

WEREWOLF

THE DARK AGES



A Historical Sourcebook for Werewolf: The Apocalypse™
and Vampire: The Dark Ages®

WEREWOLF

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By Heather Curatola, Harry Heckel, Forrest B. Marchinton,
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LEGENDS OF THE GAROU

The Jewels of Boleslav

A good death does honor to a whole life.

— Petrarch

The city of Krakow stood strong as a monument to the might and wisdom of the Polians, Wislanie, Pomorzanie and Mazovians. For 300 years, since shortly before the dawn of the new millennium, these stout folk had proven themselves time and again over the weaker tribes that wandered the lands. Now they could stand proud and show to all their great city with its vast library of nearly 30 books, thick stone walls and the fine cathedral that held the bones of Boleslav the Brave safe with his crown and scepter.

Yet outside the city gates, chaos reined. For more than 50 years, civil war had cut a path through the rich lands surrounding Krakow. In this strife, the Shadow Lords played no small part, for to them, conflict alone bred the strength necessary to survive and rule. When the fields lay stained with blood and none but the mightiest of mortal and Garou still stood, only then would the strife end. Battle tested the mettle of a soldier, the cunning of a war leader and the patience of a woman. It was the heritage of wolves and men, said the Garou.

Among the Shadow Lords was one who greatly desired the leadership of his tribe and the bounty of Krakow. His name was Kazimier Piast, son of Jagiello, and many brave men and werewolves he'd spitted on his silver-tipped spear. Kazimier was a warrior born, the bright light of the full moon illuminating the suffering of his mother as she died at his birth. The stripling grew up among men, never learning mercy or temperance. When he set his eyes on the rulership of Krakow and the city's fertile lands, none hesitated to get out of his way. Jagiello swelled with pride that his son was so feared, and when Kazimier asked his father's advice on taking the city, the old sage had a plan full ready. He poured words of deceit into the younger man's ear, ignoring the wise protests of his new wife Zophia, at the shame of the scheme. Through her veins ran blood from the enemy Silver Fangs, and Jagiello bade her be silent lest he banish her from his sight.

A fortnight later, the priests of Krakow wailed in sorrow. The unthinkable had happened; the crown and



scepter of Boleslav had disappeared! "These are the bonds of our people," mourned the holy men, "and now they have vanished! What swift thief could take them from the city? And how shall they be returned?" The priests summoned a council of men, and Jagiello and Kazimier attended, feigning their shock and ignorance. For the young warrior himself had desecrated the tomb in dark of night and taken the royal jewels as part of his father's dishonest plan.

The throng of assembled men frowned and stroked their beards in confused silence. Finally, an elderly farmer spoke what everyone had been thinking.

"Surely the Teutons who have run amok in our lands are guilty of this deed. One came like a thief under the new moon and took what we held dear." The men nodded assent and grumbled words of hatred. At a sign from his father, Kazimier stood forth.

"Why then, the jewels must be rescued from those brutes at once. I will go ere the dawn comes." A cheer went up, for as badly as the men wanted the jewels returned, most were well into their gray years and hardly prepared to do battle against heavily armed knights. Let Kazimier do it, they thought. He is young and hardy, with the strength of many. Better he spill his blood and die a hero than we leave our families on such a dangerous errand.

The priests of Krakow murmured among themselves a moment. Then the oldest said, "If you go, son of Jagiello, and return with your bounty, we will support your claim to the principedom of the city and advise the people of the countryside to do the same. A hero's quest is an honorable deed in the sight of the Lord, and your victory a sign of His will."

Of course, Kazimier believed the Christian deity was a poor substitute for Gaia, but he accepted the priests' blessings with good grace, along with a stock of provisions from the town.

Returning to the lands of his father and sept, Kazimier made his plans — a few days hunting wild boar and stag, then sleeping under the cover of a warm streambank, perhaps chasing some of the wolf Kin in play or even challenging them to a fight. His quest promised to be enjoyable indeed. Before he departed, he checked his provisions, sharpened his silver spear and made certain the jewels were safe in his pack. Yes, he was more than clever and strong enough to be a great prince.

