just don't know how to proceed. When their internal creativity is at a loss, they turn to the cunning of Sagrim-Ur. For that reason, many *Farsil Luhal* are ashamed of using this rite too often. A night spent in the ritual mindset, re-learning cunning and adaptability is all well and good, but the spirit magic is addictive. It's too easy for a werewolf to outsource his cunning and inventiveness to this rite. Some Iron Masters use the rite to give Uratha of other tribes a taste of what it's like to feel Red Wolf's favor. Though Iron Masters would never teach this rite to a werewolf of another tribe, they enjoy giving others the chance to think as they do.

Performing the Rite: The ritemaster surrounds the subject of this rite, who can be himself, with a circle of chalk. He lights pungent incense at each cardinal point on the circle, and places items important to the subject at the inter-cardinal points — indicating that the subject's normal modes of thinking will be skewed for the duration. The ritemaster blindfolds the subject, and drums or plays resonant, bass-heavy music at around 70 beats per minute to synch with the subject's heart rate. Finally, the ritemaster howls to Red Wolf while the subject consumes a hallucinogenic drug.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (25 successes; each roll represents 10 minutes)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Visions of missed opportunities and failed gambits wrack the subject as he relives past failures. He loses two points of Willpower in addition to the effects of a failure.

Failure: The rite fails. The subject is affected by the hallucinogens as described on p. 177 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**.

Success: The subject's perceptions are altered, highlighting opportunities that he would not otherwise see. The character adds a +2 circumstance bonus on all rolls made to improvise equipment or otherwise try something he would not normally attempt. If the player does not know how to proceed, other players and the Storyteller are encouraged to suggest options though the player has final control over what course of action his character takes. The effects of the rite last until the following sunset.

Exceptional Success: The subject learns a lot from the rite's effects. One Skill that the character uses when under the influence of this rite can be increased at an experience cost of (new dots x2) rather than (new dots x3). This bonus affects only the purchase of one dot in the Skill; further increases cost the normal amount.

Rite of Permanence (••••)

Nothing's worse than being unprepared. *Farsil Luhal* the world over face similar problems, from needing to pick a lock without tools to being trapped in a junkyard with a powerful Claimed hunting for them. Whatever the situation, Red Wolf's chosen improvise. She may use scraps of wire to pick a lock or a car hood to deflect powerful blows. When she's desperate, it's the work of mere moments to grab something and put it to use. Whatever she chooses won't be ideal, but several werewolves become attached to their ramshackle solutions, especially those without the working capital to afford top-grade equipment. This rite bridges the gap between the haves and the have-nots. Through a combination of bribery and intimidation, the werewolf slowly changes the object's spirit, making his temporary tool more permanent. A shard of glass partially wrapped in duct tape becomes less brittle and more knife-like, and a zip gun is easier to reload and less prone to jamming.

Other werewolves who know of this rite use it as another reason to brand the *Farsil Luhal* as irreverent materialists who focus on tools at the expense of their own capabilities. That said, some situations need tools that aren't readily available without dealing with the wrong sort of people — and when they're in your territory, that's bad news. Better to improvise. Iron Masters who use this rite a lot develop their own style. While the function of their items changes over time, the original form does not. Some Iron Masters look like urban primitives, wielding trash and junk as surprisingly effective weapons.

Performing the Rite: The ritemaster must first create his jury-rigged tool and use it once without destroying it. If the tool survives that first use, she places it in a circle of broken consumer goods — from smashed satnav devices to parts of a burned-up car. By the light of the moon, she howls threats to the spirit while scrawling images that evoke her tool's new focus in chalk around the circle. When she's made one complete circuit, she doubles back on herself, chanting an entreaty to the spirit of the object and drawing representations of what will happen to her tool if the spirit resists her.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (15 successes; each roll represents 15 minutes)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The object's spirit is angered by the werewolf's request. The tool destroys itself, and the ritemaster cannot use this rite for a full lunar month.

Failure: The rite simply fails.

Success: The rite succeeds, and the object gains a measure of permanence. If the object replaces a required tool for a roll (such as lockpicks for picking a lock) then the can be made without any penalties for improvised equipment. If the object is used for a weapon or armor, it adds a number of dice (or defense) equal to a comparable manufactured item. The change to the object is permanent.

Exceptional Success: The spirit is willing to change its function. A tool or weapon increases its bonus by +1, armor increases either normal or firearms defense by 1.

Community Spirit (•••••)

Every *Farsil Luhal* has a territory that she must honor. For some, their territory is their pack's territory; others have close ties to a community, an institution or even an ideal. Everything an Iron Master does is for her territory. This rite taps the tribe's role as the wardens of humanity, making her territory give her something in return.

Enacting this rite at the start of a hunt allows a werewolf to exert an innate authority over people with a connection to her territory. Those who live there, those who are part of her community, those who belong to the same institution or hold the same ideal in high regard — anyone who has a strong connection to the werewolf's territory does whatever she needs without realizing it. Channeling her Rage out into her territory can quickly raise a lynch mob or rally crowds to the pack's defense. Whomever the pack is hunting, people refuse him service, cops arrest him and gang members beat him. The ritemaster has ultimate authority over the fate of her victim, but it will not be pretty.

Even a werewolf who holds the ideal of the *Farsil Luhal* themselves as her territory gains great benefit from this rite. If she focuses on the idea of the tribe as watchers over humanity, humans who take a similar role — such as cops — act to her benefit. A werewolf who focuses on the tribe as the innovators of the Uratha find that artists, creators and technologists follow her command.

Performing the Rite: The ritemaster gathers her pack around her. They must have a target for their hunt, either a single person or a close-knit group — a family, a small company or another pack of werewolves are common examples. The ritemaster needs a photograph, a lock of hair or some other personal item from every member of the hunted group. She lights a small fire, burning incense and items of chiminage — commonly food or hand-crafted objects — before her packmates cast the items into the flames. They howl the reasons for their hunt and their desire to run their targets to the ground and kill them. The pack must howl until the fire has burned out. Afterwards, the ritemaster mixes the ash with a few drops of rainwater and one drop of blood or from every member of her pack. She uses the resulting mixture to write a secret word of power in the First Tongue on a symbol of her territory.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (25 successes; each roll represents 10 minutes)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Powerful spirit magics turn against the pack. People who would aid the pack members turn against them; all Social rolls made on behalf of the pack suffer a –3 penalty. This lasts for one scene.

Failure: The rite fails. The target only has to deal with a pack of werewolves coming to kill him.

Success: The Iron Master's territory comes to aid the pack in their hunt. The ritemaster binds his territory to him, deciding just how far members of his territory will go. The werewolf doesn't have to speak; his Rage contacts the primal mind of his territory.

Members of the territory who see the target of the hunt are compelled to act against him — a store or restaurant refuses to serve him, a cab driver ignores his hails, a mugger sees his next mark. People won't do anything worse than they would on a really bad day, but the target finds a large chunk of the populace is against him. Nobody will kill the target of the rite — that is a job for the pack alone. The rite lasts for a day and a night, and honor demands that after that time the hunt must cease.

Exceptional Success: People who are part of the territory go out of their way to obstruct the target of the rite. The target sees that the world is against him, and loses two points of Willpower.

New Fetishes

For the tribe that other werewolves consider most human, the Iron Masters don't have a wide range of fetishes made from modern technology. A laptop is plenty useful enough, but at the end of things, it's just a tool — a fetish is something more. The spirit within the object gives it resonance and meaning, elevating a fetish beyond the realm of tools and into prized positions and ritual items. While it's possible for a *Farsil Luhal* to get attached to her smartphone, it will never hold the same impact for her as her grandfather's engraved watch. One of those has an impact that goes beyond familiarity and habit, and thus is a fitting home for a spirit. In this world of disposable tech and constant upgrade cycles, there's precious little that holds enough meaning. Some Iron Masters even make fetish firearms — preferably old revolvers — but they are careful never to call them klaives. The respect that a *Farsil Luhal* has for the housing of a fetish extends to her choice of spirit. Some will choose a local spirit in order to empower the fetish with an emissary of their territory; others honor their territory without trapping part of it in material confines, questing elsewhere to find the spirit that will power their fetish.

Sucker's Tell (Talen)

Society shows that a person is more than just his physical form: databases and filing cabinets the world over hold everything from a person's shopping habits, address history and sensitive medical records. People believe the information on identity documents even when they don't know the issuing authority. They trust the simple existence of a document as proof that someone has taken the time to validate the person holding it. In real life, records are filed wrong or go missing, databases get corrupted and all a photo ID really proves is that the bearer has access to a printer and laminating machine. The Sucker's Tell grabs human misperception and gives it a good, hard twist. This talen takes the form of a fake ID. When the werewolf burns it, someone within eyesight assumes the character's negative social modifier associated with his Primal Urge score. For an hour, that target now bears the curse of Rage, and the werewolf can engage in a social situation without the obstruction of her own feral nature. If the werewolf didn't see anybody while activating the fetish, it has no effect. To create this talen, a werewolf binds a minor spirit of information into a laminated fake ID bearing his picture.

Action: Instant

Iron Tongue (•)

Many Iron Masters create fetishes that help them use tools. The Iron Tongue is a common fetish among the tribe, and many werewolves make one for packmates who have a hard time with technology. A truck lightbulb threaded onto a necklace, this fetish allows the werewolf to talk to the spirit of the machine. She can ask the spirit to cut her some slack and help her out. Simple objects with no moving parts find it hard to comply with most requests — unless the werewolf asks a knife to be a bit sharper, there's not much it can do for him. Devices with moving parts work best, though the werewolf cannot cajole a device that relies on electrical or chemical energy. She could cajole a crossbow to hit her target, but a rifle wouldn't listen. Activating the fetish allows the werewolf to plead with one object, effectively allowing her to improve its disposition to her with a standard Presence + Persuasion roll. A success when asking the object to "work better" improves the equipment modifier of the object by +1; other entreaties should be handled on a case-by-case basis — asking a wagon with a wrecked axle to keep going until the next garage is one thing, but "just keep going" will buy you five minutes running on splinters at best. Spirits of community are the most popular choice to power this fetish, though plover-spirits also work.

Action: Instant

Backbiter (••)

The first Backbiter was a silenced TT-33 automatic pistol, an assassin's tool used in the Soviet Bloc to silence 11 people that then turned on its former owner. She vowed that she would have her revenge, and when an Iron Master offered her the chance to get even, she agreed. Bound to the pistol, she served him well. That Backbiter killed far more people after that, and eventually slew the ghost's betrayer — though that didn't sate her lust for treachery and revenge. Backbiters are always made from automatic pistols, usually ones used in betrayals. The bullets from an activated Backbiter don't do any more damage — the fetish isn't intended for a fair fight. Instead, the bullets transform inside the victim, morphing into small venomous snakes and scorpions that crawl from the bullet holes. These creatures may sting or bite, but as they used to be the bullets, their transformation removed forensic evidence. The fetish has the characteristics of a silenced automatic pistol. Some werewolves bind spirits of treachery and vengeance to make a Backbiter, though cold war veterans know that spirit-bound weapons are but pale imitations of the original. They seek out the ghosts of those silenced before their time, offering them a chance for revenge.

Action: Reflexive

Minor Klaive — Shifting Fang (•••)

The Shifting Fang is three feet of metal chain covered in sharp edges and spikes. The only concession to the wielder is a strip of black leather wound around one end to make a grip. The spirit within the weapon makes the chain jerk and twist in the wielder's hand. With some training, he can use the constant motion to his advantage, striking from unexpected angles — even goading the chain to bend in the same direction as a dodging opponent. When activated, the Shifting Fang twists and writhes in such a way that the wielder ignores his opponent's Defense. The one drawback to this klaive is that the spirit within refuses to fight the same opponent twice — while an Iron Master can use the ritual weapon against the same person any number of times, the werewolf can activate this fetish only once. To the spirit within, a "fight" isn't anything as civilized as "first blood." Once the fetish



is activated, the bonus remains until the end of the combat scene — until the wielder, or his opponents, is unconscious, running away or dead. When fighting multiple opponents, only those whom the fetish hasn't fought in a previous scene lose their Defense, and only those damaged by the fetish count as having fought it for future activations. The spirit of a venomous snake fuels this weapon.

Action: Reflexive

Omnitool (••••)

Many humans carry pocket-knives or multi-tools in case they are caught without a knife, a screwdriver or a pair of pliers. The resultant tool is rarely as useful as a dedicated item, but it gets the job done. The Iron Master who created the Omnitool thought exactly the same thing. A battered metal box, eight inches square and three inches deep, the fetish doesn't look like much. When the owner is hunting, however, she sometimes needs something she doesn't have with her. In the space of one hunt, a werewolf might need a laptop computer to research the people his prey was meeting, and a set of lockpicks to investigate the secret rituals in a warehouse basement without the cult being aware. The Omnitool provides whatever she needs. Provided that the wielder is hunting, she whispers her need for a single item in the First Tongue as she activates the fetish. When she opens the box, she'll find something that she can use, crafted out of what looks like horn or bone.. If the object produced by the Omnitool would normally provide a bonus on a roll, reduce that bonus by

1. The fetish cannot be used again until the user returns the item to the box — though caltrops are useful, recovering them is nearly impossible — and the werewolf can use the Omnitool only once per dot of Harmony over the course of a single hunt. When the hunt is over, the spirit within the fetish must rest for a full day and night before being used again. Spirits of nesting birds and tool-using animals can power the fetish, as can urban spirits of desperation.

Action: Instant

Liar's Delight (•••••)

While an Iron Tongue lets a werewolf request favors of an object, Liar's Delight allows so much more. A cog no more than half an inch in diameter taken from a smashed-up pocket watch, a werewolf who places Liar's Delight under his tongue and activates it can talk to complex objects for one scene. Not only that — he can lie to them, and they may believe him. This fetish considers a complex device to be anything that relies on electricity or chemical energy to function — cars, guns, computers and so on. Simpler machines, from trebuchets to gumball machines, don't understand him. The werewolf can glean information about a device by asking it (Presence + Empathy), and can persuade or scare machines into functioning as he commands (Manipulation + Intimidation or Persuasion). He communes directly with the items' spirits in his native tongue, though only he can hear any responses. Devices can't do anything they couldn't normally do, but the werewolf can use his Social Skills to command anything that can hear him. With a successful Manipulation + Subterfuge roll and a point of Essence, the character can convince a device of something that isn't true, though the roll is modified for how audacious the lie is. "You've got plenty of gas to get us across the state line," "I left one in the breech, so you're good for another shot," and "The rotors will hold until you land" are all potentially true if the werewolf is convincing enough. Spirits of advertising and politics can fuel a Liar's Delight, if the werewolf is canny enough to trick them into the fetish.

Action: Instant

Milestone Gift: Backstage Synchronicity

Prerequisites: Cunning •••••, Harmony ••••••

Red Wolf grants this Gift to the select few who truly impress him. Those who receive this blessing are never out of the eyes of the Irralunim. They tap in to an ancient compact forged between the spirits and Red Wolf to send Essence flowing through the most audacious plans.

When the pack members work in harmony to come up with new ideas and clever plans, Backstage Synchronicity rewards the pack with a gift of Essence from the watching Irralunim. This Gift comes into play whenever the pack plans something that counts as a notable feat of Cunning (see p. 194 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**). The spirits must be impressed with the plan, but while the character remains one of Sagrim-Ur's chosen, they consider all members of the pack equally. In addition, when the pack puts its plan into action, the character can tap into her innate cunning, increasing her pack's chances of pulling the plan off. There is no limit to how close her packmates must be, though this Gift works only for deeds committed by members of a pack bound together with a totem. Others who hang around the pack, be they wolf-blooded, vampire, human or anything stranger, cannot perform the deeds required for this Gift. The Irralunim understand only the sacred bonds between pack members.

Since this is a Milestone Gift, only Iron Masters who perform some great service to their tribe can learn Backstage Synchronicity (see "Milestone Gifts," p. 12). Normally, Red Wolf chooses those who come up with a truly unique means of pacifying opposition. If the character's Harmony falls below 6 after he learns this Gift, he has one cycle of the moon to regain spiritual balance, during which he must perform a feat of cunning dedicated to Red Wolf. Sagrim-Ur won't help *Farsil Luhal* who rest on their laurels. If the character fails, he loses Backstage Synchronicity and can never regain it.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Wits + Occult + Cunning

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The plan may be good, but the Irralunim have seen vital flaws that offend their mercurial nature. They strip two points of Essence from the character.

Failure: The spirits do not notice, or are not sufficiently impressed by the act to think it worth reward.

Success: The Irralunim are impressed. When the plan is formed, they grant the every pack member two points of Essence. Pack members may have

more Essence than their Primal Urge score would normally allow, but any excess points are lost at the end of the scene. When carrying out this plan, the werewolf can tap in to her reserves of cunning. She adds a number of dots equal to her Cunning to any pack member's Wits — she can use this bonus herself, or donate her expertise to help another. This bonus lasts until the end of the scene, or until the plan is complete (whichever comes first), and can only be used once for each plan. If her pack came up with the plan more than a week ago, the Irralunim lose interest, and she must activate this Gift again in order to tap her Cunning.

Dramatic Success: The spirits let the character know just how impressed they are. In addition to the effects of a success, the character regains two points of Willpower.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
–5	The pack have already used a similar plan with this Gift.
–3	The deed would not be notable for a character with Cunning 2 or above.
–1	The pack has received Essence for a similar plan, but later decided not to go through with it.
–1	The deed would not be notable for a character with Cunning 3 or above.
+1	The deed would be notable for a character with Cunning 4.
+3	The deed would be notable even for a character with Cunning 5.

New Merit: Synergistics (••)

Prerequisite: Rituals •••

Effect: Sometimes a ritual is impractical — crowded urban centers can make it difficult to hunt openly, for instance. Synergistics allows the ritualist to alter the materials and components needed for a ritual without changing the underlying rite. A burned-out circuit board takes the place of a skull, a symbolic hunt takes the place of a real one. Some Iron Masters use this ritual to wrap their spirit magics in the trappings of a human religion, wielding the powers of the spirits through the prayers of a Christian or the divinations of a Shinto priest. The character reduces the penalties for altering the form of a rite by 3 (see **Lore of the Forsaken**, p. 108)

Drawback: Once she's changed a rite, a werewolf suffers all normal penalties for attempting to use the normal form of the rite.

Change or Die

Some *Farsil Luhal* keep in touch via Internet mailing lists or spirits who carry stories. Others hear nothing but the words of travelers. Some Iron Masters have their stories told throughout an area, while the reputation of a few spans the world. These legends and reputations are just another set of stories, and no *Farsil Luhal* can resist tinkering with tales of his own life. Better to take what she says with a grain of salt and work out what she's trying to teach later.