His surprise was considerable when, after a few hours basking in the weak but warm sunshine, he noticed the flap of his pack was askew. The royal jewels were gone! After a moment's dumfounded hesitation, he emptied the bag's contents onto the ground, then looked frantically around. Nothing! The crown and scepter of Boleslav had been stolen from their rightful thief! With a snarl he caught up his spear and plunged into the deep dark forest.

After several minutes of panic, he realized that in his rage he hadn't stopped to look for the thief's footprints or scent. His father would have been most disapproving of his stupidity. The robber had obviously been cunning enough to steal the jewels out from under his nose; it would take equal cunning to get them back. He took a few deep breaths to clear the red haze from his vision.

It was well he did, for at that moment he heard deep guttural voices, tongues speaking the uncouth language of the Teutons. Gripping his spear at the ready, Kazimier crouched. The thrill of having his mortal enemies so close made his blood sing. His clothes grew tight on his expanding frame. Through the dense underbrush, he spied three warriors — Fenrir by their markings. Kazimier understood most of what they said, for he had learned the enemy's speech as a child.

"Why couldn't we just charge in and kill them, and then take the booty?" asked the red-haired one.

"Because if the jewels are gone, it will anger them much," the tall one replied. "And stirring their ire is almost as good as killing them. Besides," he added as he shifted his long axe to rest on his other shoulder, "there's a damn lot of them in that city. If they're mad, they come after us, and we can take them down four or five at a time instead of suffering the stings of the whole nest."

Kazimier studied the enemy as they drew closer. He noticed that the Fenrir moved with complete unconcern, as if they were striding along the streets of a town on Mayday. They were young and careless, it was plain. He also noted other things, their weapons and armor being chief among them. The tall one carried himself like a leader and wore a poorly-fitting shirt of mail; the Shadow Lord could see a gap in the link where an earlier blow had gone unmended. The redhead bore a spear which he used like a staff; his movements were a little slow and clumsy. The third looked to be troublesome, for he alone seemed to be paying attention to the world around him. He carried a throwing axe and small round shield; at his belt hung a short sword. And it was this one who noticed the crouching Shadow Lord.

Before the lad could cry a warning, Kazimier sprang forward. Before the others could react, his silvered spearpoint buried itself in the gap of the tall one's armor. Without slowing, he hit the redhead and sent him sprawling. He sensed rather than saw the great axe swooping at him and barely sidestepped its deadly arc. Tall One, Kazimier's spear haft still protruding from his side, staggered as he tried to ready his weapon again. Kazimier grabbed the deadly spear, twisted it in the wound and yanked it out in a spray of blood. Tall One fell to his knees, then toppled to one side. Redhead was up on his feet again, his own spear at the ready. Kazimier batted aside a clumsy thrust, but before he could deliver his own attack, something bit deep into his shoulder. A

roar of pain exploded from his lips, yet before he could face the new attack, Redhead recovered and drove the spear into Kazimier's belly, pinning him to the trunk of a spruce. The force of the blow made him drop his spear. His head swimming and the red haze of his Rage creeping into his vision, Kazimier reached up and wrenched the throwing axe from his shoulder. A short distance away, the Short One watched with a grin of triumph on his young face.

Redhead spoke in the Garou tongue. "Caught a prize, we did. A dark stormcrow's about to get its wings clipped," he gloated.

"It's you who will get clipped," growled the defiant Shadow Lord. "I'll carve out a piece of you for every jewel on Boleslav's crown and scepter. If you give them back now, I'll simply take your own two jewels." Redhead looked confused for a moment, then anger flashed across his face as he realized his quarry was threatening to geld him. Before he could fashion a suitable retort, a change overcame Kazimier.

It was a trick Stormcrow had taught him. His face took on a fearsome mien; his body, pinned though it was, loomed shadowy and frightening. Redhead gasped and stepped back, suddenly cowed. Gritting his teeth to stifle as scream, Kazimier drew out the spear, inverted it and flung it with all his might at the cowering Fenrir. The spear plunged deeply, to half its length in the foeman's chest. Feeling his wounds closing, Kazimier reached down to pick up his own spear when he caught a blur of motion. Had he been any slower, the wound would have been mortal; as it was, Short One's klaive drank deeply of the shadow warrior's life's blood.

There was fear in the young Fenrir's eyes, but strong will and Rage as well. "Your treacherous ways are known to me, Lord of Shadows. I've seen true warriors fall to your deceits." He darted inside Kazimier's spear range, and only by grabbing the youth's arm did the Shadow Lord save himself. With a deft motion borne of hard experience, he reversed the blade in Short One's hand and sank it into the Fenrir's belly. Ripping sideways, he eviscerated the young Garou.

"What you call treachery, I call the arts of a true warrior," he said to the falling Fenrir. He took pleasure at the hate that burned in the dying blue eyes. "It is our mastery of all a warrior's arts that will drive you from our land and, Gaia willing, extinguish your uncouth, barbaric and crude little race. Take that with you into your next life, pup." He waited patiently until his foe's eyes became glassy, then sagged to the ground himself, using his hand to stem the flow of blood from his side. Only when he looked up again did he see the magnificent raven perched above him.

"Corrk. Well, friend Shadow Lord. Nearly got yourself killed over a few sparklies, yes? Slaying thieves



before they stole, but the boy was right. You were the only deceitful one here."

"Enough, friend raven," the wounded Lord grumbled as he crawled to the Tall One and ripped open the dead man's pack. "I have a prize to take. I've earned it."

"Hah! You've earned nothing!"

The pack contained a small wineskin, some bread and dried meat and a blanket. No rich ornaments were to be found. "Damn them!" howled Kazimier. "And damn you as well, bird, for you know who has my treasure!"

"And what if I do? Why should you have them back? You've done no work to earn your crown. Your father, now, he has done all the work. Perhaps he should wear it. *Corrk*. Perhaps in truth, he *does* wear it."

The implication was too much for Kazimier. "Enough of your riddles," he roared. "Take me to the jewels!"

"Here, then." The bird disappeared in the deep green foliage, returning with the treasures in its beak. He dropped them disdainfully; the Garou barely kept them from hitting the earth. "*Corrk*. Crowns are for heroes, not thieves and deceivers. Decide which you are, Shadow Lord, and make your choice." With that, he spread his wings and disappeared into the dense foliage,

leaving Kazimier to ponder his words but a moment before turning to make the journey homeward.

As Jagiello had predicted, both inside the city and around the nearby lands, people dropped their disputes to rally to the new hero of Krakow. The sight of Kazimier's wounds and the stories of his victory over the Teutonic knights inspired the quarrelsome tribes to offer their fealty, even as the tales and stains of blood frightened the warrior's would-be enemies. No Garou would forsake him, either; this one was a prince even among wolves. For a time, peace would reign in the lands of Krakow.

The declared prince accepted all the gifts and honor afforded him, though he did leave the festivities for a brief time to pay respects to his father and stepmother, an act which earned him even more praise. Already they lived in a fine stone house and did not seek to move into the keep inside the city walls. Jagiello greeted his son humbly and sat the prince in the finest seat near Zophia while he went to fetch refreshment.

In silence, Zophia nursed her baby daughter, half-sister to Kazimier. Even in the cradle, the child was promised to a Magyar lord far to the south and east on her 13th birthday. Then finally, the mother spoke.