Enki's Song

Auspice: Ithaeur
Tribe: Iron Masters
Lodge: None
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 5, Wits 6, Resolve 4
Physical Attributes: Strength 3 (4/6/5/3), Dexterity 2 (2/3/4/4), Stamina 4 (5/6/6/5)
Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 5, Composure 4
Mental Skills: Academics 2, Investigation 3, Medicine 2, Occult (Rites) 4
Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Dalu) 2, Larceny 6, Stealth 4
Social Skills: Empathy 3, Persuasion 3, Socialize 4, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 6
Merits: Danger Sense, Encyclopedic Knowledge, Fleet of Foot 2, Language (First Tongue), Resources 3, Synergistics
Primal Urge: 7
Willpower: 8
Harmony: 8
Essence Max/per Turn: 20/5
Virtue: Faith
Vice: Lust
Health: 9 (11/13/12/9)
Initiative: 6 (6/7/8/8)
Defense: 2 (2/3/4/4)
Speed: 12 (13/16/19/17)
Renown: Cunning 5, Glory 3, Honor 4, Purity 3, Wisdom 4
Gifts: (1) Call Water, Know Name, Left-Handed Spanner, Straighten, Two-World Eyes; (2) Anybeast, Nightfall, Read Spirit, Travelers Blessing, Ruin; (3) Gauntlet Cloak, Iron Treachery, Sagacity, Sculpt; (4) Between the Weave, Know the Path, Shatter; (5) Backstage Synchronicity, Communion with the Land, Crash the Gates
Rituals: 5; **Rites:** Banish Spirit, Bind Human, Bind Spirit, Call Gaffling, Call Jaggling, Community Spirit, Eyes of Sagrim-Ur, Fortify the Border Marches, Mark of Change, Rite of Chosen Ground, Rite of Hallowed Ground, Rite of Permanence, Rite of the Spirit Brand, Wake the Spirit

Enki's Song has always been and always will be. Before humans raised the city of Ur, Enki's Song watched them and learned of their ways.



Her name was different then, but she changed it because the sound of the human words pleased her. She hunted with the Get of Nabu for a time, but eventually, she died. That was not the end for the wolf who tricked death.

A year after her death, another *Farsil Luhal* took the name Enki's Song. She, too, worked tirelessly for her tribe, and her actions pleased Red Wolf. Some tales say that when she died, Red Wolf took her for a lover; many more believe that she loved the Firstborn, but the spirit could not understand her. When she died, another werewolf waited to take her name. So did Enki's Song become a legacy, a title and sacred duty in one. Every Iron Master who took the name left her own mark upon the role. After 20 generations, the tribe decided as a whole that only those women who bore Red Wolf's highest favor, no matter their auspice, could aspire to the name. Every werewolf who aspires to being Enki's Song must learn the stories of her predecessors and ensure that their lives are never forgotten.

The current Enki's Song has tricked the world for well over 100 years. She's the oldest Iron Master on Earth, and the contradiction at the heart of the tribe — she is a bastion of tradition at the heart of a storm of change. She has grown distant from humanity, but still hunts — for prey and for knowledge. She takes great pleasure in mixing human tradition with her teachings, often from three or four different sources. A werewolf who stays with her long enough to learn a rite can find herself chanting in Navajo and beating a traditional African rhythm as part of a larger Confucian ceremony. When she meets other werewolves, Enki's Song acts every inch the trickster wolf, downplaying her role and power to measure the reaction of others — then bringing those who do not show her respect to heel. She has an incredible command over spirits — even those that hate her respect her power — and she will use them to her own ends. Often she bribes spirits that behave against those that invade the material realm. Her current territory includes three villages that she watches over like a mother, though her Primal Urge limits how close she can get. She prefers outwitting other werewolves, and those who can deal with her mercurial temperament find her a useful teacher.

Enki's Song looks like a woman of at least 70 years, her face scored by deep lines. Her skin has a Middle Eastern cast, though others swear she's a Native American. Her hair has long ago turned gray, and she wears it long with pride. Symbols of a hundred human ritual traditions decorate her skin, from beads in her hair to piercings, and from facial tattoos to runes burned into her flesh. One the rare occasions that she takes Urhan form, she is a large copper-furred wolf whose dark eyes are alive with hidden energy.

Using Enki's Song in a Chronicle: Enki's Song is one example of an archetypal Iron Master, rebelling against even her tribe's desire for change while hoping to integrate human culture into her own. She's also more than little scary in her focus on ritual magic and protecting her territory — she knows she is soon going to die, and she wants to go out in a blaze of glory. *Farsil Luhal* look up to her with a mix of awe and fear, and currently two werewolves are building up the reputation required to take her name when she dies. In her final months, however, she is struck with her own mortality. She's been Enki's Song for too long, but she

doesn't want to die. If she could just hand on the name and fade away, going back to her earlier life, she would be happy. Her duty precludes any chance of that. She could be used as a teacher, a lesson on the price of power or as a title to which a female Iron Master might aspire.

Rex Mundi

Auspice: Cahalith
Tribe: Iron Masters
Lodge: Wires
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 3
Physical Attributes: Strength 3 (4/6/5/3), Dexterity 2 (2/3/4/4), Stamina 3 (4/5/5/4)
Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 2
Mental Skills: Academics (Research) 1, Computer 3, Crafts 2, Investigation 1, Occult 2, Science (Math) 2
Physical Skills: Drive 1, Larceny 2, Stealth 2, Survival 1
Social Skills: Expression 2, Persuasion 3, Socialize 1, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2
Merits: Eidetic Memory, Language (First Tongue), Fetish 2, Totem 3
Primal Urge: 2
Willpower: 5



Harmony: 5
Essence Max/per Turn: 11/1
Virtue: Prudence
Vice: Greed
Health: 8 (10/12/11/8)
Initiative: 4 (4/5/6/6)
Defense: 2 (2/3/4/4)
Speed: 10 (11/14/17/15)
Renown: Cunning 2, Glory 1, Wisdom 2
Gifts: (1) Know Name, Left-Handed Spanner, Pack Awareness; (2) Nightfall, Resist Pain
Rituals: 1; **Rites:** Rite of Dedication, Rite of Hallowed Ground

For most of his life so far, Chaz Hamilton was a writer. He spent his time putting together other people's websites to pay the bills while honing his craft on a local newspaper. His real passion was speculative fiction, and he was deeply entrenched in several online SF communities. While the new wave of Scottish SF broke around him, he struggled to get published. He told himself that he was too far ahead of the curve. More than a burning passion for the future, he actively hunted what he saw as the Future breaking through into the world.

His First Change didn't alter that. He joined a pack but remained distant from his new family. The *Farsil Luhal* appeared to be the forward thinkers among the Uratha, the tribe that cared about the Future. Only after his initiation did he find that the Iron Masters cared more about the real world than mere possibilities. After struggling with what he believed and what his new life as a werewolf was turning into, he decided to take charge: the other Iron Masters could have the present, he would look after the future. Others thought that the newly named Rex Mundi cared about the future of his territory. They were wrong. Eventually, Rex came to the attention of Tomorrow's Son and the Lodge of Wires. Rex left his pack to join the lodge.

Now, Rex is in a bind. He knows that for a long while he was a third-rate werewolf. He had an entitlement complex that didn't have room for his post-Change state, and he took his sweet time dealing with all of that. Only after being a Wirehead for long enough to learn the truth did he really start regretting his prior behavior. He has seen the truth, and the truth scared the shit out of him. He knows that Tomorrow's Son has sold out the future of the Uratha to a powerful spirit

born of nebulous fear and draconian control. That's not the future he dreamed, and he keeps having prophetic visions of what might happen if the Lodge of Wires keeps expanding. His old pack couldn't care if he lives or dies, and he's on the run from a group of werewolves who can track him anywhere. He often goes days without sleeping, wandering the country and slipping between the Shadow and physical realm. He knows his chances of finding a pack that believes him — especially other Iron Masters — are slim, but he has to try. He attempts to help out as he's moving through other packs' territories, but all too often his Rage taints his efforts. Living on the run doesn't suit him, and he's learning a lot of things about himself that he didn't want to know. On the other hand, he's keeping ahead of the other Wireheads, using their own tools against them. If he can just find a pack of sympathetic Iron Masters, he might stand a chance.

Rex Mundi has been on the run for too long. He changes his clothes every week to get rid of tracking devices, but he always looks like a homeless dot-com billionaire in a crumpled thrift-store suit and ragged coat. He keeps his dirty-blond hair short so it doesn't get in his face, but has otherwise let himself go, growing a full beard. His skin is pale and eyes bloodshot from lack of sleep. As a wolf, he's small and wiry, with gray coat that's in real need of a wash.

Using Rex Mundi in a Chronicle: Rex is an obvious hook to draw characters into the secrets and lies surrounding the Lodge of Wires, but he's got plenty of other uses. He's a good example of what can happen when an Iron Master chooses a territory that he can't handle, and of what can happen when all that comes crashing down. He can also be an object lesson in why the Iron Masters consider something before embracing it. If the pack offers him protection (whether or not the Lodge of Wires believes him valuable enough to chase is another story), he'll gladly stay in their territory and trade some of what he knows. If the pack members are willing, they could even try to teach him how to be an Uratha, rather than leaving him to his own devices. If they were to succeed, they'd get a firm ally who knows more about modern technology than most werewolves.

Gail Measures-Twice

Auspice: Elodoth
Tribe: Iron Masters
Lodge: None
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 2, Resolve 2
Physical Attributes: Strength 2 (3/5/4/2), Dexterity 2 (2/3/4/4), Stamina 3 (4/5/5/4)
Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 4
Mental Skills: Academics 1, Crafts 3, Investigation 2, Occult 3, Politics (Planning) 2, Science (Engineering) 3
Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Drive 2, Stealth 1, Survival (Urban) 2
Social Skills: Animal Ken (Urban Predators), Empathy 1, Persuasion 2, Socialize 1, Streetwise 2
Merits: Contacts (City Hall, Builders) 2, Fetish 1, Language (First Tongue), Resources 3, Synergistics
Primal Urge: 3
Willpower: 6
Harmony: 7
Essence Max/per Turn: 12/1
Virtue: Fortitude
Vice: Pride
Health: 8 (10/12/11/8)
Initiative: 5 (5/6/7/7)
Defense: 2 (in all forms)
Speed: 9 (10/13/16/14)
Renown: Cunning 3, Glory 2, Honor 1
Gifts: (1) Left-Handed Spanner, Scent Beneath the Surface, Straighten, Ward versus Predators; (2) Ruin, Snarl of Command, Ward versus Humans; (3) Aura of Truce, Sculpt
Rituals: 2; **Rites:** Banish Spirit, Mark of Change, Rite of Dedication, Rite of Hallowed Ground

Gail Simmons always wanted to be an architect. When she was small, she fancied that buildings talked to her, warning her of the secrets within. Growing up, she realized that a certain style of decoration or an imperfect angle doesn't make a building inherently bad. Instead, they have some subconscious impact on the minds of people who live and work in the building every day. Cathedrals influence people toward quiet reflection. Suburban homes, with their cookie-cutter looks and tiny imperfections, exaggerate the cracks in people's souls. When Gail moved to college, she saw that firsthand. Her otherwise well-adjusted parents lost it when they moved to the suburbs. Her mother drank herself to death, and her father spent his days in a drugged-up cloud. Gail knew that their house had, however indirectly, killed them. When her classmates were

studying or indulging themselves with whatever substances they could find, Gail researched geomancy and sacred geometry, hunting for a truth she'd glimpsed so often.

She Changed when someone tried burning down her apartment building with her inside. That someone was another werewolf, a Bone Shadow who thought torching the place was the only way to deal with a Wound on the site. Gail was there when the *Farsil Luhal* caught him. They wanted to know why he was burning their territory. Spirits boiling in front of her eyes, Gail spoke out. She offered her own justification based on what she knew and what little she had learned in the short time since Changing. The *Hirfathra Hissu* didn't know whether to be impressed or aghast at her breadth of knowledge. She left with the Iron Masters before he could decide.

Gail finished college, and now works as an architect. She's not in it for the money. Through an equal mix of threats and bribes, she twists the arm of every planning committee she's on. They don't know that the people who live in the existing buildings can go hang for all Gail cares. It's up to her to keep the spirits that live there happy. Her sacred geometry textbooks had some useful information, which she blends with *feng shui* and modern views on building materials. Her buildings appease the spirits of her territory — she gives them new homes, and they stay the hell on their own side of the Gauntlet. When she can't bully a planning board, her pack is more than happy to help with any unscheduled demolitions. She's also good at selecting prey for her pack to hunt — anyone who ruins of her buildings' resonance is fair game. She will honor her territory, and has no compunctions about scaring off or killing anyone who stands in her way. It's not just her territory, either — her father has a new apartment, and the home that killed her mother burned to rubble and ash. Gail claims that she closed a budding Wound by doing so, but her packmates aren't sure if they believe her or not.

Gail's in her early 30s, but others accuse her of being at least five years older. No stranger to unhealthy eating, her werewolf metabolism and tendency to skip meals when she's busy keep her reasonably trim. She carries a steel rule and a pair of compasses with her at all times, a sign of her profession. Her mousy hair is long, with a single bright blue stripe running from above her left eye. The stripe continues through her coat in Urshul and Urhan form, and the piercings and tattoos that she normally hides beneath long sleeves are plain for all to see.



Using Gail in a Chronicle: Gail doesn't just work on her own patch of ground. If a pack has trouble calming the spirits of their territory, especially the powerful ones, she may offer her services. Alternately, if a pack destroys buildings and hamfistedly tries to "fix" their territory, Gail and her pack may show up to educate them. She'd be willing to offer her services as an Elodoth to a pack that needs to make deals, but she's very single-minded — if they don't treat their territory with respect, she will make sure that every deal shafts them until they learn. After all, werewolves come and go, but good buildings are forever.





Chapter 10

Storm Lords, Ymir

Cassie wasn't breathing, so her lover breathed for her.

Great mouthfuls of Garrett's breath rushed into Cassie's mouth and throat, inflating her lungs. He thumped down on her chest with rhythmic presses, staring into her open eyes all the while. When he wasn't breathing for girl he loved, Garrett was speaking to her with his usual gentle-voiced intensity. It worked when he gave orders. Now he hoped it would work as he begged.

"Don't die. Please, Cassie, don't die. It's not ending like this."

Around him, Garrett's packmates looked on. Several shook their heads, and every one bore wounds from the fight. Their prey, their enemies, were scattered around the room in messy heaps. Cassie was no shifter, and her thin wolf's blood had done nothing to strengthen her weak heart. Now her lover was doing all he could to get it beating again.

When she drew a gasping breath and went into spasms, the pack flinched back. Garrett immediately moved Cassie onto her side so she wouldn't swallow her tongue. A minute later and she was conscious again, weeping into his arms. He'd never felt such relief.

He eventually rose from cradling her and walked over to the biggest corpse in the room. The spirit-thing was slowly dissolving, melting back into the Shadow. Even in death, the power in its form was enough for the beast to maintain a tenuous presence in the physical world. Garrett pulled the blade of his forefathers from the spirit's throat. It had been set there in the final strike of the fight — the killing blow.

His pack looked at him; the same awe projecting out, the same question standing in each pair of eyes. What now?

"Let's get out of here," Garrett said. He was alpha. He knew best. They nodded and obeyed, silent as wolves in the wild.

STORM LORDS

Iminir

"The merit of an action lies in finishing it to the end."
— Genghis Khan

Some people matter. They have the strength to matter to others, to the world. In the span of one heartbeat or the thunder of many, we all get the chance. Maybe just one shot, but it'll be there. The exhausted paramedic saving a dying baby at a premature home delivery. The bigger kid who helps the beaten child stand up to his bully. The soldier who goes back for his wounded comrade. In life, a single act of strength — a single moment of courage, of skill, of defiance and endurance — can be all it takes for a soul to matter.

People are inspired by those who matter. Those who matter are the ones who change the world, even in the smallest ways.

Duty. A human word. What's duty to a man with a wolf's soul? Pride? Who could ever be proud of a fear of failure? Do you know us at all? It's not about looking good or winning glory. It's not about being the biggest, the best or the bravest. It's about being ready for that one second when you have to matter, that one moment when you can change the world around you for the better.

Because if you don't, if you miss that moment, people die. The people you love, the people who need you, the people you swore to inspire and protect will die.

Be ready for anything. You swore to a wolf-god you'd stand up to all that could ever go wrong without letting your pack down. No matter what the two worlds throw at you, be it anguish or agony, just keep going. Endure where others would surrender. Survive where others would die.

Bleed when you're hurt and roar in rage when the world spins against you. You're not a god or demon, to resist such things with an immortal's nonchalance. But let the others know you're not down and you're not out. Cry out in pain, not despair. The others have to see you're still standing come the dawn. Let your pack see you walk through hell and come out the other side. Whether you're laughing or crying, they'll know they can rely on you, trust you and follow you.

Inspire them.

Matter *to them.*

To Howl in the Heart of the Storm

Storytellers and players reading this are likely to have a good grasp on the Storm Lords already, gleaned from **Werewolf: The Forsaken** at the least, and perhaps several other sourcebooks. This chapter invites you to discard that knowledge for a while. Not throw it out for good, but look with a fresh perspective what it means to be one of the *Iminir*. We've seen the Storm Lords from the outside. This is about looking deeper. Let's get behind their eyes, to think what they think and see what they see.

Much of the tribe members' appearance to outsiders is colored by their tribal oath: *Allow no one to witness or tend your weakness*. Take a look at the other promises sworn to the Firstborn. The Blood Talons swear to offer no surrender they would themselves find unworthy. The Bone Shadows vow to treat each spirit as they believe it deserves. The Hunters in Darkness promise Black Wolf they would let no place in their territories suffer violation. The Iron Masters swear to honor their territory in every way, by any means.

Worthy promises, all. Worthy goals and worthy creeds.

Each is an obvious example of nobility, justice or fairness. Barring the Storm Lords' oath, each one is a vow to defend, to protect or to maintain a personal code of honor. Among the Uratha, the *Iminir* alone cannot claim that. On the surface, their oath is selfish. There's responsibility in the Storm Lord oath, but it can seem buried under a fear of failure and mired in hubris.

It is easy to see the proud and lofty Storm Lord alpha stereotype as representative of the tribe. It's simple to view Winter Wolf's oath as a tribal culture of seeking superiority over the other Uratha. It's a key step in presenting vain, insufferable and self-important werewolves who believe their tribe's true role in werewolf society is to never show flaws — never *have* flaws — and to be peerless in all they do. It's true for some. But it's not true for all, and self-importance is not what Winter Wolf demands.

Perfection is shallow. It's always a lie. This is what *really* happens.

Children of Winter

The *Iminir* have a saying. In the First Tongue, "*Desh kar*" (or "*Iminir desh kar*") means literally "Just us." It's a saying the Storm Lords like to use when among others of their tribe, because it's really something only they understand. In some ways, it's an expression of the shared *noblesse oblige* within the tribe, the desire to lead and inspire and the responsibility they feel to do it. Depending on body language and tone, it can be a weary complaint at the harshness of Uratha life, a reassuring acknowledgement of a tribemate's hard work or a joking "been there, done that" reference to another Storm Lord's troubles. It's even a greeting in some cases. Intonation and intention are everything.

Desh kar is the tribe's traditional way of saying: "I know how you feel." Storm Lords use it to recognize the separation between werewolves of their tribe and Uratha sworn to other Firstborn. It's considered a little pathetic and bitter to ever use it as an insult. A Storm Lord whining about his responsibility or throwing his efforts in the face of his packmates to make sure they pay attention is no Storm Lord at all.

Desh kar is most often a private thing; a quiet acknowledgment of tribal differences without any implied disrespect. Do the other tribes sometimes read it as Storm Lord arrogance? Sure they do. Is it ever used as an insult against the other tribes when one of the *Iminir* thinks a packmate isn't pulling his weight? Sure it is. Nothing and no one are perfect.

But what *Desh kar* is supposed to mean isn't "We're better than the others," but rather "We're different from them." And that's what some werewolves, be they Forsaken, Pure or walking their own roads… just don't get about the *Iminir.*

Shouldering real responsibility is a tricky duty to manage for anyone, and it gets even harder when someone promises a wolf-god she'll bear all life's burdens without letting anyone see her fail. That's a key point not always remembered: at no point does a werewolf swear to Winter Wolf that she'll never, ever fail. She swears only that she'll do all in her power to avoid letting others see her failures, for fear of demoralizing them or breaking their own hopes.

Enough about what the Storm Lords aren't. This is what they are.

The Alpha Tribe

Robert Halvarsson, Storm Lord Rahu, speaks:

They still have kings and queens in England, you know? They're not so powerful these days — mostly they're smirking tourist traps and a bunch of dog-ugly faces printed on paper money. But they're still a group of souls, a caste of people, born into a position of leadership.

That's a lot like us. Not that you'll be seeing my face on a 10-pound note any time soon, but you know what I mean.

More is expected of them, because of their family ties and their position in society. If they screw up, it hits the news like the waters hit New Orleans in '06. Bam! All over the show. Everyone sees it.

Same with us.

It's a hell of a responsibility. I feel that on my back every time my fingers twist into talons, let me tell you. My heart beats over and over: Don't fuck up. Don't fuck up. Don't let them see you fuck up.

And it feels great.

It's like liquid life running through my veins. Never trust any Storm Lord who tells you otherwise. The ones who whine about the pressure of leadership and how hard it is to inspire their packmates aren't going to make it in our ranks for long, let me tell you. Skolis-Ur sees that shit and breathes ice down their necks until they're too cold and too scared to stand in line with us any longer.

Angel Harrison, Storm Lord Elodoth, has her say:

Not every Storm Lord is an alpha, but we all lead in our own ways. You'll see it in every Iminir*: that drive*

to succeed and be the best at whatever one thing she knows she needs to be the best at. Maybe she's the pack's getaway driver, or the ritemaster or just the one who kicks the most ass and takes the most names. Formal or informal, a Storm Lord in a pack will lead through example, even if it's just in the one area he knows he can handle better than the others.

So goes the party line, at least. The guys tell me they keep me around because I'm funny. They'd have me convinced, but it's always me they come to when our totem, Mad-Eyed Crow, needs to be talked down from whatever insane scheme he wants us to throw ourselves into. He's powerful, and that means he needs to be obeyed. But some things… well, some things need to be negotiated. We'd be dead 10 times over if I didn't talk a little reason to him once in a while.

My packmates can joke about how my only use is to raise everyone's spirits, and I'm fine with that. As it happens, I mix a wicked Sex on the Beach, and I know my job in the cocktail bar gives the guys a safe place to go after a hunt. The free drinks are a perk, sure. But I also know the truth. So does our totem, and so does Winter Wolf.

They need me. They need me to hang around and keep being the best at what I do. The pack would fall apart with me.

Haluk Diriker, Storm Lord Ithaeur, offers this:

My pack has three Crescent Moons, each more powerful than I. Our alpha is a Storm Lord with a legacy of kills written upon a blade of spirit-infused bone. I am a worse shot with a gun than at least half of my packmates. My English is so bad I must often speak First Tongue to make my meaning clear.

What do I offer my pack? What do I offer my tribe? What do I offer Great Skolis of the Winter?

They call me Checkmate; it's my deed name. I play a lot of chess. That is what I bring to my pack, even though many others are better at much more than I. I always win chess, though. Always and always.

I play so much that when things happen, I see all the possible outcomes the way I see a chess game. The people, the spirits, the foes — they all become pieces, each with different movements and different ways to threaten others, which must be remembered and considered to prevent any bad surprises.



I do not think faster than my friends, I just think different. That's why they listen to my words when I speak. It's why my tribemates come to me sometimes for talk.

Great Skolis of the Winter is as mysterious as he is fierce. I met the Wolf of Winter when I entered the Lords of Storm. And I ask him, I say: "Great Skolis of the Winter, I am strong enough to survive all. But why do you want me?"

And he says: "You are a wolf in a man's skin with a machine's mind. You think by instinct, by emotion and by calculation. It makes you strong in rare ways."

Those with me say they heard only a growl from Great Skolis when he answered my question. But I heard what I heard, and that is the truth. I still am not sure I understand it.

Deadlock, Ghost Wolf Rahu, has something to say:

I'm close to the Lords. Me and them, we've got some history. Hell, I tried to join them — tried once and failed hard. Some of the guys and girls in the other tribes think that makes me a failure.

The Lords don't think that.

My deed name to most of the packs around here is kind of embarrassing. They all call me the Little Engine Who Couldn't. That bites, let me tell you. It's hard to rise above it, but I earned it from all the months after my Change when I bragged about how I was born to join the Lords. Turns out I was wrong, because when I stood before Skolis-Ur, I never saw greatness or majesty: I saw pure fear, I saw my death, I saw a god that didn't respect me; that cared nothing if I lived or died.

Since that day I've killed three of the Anshega, *earned 10 years of scars from always fighting at the front of my pack, and single-handedly destroyed a plague goddess lurking in the bowels of a hospital basement. I'd match my war skills against anyone in the area, be they Blood Talon or Full Moon. I know how to fight and kill better than anyone I've ever met, and despite my deed name, half of the great things done around this city are down to me and my pack — but no one ever believes us.*

No one except the Lords.

They call me Deadlock, and I'll take that to my grave with pride. They named me after I failed, choosing that word to honor the fact I never backed down from Skolis-Ur, even when he demanded me to leave his presence. That impressed them. They tell me most of them wouldn't even do that. So when I tell them my tales and all the others in the city laugh and think I'm sucking up to the big boys who wouldn't take me in, the Lords always believe me.

Until-the-Blood, Predator King, snarls:

The Storm Lords follow the Firstborn beta. This is Winter Wolf. My tribemates laugh long and howl hard. They say the Iminir *are poor leaders, and the Forsaken are destined to fail, for they follow the second of* Urfarah's *children, while we among the Predator Kings follow Dire Wolf,* Urfarah's *oldest and godliest son. We follow the strongest. They follow one who failed and now pretend at strength.*

I don't laugh with my packmates when they say these things. We follow the Firstborn alpha yet we rarely lead the Pure. Why is this? The Storm Lords follow the Forsaken beta, yet they are often leaders among their kind. If they are destined to fail, why are they not yet destroyed?

I worry about this. I worry that Winter Wolf and his children are not pretending to be strong. They are *strong. They found strength in learning from their failures, instead of glorying in every hollow victory.*

So I think these things, and I worry. I worry that the Mother Above looks down on her children and loves the Urdaga *for the lessons they learned and the duties they have taken. I believe I will seek out the Storm Lords when the chance arises.*

We have much to discuss.

The Pure

The Pure detest the Storm Lords. Much of this is down to the perceived flaws in the Forsaken, given that *Urdaga* packs are often led by *Iminir.* But it goes deeper, and it goes two ways. Many of the Pure hate the Storm Lords for their flaws, while many hate them because the number of defections to the *Iminir* has been at times, in some areas, absolutely punishing.

Think about it. Here we have one of the tribes that genuinely faced up to the responsibility of ending *Urfarah's* life when his continued existence threatened the world. Here we also have the tribe whose totem led the Firstborn who forgave the murderers. Here we have a tribe of werewolves who do their best to lead and inspire all who seek redemption from the Shadow's hatred. Here we have the tribe that stands proudest in Luna's grace. The Forsaken may be loathed by the denizens of the second world, but there's so much pride and grace in their position — the dedicated, leading martyrs of the fallen — that many of the Pure have to admire what they see.

This goes both ways, of course. This is a rosy description of the Storm Lord tribe — a description of what most Storm Lords strive hard to be, not what every single tribe member manages to achieve.

While most *Iminir* can claim to show this face to the *Anshega*, not all can — not if they're honest with themselves.

The 'lesser' Storm Lords, the ones who never quite live up to the ideals or never try to (some prefer their own paths, after all) are the Forsaken who earn the most derision from the Pure. These Storm Lords epitomize the failings of the *Urdaga*, showing how even the Forsaken's so-called alpha tribe can't live up to the standards it sets its members. Thus, the Storm Lords who present a weak or different face to the *Anshega* appear as living examples of the Tribes of the Moon biting off more than they could ever chew. Their eventual failure, it seems, is certain, and apparent most clearly in their leaders.

Defection

Werewolves have died to prevent one particular tale spreading out of the tribe's ranks. While many Storm Lords have never even heard of the Defection — and many who have deride such a legend as total fiction — it has a certain pervasiveness that means the story crops up around campfires in whispers across territories throughout the world. It's often said of the *Iminir* that they aim to beat their enemies no matter the cost, that at times the tribal fervor for perfection reaches heights that blind the Storm Lords to all else. One story tells how, in their desire to be on the winning side, Winter Wolf and the *Iminir* almost joined the Pure.

The reasons vary with the telling, which will come as no surprise given the fluidity of myths passed down verbally through a culture for generations. Some say Winter Wolf was tempted and the tribe pulled him back, others say the opposite, and that it was Skolis-Ur who reminded his children of their duties. One thing remains set in stone, though. The Pure came to the Storm Lords, and without war or anger and — here's the kicker — *asked* for their alliance. The Pure Firstborn came to Winter Wolf in the farthest reaches of Shadow, and packs of *Anshega* came to the *Iminir*. No bloodshed (at least, none started by the Pure), just a straight-up sharing of truths. "We want you in," said the Pure.

Ultimately, the answer was "No." But what events led up to such a scenario if it truly did happen? And how many Storm Lords were tempted?

A Storm Across the World

In the deep urban jungles of Los Angeles, the Storm Lords leave the First Tongue glyph for *Desh Kar* all over the city, to let others of the tribe belonging to other packs know that allies are near. It's found in graffiti on subway trains running certain routes, mixed in amongst all the usual mess of spray paint and chaos. It's found scratched into the rusting metal of abandoned cars or chipped into the stone walls of buildings. It's found drawn on the backs of dead packmates' gravestones. Each of these symbols is a marker — a sign that says, 'Howl here, and your brothers will come.'

There's never a guarantee on how many will answer (that's the kind of thing that depends on which werewolf and pack left the mark), and there's no assurance the werewolf answering the call will be a helpful tribemate ready to give up his business or duties to help out above and beyond the call of duty. What the marker *does* guarantee, however, is the summoning of someone who understands what the Storm Lord is going through. Someone to ask advice, someone to pass on a message through the tribe, someone who maybe knows a rite or a Gift the howler doesn't. Before the rise of cell phones and email, these markers were the primary form of communication between Storm Lords in LA's various packs. Even now such markers see a great deal of use, most often for local gatherings of the tribe.

Abuse of the *Desh kar* glyph summons is considered a serious annoyance and an insult. Few Storm Lords relish their inter-tribal touchstone used for meager or minor matters, and a werewolf is in for a rough time if he howls for help over something truly trivial. To answer a summons is to break off whatever it was the werewolf (and perhaps his pack, too) were doing that night. Finding out a tribemate in need just "needed" to borrow a few dollars is likely to earn the summoner a thrashing. This is not a tradition to screw around with.

A variation exists in parts of Eastern Europe, based on Slavic mythology. Traditionally, roof beams of houses were marked with etched *Gromoviti znaci* symbols (literally "thunder marks") to ward the home from ever being struck by lightning. Whether the tribe adopted these symbols or created them in the first place is likely to always remain unknown, but a Storm Lord knows she's not far from allies if she sees one of these geometric runes on a wall, a roof beam, scratched into a car's paint job or even on a letterhead.

In the wilderness of the hilly German mountains that border Austria, the few Forsaken packs leading a losing battle against overwhelming Pure numbers have a ritual they take with grave seriousness. It also shows the depths of their degeneration, and their commitment to doing all they can to hold onto their territories. Any Storm Lord who kills one of the Pure is ritually marked with a scar fetish in the shape of a stylized lightning bolt, from elbow to wrist. Each of these is referred to as a *Donnerschlag* — Thunderclap — and the oldest veterans barely cling to their Harmony as they tear through the ranks of the Pure, always seeking to add more scars to their forearms.

The leader of these wild, desperate packs is chosen at a midwinter festival every year — whichever werewolf bears the most *Donnerschlag* becomes the *Donar* of the packs, and wins the right to have all orders obeyed for the coming year. The current *Donar* is Donar Tesse Brandt, who has held the position for nine years. Her arms are a mess of scars, with 36 lightning bolts crisscrossing her forearms like a tangled nest of red snakes. A *Donnerschlag* scar bleeds when a werewolf loses herself to Frenzy. Donar Tesse Brandt's arms bleed constantly, no matter what she does.

In Australia, a small (but nationwide) lodge is led by a reviled soul known as the Namarrkun. The Namarrkun leads a pack of Storm Lords — one of each moon sign — and for the last 10 years has ranged across the southern continent demanding that all Storm Lords do the same. To mix with other tribes is to dilute the strength of the *Iminir*, he claims. No other tribe is as noble or worthy as the Storm Lords, and to pack with members of the lesser tribes is opening oneself to potential weakness: a weakness others will see, and a weakness that shames every Storm Lord responsible. He insists he is blessed by Skolis-Ur for his adamant refusal to pack with the lesser tribes, and displays power over snow, storms, thunder and lightning that lends a terrifying weight to his fanatical claims.

No other werewolf in known Australian history has been remembered with as much awe and fear as the Namarrkun. His real name is unknown — the title given to him is the name of the lightning god within Aboriginal mythology.

A civil war rages between the Storm Lords of Australia, though it touches only those who encounter the Namarrkun's scattered packs. All-Lord packs battle other Forsaken in an attempt to force the Storm Lords present into leaving their packmates and joining the Lodge of Namarrkun, for initiation into their secret ways and an all-*Iminir* pack. The conflict has many names, with 'kin war' or 'storm war' being the most common.

Some Storm Lords have taken it upon themselves to organize a loose coalition of mixed-tribe packs and keep them informed about the Namarrkun's intentions, so as to coordinate a resistance. The problem is that the Lodge of Namarrkun is estimated at a few hundred werewolves in total, dispersed across Australia, New Zealand and Indonesia. Tracking them down is exceedingly difficult, and a sudden assault by Storm Lords wielding hammers that beat thunderclaps is the only warning many *Iminir* have that their zealous tribemates are after their loyalty… or their blood.

In the monsoon-wracked regions of South Asia, the Storm Lords take the fury of nature and its spiritual resonance with an even greater seriousness than others in the tribe. These werewolves fast for extended periods during the monsoon season, performing curious rites that allow them to eat only the ashes after ritually-prepared fires. They do this throughout the storm season, yet never seem to suffer a depletion of strength.

During this time, packs across Pakistan, India and Bangladesh will find their Storm Lord members often become more 'in tune' with their auspices, almost as if they were becoming prototypical avatars of their moon sign's nature. Rahu plan battles with the rumbling patience and suppressed tension of the distant thunder before a storm breaks, then fight with the savage speed and bright anger of lightning bolts, doing all they can to kill their prey as fast as possible, often resorting to striking the same place repeatedly on an enemy's body to inflict the most direct and punishing damage. Elodoth and Ithaeur deal extensively with storm-, nature-, weather-, rain and cold-spirits, making fetishes (and swearing secret oaths) with these beings away from the watchful eyes of their packmates. Irraka spend weeks unseen by their friends and families, stalking the cities and the wilds alone, appearing without warning when the pack is attacked, or to deliver a crucial piece of information about enemies within the territory. Cahalith divine the future from the voice of the roaring winds and see omens forming in the black clouds; many speak grim prophecies with a clarity rarely seen in Gibbous Moon dream-predictions.

Joining Up

If I sometimes come across like I've got an attitude problem or a chip on my shoulder, it's because to get into my tribe I had to fight as hard as a Talon, hunt as hard as a Hunter and cut a deal as hard as a Shadow — and do it all without complaining. It's not easy getting into the Lords, you know. I try not to let it change me, try not to let it come out as arrogance — I know we're no better than you guys — but if you're ever wondering why there are so few of us compared to the other tribes, you've now got an idea why. Skolis-Ur's got no mercy when it comes to taking new blood. I've heard more than one story about how he's killed Ghost Wolves for failing their initiations so badly.

When a werewolf seeks to join the Storm Lords, the odds are against her from the moment she makes the choice. The *Iminir* have a punishing failure rate because the demands Winter Wolf makes of his children are so severe. The tribe understands this implicitly, as do Uratha from the other Forsaken tribes who get to know the Storm Lords' customs, be it through familiarity or research. It's not uncommon for Storm Lord initiations to involve fragments of the rituals used by other tribes to test potential recruits, combining these elements into a hybrid of incredible difficulty.

In failing the Storm Lord initiation, there's no shame so long as the applicant gave it her all. The tribe often respects werewolves who failed by a moment's misfortune even once the prospective applicant has moved on to another tribe. The Lords are worked so hard in their need to prove their worth purely because the initiation process must weed out those with the potential to show weakness later.

It's often said of Storm Lords that even before they were *Iminir*, even before they were werewolves, they still lived by the oath: *Allow No One to Witness or Tend to Your Weakness.* Well, maybe. But no one is *born* a Storm Lord.

People change. The First Change is about as big a life-changing event as can be imagined. Fresh perspectives change outlooks. Someone could be a royal asshole and a total slacker before his First Change, but once he sees the world as it really is, he may end up with a sudden savage sense of responsibility. People grow into their roles in life — that changes them, as well. It's a classic staple of many stories that a character discovers an untested talent for leadership (despite initial reluctance) or the capacity to feel things and perform deeds he or she had never thought possible.

These are the kinds of events and changes that give birth to a Storm Lord — not the color of his blood or the whims of Fate. Yet two traits are shared by most of the *nuzusul* seeking entrance into the tribe — at least, those with a chance of making it.