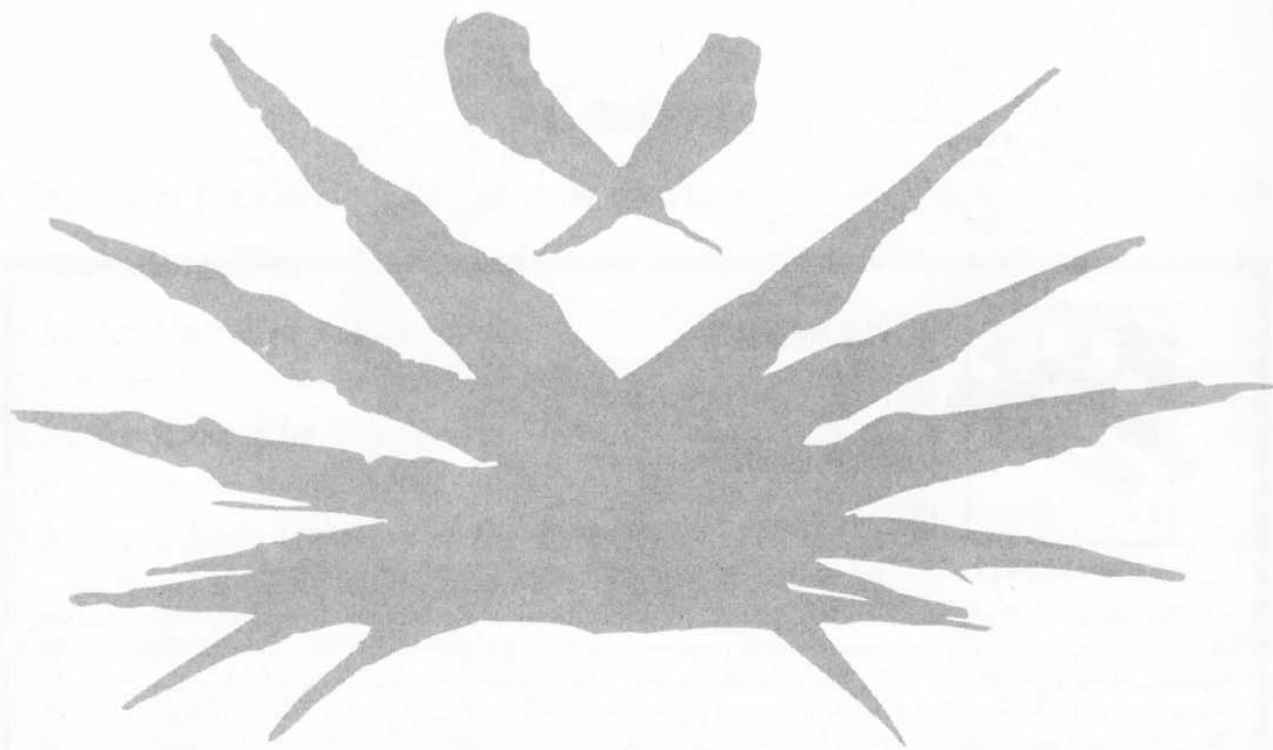
"You think you have won, my lord Kazimier, but my husband, your father, is more clever than you think.

Do you believe you control him? If so, little do you know the man as I do. If you forget who is the master of this house and these lands, be assured that he will not. If you displease him in your noble position, one day another line of royal blood will displace your own. I have seen these things as surely as we know the full moon will rise and set tomorrow. If you can never have the conscience of a prince, I beg you to at least strive for the honor of a Garou."

Kazimier snarled his fury and made to slap the woman for her insolence, but after a moment's thought,

he harmed not a hair of her fair head. Perhaps she would be useful. The new prince's footsteps shook the ground as he left his stepmother's chambers to preside over his coronation feast. He did not even wait for his father to return; what better way to show his sire who was the true ruler of Krakow and its lands?

In 1370, the line of Piast fell into decline and was no more. Krakow's new prince was of the Magyars, though many said that his grandmothers of old came from among the most farsighted blood of Polians and Rus.



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Introduction: Dawn and Twilight

*Judgement and strength — eyes and hands.
Wisdom without courage bears no fruit.*
— Baltasar Gracián

Outside the soot-filled longhouse, a freezing wind blows down through the fjord. More terrifying than cutting shards of ice, it carries mournful howls of grief as werewolves mark the passing of their dead. Inside, the huskarls recoil at the sound....

A seasoned knight falls wounded on a battlefield once green but now soaked in blood and flesh. He mumbles a quick prayer of contrition, certain his doom is upon him, when with a guttural cry his brother saves him from death, striking down their family's enemies with a terrible clawed fist....

In the ancient dark forest, falling snow covers the trees with barely a whisper of sound. Two black wolves play and chase one another, heedless of any mortals. For this is their territory, where no man dares travel for dozens of leagues, lest he find his mount and his person devoured in fury and rage....