It's well-known the Storm Lords value endurance and leadership above all things, but what's 'well-known' is actually wrong. Above endurance, there is defiance — to do more than suffer in stoicism, but to actually feel the passion of anger afterwards and take revenge for the pains inflicted upon you. Above leadership, there is empathy. To lead is easy, to see through the eyes of others — friend or foe — is how to judge an enemy and truly lead allies as they should be led.

Is every Storm Lord like this? No, of course not. The Storm Lords are hardly without their fair share of tarnish. Not every Talon wins a war single-handedly, not every Hunter ghosts through the wilderness as silent as nighttime mist and not every Storm Lord leads her pack like the prototypical *Iminir* alpha. These are tribal ideals, to be lived up to as much as a werewolf is able. To be a Storm Lord, you need to be good, damn good. While the tribe asks for perfection, no one expects it. The best you can do is often enough.

Defiance and empathy remain vital, though. No matter a Storm Lord's flaws, if he shows little of these traits, if these traits aren't present in his character, then his tenure in the tribe is likely to be a short one.

Defiance

Beaten and bloody, Eddie knew he'd failed. The spirit had him on the ropes, his fingernails were bleeding dark red, and his skull smacked into the wall behind him, and he couldn't even summon the strength to assume another form. So it was over. And it was a good death. He'd killed a dozen of them. His friends were gone, safe now. This was a good death. No, he grinned with blood-pinked teeth — this was a great *death. Worthy of the sagas.*

Then the spirit laughed. It was the laugh that changed everything. Eddie's blood boiled as he readied the iron bar in his trembling hands.

'Oh, fuck you*…'*

An unwillingness to give in is crucial to the Storm Lord mindset. The tribe admires nothing more than the ability to take everything the world can throw, and to stand tall throughout. But beyond simple endurance lays defiance. A true Storm Lord will not just suffer in silence; a true Storm Lord gets mad and gets even.

Depending on the circumstances, werewolves of the *Iminir* gain more renown and respect from their tribemates even if they lash out in rash reaction seeking revenge, rather than enduring quietly and planning a delayed vengeance. *The Legend of the Warrior Al Altan* is a perfect example of this. Ancient Mongolian tales tell of a soldier in the 1200s who was claimed by a demon when his family is threatened.

In truth, Al Altan was a Storm Lord Cahalith who rode alongside Batu Khan of the Blue (and later Golden) Horde. Of all Batu Khan's warriors, Al Altan was the fiercest, and he still managed to conceal his true nature from many amongst his clan and the army he led.

Al Altan was almost crippled by a sorcery-poisoned arrow in the back, which inflicted damage even his Uratha blood couldn't regenerate and reduced him to a lifetime of hesitant limping. The Storm Lord learned to guide his horse without the use of his legs, and trained to master the bow over sword and shield — since his balance was ruined after his injury, his skills in the melee of horseback warfare were limited.

Three years later, he suffered horrific scarring and nerve damage from being burned by flaming arrows that set his robes aflame. Although he regenerated most of the damage to his flesh, he was left weak in body and prone to painful spasms. Thus his aim was ruined. When his fellow warriors (as well as his tribemates) looked upon him with pity, he ignored them all and trained his still-functioning right arm to hurl the spear as far as any other in the army.

Al Altan died at the age of 40, while 'possessed by a demon.' To the Storm Lords, such ferocity was born of the warrior losing himself to his Rage, but the human witnesses had no such information to hone their perspective. When his camp was attacked, Al Altan limped out of his tent, spear in hand. He was the only warrior remaining, and as the women and children were cut down, he hurled spears, flaming brands from the cooking fires, clay pots and anything else within reach — each strike throwing an attacker from his horse. When there was nothing left to throw and his anger drowned all care of his dying people learning the truth of his nature, he changed to Gauru and leapt awkwardly at any rider who came within reach.

By the end of the battle, he had killed more than 30 men, and was only finally brought down when three riders lanced him at the same moment in a coordinated attack. Even after death, even after *losing* the fight for his life, Al Altan inspires his tribe. In some parts of East Asia, variations on his rumored last words are still spoken as a curse to great enemies. *'You live only because I am too tired to kill you.'*

Empathy

Garrett looked at his packmates. Only an hour before, they'd seen him slay the ugliest murder-spirit any of them had ever seen, then bring Cassie back to life by CPR. He looked around and saw them looking back at him. They wanted another miracle. They wanted another miracle, or they were all dead.

Elliot wanted to fight. Elliot always wanted to fight, and he wasn't going to take any other option this time. He was a Talon; he was made for moments like this. Joanna was an Irraka of the Hunters. She could vanish into the city like she'd never been born, and Garrett knew she wanted to right now. Charles was like Garrett — the alpha knew the other man's thoughts were on his wife, just as Garrett's own had been fixed on getting back to Cassie when news of the Pure assault on the city had filtered through the packs.

He weighed up their options, and made his decision. "We follow Joanna to Charles's house, where we get his wife and get the hell out of the city. Jo, we need to go the blackest, darkest ways to get there — through this world and the next — but we need to get there fast." Before Elliot could murmur his disappointed growl, Garrett turned to him. "Remember that Talon lodge you crossed back in October? The ones in the next town over who said they'd only speak with us again if you beat their best in a duel?"

Elliot nodded. Garrett continued.

"The time's come. We need their help, and that means you need to fight like you've never fought before."

Elliot was silent for a time, then said, "I'll need my father's sword. It's at my apartment."

Garrett shook his head. "I've seen you slay demons without it, my friend. And I'll see you beat your tribemate senseless tonight without it as well. If I didn't think you could do it, I'd choose another, easier way. Our lives ride on the outcome of that fight, El. And I know you can do it. Now… everyone ready?"

Everyone nodded, and the pack moved like hounds snapped at their heels. Now they had purpose.

Great leaders rely on a combination of charismatic charm, intelligent decision-making skills, careful planning, palpable authority and obvious competence to lead those who would follow. Any of these elements can be missing, so long as others are amped up to compensate. Whether the result is an efficient tyrant, a benevolent democratic ruler-by-committee (or more likely somewhere in between), the job still gets done. People obey.

The Storm Lords know all this, and they still look for more. A leader rising from the ranks of the *Iminir* must also be able to see things from others' points of view. Perception determines the reality we see, and the one seeing things from all angles is the only one who sees the whole picture.

To this end, it's common for Storm Lords to spend a great deal of effort getting to know their packmates on a personal level, paying attention to their fellow werewolves not out of a manipulative desire but from genuine curiosity to learn what makes them tick. The same applies for the pack's enemies. The more a Storm Lord leader knows of his foes, the easier it becomes to understand them, predict their actions and ultimately beat them.

It hearkens back to Skolis-Ur's realization that his grief howl harmed his Firstborn kin. Winter Wolf saw how his mourning cry had set fear within their bones when they needed him to be strong, and only because he knew each of them so well was he able to understand their fears. Possessing a similar talent for perception is precious to the tribe sworn to Skolis.

The *Iminir* have an expression for the kinds of werewolves who show great skill at empathy with their friends and foes. To be known among the tribe as *Muhil Kasha* — 'alpha-born' — is the greatest compliment the Storm Lords can pay.

The Sin of Pride

There's a fine line between knowing what's best and just thinking you do. Confidence and competence often go hand in hand, it must be said. But pride is an ever-present threat to many of the Storm Lords, for in their ruthless drive to achieve and survive no matter the odds, confidence in one's own choices and knowledge can all too easily lead to an overabundance of pride.

And it happens. It happens more than the *Iminir* would like to admit. It happens enough that when werewolves of other tribes hesitate to follow one of the alpha tribe, their reasons for holding back are almost always mired in memories of a previous Storm Lord's pride. Nothing turns the other Forsaken away from the *Iminir* as often as Storm Lord pride getting out of hand.

Not every Storm Lord stands tall as the perfect alpha or the ideal example of her auspice. Some just think they do. These werewolves need not necessarily be openly arrogant about their perceived superiority — they just genuinely believe they have it where it counts and their judgment calls needn't be questioned. Some operate under this assumption with a tickle of foresight, a hint of awareness that they're not as competent as they present to others. These are the Storm Lords who will learn soon enough, and are more than likely to find acceptance and forgiveness among their packmates.

And then there are the Storm Lords who try as hard as they can, never realizing that their competency falls short of what they attempt, and exalting themselves above what their achievements deserve. Worse still, hidden among these last werewolves are the *Iminir* who deliberately fake it, claiming glory and recognition for deeds they never performed.

These attitudes need not be fatal character flaws: in some cases, they are mere annoyances to a pack, small personality irritants just like every man and woman possesses. Some Storm Lords even parlay such flaws into strengths, using them to wage political wars against other Forsaken instead of taking their pride to the battlefield. In other instances, when the pride gets out of hand, packs can suffer and die. It's in those events that the Storm Lords lose the respect of their brother Forsaken.

Initiation Rite: The Evocatus

In the days of Roman Empire — and the Republic that came before, during and indeed after — the name *Evocati* was the Latin term for soldiers who had re-enlisted into the legions after serving their allotted time. They were often promoted above rank and the file troops, and released from the menial duties of military life, such as laying roads and raising camps after a day's march.

The Storm Lords have a similar tradition. Werewolves who have served several years within their own tribe and amassed a degree of local or regional respect (at least Honor Renown 3) are treated with great admiration and respect if they then seek to leave their tribe and join the Storm Lords.

In London, many Storm Lords have been known to offend the other tribes by approaching worthy Uratha among the other *Urdaga* and offering them the 'opportunity' to join the *Iminir.* This traditional offering has become something of a citywide tradition, though few other places are so formal with this custom. What usually happens is simple: a werewolf comes to the Storm Lords with the hope of joining their ranks. Most are given a Rite of Initiation as normal. However, if the werewolf of the other tribe is respected enough, his initiation ritual will be the *Evocatus.*

The *Evocatus* relies on a great deal of trust. The applicant must detail the exact happenings of her

own Rite of Initiation undertaken when she first joined her current tribe, which the Storm Lords will then recreate as best they can. The applicant must pass this again, traditionally witnessed by at least one *Iminir.*

Some applicants question this recreation, citing that they have proved themselves in that way once, so they've no need to do so again. Storm Lord custom is unbending on this point: the recreation of another tribe's Rite of Initiation is out of open respect for the other tribe's methods, and designed to honor the Firstborn whom the applicant may soon be leaving. The difference now is, of course, that the *Iminir* ramp up the difficulty to account for the fact the werewolf undergoing the rite is now older, wiser and stronger.

If the werewolf passes the test, the Storm Lords welcome her as an *Iminir Evocatus.* These souls gain no additional Renown for their efforts, and they are not seen as lesser for their means of entry. The opposite is true: *Iminir Evocati* are respected for passing a Rite of Initiation among their former tribe as well as Storm Lord one, and are valued for the perspective they bring to the tribe's ranks.

Initiation Rite: Fear of the Dark

I remember my initiation into the Iminir. *I remember what they said I'd have to do. "I'm not scared of the dark," I told them. And they laughed. Hell, I laughed with them.*

Six hours later, I came back out into the light. No one was laughing then. They sure weren't.

And me? I was just bleeding.

Sensory deprivation is hard to imagine, but there's a reason it's used as light torture by some nations in the world. To be without sense is to be without any connection between the internal and the external. You can no longer affect your environment — or even relate to it or comprehend it — at all. No link between your mind and identity, and the world itself, exists. It is almost impossible to be any more helpless, any weaker.

A Fear of the Dark rite consists of a brutal run through the Shadow to reach the pack's territory. The applicant is taken several hours' distance from the edge of the pack's domain and blindfolded with a ritualistic cloth talen over his eyes. The talen also weakens the werewolf's sense of smell, but does not deaden it completely. The pack leaves him there with the simplest of instructions. *'Remove the blindfold and you fail. Make it to our territory and you succeed.'*

Few Rites of Initiation are as dangerous as this, which is a large part of why the Storm Lords value it so highly. The werewolf has to run blind and get back to the pack's territory, with diminished sense of smell and no real idea of just what lies between him and his objective. Usually, it's a great many spirits, many of whom see the 'handicapped' Uratha as a golden opportunity, and try their best to harm or kill him.

The werewolf is always free to remove the blindfold, which is the real test in these trials. The temptation burns hardest when the applicant has to fight (self-preservation *screams* at him to tear the damn thing free so he can see what he's fighting), but once removed, the talen disintegrates in the failed applicant's hands. The Storm Lords neglect to tell any applicants of this fact, so the ones who expect to cheat and get away with it are in for a nasty shock.

Initiation Rite: The Take-Down

The Storm Lords are, for better or worse, the most political of the Tribes of the Moon. Many of the tribe's members are the kinds of werewolves to work hard in the primitive (but still complex and brutal) political arena that sprouts between local packs in any given territory. For those werewolves with a clear gift or love for this level of politics, the following ritual tests their worthiness for the tribe.

A Take-Down rite also goes by another similarly popular name: the Double-Edger. This is an easy reference to the fact that while the ritual tests the applicant and highlights a pack's strengths, it also reveals a pack's weaknesses, and the end result can be dangerous for the werewolves who sponsored the test in the first place. To be offered a Take-Down as a Rite of Initiation, a werewolf must've earned solid trust from the Storm Lords, above and beyond the usual levels of assurance an applicant to the tribe must give and receive.

The premise sounds simple, yet it is anything but. The applicant has one lunar cycle to create a presentation for the pack he wishes to join, detailing the ways he would harm and destroy them all given the opportunity. After the month is up, the sponsoring pack meets with the potential Storm Lord and listens to what he has to say.

This can go one of two ways: the pack (and most importantly, its Storm Lord members) will either be impressed at the flaws pointed out by the applicant, or they will reply with counter-arguments that quash the applicant's observations and hypotheses.

A successful applicant will highlight several previously unknown ways in which the pack and its individual members were vulnerable in their daily routines, as well as discussing potential weaknesses such

as family ties, the relationships with family members, co-workers and friends and thorough information showing the many ways to strike each pack member physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally. The bans of allied spirits, the weakness of a pack totem, an emotional instability that once drove a leader into the Death Rage… Anything imaginable can be used in this meeting, so long as it's honest.

A pack needs to be prepared to hear all this, and there's a great deal of logic and wisdom in taking all this information on board and using it to strengthen the flaws that the pack had previously let slip.

Packs can shatter the applicant's attempts to point out their flaws, but they must do so with logic and reason, not blind passion or overeager defensiveness. It's likely some of the evidence the applicant presents will have its fair share of flaws, of course. But even so, a werewolf that can claim a truly impressive amount of research and just enough perception to impress the pack is still likely to pass the test.

It will come as no surprise to any Storm Lord to learn that the tribe also turns this ritual against rival packs — even *Anshega* packs — if the sponsoring pack deems it worthwhile. In such cases, the applicant is ordered to present the flaws and vulnerabilities of a rival pack. This is considered a lesser form of the rite, usually offered only to less promising applicants, because it steals the valuable self-reflection a pack can glean from the ritual and is seen as a touch ignoble to send a potential pack member to do all the hard work in targeting a rival pack's weaknesses. That's really something the pack's members should be doing for themselves, and if word reaches other Storm Lords nearby that a whelp was sent to do the pack's own duty, dishonor is sure to fall upon the pack members' shoulders.

Tales of the Iminir

The tribes each tell their tales, with each one swearing theirs are true over all others. Storm Lord legends aren't so different from the myths and stories told by the *Urdaga*, though Storm Lords legends often contain a degree of modesty that would surprise any werewolf who had bitten too deeply into the 'arrogant alpha' cliché. One thing tends to remain the same in *Iminir* tales, though. The heroes usually die. Self-sacrifice runs strong in the tribal mindset, and doubly so within the tribe's tales.

Deed Names

Storm Lord deed names tend to be evocative, first and foremost, and they often come in one of three stripes. The first and perhaps the most obvious are those based on imagery of storms, from which the tribe takes its name. These may sound simple enough ("Thunderous Cry," "Storm's Heart") but it's *Iminir* tradition to attribute such deed names to personality traits and past events, rather than just because a werewolf desires a cool-sounding name. The aforementioned Thunderous Cry, a Cahalith, drew her name from a punishing Rite of Initiation in which she endured the attack of a lightning-spirit and eventually frightened it away with her roar. Storm's Heart, an Ithaeur, is the pack's healer and spiritual backbone, calm as the eye of a storm no matter how the battle's tides twist and turn.

Names based on a storm's aspects are treasured but rare and often only awarded to *Iminir* with great potential. Far more common are the deed names that would almost be casual nicknames if not for their sincerity. 'The Boss,' for example, or 'the Khan' or 'the Margrave.' Storm Lord names are essentially supposed to inspire respect (or at least a moment's thought over why the werewolf earned such a name). In the case of more casual nicknames, most are based on a werewolf's auspice and the role she plays in the pack. Being Storm Lords, this makes an easy and direct kind of sense: they're trying to be the best at what they do, after all.

The Last Tribe

As told by Eddie the Black, Storm Lord Cahalith, 1999 CE

The other tribes argue about who came first, you know that? They actually care. They think it matters. Now, who was last *— that matters. And that was us.*

We were the last, and I'll tell you why. The four tribes were born — the Talons, Hunters, Shadows and Masters — but these newly-named Forsaken ran into a pile of hell and needed leadership. One of the Firstborn turned lone wolf after Urfarah *bought the farm. That was Skolis of the Winter, and he walked his own path away from the other Firstborn and their new tribes.*

But nothing was working. The world was shot to hell, and our new bonds weren't adding up to much. Sure, the Urdaga *did some good, but we were all finding our feet and Father Wolf's two eldest, strongest sons —*

Dire Wolf and Winter Wolf — wanted nothing to do with us. We had the Moon's forgiveness, but the spirit wilds hated us, and so did the Pure. The things lurking in the Shadow hadn't learned to fear us back then, either. They just wanted us dead, and they tried it all day and all night.

The leaders of the four tribes met to speak. Warlords, chieftains, pack alphas, you name it. "All's not well," they said, in whatever language cavemen spoke. "A change must come." And a change did come. These leaders went looking for the most powerful scion of the Great Father who would still speak with them. Dire Wolf hunted with the Pure, so he was no choice at all. Winter Wolf hunted alone, so it was to him they went.

"It's not working," they told him. "The Shadow slays us and the Pure hunt us. We are outnumbered."

Winter Wolf looked at them. "I do not care," he said.

"We cannot do this. The four tribes are failing before we even start."

And Winter Wolf looked at them with lightning in his eyes. "I do not care."

"We are the leaders of the People, and yet we agree on nothing. We need unity. We need purpose."

Now Winter Wolf growled at them with thunder in his voice. "I do not care! Tend your own weaknesses. Your fears are not mine."

The alphas of the four tribes sought to prove themselves to Skolis-Ur any way they knew how. Just as they had with their tribal totems, they sought to hunt Skolis down, out-riddle him, beat him in a great battle and teach him lessons he had never learned. After all this was done, he turned to them all with laughter in his eyes, replacing the anger that had always been there before.

"I still do not care. Play your games and leave me be."

The leaders withdrew, defeated. They had been away from their packs and tribes for too long. Only a single soul remained. To our legends, she is now simply Storm's Whisper. Whatever her real name was is lost to the ages. Storm's Whisper was dying. She had been wounded in the fight against Winter Wolf, and it was taking her a long time to die.

Everything that had worked with the totems of the four tribes had failed with Winter Wolf. Now Storm's Whisper dragged herself before him. Her voice was bitter with reproach. She had nothing left to lose, after all. What better time to rave at a god?

"You should care! The Firstborn are lessened by your loss, but they are weakened most by your fear when they needed your bravery. Urfarah *died and your grief-howl cut the others like a blade of ice."*

"They are weak," Winter Wolf replied, but he was amazed at the dying woman's perception and heard the lie in his own voice.

"It is not weakness to need a pack's unity and live within a pack's strength. That is natural. It is weakness to turn your back on the bonds of Nature and the ties of the soul."

Storm's Whisper was wise for a flesh-thing. Winter Wolf told her so. But she was not finished, and when she finally was, she had won over Skolis-Ur with wisdom. Calling his strength and honor into question, making him see his role in a unified Firstborn pack.

"Return to us. We are the leaders of the four tribes of the Forsaken. We have come to you for answers, for strength. From this moment on, our weaknesses are the past — and so is yours, Great Skolis of the Winter. Hunt with us, we will be your tribe, the fifth tribe, the clan of storms. And we will together ensure no souls we love ever witness our weakness again. We will inspire the others with our defiance and strength. We will catch any friends who fall."

And then the other greatest difference between our tribe and the others came about. We did not swear to a god. The god first swore to us.

"Swear it to me," said Winter Wolf.

"No." Storm's Whisper smiled and spoke her last words, "You first. You were the one who failed. You swear first."

You ever wonder where we get our sense of responsibility from? It runs in our souls from the bond to a god that feels the same way. And we made him feel that way. That's our greatest honor.

Over her dead body, whispered into her dead ear so the spirits would never hear his admission, the second-born of the Firstborn swore to the alphas of the Forsaken. The fifth tribe was formed.

Death of Peg Powler

As told by Righ Rowe, Storm Lord Ithaeur, 1856 CE

You might have heard of Peg Powler as Ginny Greenteeth or just as 'the river hag.' Aye, there's a lick of honesty in that, for she went by an army of names. But to us, she was Peg Powler, and that matters because it was us who put the demon-bitch down forever. It was a war, and I make no bones about it. The thing with old Peggy was that she was everywhere, in almost every river in the whole British Isles. It made her hard to kill. Easy to find, but tough to take down once and for all.

Call her what you will, this green-teethed cunt was a death-spirit that lived within rivers and lured children to their deaths. She used magic, plain and simple, because there could never be any attraction beyond terrified fascination at a skeletal hag with algae for hair and river-moss for robes. Take the ugliest old woman you've ever seen, let her rot for a few years at the bottom of a lake and then you'll have an idea what Ginny Greenteeth looked like. A demoness to rival any other British legend, to be sure.

When children went missing from riverside villages and town, sometimes the bodies would turn up floating in the river, and other times they never turned up at all. Oh sure, there are any number of reasons for little ones to vanish in this world, but Peggy claimed more than her fair share. Packs would call the vicious creature out onto the shore and face her, which left more than a few towns without any guardians at all. Ginny Greenteeth was no pushover, no matter which river she crawled from. Most folks thought she was a local legend, but word spread through the tribe that she was seen up and down the length of the British Isles. With several dozen towns and villages claiming she took a few kids every year from each *of them… You can see how her body count rose to the sky. She was dangerous and she needed to be put down.*

Sometime in the early 1800s, we did just that. Each time Peg was killed by the edge of her rivers, she'd return a year or so later, and each local destruction had no effect on the sightings of her elsewhere in the country. We came to realize, in the summer of 1818, that each incarnation of her was one limb of a greater spirit — and it was the being behind it all that had to die.

Messages and plans raced through the tribe, up and down the country, spread by letter and by howl. It took a year to clear all the doubts, the arguments, the mistrusts and to get almost every Storm Lord in the country on the same page. In the summer of 1819, we struck as one. Can you name any other time a tribe has united like that? I can't, let me tell you.

We descended on the rivers as the moon rose that night. In the Shadow, of course, where she rested between her murders. The Irraka found her. Elodoth and Ithaeur dragged her from the depths with bindings and bans. The Cahalith told her why she had to die. The Rahu struck the first blows. And we killed her, across the country, all on the same night.



Then we dived into the rivers, and chased her dying essence back to the source.

Something happened to us that night. The tribe, I mean. I remember the swim took so long, and we went so deep, that my lungs screamed in my chest. Peg's ghost streamed through the water like sick mist, and we dived deeper to follow, deeper than we should have been able to go.

In some place where Shadow and Hell meet, we hunted the source of the river hag. We found it, and we killed it. But you have to be a Storm Lord to learn the whole truth of what we hunted down there, and why so many packs had missing members when we all surfaced later that night.

It's a night that stands tall and proud in Iminir *history as one of the only times we went to war as one. A grand occasion, even if the sound of screaming underwater still breaks my dreams, and I've not been able to go near a shore since.*

Greenteeth's Spawn

Evil doesn't die that easily. Even with all the lives lost in the historic battle, echoes of Greenteeth's malice remains in the two worlds. The entity known as Peg Powler was destroyed, and the Storm Lords are right to speak with pride about their many battles on that fateful night. But still, echoes remain. The evil was vanquished, yet a lesser darkness remains in its place. Manifestations of Ginny Greenteeth still show up from time to time, clawing their way from rivers in the United Kingdom and luring people to bloody deaths in algae-choked waters.

The Storm Lords had their victory, though it's down to Storytellers to decide in their own chronicles whether the tribe killed an Incarna, an impossibly-powerful Maeltinet, or one of the *idigam* that night. The tribe won, though. The echoes of the destroyed evil are just that: echoes. While it's not inconceivable that the same entity might arise again, it's far more likely that any manifestations of Peg Powler are spirits of negativity taking a form from local folklore, or the last essences of the dead *idigam* showing itself on rare occasions with the pathetic shreds of energy it has left.

Silent Nancy

As told by Wallace Germaine, Storm Lord Cahalith, 1980 CE

Silent Nancy was the greatest hero the Lords ever had, let me tell you. Now there was a girl who never showed her weakness, and if anyone had something to cry about and beg the world to leave her the fuck alone, it was Silent Nancy. The 1800s weren't a great time to be black in America. Shit, even the Forsaken were doing each other in based on the color of their skin. The People are still, well, people, *after all. And back then, people had even more problems with each other than they do now. I know what you're thinking: ain't like it's so shiny now, right? Listen, it was worse then, and that's the truth.*

Silent Nancy lost her tongue to a silver knife wielded by the alpha of a rival pack. It was a lynching, sure as sure. Only a few minutes before, she'd lost her wolf-blooded husband. He was still there in the physical sense — while she was held on her knees and they sliced her tongue from her mouth, her husband dangled from a nearby tree. He weren't kicking no more. That had stopped by this point. Her tears were still going, though. Yessir, they'd not stopped by this juncture, oh no.

So they take her tongue and spit on her. Some versions of this story have them raping her and pissing on her, too. I don't much care for those versions, me. I think our girl had it bad enough already, sure as sure. But through it all, she doesn't change. Maybe the other pack was full of such hot shits that they had some kind of ritual or Gift that stopped her feeling the Rage. I've heard some of the other tribes tell that version, but it's horse-hockey. It steals all the nobility along with the truth.

The truth is that she was pregnant, and not far from dropping the little one. A girl that far along can't risk the Change without maybe messing up the baby. So Silent Nancy took it all, let her husband die and let these bastards rough her up good, sucking it all up to protect her little one. That's a heart, let me tell you. That's strength and that's fucking courage.

They do it, and they go, leaving her to bleed alone and cut down her man. They figure if this doesn't roust out her "nigger pack," then nothing will.

She does it. She buries her love and thanks the good lord her baby is still kicking inside her belly. And she stays. Her pack stays, though one by one, they're taken out in lynchings by the same bastards that took Nancy's man.

A month later, they come back for her. From the spirits, they hear it's Nancy's time, and they come back to end her for good, as well as make sure the little kiddy being born doesn't get to draw much breath in this wide and wonderful world.

They come for her the very night she's pushing the baby out, all alone in the shithouse shack where she and her man lived. As they head in through the door, she's holding the tiny one in her hands, and he's all sticky and bloody and howling up a storm to make up for his mama's silence.

And they start on her slow, all growls and threats.

But Nancy, see, she can't call for help. No tongue, you ken? She's alone, and they've come to kill her and the little one — and there's nothing she can do about it. So when the first of 'em comes and sneers in her face, breath stinking of whiskey and hate, she pulls out her daddy's rifle from under the bed and BANG! Exit one asshole, sans most of his face. That's our girl. Good as gold.

It kicks off the fight, sure as sure. The three left alive pounce on her, and she fights them off as best she can. It can't have lasted long, but I tell you this with a face as straight and honest as a promise made in blood: she won that war. Silent Nancy killed all three of the whore-born assholes that came for her that night, and the only life left in the room was her little lad, wailing on the bedsheets alone with five corpses and the walls all red with blood. His mama (and a soul finer than Silent Nancy never walked the world) died making sure the scum never laid a single claw on her little man.

The baby was found a day later, close to death. The spirits came to us, to sing of new blood in the tribe. A pack of Lords, white, black and any color in between, followed those spirits back to Nancy's shack and found the kid there.

And what lesson do you take from this? Defiance, my friends.

Defiance.

Storm Lord Lodges

Over the course of the **Werewolf: The Forsaken** game line, there's been a lot of talk about cultural and geographical lodges within the various tribes. The brotherhoods (and sisterhoods, for that matter) detailed here are a step beyond the standard Storytellers and players may have seen before. These lodges are rare for a start, and in some instances, their belief codes diverge far from the Forsaken's general outlook.

These lodges are presented with one aspect in mind: to show just how diverse the Storm lords can be and to highlight the various means of either breaking the tribal stereotype or showing it in a new light. These werewolves are still *Iminir.* But they are also something else, shaped by experiences and beliefs few others have shared.

Lodge of the Final Winter

"This is the way the world ends." We found those words written in First Tongue, painted on the wall of a cave in the country we now call Iraq. It was once Mesopotamia, the cradle of civilization. The first of the People lived there, and these are some of the first words they wrote. We were never supposed to forget them, but we did.

Now we've found the words again, we can be ready. The Final Winter is coming, and the world will end in the Apocalypse, the Maelstrom, the greatest storm of all time. Luna herself will fall from orbit, and shards of her stone flesh will rain upon the world like atom bombs. To have the Mother so close will drive us all mad. As the seas rise and the land floods, the humans who still live will die under our claws. We won't be able to help ourselves. We'll be enslaved by our own Rage.

Unless we do something about it before it's too late.

Not all apocalypse cults are founded to hasten the coming End Times or somehow survive them. Some take the other stand, coming into being with the purpose to stop the end of the world ever happening — or at least delay it, if such a catastrophe is inevitable.

There's a third way, of course. A way even apocalypse cults don't often like to consider. If the End is coming hard and fast, and

there's naught to be done to stop it or slow it down so it's the next generation's problem, then there's always something that can be done to make sure the coming catastrophe can be *controlled*, a little. Those fighting aren't battling the End itself; they just need enough room to swing the result so that survival — even for a rare few — becomes an option.

With a little give, a little take and a little infighting, this lodge runs all three paths.

One woman's visions gave birth to the Lodge of the Final Winter. She saw the moon broken from its orbit and pulled toward Gaea by a great evil within the Shadow, and great gray-white shards of lunar rock rained upon the world as the Mother disintegrated in the heavens.

On the night the Cahalith Jennifer Dawnell first saw those nightmares, she took the name Rage-Against-Luna's-Death. Her lodge is open to all werewolves but is filled primarily with Storm Lord Gibbous Moons who either believe her words or share her visions through the use of the Rite of the Sleeping Seer (see p. 179).

The Lodge of the Final Winter operates on a simple premise: *what the Forsaken have done so far just isn't good enough.* What Jennifer is raging against in truth is the Forsaken's failure. She believes the *Urdaga* must try harder, fight fiercer and battle longer to avert the coming apocalypse. If the tribes can be united into the Uratha Nation, so be it. It's certainly worth trying. But the focus is firmly on individual packs; a Winter-seer is a lode of activity and inspiration within her pack. She is the one who drives her packmates on, lifts them up when they're down and does all she can to work them a little harder than they would otherwise try. It's easy to see why most of the members of the lodge are Cahalith; in fact, it's believed Gibbous Moons make up fully half of the lodge's numbers.

This additional impetus can have two results: in rare cases, the Winter-seer is kicked out of the pack for being too much to handle. In most instances, the pack is driven by the subtle and inspiring urging provided by the Winter-seer, and achieves a greater harmony (and a cleaner, less corrupt territory) because of it.

From the outside looking in, one of the most curious aspects of the cult is not the beliefs of its members, but the curious fetishes and rites that all tie the werewolves either to each other, to the lodge totem Dreaming Bear and to the lodge founder Jenny Rage-Against-Luna's-Death. These trinkets and artifacts are detailed on p. 182, and form a powerful focal point for the lodge's unity even with members scattered across North America and Europe.

Ultimately, all that binds the lodge together is a dream, and the faith that arises from trusting the dream is true. But what evidence is there to substantiate this wild claim? Why does any werewolf believe the world is coming to an end with the destruction of the moon? The answer to that is simple: Dreaming Bear.

Recruitment into the lodge is done at the discretion of Dreaming Bear and no one else. Storm Lords, Cahalith or otherwise, whom the totem believes might be potential recruits experience the dream of

the Final Winter as shared by full lodge members. This nightmare of the world shattering in the apocalypse comes several times within a month to the prospective applicant, during which established lodge members (or their spirit allies) will watch the potential recruit to see how her behavior changes — if at all. After a month, the lodge members will approach the dreamer and reveal that the lodge totem has sent the nightmares and invites the werewolf to meet with the great spirit itself. Most werewolves are at least a little shaken by the recurring nightmares, even if they don't see portents within the dream's images, and will agree.

Whether the meeting occurs in a boardroom or the deep wilderness is irrelevant. The only constant is that every werewolf present must taste a drop of blood from each other Uratha, and then perform the Rite of the Sleeping Seer (see p. 179). This requires a great deal of trust between the werewolves, for there's every chance the potential recruit doesn't know the lodge members well — even if they are from the local area they're likely to be drawn from several packs who may never have crossed paths. The tension mounts if such packs are territorial rivals with a longstanding enmity, and such happenings are hardly rare. The lodge and its totem care nothing for such squabbles.

The Rite of the Sleeping Seer allows those involved to share a dream and manifest within it. Within the apocalypse nightmare, Dreaming Bear manifests and makes his case for what portents and omens point to such a future, and then the end of the world plays out before the werewolves' eyes. The key to this already intense experience is Dreaming Bear's explanation. The spirit ties in events of the recruit's own life to the End Times, citing how each miniscule flaw, wrong decision or moment of inaction in the past will build up, joining with the same mistakes others have made, and eventually set about the birth (or is it the resurrection?) of a great *idigam* within the Shadow that has the power to break apart the moon.

Even after witnessing such an event, most potential recruits do not join the Lodge of the Final Winter. Just as individuals don't necessarily see their contributions to charity or global warming as making a difference worldwide, it can be hard for any werewolf to see how her mistakes and actions contribute to the end of the world — or what can be done even if she does believe what she sees in the dream.

The low recruitment rate has led to a sense of elitism among some of the Winter-seers. Their lodge, they reason, is only for those of great faith and the devotion to doing something about the world's dark fate.

Prerequisites: Honor ••, Investigation ••, Wits •••

Benefits: Members are taught the Rite of the Sleeping Seer, as well as taught how to make the Spirit's Dream fetish. Lodge members also gain one free dot in Wits, Investigation and Expression.

The Death of Luna

"We'd warned you for so long, but you never listened. Now the Mother is dead, and her broken corpse burns in the night sky like a hundred new suns, falling ever closer. The floods across the globe, the earthquakes shaking entire landmasses… these will kill most of the world's population. The meteorites made from Luna's body will kill yet more. The rest of humankind will die under our jaws and claws, for the Mother's closeness will drive what few of us remain utterly insane. The world is ending, brothers and sisters. It's time you listened to us."

It could happen. That's the thing; it's really not that crazy. Perhaps a Storyteller is interested in such an event happening as a grim foreshadowing in a secret Shadow pocket realm, where the lodge's nightmares become real. Perhaps he's interested in running with the idea in full and constructing a chronicle based around surviving the End and eking out an existence in a world shattered by the Moon's destruction. But the point is, it could happen. It's probably not too cool to axe a long-running chronicle in this manner without getting the go-ahead from the players first, of course.

How would this pan out? Well, springing something like the end of the world on a pack is definitely throwing the pack members something they're ill-equipped to deal with. Depending on the Storyteller's approach, it might be a good idea to break this into manageable chunks rather than start making rolls to dodge falling moon-meteors right from the get-go.

First, there's the chance the characters learn something about the coming apocalypse and actually have the chance to prevent it. Tie this into their backstories or previous chronicle events — likely something linked with a mistake in their past or an old enemy that escaped their clutches. The idea isn't to frustrate them, but to highlight the awakening of the moon-killing *idigam* is tied to the local dealings of every pack in the world. Perhaps

it's not too late for the players' pack to put their mistake right, and encourage others to do the same. It could weaken the rising *idigam,* and lessen the horrors to come. **Werewolf: The Forsaken** is primarily geared toward local-style play, with the characters' actions directly affecting their hunting ground and the territories adjacent. It's cool to run with that, even in events as literally world-shattering as these. After all, the story is still about the characters and how they deal with this.

Once the preliminaries are settled, the Storyteller might still choose to have the *idigam* rouse itself within the Moon and break Luna apart from the inside. This could be tied into something as 'pedestrian' (the term is used relatively here) as a NASA-planned moon-landing uncovering something ancient and evil, or it could be an event occurring entirely within the Shadow, and the aftershocks tear Luna apart in the physical realm. What matters is, when the Moon breaks, the Earth goes to hell. Natural disasters ravage the planet, and most of life on Earth is snuffed out in mere hours.

The most immediate and local factor affecting the characters is that civilization will be effectively destroyed. From now on, the packs that survived will stalk their prey through wastelands with oddly familiar landmarks, and fight over patches of turf in ruined cities. Some fantastic, long-running chronicles can rise from such a scenario, even without the addition of the shattered Moon striking the Earth. Wounds will rend the Shadow; the Gauntlet will crumble in places and become invincibly thick in others. For many spirits (and, it could be argued, the Pure Tribes), this is a return to Pangaea. Humankind has fallen. For some Storytellers, this may well be enough. There's no shortage of violence, horror, excitement and emotion in this broken new world.