These are the Dark Ages, a time of isolation and despair, bloodshed and ignorance. Mortals have little to hope for, living their lives as their fathers and their fathers' fathers did, clinging to their faith or their superstitions to survive from day to day. In the scattered cities, the undead have growing influence over the affairs of princes and priests. But in the wilderness, on the moors and even among the feudal estates of the nobility live the Garou. Few mortals have the power to oppose them. Most of the bloodsucking Leeches have no wish to face them. Within their territories, the werewolves are undisputed masters, ready to defend what is their own from any enemies foolish enough to give challenge.

Unlike the modern era, the Dark Ages are a time when werewolves have relatively few enemies. The Wyrn, while a definite threat, is not as powerful as it will become, and the webs of the Weaver are not so thickly woven. The ever-increasing number of Leeches is a matter of great concern, as are the growth of cities and the expansion of mortals. However, much more in the Dark Ages than in later centuries, the greatest enemies of the werewolves are their own kind. This is a time of conquest and expansion — the Fenrir pushing into the British Isles and Russia; Silver Fangs moving west from Russia, north from Normandy and south to Sicily; and Shadow Lords fighting battles in Eastern Europe on two fronts. Kinfolk too become embroiled in these battles, and the Kin of enemy tribes often intermingle in the wake of victories or losses.

For all the beauty of medieval art, architecture and epic literature, this is a brutal, ugly time to be alive. Mortality is high on account of disease and malnutrition; the average villein farmer only sees meat on the table during holy days, if that often. The crafts of healing are crude, with a paltry few monks and nuns having any true knowledge of mending flesh and curing illness. True wealth is measured in acres of land, bushels of grain, heads of livestock and numbers of bound serfs. The taking and holding of territory is the prime reason for battle, a cause that arises too often for peace to reign overlong. Despite efforts by the Children of Gaia and some priests of the Catholic Church, warfare is a constant threat. The truce that holds between the French and English is shaky, and few enough years have passed since raiders from the Steppes decimated Eastern Europe and Constantinople. In the Levant and Spain, Christian knights still do battle with Muslim defenders of their faith. Anyone can find a good excuse for a fight.

Yet this notion of territory as power seems quite logical to the werewolves, and thus the Dark Ages in some ways are their meat and drink. Battles are horrific, but in a way more honest and straightforward than future tangles with the Wyrn, the Weaver and corrupt mortals. No mechanical scythes yet destroy the vast wilderness, nor do smoky hazes from industry block the sky. If one werewolf treads on another's territory, challenge is clearly offered and accepted. Invasions are frequent, and the Garou hone their claws to protect what is theirs. Despite the growth of cities, humans are at worst a minor annoyance, for none can stand up to the might of an enraged werewolf. Few mortals know that silver is deadly to werewolves; moreover, the art of forging such weapons is a rare knowledge indeed.

So, this is a time when the werewolves can simply be what they are — warriors, poets and protectors of Gaia in an age where savagery and chivalry distinguish the rulers from the ruled and the living from the dead.

The Known World

Looking on the bright side for a moment, the people of the late 12th and early 13th century perhaps had more wisdom and knowledge than they are given credit for. By 1250, many warriors had been on crusade in the Middle East, bringing back miraculous stories of astrolabes, a simple yet viable postal system and the use of glass in windows. Farmers knew the benefits of fertilizers and crop rotation, and manufacture of linen, cotton and wool were just beginning to boom in cottage industries. Troubadours and jesters were a new trend in the noble's courts, and in 1176, the first *eisteddfod* (formal bardic gathering) took place in Wales. Although Marco Polo didn't make his remarkable journey to Cathay until 1271, many people had still heard of fabled lands to the far east and west.

Politically, the tenets of feudalism were firmly entrenched, particularly in England and France. A king had warlords and vassals at his command, bound by oaths of service. In exchange, the monarch would protect these subjects and their demesnes in times of war. Beneath the vassals, were serfs and peasants bound to the land. While the laws of noblesse oblige demanded that their lords care for them, the life of a serf was often nasty and short. Yet in the 13th century, slowly but surely, some peasants were starting to come into their own; many earned their freedom by successfully running away for a year and a day. From these free men and women, a new class emerged, a middle class of merchants, traders and artisans. Particularly in the Italian and Germanic states, the new merchant class fostered the growth of minted coins, guilds and corporate charters. Towns grew up from fortresses, the junctions of crossroads and beside river and sea ports. Though tiny by modern standards, the cities of Venice, Vienna, Copenhagen, Munich, Kiev and Amsterdam provided grander and safer opportunities than did isolated feudal estates. With the rise of towns came longer and better trade routes, all of which led to a remarkable economic revival by the start of the 14th century. Unfortunately, it was too good to last in the face of a deadly plague and nearly 100 years of terrible inclement weather.