For those groups that wish to amp up the potential spiritual fallout of the world's end, there's the matter of Luna's body now resting on the Earth. The Mother is dead, just as the Father. The Forsaken's forgiveness is withdrawn, and many of their powers are stolen. The spirit wilds are filled with creatures that sense the *Urdaga's* weakness and now believe their victory is at hand after centuries of fearing the Forsaken. Werewolves are now born without an auspice, or come into their powers under a constant, unchanging 'dead moon' sign. Who knows what the first Uratha to Change under a Luna-less sky will become? Will it shatter his sanity or will the First Change warp his body in a fusion of failed spiritual energies? Werewolves have never fully been able to trust the gift in their bloodlines — it has forever been a curse as well. What will happen now that the Moon itself, giver of their gift, is dead?

In craters where parts of Luna's corpse fell, the Shadow is likely to be… unusual. A Storyteller might prefer the lodge's default belief that the shards of Luna's corpse within arm's reach of a werewolf would drive him (and the whole race) insane, perhaps barring some kind of powerful ritual to restore balance. It might be that resisting Death Rage becomes impossible, or the werewolves are trapped in a certain form forever. Of course, it might be that somehow, Luna's death has curious benefits in all this chaos.

Surviving humans will likely avoid such places because of 'monsters' or 'demons,' and these sites may well become spiritual havens for the werewolves, as well as fonts of energy for spirits and *shartha.* For the Uratha, it could be that Luna's grave sites are the only places the Forsaken are able to use their auspice powers and commune with the few surviving Lunes, and it will be these places that packs defend with their lives. For spirits and spirit hosts, well… what could be more appetizing and appealing than the spiritual residue given off from the cadaver of a goddess? Battles in the bones of cities and the hearts of desert wastelands alike will rage over shards of the moon.

In **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, the assumed atmosphere behind the game is that the *Urdaga,* and therefore the characters, are the underdogs through and through. They struggle for their victories, often down, never out. This hypothesized End of Everything darkens that picture more than a little, but the themes of the game can still remain the same. In destruction, there's the chance to rebuild. In the deaths of so many, there're endless chances at forging new lives. A chronicle set in the rubble of Luna's death could turn any way the Storyteller and his players make it, from the reunification of the Forsaken and Pure to the literal end of the world as the Uratha all suffer Death Rage with Luna's corpse so close to them, and their maddened hunts extinguish all human life. How would the characters stop such a thing?

Consider this, though: The eternal, uneasy balance between the two worlds has been broken. Untold damage and death have rained down upon both sides of the Gauntlet. Whole tribes could be decimated, and their Firstborn totems killed. The Mother and Father of the werewolf race are both dead. Mankind's wars, horrors, Shadow-scarring advances… all gone. The spirits that yet survive are establishing their own hierarchies in a Shadow reaved clean of so much past influence from so many sources.

The slate is wiped clean. What better time is there to start over? When will the Forsaken ever have a better chance to reforge their society, their oaths, their relationships with each other, with humanity and with spirit-kind?

Curiously, members of the Lodge of the Final Winter also gain the unique ability to survive on only one to three hours of sleep each day. Any further time spent asleep in a 24-hour period makes the werewolf feel restless and uncomfortable.

Membership: Once within the lodge, a werewolf must work her hardest to ensure her (and by extension, her pack's) actions are above criticism from other members of the lodge. This manifests as a stronger survival ethic and a much sharper, clearer and more forceful devotion to keeping a territory cleansed.

Most Storm Lords of the Lodge of the Final Winter will make overtures to their packs at some stage, seeking to explain their knowledge of the coming End Times and recruit more followers. It is well-known that although Dreaming Bear chooses who will see the nightmare of the apocalypse, many instances exist where a werewolf has had the vision after believing the words of a lodge member and desiring to learn the truth for herself.

An aspect of some horror to many of those who learn of this lodge is the Winter-seers' attitude to the Pure Tribes. Lodge members kill *Anshega* werewolves. Certainly there's an attempt to convert the Pure if the opportunity arises, but when packs meet, a Winter-seer rarely hesitates in delivering a death blow when she sees the chance. When asked why the lodge treads so loosely around 'The People Do Not Murder the People,' the answer from lodge members is always the same: the *Anshega* will be instrumental in bringing about the apocalypse.

This can understandably wreak havoc with a lodge member's Harmony score and create tension between the werewolf and her pack, but such is the cost of total dedication to saving the world.

LODGE OF THE SHADOW'S STORM



This is the story of Kunula Sun-Killer. Kunula came from the Pomo people — a loose cluster of Native Americans who were not truly a tribe. Over a four-year ritual, she drew great magic from the land to take revenge on those who wronged her and her people in the Bloody Island Massacre of 1850. With her power, she sought to destroy whole cities and towns with the power of the storm.

The twist in this tale comes early, for the great magic she summoned — the army of storm-spirits she raised — turned against her. There was to be no revenge against the soldiers who killed her people, as the many hundreds of weaker spirits coalesced into a one almighty gathering storm that broke from her influence and erupted across the Shadow.

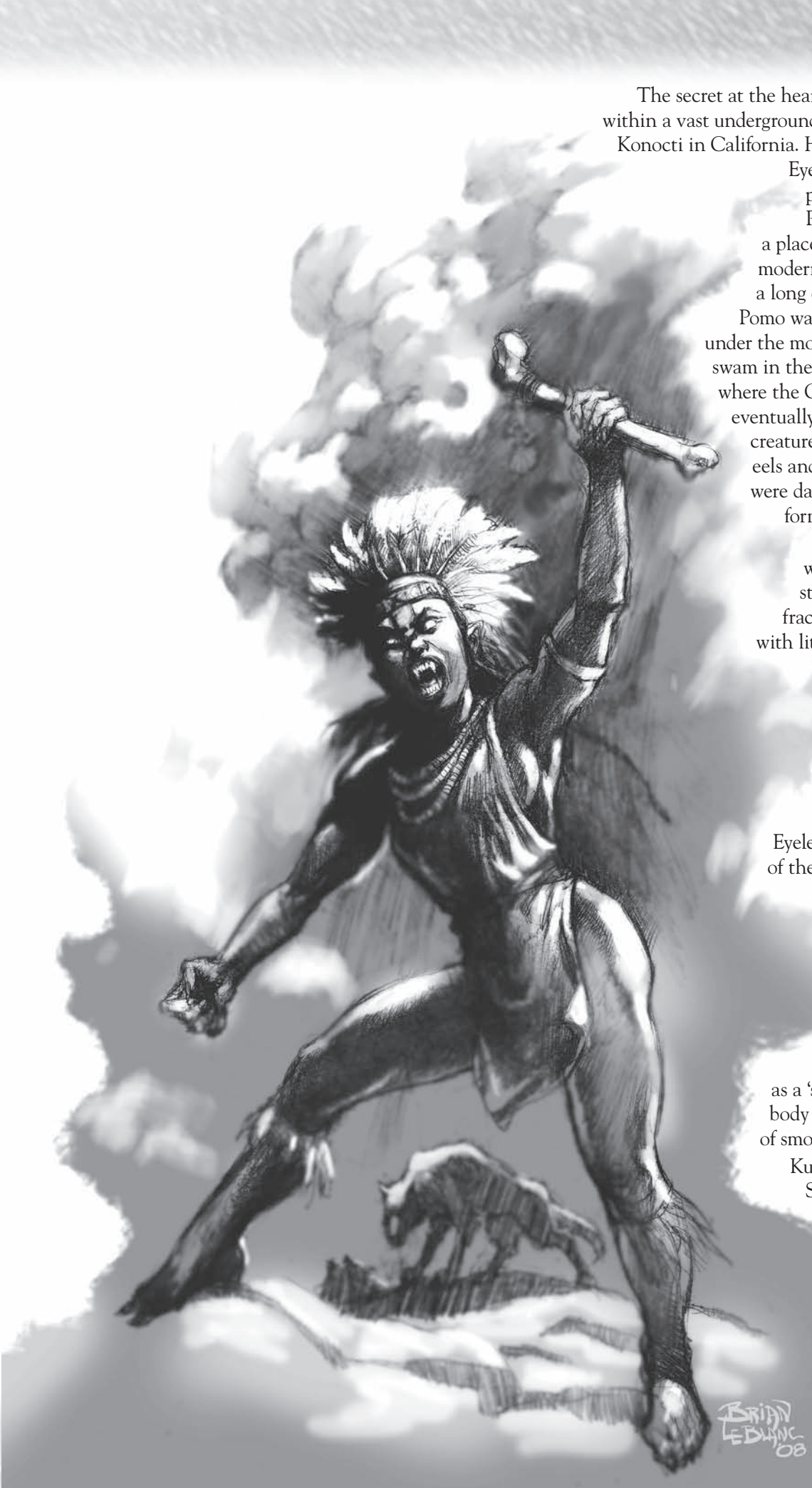
For a year and a day, this storm raged across much of North America with no signs of breaking. Werewolves and spirits crossing from the unaffected physical world into the Shadow were drenched by cold rains and whipped by howling winds. This great storm became known as Kali-matutsi (a spirit of the sky according to Pomo belief) and was seen not as a vast gathering of individual weather-spirits, but rather one great entity. In the angriest parts of the storm, the thunder- and lightning-spirits slew denizens of the Shadow with impunity, turning the beings of the spirit wilds against the Forsaken in ever-increasing numbers.

The Storm Lords sought a way to cease Kali-matutsi's wrath, and they earned a great deal of blame and scorn from the other tribes for the error of one of their own. Kunula earned the name 'Sun-Killer' for her wayward actions bringing about an overcast darkness in the Shadow for over a year.

Finally, the storm broke. Kali-matutsi's anger faded from the second world. The Urdaga *never knew why.*

A few Iminir *did. They are the keepers of a secret never to be told.*

Kali-matutsi was born from a thousand storm-spirits uniting into one. It died — or rather, it diminished — when its separate parts began to break off over time. What remains now serves as the totem for one of the tribe's most secretive lodges.



The secret at the heart of the lodge is found within a vast underground cavern beneath Mount Konocti in California. Here is the Cave of the Eyeless, where Shadow and physical world meet as one. Pomo legend speaks of such a place, as yet undiscovered by modern day archaeologists. After a long drought ending in 1818, Pomo wanderers found a great lake under the mountain where eyeless fish swam in the blackness. This was a place where the Gauntlet was so thin it eventually wore away, and the eyeless creatures lurking down there, blind eels and fish splashing in the water, were darkness-spirits given physical form.

Kunula found this cave with her pack. Her army of storm-spirits was rising, yet fractured and directionless with little cohesion and barely any capacity for obedience. It could not be unleashed as it was, so Kunula followed the trail of Pomo legend for the truth at the end of the journey.

In the Cave of the Eyeless, the subterranean heart of the dormant volcano range, was the spirit of the once-wrathful peaks. The soul of the Clear Lake Volcanic Field was incarnated here, immense and mighty even as it slumbered. Lodge legends describe it as a 'serpentine creature, with a body of ten thousand coils made of smoke and feathers of fire.'

Kunula (soon to become the Sun-Killer) bound the great spirit, shackling it to her will with terrible rituals demanding sweat and

blood beyond anything else she had ever done. This great spirit was then joined to the gathered storm-spirits, and at that moment Kunula's control over the god-like energies crumbled. The wrath of Nature itself ravaged the Shadow for a year and a day, earning her the name Sun-Killer and doing terrible damage to the Shadow across much of North America.

It's a deep, dark shame for the Storm Lords that one of their own caused so much havoc. Merely entering the Shadow became difficult, as the winds repelled those who wished to cross through the Gauntlet. Packs were driven to the edge of madness by the number of spirits blown through from the Shadow on the waves of spiritual winds. Oaths were broken. Territories were lost. Many Uratha died, with the *Urdaga* blaming the *Anshega* and the Pure blaming the Forsaken.

The Lodge of Storm's Shadow hides the truth of this dark event from the other tribes. They also hide the fact that Kali-matutsi still lives, the hybrid of volcano and storm, slumbering in the black depths of the Cave of the Eyeless.

Now they work to keep it from ever waking again.

Prerequisites: Member of the Storm Lord tribe; knowledge of at least five rites.

Benefits: Characters are shown to create a Gusuku Headdress, as appropriate for their auspice, and they are let into the secrets kept by the lodge. They also learn how to perform the extremely rare Rite of the Ruined Tongue — a secret many other lodges would kill for.

Membership: Recruitment into the Lodge of Shadow's Storm is problematic, and has been so since the lodge's birth. For many years, only members of the Pomo people were allowed within the lodge, which kept the lodge at a minute size for decades. Now that the lodge has opened its gates to others among the tribe (by necessity, for there were too few left to maintain a lodge for much longer), its members are still careful about just who they let into the big secret.

The totem for the Lodge of Storm's Shadow is Kali-matutsi itself, though it slumbers and its presence in the lives of those bound to it is little more than a whispered voice from time to time, like the mumbles as a sleeper dreams. Each time someone joins the lodge and swears the oath to watch over Kali-matutsi's sleep, the great spirit slips a little deeper into rest. Each time the lodge loses a werewolf to death or renunciation, the tainted storm-spirit stirs in its sleep and comes that much closer to awakening fully.

Amongst their packs, Stormwardens tend to be among the more spiritually-inclined, with even members of deep-urban packs spending time and effort to make ties with spirits in the Shadow that allow the pack to call upon elements of the weather as an allied force. When a true storm breaks, be it in Shadow or in the world of flesh and stone, one will always find a Stormwarden outside in the rain, staring up at the clouds seeking portents and omens, patterns in the dark clouds.

New Rules

The following section is where the new rules for Storm Lord characters are presented for players and Storytellers to use and abuse at their leisure. These are largely designed as a little extra flavor for characters of the lodges presented in this chapter, but it's not a stretch of the imagination for other Storm Lords (or other tribes, even) to have developed similar fetishes with equivalent powers.

Rite of the Ruined Tongue (••)

The Lodge of Shadow's Storm thrives through the keeping of secrets. This ritual is just one of the many ways in which the werewolves revel in their secrecy, and is a mystic rite many other lodges would kill to learn.

The rite allows a werewolf to silence another being, be it Uratha, human or spirit. By performing the ritual, the ritemaster turns the target's tongue thick in his mouth, rendering him unable to speak of a single subject. Any attempts to speak of the forbidden topic result in breathless silence, which turns into choking, which in turn quickly becomes asphyxiation if the speaker doesn't give up his attempts.

Performing the Rite: The ritemaster must possess some item belonging to the intended target. This can be anything from an iPod the character owned for a day to a vial of the target's blood — but it must be something the character has touched and physically 'owned.'

Once this component is obtained, the ritemaster must choose — very, very carefully — the exact topic the target will be denied speaking of. Specifics matter here; something like "The Uratha" or "The Shadow" is too vague for this ritual to cover. Things such as "The Lodge of Shadow's Storm," "The events of the night of September 27th 2005" or "The name of the pack you met last night" are more in the realm of the rite's coverage. Specific topics, narrow in scope.

The ritemaster writes the forbidden sentence on a piece of fresh paper that has been used for nothing else, and leaves both the paper and the component out in the next rainstorm to be battered (and almost certainly blown away) by the elements.

Dice Pool: Harmony versus the subject's Resistance

Action: Extended and contested (the first time and each time the subject wishes to speak of the forbidden subject)

Dramatic Failure: The secret-spirits mock the ritemaster, and the ritual fails catastrophically. Instead of the subject being afflicted by the rite, the ritemaster bears the effects of the ritual himself for a full lunar month.

Failure: The rite simply fails.

Success: The subject is afflicted as intended, and the effects are permanent. Every time the target wishes to speak of the forbidden topic, he must first pass the Resistance versus Harmony roll. If he fails the roll, his awkward silence becomes wracking chokes that reduce all dice pools by 1 until he stops trying to speak of the topic. If he continues (tries to roll again in a following turn) and fails a third time, the ritual closes his windpipe, causing the effects of asphyxiation as detailed in the **World of Darkness Rulebook**.

All negative effects cease the moment the subject stops trying to break the mystically-enforced silence.

Exceptional Success: As with a success, though the Harmony roll against the subject gains a +1 bonus the next time a roll is called for.

Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
+5	Subject's blood was used in the initial rite.
+3	Subject's body matter was used in the initial rite.
+2	Subject's treasured possession was used in the initial rite.
–1	An unmemorable or disliked item was used in the initial rite.

Rite of the Sleeping Seer (•••)

This ritual allows the Lodge of the Final Winter to dream what the lodge members believe is the coming end of the world. Once the ritual is complete, those involved fall into a mystic slumber and meet in a shared dream of the End Times, as described on p. 173.

Performing the Rite: The ritual begins with the ritemaster ritually blessing a chalice of rainwater with a few chunks of soil and a drop of blood for each dreamer sharing in the experience. As the ritemaster's blood drips into the murky water, the werewolf speaks the name of every soul present who will be sharing the vision. This rite does work on non-Uratha, though only wolf-blooded humans may enter the joint dream (non-werewolf characters must at least have the Merit: Wolf-Blooded to be involved).

Once the chalice is blessed, each character present takes a sip from the foul-tasting liquid, and falls into a light trance, entering the shared dream.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The ritemaster's dream fails to imprint as intended within the minds of those who shared the ritual drink. Instead, the mind-link is unstable and chaotic, though still present in some form. For a month's duration, each time the ritemaster dreams as part of her natural sleep, there is a small chance one of the characters present at the failed ritual 'seeing' the ritemaster's dream in her own slumber. Characters experiencing the ritemaster's dreams in this manner are unable to affect what they see in any way, but it's an eerie, curious (if totally accidental) way of seeing inside someone's head without that person ever knowing.

Failure: The rite fails, though the ritemaster is free to make another attempt after the following moonrise. The characters who were to be involved may suffer potent dreams and nightmares for a few nights, but there are no concrete aftereffects.

Success: The rite is successful, and the affected characters enter a light trance. To wake from the trance, characters need only pass a Willpower roll, spend a Willpower point or wake naturally as the ritemaster ceases the dream. Unbroken, a dream can last until the next sunrise, be that an hour or 20 hours away. During the dream, the ritemaster has no direct control on the way time passes, but some werewolves have reported 'living' within a dream for several years, even if only a single night has passed in the real world.

Within the shared dream, each character may act independently and has the same stats and traits as in the real world. Any characters dying in the dream wake immediately in the real world completely free of injury. Any new traits bought with experience points, new derangements or Harmony losses (and gains, for that matter) are all lost upon waking, left behind as echoes of the dream world. Such details belong to the characters' potential futures, not to them themselves.

While in the dream, characters will experience the end of the world as described in the Lodge of the Final Winter's write-up on p. 173.

Exceptional Success: As with a success, but the characters' dream-selves are preternaturally resilient in the shared vision. Each character adds +1 Stamina for the duration of the dream, usable only in the dream-state.

To the Cannon's Mouth (••• or ••••)

Different Storm Lord packs perform this rite for different reasons: some use it as part and parcel of initiation. Some use it as a test, others as proof of a werewolf's obvious authority. Finally, packs may use this rite as punishment, a watermark of one's worth… or his worthlessness.

In this rite, a pack tests a werewolf's mettle by running him through a barrage of physical damage and pain. They might beat him with bats. They perhaps harry him like wolves do play, nipping at his heels, slamming him into walls and knocking him down steps. In the city, the pack might bind him to a fire escape and blast him with the spray from a fire hose (if that doesn't sound bad, then you've never been hit in the chest with the water from a fire hose). The test is, can the werewolf suffer the barrage of attacks without an utterance of pain, without a strangled cry or a peep through gritted teeth?

The name of the rite comes from an old Storm Lord tradition forged at sea with the pirates and shipmen of the tribe. The tradition was to march the werewolf up to the mouth of the cannon and then… fire it at his torso. The werewolf would take the brunt. The stories say that some could tighten up their prodigious chests so tightly that the cannonball would bounce off, whereas others dropped to the deck with a shattered breastbone. Whether this story is even true ignores the point of the ritual: not to test how a werewolf can shrug off damage, but how well he can maintain the face of strength in the power of such sudden pain.



Performing the Rite: The ritemaster prepares the target of the ritual by shaving his or her head (one can't conceal the face of weakness behind long, stringy hair). All participants in the rite must mark the target with fingers of blood — some write words or glyphs on the target's naked flesh, others might

simply rub grisly smears of the stuff. The blood can be animal, human or werewolf.

The participants then must do enough bashing damage to the target so that his entire Health pool fills with it. How they do the damage is up to the ritemaster: a gauntlet of tire irons, shotguns firing off bean bags, choking, whatever. The target must not show any kind of weakness. He can run, he can try to escape the damage (though the rite cannot be fulfilled until he suffers all that he can suffer, but some ritemasters will demand that the target flee as prey would during a hunt). But his face must not show moments of pain, and he cannot cry out or make any kind of utterance revealing his suffering. (Storytellers might demand that the target succeed on a Resolve + Composure roll; failure on this roll means the target shows weakness, but can negate that by spending a Willpower point.)

Performing bashing damage against the target is the ••• version of this rite. The Storm Lords do have a •••• version, however, and this version requires that the damage be lethal — either lethal from the get-go, or bashing made to turn to lethal. This is obviously more dangerous, pushing the target closer to the edge of death to test his strength.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (a number of successes must be met equal to the target's total Health score; each roll represents 10 minutes of pain delivery)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes are lost. The subject must roll for *Kuruth*. The ritual must be reattempted another day.

Failure: No successes are gathered toward the total.

Success: Successes mount toward the total. Once the total is reached, the rite is over and the pain can stop. The target has hopefully proven his mettle. If he did not show weakness during that time, he gains a rather potent benefit upon healing all the damage suffered. For a number of days equal to the werewolf's Primal Urge score, that werewolf becomes immune to the type of damage suffered (if the three-dot version was performed, he becomes immune to bashing damage, and if the four-dot version was performed, he is immune to lethal). If he *did* show weakness, however, the target suffers a punishment, instead. Once the damage from the rite is healed, the target suffers greatly from damage taken for a number of days equal to *twice* his Primal Urge score. During this time, bashing damage becomes lethal, and lethal damage becomes aggravated. Aggravated stays as is, being at the peak of preternatural damage.

Exceptional Success: As above, except all participants gain a Willpower point. The ritemaster gains two.

Blindwolf Cloth (Talen)

A Blindwolf Cloth is a talen created for a Fear of the Dark initiation rite. The talen usually smells pungent, for its creation involves a piece of white cloth left out in a storm from the start of rainfall to the last drop, then dried by incense smoke. A smoke-spirit is bound within the cloth, and the blindfold disintegrates into ash the moment it is removed from around the initiate's eyes.

While worn, the Blindwolf Cloth completely blinds a character and imposes a –1 die penalty to any perception rolls involving the wearer's sense of smell. However, a character wearing one will find that the talen changes shape to fit them in any form, and provided they are wearing it as part of a Storm Lord initiation rite, the Blindwolf Cloth provides an additional dot of Willpower to be used during the Fear of the Dark ritual.

Kin Caller (••)

Poets know that blood calls to blood. An *Iminir* poet of the Romantic era created the first of these fetishes for himself, and since then, they have become a common sight throughout the tribe. This fetish is a choker or a collar worn tight around the neck, usually made of leather. In creating the Kin Caller, a werewolf must have drops of three relatives' blood touch the material (no more than the tiniest drops are required) and bind a blood- or love-spirit within the item to seal the deal.

When the fetish is activated, the werewolf wearing the Kin Caller can howl, shout or cry out in any form, though it can be no more complex than a single concept or word, such as a place or a name. To all within the two worlds, the howl will be silent. To anyone related to the character by blood (or whose blood was used in the creation of the fetish), the howl will be audible so long as he is within a five-mile radius of the werewolf. Further than five miles away, and the reception of the howl becomes unreliable. A perception roll is required to hear the howl between five and 10 miles away. On the plus side, the howl can be heard in both worlds, breaking through the Gauntlet when the fetish is used.

These fetishes are most often used so family members and lovers can find the werewolf in times of stress or danger, but the fetishes are used by

some packs as beacons to find one another, allowing howling with no enemies hearing what is being conveyed. Unfortunately, this is not an option for packs larger than four werewolves, for it requires the blood of three other souls to create the fetish, no more and no less.

Action: Instant

Storm Rune (• to •••••)

"When ol' Ragnar tells you his hammer cracked a mountain, you better believe what he says. A hammer that splits a mountain in two would make short work of your skull, boy."

— Ragnar the Red, Storm Lord Rahu, 902 CE

Much like the rest of the weapons of the Forsaken, Storm Lord weapons come in two types: plain and useful, or ornate and useful. When your life is given over to fighting a war every night, no werewolf would make a pretty blade with no use whatsoever on the battlefield. Instead, beautiful or hideous, every Forsaken weapon has a use. Some lament the weapons' lack of craftsmanship, though, and some Storm Lords turn to a traditional method of making their weapons a little less uninspired-looking.

Storm Runes are the *Iminir's* way of putting even plain and uninspiring weapons a little closer to the realm of the ornate. The Storm Rune is also the fetish largely responsible for some of the tribe's most famous weapons: the Jarlhammer of Ragnar the Red and Ellen Ragnarsdottir, the saber of Al Altan and so on.

A Storm Rune is an enhancement to an existing weapon (fetish or otherwise) whereby the creator etches a stylized lightning bolt into the weapon's surface. These symbols are not the simple zig-zags of a child's drawing but a stylized representation often reflecting ancient cultural art or a personal vision of the essence and power contained within a storm's rage. In some cases, it might be a long spiral from a blade's hilt to tip. In others, a short poem about the fury of the heavens, written in tiny, delicate script along the length of a staff. Sometimes, of course, a bolt of lightning is just a bolt of lightning, but these are seen as the creator lacking imagination as well as talent. Utilitarian, yes. Worthy of respect, no.

Each Storm Rune inscribed upon a fetish weapon makes the fetish one dot more expensive, up to a maximum of five dots (a one-dot weapon with four Storm Runes). Each Storm Rune can either add +1 Strength to the attack roll on the turn the fetish is activated, *or* the Rune subtracts one from the foe's Defense on the turn *following* a successful attack. The effect must be chosen at the time of purchasing Storm Rune, but a weapon can feature a mix of these effects. (A five-dot Rune-inscribed weapon could grant +3 to Strength on the attack roll when activated, then also subtract –2 from the foe's Defense on the subsequent turn if the attack roll was successful.)

A spirit of lightning, storms or thunder is bound into these runes.

Action: Instant

Rune Stone of Balance (•• or •••)

Leading by example is an ideal close to the hearts of many Storm Lords. The ever-present threat of Death Rage simmering beneath the surface of every werewolf is a terrifying loss of control for any of the Uratha, but it is an awful sign of weakness for some of the *Iminir's* most devoted members, who can lose heart and faith in themselves if their packmates are forced to see even one of the Lords lose control over his own mind and flesh.

Rune Stones of Balance are created as a way of helping maintain control against the onset of *Kuruth*, by binding a calming spirit of earth into a fist-sized rock. When activated, these fetishes spread cooling calm through the blood of the Storm Lord, quickly easing the lava heat in his heart and the burning red streaking across his vision.

Upon activation, a Rune Stone of Balance offers the character a +2 bonus to Resolve + Composure rolls in order to resist Death Rage. A three-point version of this fetish exists, which increases the bonus to +3, and triggers automatically if the Storm Lord falls into *Kuruth*, offering the character the bonus on his roll to regain control. The three-point version also offers the character a single point of Willpower once a week, usable so long as the character's feet are in contact with the ground. Tarmac, sidewalks and any other artificial human-made surface are still appropriate for the purposes of the weekly Willpower point.

Action: Instant

Spirit's Dream (• to •••••)

Some fetishes are created not for battle or even with a particular beneficial use in mind. Some are created purely out of curiosity, and any potential uses for the items are discovered after the tool is completed. A Spirit's Dream is one such fetish, made by the Storm Lords of the Lodge of the Final Winter and then spread among the rest of the tribe — even to Irraka and Ithaeur of other tribes, who may sometimes find the tool has some fascinating applications.

A dream-spirit (not always easy prey in itself) is bound into a piece of clear stone, such as quartz or crystal or diamond. The fetish can be created with a shard of glass, though it is notoriously difficult to persuade a dream-spirit to enter such an item.

A Spirit's Dream is activated by a werewolf within arm's reach of a spirit in Slumber, or otherwise inert, such as shackled by a rite or bound within a fetish. The spirit cannot be resisting (or even mobile) in any way, or the fetish will fail to function. Once activated, it allows the werewolf to experience several moments of the spirit's own dreams. The duration is based on the power of the fetish, with each dot allowing a further 30 seconds of perception, during which the Uratha sees the dreams as though she were seeing through the spirit's eyes. The fetish's rating also determines the rank of the spirit that the fetish-user is able to 'pry into,' with one-dot Spirit's Dreams allowing a werewolf only to see into the lowest-ranked spirits, and five-dot fetishes seeing into the dreams of Rank 5 spirits.

A spirit's dreams are not the dreams of a mortal. A werewolf is likely to look into the very *essence* of the spirit's concept, reliving moments where the spirit has acted out its core nature or important moments in the spirit's existence such as when it devoured other spirits and grew stronger. For some packs, this can be a fascinating look into the psyche of a Shadow-being. For others, it can be an insidious way of learning about a type of spirit, or exploiting a particular spirit's ban.

Action: Instant

Guksu's Headdress (•••)

On the surface, a werewolf holds in his hands a tattered headdress of feathers, pebbles on strings, dried leaves and old leather. Not too pretty, and certainly a far cry from the majestic Native American headdresses worn by ranking tribesmen so long ago.

A Guksu Headdress is a holdover from previous centuries and used almost exclusively by the Storm Lords of North America, especially among those in whose veins still beat Native American blood. A werewolf must create one using seven different materials from his own territory: wire from a chain-link fence, feathers dropped by pigeons or crows, carved pebbles from a public park now shaped like the face of Skolis, leather from a jacket bought at a local store and so on. The only element that must always be present is the fact feathers must be used, though the type of bird they come from doesn't matter. Once the headdress is created, a raven-, coyote- or lizard-spirit is bound into the fetish to complete it.

Guksu Headdresses were used by Pomo Storm Lords (as well as those in other tribes) to identify auspice roles among the *Iminir.* More than that, the fetishes enhanced the werewolf's abilities to fulfill her duty, and infused her with the courage and willpower to go one step closer to perfection.

The following section details the Attribute and Skill bonuses imbued by the activated fetish, determined by auspice. Upon creating the fetish, the maker (or the purchasing player, if bought at character creation) can choose the Attribute and Skill boosted by the headdress, which remain the same throughout the fetish's use.

Rahu: Full Moon characters wearing their headdress gain +1 to any Physical Attribute and +2 to any Physical Skill on the turn it is activated. Any successful rolls using the enhanced Skill while the Headdress is activated will restore one point of Willpower.

Cahalith: Gibbous Moon characters gain +1 to any Social Attribute and +2 to any Social Skill on the turn it is activated. Any successful rolls using the enhanced Skill while the Headdress is activated will restore one point of Willpower.

Elodoth: Half Moon characters gain +1 to any Social or Mental Attribute and +2 to any Social or Mental Skill on the turn it is activated. Any successful rolls using the enhanced Skill while the Headdress is activated will restore one point of Willpower.

Ithaeur: Crescent Moon characters gain +1 to any Social or Physical Attribute and +2 to any Social or Physical Skill on the turn it is activated. Any successful rolls using the enhanced Skill while the Headdress is activated will restore one point of Willpower.

Irraka: No Moon characters gain +1 to any Physical or Mental Attribute and +2 to any Physical or Mental Skill on the turn it is activated. Any successful rolls using the enhanced Skill while the Headdress is activated will restore one point of Willpower.

Action: Instant

Milestone Gift: Storm's Whisper

Prerequisites: Honor 5, Wisdom 2, Harmony 6 or greater

Honor is a duplicitous thing. Luna is divided by honor: one side of her face is dark and punishing, the other light and rewarding. Those with profound Honor, those within the Storm Lords, must walk the line between those two realms. The proper Storm

Lord is just and generous, and has the authority to dole out rewards, or mete out justice.

This Gift is granted by Skolis-Ur himself in recognition of a Storm Lord who embodies the ideals of his tribe and of Honor Renown. Winter Wolf recognizes the role of arbiter and ruler in this werewolf, and grants his child a measure of judgment.

For some, this Gift is both boon and bane. Once per game session, the Storm Lord imbued with this Milestone Gift *must* select one member of her pack to receive a blessing from Winter Wolf, and one to receive castigation from Skolis. The blessing is a +2 bonus to all rolls, while the castigation comes in the form of a –2 penalty to all rolls. These modifiers last for one lunar cycle, or until the Storm Lord uses Storm's Whisper to select new recipients of the reward and punishment.

How she selects the chosen members of her pack is up to her: she can accept input from the pack, or she can decide in her own authoritative manner. Perhaps she always chooses the lowliest member of the pack to receive the curse and the alpha to receive the blessing. She may not select herself for either of them. Her decisions, however she makes them, are sure to earn her some level of enmity from her pack, but this is by Winter Wolf's design: leaders and judges are not to be loved, only to be obeyed.

Note that this Milestone Gift is named after the legendary member of the tribe, Storm's Whisper (p. 168). When the werewolf possessing this Gift uses it to choose the two packmates, she must whisper in each Uratha's ear to deliver the boon or bane. It's said that her voice is different during that whisper: a sentence delivered not by the Storm Lord but by Storm's Whisper.

As a Milestone Gift, Storm's Whisper is available only to a Storm Lord who performs some great service to his tribe or pack, often heroically demonstrating the skills of a leader or a judge — one who offers only strength and never weakness (see "Milestone Gifts," p. 12). If the character's Harmony drops below 6 after he learns this Gift, he has one cycle of the moon to regain this level of spiritual balance, during which he must perform the Rite of Contrition to Winter Wolf. If the character fails to do this, he loses Storm's Whisper and can never regain it. In addition, he gains a mild derangement as a result.

Tribal Legends

Some names echo down the years and across the world, falling into the collective tribal memory. Every tribe has its legendary heroes and its infamous members. Werewolves such as the Namarrkun, Rage-Against-Luna's-Death, Silent Nancy, Kunula Sun-Killer and Al Altan enter into the *Iminir's* histories as their life stories are told and retold across the world. But they are not the only legends the tribe has produced.

Chronos

Auspice: Elodoth

Tribe: Storm Lords

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 1 (2/5/4/6), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/3), Stamina 2 (3/4/4/3)

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 3 (2/3/0/3), Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics (History) 2, Crafts (Clockwork) 4, Investigation 1, Occult 1

Physical Skills: Brawl 2, Stealth (In the Subways) 4, Survival 2

Social Skills: Animal Ken 2, Empathy 2, Expression (Poetry 1, Persuasion 4, Socialize 3, Streetwise 5

Merits: Languages (French) 2, Languages (Spanish) 3, Languages (German) 2, Contacts (Various Subway Workers) 5

Primal Urge: 1

Willpower: 5

Harmony: 7

Essence Max/per Turn: 10/1

Virtue: Hope

Vice: Envy

Health: 7 (9/11/10/7)

Initiative: 6 (6/7/8/8)

Defense: 3 (all forms)

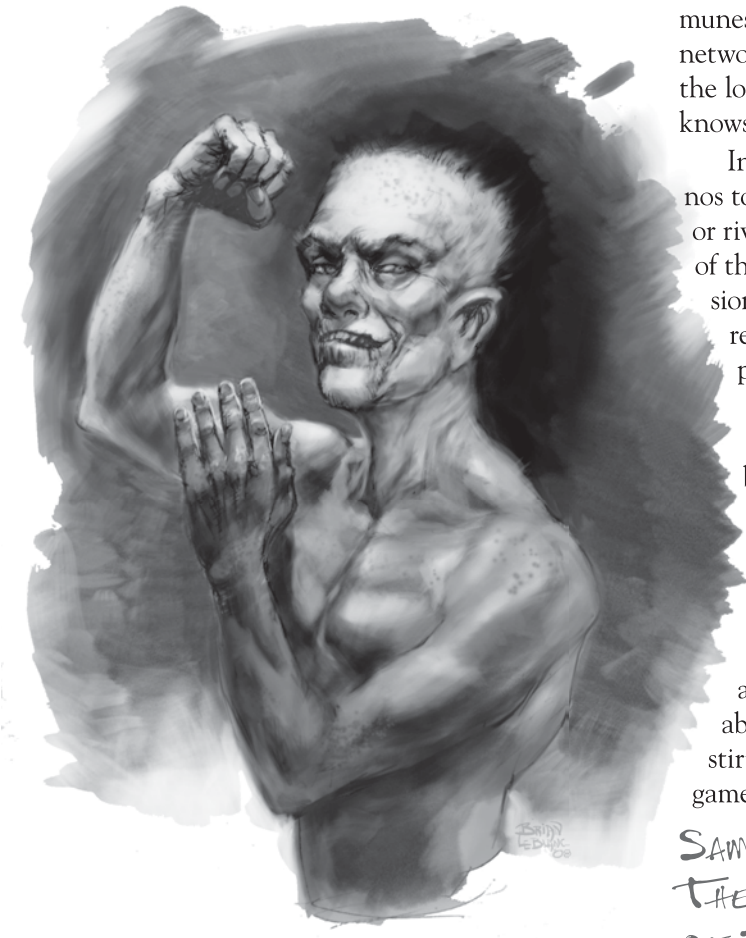
Speed: 9 (10/13/16/14)

Renown: Honor 2, Glory 2

Gifts: (1) Know Name, Sense Malice; (2) Snarl of Command, Warning Growl

Rituals: 2; **Rites:** Banish Human, Rite of Dedication, Rite of the Spirit Brand, Banish Spirit

Frank Lampard always loved clocks, watches, you name it. When he was a kid, he'd get cheap watches of bright and chunky plastic, never digital — a new one for each birthday. He'd need a new one each year since the previous year's gift would have inevitably been taken apart and examined by the time the following birthday came around. Clocks in the house, his friends' watches… no timepiece was safe from his inquisitive nature.