The 13th century was also a time when the first great universities arose, many evolving from cathedral and church schools. Never before had young men (and a few young women) had the chance to undertake systematic study of medicine, law or theology with the greatest thinkers of the age. Bologna was perhaps the grandest university, but Paris, Oxford, Salerno and Toulouse also came into their own during this century and the next. While books were rare, these universities offered libraries of unprecedented size; previously, any book collection with over a half dozen tomes was consid-



ered priceless. Of course the majority of men and women couldn't read or write during this time. However, chances were reasonable that at least one person on a feudal estate would be literate, ostensibly in order to keep accounts straight. Usually this person was the seneschal or lord, and in some cases, the lady or chatelaine of the house, since it was usually her responsibility to oversee the larders and indeed the entire demesne when the lord was away. Many clerics were skilled in reading and writing and often became tutors to noble children.

While influenza, malaria and pneumonia killed many people each year, no one in Europe had to deal with the ravages of plague until the 1340s. This allowed the steady growth of towns and trade for over a hundred years. Although everyday life was pretty appalling by modern standards, the 13th century was a sort of high point in the Middle Ages. Even though bloody territorial skirmishes, such as those between England and Scotland, and raids by brigands were normal, there were no extended periods of war in the 1200s, certainly nothing comparable to the 100 Years War from 1346 to 1453. Even Crusaders who survived the long journey to the Holy Land rarely fought more than two to five years before returning home. Unfortunately, things take a sharp downward turn by 1350, and according to many werewolves, get steadily worse ever since.

So, how *do* the werewolves enter this picture? Do they shun towns and keep to the wilds? Well, yes and no. Most despise the growth of towns, and the Red Talons and lupus from other tribes are bold enough to strike at the humans directly, thus providing a source for the horrible legends of werewolves that exist in many cultures. Remember that nearly a third of all Garou and Kin in this time are lupus rather than homid. Yet having a presence in the towns comes naturally for the Warders of Men and the Bone Gnawers. Towns and cities are a place to gather information and keep an eye on what mortals are doing.

Likewise, the natural order of human society, one built around rank and station, isn't without appeal for the Garou. Moreover, humans in the medieval era, particularly in the peasant and merchant classes, tended to live in large family units, much like werewolf packs. The growth of towns aside, the basic unit of organized living was the village. As much as 90% of the populace lived in these villages, and while the modern village invokes images of several dozen cozy homes and storefronts, the 13th century village contained only about four to eight homes and families, plus storage buildings and livestock. Many villages were attached to a feudal estate, which kept things even more insulated. Chances were, men and women married within their social class

with other families living close at hand. Even daughters and sons of noble families often married widowers and heiresses from nearby estates, thus increasing their family's territory and power. Small wonder, then, that some tribes of werewolves, like the Silver Fangs, began to play close attention to the careful mating of Garou and Kin, and the acquisition of territory through alliances and marriages. So a feudal estate or small village composed entirely of an extended family of werewolves and Kin might have been much more common than a lonely traveler may have wished for.

Suggested Resources

Books on medieval history are abundant in bookstores and libraries. An excellent resource is *A Baronial Household in the 13th Century* by Margaret Wade Labarge. It describes daily life on a feudal estate and gives a detailed accounting of the medieval manor's household. Also of note are Boissonade's *Life and Work in Medieval Europe*, *Everyday Life in Medieval Times* by Marjorie Rowling and *Marriage and the Family in the Middle Ages* by Frances and Joseph Gies.