Time itself, and the concept of measuring it, keeping it, tracking it, appealed to him on an intense level even as a young boy. This translated into a brief period of bad poetry in college, but he shook that after a few years.

Exactly where he Changed is a mystery, but it's known it was in a big city somewhere, back in the '50s or '60s. Frank's pushing into his 80s now, and he looks it, but remains gleeful and sprightly most of the time. Sometimes he seems small, shriveled. Other times he flexes old arms and shows off his Popeye biceps. His accent is neutral, but many werewolves are certain they hear a hint of their own local twang in his voice.

He's been seen in practically every American and European city with a subway system, and seems to spend his life traveling between major cities, living down in the subways. What local packs soon come to notice is that Chronos — who earned the name from this very habit — knows absolutely *everything* about the subway systems, right down to the exact time, to the very second, the next train is coming into any station in the city.

But there's more to it than that. Chronos communes with the spirits of the underground subway networks, learning all he can of them. The trains, the loci, the Wounds, the shoals, the *shartha…* he knows it all, in every city he visits.

In several instances, packs have come to Chronos to help plan their battles against Shadow-beings or rival packs, using the infinitely complex Shadow of the subways to strike. On more than one occasion, the lightless tunnels under London have run red with blood as Chronos helped the Forsaken plan their wars against Pure infiltrators.

Time still appeals to him. Rumors circulate that spirits clinging to him in the Shadow can be called upon to warp time itself, though what chiminage could entice a spirit to perform such powers — and why these beings cloak Chronos as they do — is not something the smiling Storm Lord ever speaks about.

Using Chronos in a Chronicle: The guy's a mystery, a cipher, but he also knows too much about most things. Which means he's a great pot-stirrer, the kind of character who can come into a game and deliver new information.

Sample Pack — The Swaggering Rousers of Butcherblock Avenue

Ten years back, the Rousers weren't a damn thing. A trio of weak-kneed whelps with hearts of fire and ice, they had bravado to spare but not the skills to back it up. But the pack put in its time, and went through the trials and tribulations of a domain rife with roughneck Forsaken. They scraped and fought to get a piece, to *prove* themselves, and over time, they managed inch by inch to carve out a territory with broken claw and a mad laugh.

Now, they're among the most powerful and influential Forsaken in the city. They've done more than carve out a niche; they've hacked out a wide berth of territory (no small thing in the nightmare bustle of the city and its Shadow). They're cocky, powerful, with political and physical prowess. To some, they're bullies; to others, they're local legends.

Aye, but here's the problem: they've got eyes too big for their claws. They want more than what they can have (and, some say, more than they deserve). Month after month, they scrape together more territory for themselves. It works, for now. They take down a street gang and swipe the criminals' neighborhood. They string up a cult of Ridden from the

train trestle, thus marking *that* area as their own. They shoulder in on the meager stitch of land held by some wet-behind-the-ears pack of Ghost Wolves.

Their territory grows. Their power swells. Can they handle it?

Using the Rousers in a Chronicle: The Rousers represent potential allies and enemies to a pack in a given city. They're competitive, and sometimes act as bullies; but to those who do favors or concede to the Rousers' authority, they can be powerful friends. If the characters are themselves Storm Lords, they likely both fear and admire this pack. Is it worth it to ease into their good graces with the eventual goal of taking them down?

Kiernan the Killer

Auspice: Elodoth
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 3
Physical Attributes: Strength 3 (4/6/5/4), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 4 (5/6/6/5)
Social Attributes: Presence 5, Manipulation 3, Composure 2
Mental Skills: Crafts (Gunsmith) 3, Investigation 3, Occult 2, Politics 1
Physical Skills: Athletics (Foot Chase) 4, Brawl 3, Firearms (Revolver) 4, Stealth 2, Survival 1
Social Skills: Empathy (His Pack) 1, Intimidation 3, Socialize 1, Streetwise (Gangs) 3
Merits: Fleet of Foot 3, Gunslinger, Totem 2
Primal Urge: 5
Willpower: 5
Harmony: 5
Essence Max/per Turn: 14/2
Virtue: Justice
Vice: Greed
Health: 9 (10/11/11/10)
Initiative: 6 (6/7/8/8)
Defense: 4
Speed: 15 (16/19/22/20)
Renown: Cunning 1, Glory 3, Honor 4
Gifts: (1) Call the Breeze, Scent Beneath the Surface, Wolf-Blood's Lure; (2) Father Wolf's Speed, Silent Fog, Snarl of Command; (3) Deluge, Silver Jaws; (4) Killing Frost

Kiernan the Killer: charismatic brute, gunslinger with a grin, swift shadow with cocky swagger. He's equal parts Wild West showboater and high-school jock, over-concerned with competition (at least with anybody outside his pack) and a bit of a bully. Some would say that this stems from an almost paranoid fear of appearing meek or weak in front of his peers, leading to speculation about some humiliation suffered at the hand of an abusive parent or perhaps some callous demonstration delivered by Winter Wolf. Ask Kiernan, though, and he'll say he won't show weakness because there's nothing to show.

His fascination with competition has pushed him to become somewhat obsessed with the pecking order of the city's Forsaken. Socially, he considers himself at the peak of that hierarchy. Their wide berth of territory gives him that edge, too. But he still knows that the city features bigger, badder Forsaken than himself — and so he longs to take them down a peg, illustrate who's really the cream floating at the top. It's important to note that Kiernan is only a boastful bully before he's beaten someone; then, it's just shit-talking. After he bests an opponent, he's all gestures of kindness and honor, saying nary a bad word about his fallen foe. He'll help her up, dust her off, tell her how well she did. It's only natural that she'd fall to his moves. It's only natural that he'd out-run her or out-shoot her (with his pair of nickel-plated Schofield revolvers). Why insult her over the natural order?

Kiernan's a dark sort, physically — dusty, dirty skin, with black eyes like crooked bits of coal in his skull and greasy black hair slicked back and tucked just behind the ears. The only thing that doesn't carry that veneer of darkness is his grin: broad, smooth and eerily white. More the mouth of a fox than a wolf, some say.

Your Pal Charles

Auspice: Cahalith
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 2
Physical Attributes: Strength 3 (4/6/5/4), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/5), Stamina 2 (3/4/4/3)
Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 4
Mental Skills: Academics 2, Computer 1, Investigation 2, Occult 1, Politics (Deals) 3
Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 1, Weaponry 1
Social Skills: Expression (Humorous) 3, Intimidation (Give It to You Straight) 3, Persuasion (Over a Drink) 4, Socialize 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3
Merits: Allies (Police) 2, Allies (Vagrants) 2, Barfly, Fighting Style: Boxing 1, Inspiring, Resources 2, Striking Looks 2
Primal Urge: 3
Willpower: 6
Harmony: 6
Essence Max/per Turn: 12/1
Virtue: Charity
Vice: Lust
Health: 7 (8/9/9/8)
Initiative: 7 (7/8/9/9)
Defense: 3 (3/4/4/4)
Speed: 11 (12/15/18/16)
Renown: Cunning 3, Honor 3
Gifts: (1) Loose Tongue, Pack Awareness, Warning Growl; (2) Luna's Dictum, Sand in the Eyes; (3) Rallying Cry, Voice of Command
Rituals: 1; **Rites:** Rite of Dedication, Rite of the Spirit Brand

The name is apt; Charles is everybody's friend. He's always there with a joke, a handshake, a booming clap on the back. The way he manipulates people, they don't even know they're dancing on his strings. He makes them feel so good, gives them such a laugh that they think that whatever they're doing, they do because it's what *they* want, not because it's what *he* wants.

Your Pal Charles acts as the public face of the Rousers. Those rare few Forsaken in the city who don't trust him have given him the nickname of "the Diplomat," but that's ultimately too cold a moniker. Yes, he negotiates deals. Sure, he backstabs when necessary. But he always does so in such an easy way, it wouldn't be surprising if his foes *thanked him* for the pleasure. Of course, the reality is, Your Pal Charles isn't all gut-laughs and dart matches down at the tavern. The guy's got a temper. It's hard to hit his boiling point, but when the mercury rises to the top of the thermometer, that shit shatters. A pall overtakes him. He breaks things. He breaks *people*. Laughing all the way.

Always smiling, Your Pal Charles is a lanky sort with a bit of a pregnant paunch — the physical disciplines are not really his to master. A shock of red hair on his head and a nose broken and rebroken a hundred times give him a distinctive look, the wry face of a mad clown, a callous jester.



Frost on Weeping Maple

Auspice: Ithaeur
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 4
Physical Attributes: Strength 2 (3/5/4/2), Dexterity 2 (2/3/4/4), Stamina 2 (3/4/4/3)
Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 4
Mental Skills: Investigation 3, Medicine 3, Occult (Divination) 4
Physical Skills: Brawl 2, Larceny 2, Stealth 3, Survival 1, Weaponry (Found Objects) 3
Social Skills: Animal Ken (Birds) 2, Empathy 3, Intimidation (Spirits) 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1
Merits: Danger Sense, Fast Reflexes 2, Fetish (Storm Rune) 1, Totem 5
Primal Urge: 4
Willpower: 8
Harmony: 5
Essence Max/per Turn: 13/2
Virtue: Faith
Vice: Pride
Health: 7 (8/9/9/8)
Initiative: 8 (8/9/10/10)
Defense: 2 (2/3/4/4)
Speed: 9 (10/13/16/14)
Renown: Cunning 2, Honor 3, Purity 1, Wisdom 2
Gifts: (1) Partial Change, Speak with Beasts, Two-World Eyes; (2) Any Beast, Plant Growth, Read Spirit, Traveler's Blessing; (3) Gauntlet Cloak
Rituals: 3; **Rites:** (1) Banish Human; (2) Banish Spirit, Blessing of the Spirit Hunt, Call Gaffling, Rite of Contrition; (3) Bind Human, Bind Spirit, Rite of Healing

She's a slip of a girl, delicate like the lace leaves of a weeping maple, cold like the frost that forms there. Unlike her other two packmates, Frost never smiles. Her eyes are always steely and half-shut. The only brightness about her is when she's got her animals and plants to tend to (she maintains quite the prodigious menagerie of urban animals and plants, from cats to rats, from hothouse orchids to climbing moonflowers). Otherwise, she's as grim and frosty as one gets.

Which makes her an odd match for the other two lively boys, but she kind of acts as big sister to the other two louts. She takes care of them, cleans up after them, even while dismissing them or disdaining them as the cackling brutes they are. It doesn't hurt that she's grown quite comfortable with the spirits of the domain, at least as comfortable as one can get with such unknowable entities. Some say she spends *too* much time in the Shadow, stalking its shifting alleys and poison streets.

Worth noting is Frost's unshakable stubbornness; when she gets an idea in her head, she locks her jaws around it with the tenacity of a bulldog. The new idea she has is that the pack needs some new blood. Storm Lords, of course, she wouldn't think to roam outside the tribe's obvious strength (they *do* seek to rule the city, after all). But her idea is that they could use two young sorts to inject some fresh blood into the pack, lest the pack members overreach (they already have, but don't tell her that).

Pack Totem: Storm Front Far and Wide

Attributes: Power 4; Finesse 3; Resistance 2
Willpower: 4
Essence: 15
Initiative: 7
Defense: 4
Speed: 17
Size: 5
Corpus: 7
Influences: Rain ••
Numina: Call Water (as the Gift), Material Vision
Bonuses: Intimidation 1 (given); Brawl Specialty (In Rain)

Ban: Whenever a storm comes, the pack must get into a fight and win.

Cost: 7

The totem is a gray blot, a low-hanging fog whose misty boundaries flash with coruscating thunder. The totem speaks in a susurration of falling rain. Storm Front Far and Wide is not aggressive like its pack, but it *demands* a level of aggression, to be sure.



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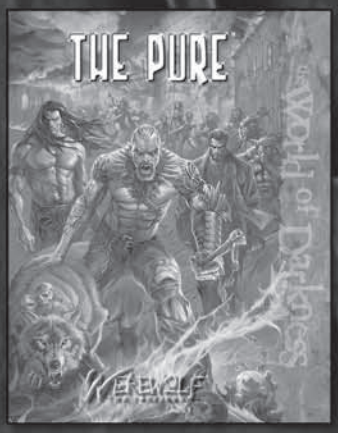
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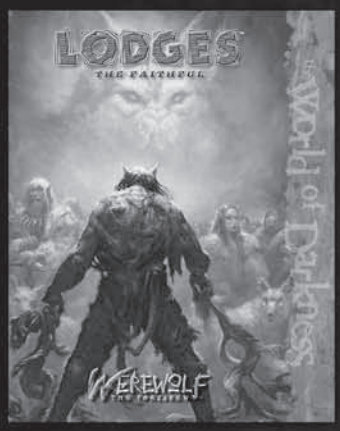
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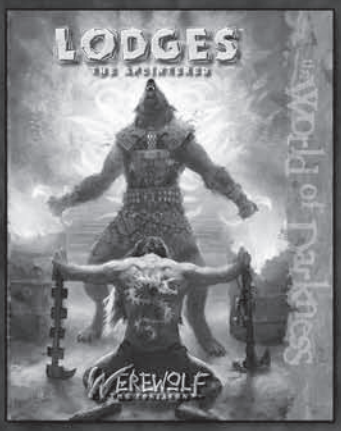
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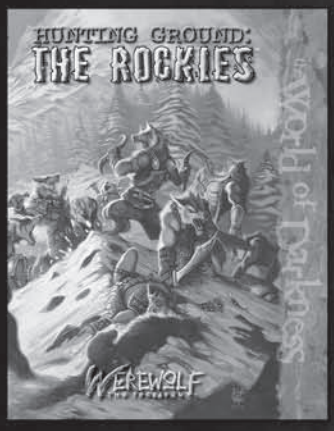
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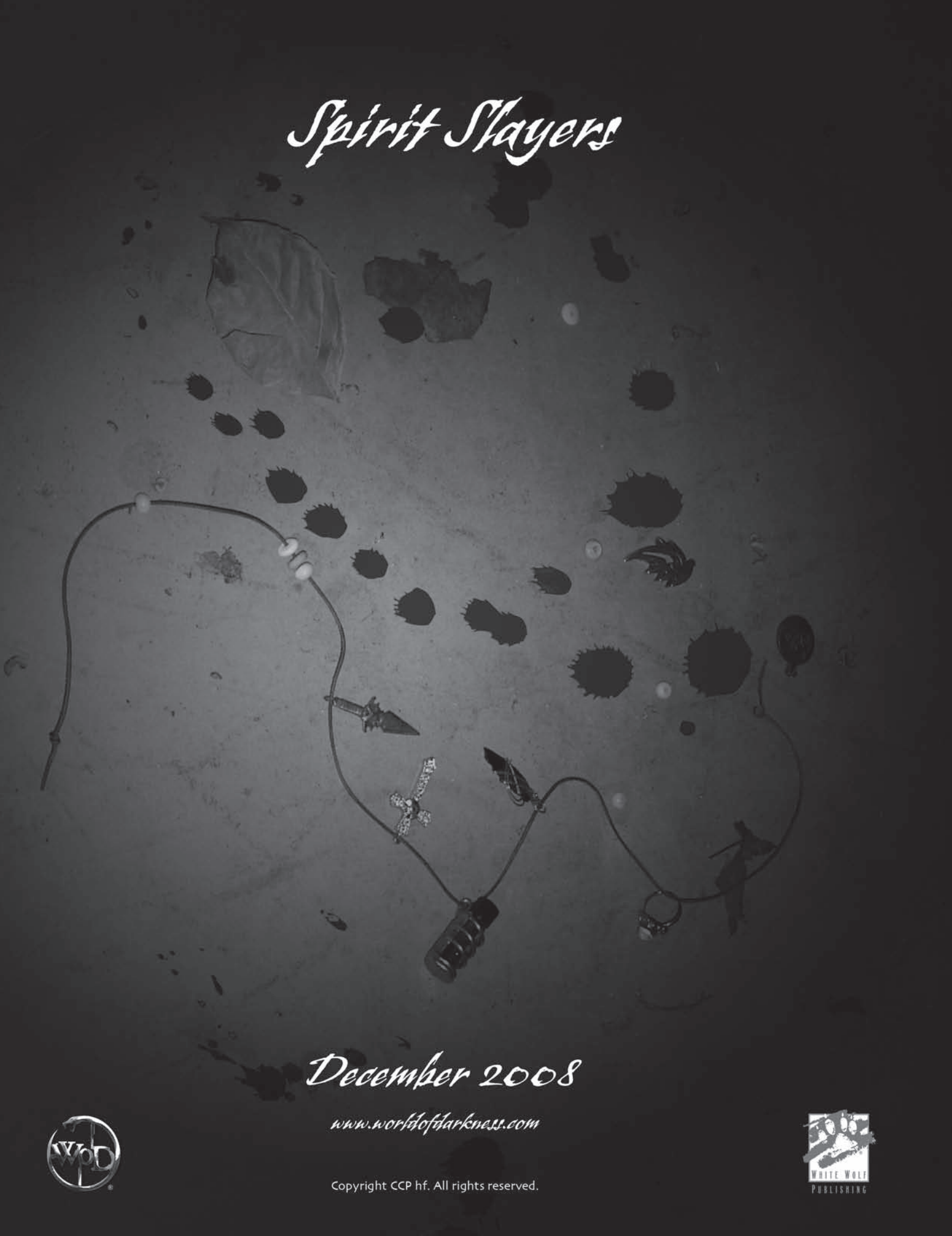
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Spirit Slayers



December 2008

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White Wolf Publishing



"You and me, we're different, but we're the same.
We both honor Winter Wolf.
We both have weakness in our hearts that we'll never
share with anybody, not even our nearest and dearest.
We're both wolves who are men
who are really neither at all.

But you? You're a diplomat.
A long-limbed, pale-faced Nancy.
The way you talk to spirits,
it's like you're talking to a yappy dog,
telling it to sit and stay and fetch.
Me, I'm a neck-breaker. Hands like trash-can lids.
Spirit gives me the stink-eye,
and I'll pull him apart like taffy.

Sure, we're both Storm Lords.
In that way, we're the same.

But in all other ways,
we're as different as blood and water."

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