For fiction, the Cadfael stories by Ellis Peters are hard to beat, and the TV movies with Sir Derek Jacobi are excellent adaptations. The same is true for Umberto Eco's *Name of the Rose*, though most troupes may find the movie a little more accessible than the book. *Hårn*, a medieval fantasy roleplaying setting published by Columbia Games, offers many ideas for running a Dark Ages chronicle, right down to names and personalities. Other interesting movies include *Stealing Heaven*, the tragic medieval love story of Abelard and Heloise; *Robin and Marian*, with outstanding performances by Sean Connery and Audrey Hepburn; *Braveheart*, for its incredible battle scenes; *The Lion in Winter*, which offers a glimpse into the mindset of the nobility; and of course, *El Cid*.

One of the best series of texts on warriors and battle is the Osprey *Men at Arms*, *Warrior* and *Elite* series. Under 50 pages each, these books are packed with excellent illustrations and maps and deal with topics such as *Medieval European Armies*, *Norman Knights*, *El Cid and the Reconquista*, *Hungary and the Fall of Eastern Europe* and *Viking Hersir*.

Of course, supplements for **Vampire: The Dark Ages** can offer invaluable setting information on the Dark Medieval world — the existing supplements contain far more information than can be neatly distilled into this work. Of them, the most valuable for **Werewolf** players are probably **Three Pillars** (an in-depth look at mortal society of the time) and **Transylvania by Night**

(which, although vampire-oriented, deals with a classic medieval setting and the homeland of the Shadow Lords).

The subject of mood music is slightly more complex. The 13th century was, in fact, a transitional period in music. The traditional medieval chant style was giving way to more melodic compositions, such as those of the German minnesingers, the French troubadours and the Irish bards. So, a Storyteller's choice of chronicle mood music is largely a matter of personal taste. Many monastic chants have been published in modern collections, and the *Carmina Burana*, although set to music in 1937 by Carl Orff, is based on a Latin chant. The music of Hildegard von Bingen, who died in 1179, is also excellent. Plus, there are always rousing soundtracks from fantasy movies to get the blood stirring, with Basil Poledouris' *Conan the Barbarian* doubtlessly leading the pack.

How to Use This Book

Werewolf: The Dark Ages is a supplement for use with **Werewolf: The Apocalypse**; Storytellers and players will need to have a copy of the main rulebook on hand to successfully run a Dark Ages chronicle. Troupes may also find that resources from **Vampire: The Dark Ages** are useful for story seeds, background information and overall flavoring. After all, this sourcebook isn't the final word on creating a Dark Ages chronicle; it's the starting point to get Storytellers and players inspired to let the Garou run amok across the moonlit lands of Europe in a time long before the Apocalypse. However, the **Vampire: The Dark Ages** rulebook is not necessary to run this book, unless you want a chronicle with lots of vampires and lots of details on those vampires.

Chapter One: The Dark Wilds mingles real life history with that of the World of Darkness. Here are details on geography, Kinfolk, other Changing Breeds and the Umbra, with particular emphasis on the British Isles of the Dark Medieval world.

Chapter Two: The Ten Tribes offers an overview of what's specifically going on with the 10 Tribes in Europe and the Middle East, as well as their current opinions on each other. Each tribe's current territory and concerns are detailed, as well which camps are extant in the Dark Medieval setting.

Chapter Three: Warriors of the Long Night covers everything necessary to create a **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** character. It supplements the material of the **Werewolf** rulebook with character concepts, Abilities, Merits, Flaws, rites and Gifts appropriate for a Dark Ages setting.

Chapter Four: Sit Down By the Fire is full of tidbits on mood, theme, period conventions, antagonists and story seeds, handing the Storyteller plenty of ideas for running a Dark Ages chronicle.

Chapter Five: Blood and Fury gives careful attention to how the Garou view the Kindred, along with rules, crossover ideas and ways to use vampires as enemies.

Finally, the **Appendix** contains information on medieval weapons, armor, additional melee rules and other miscellaneous tools for Dark Ages **Werewolf**.

Lexicon

Ceilican — A tribe of exceptionally moody werecats, with blood ties to the fae.

Curse of Lycaeon — A term used among occult scholars and some vampires to rationalize the origin of

werewolves. The vampires who subscribe to this, mostly Tremere, believe that the Lupines were once men cursed by God in much the same manner as Caine, only that they have fallen farther and degenerated much more.

Fenrir — Get of Fenris outside of Britain; those in Britain use the modern name.

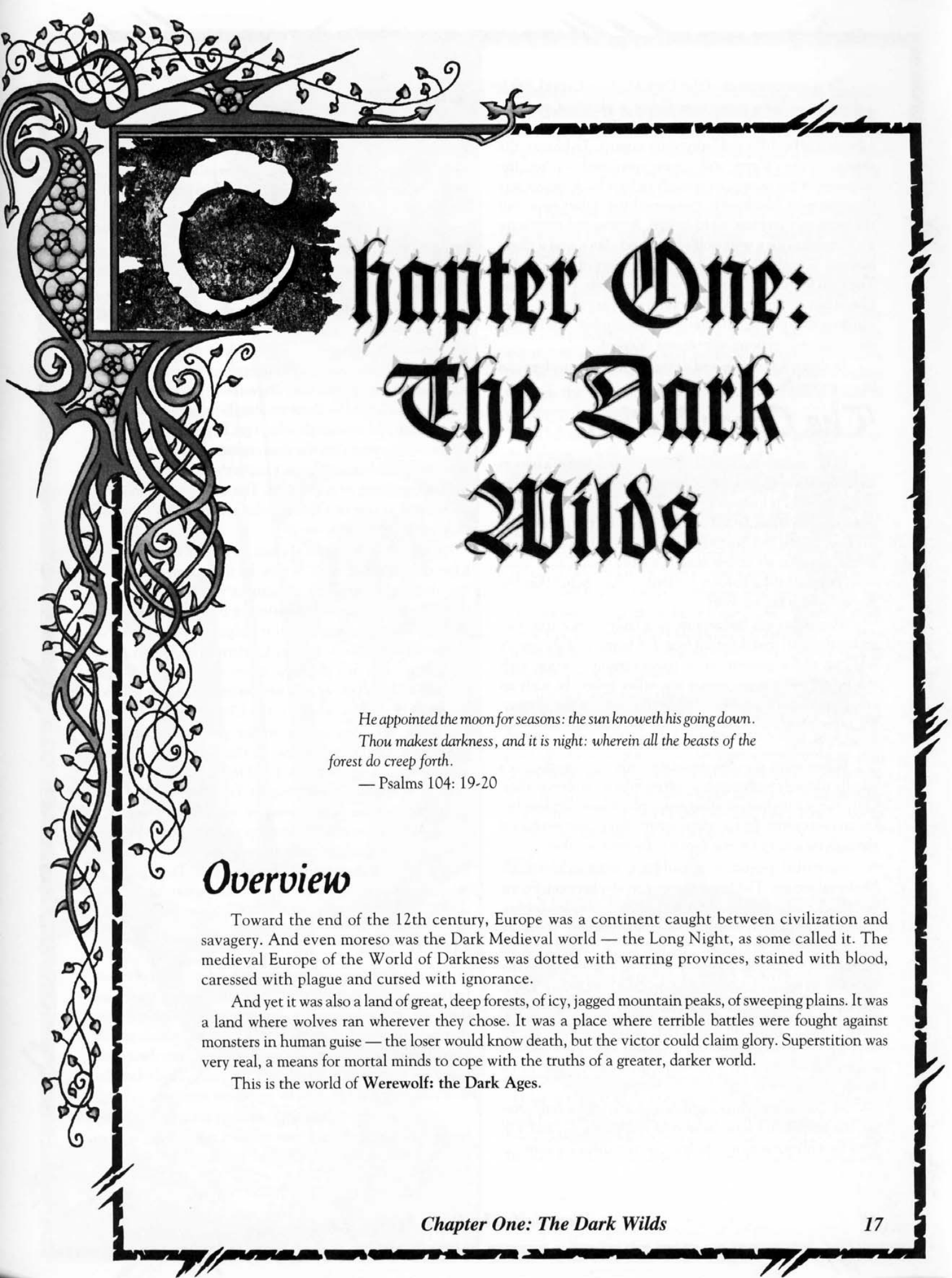
Luperci — The Warders of Men in Italy.

Sumarie — a term for vampires often heard among Fianna, Silver Fangs and Get of Fenris. Probably a corruption of the Gaelic word *súmaire*, meaning leech.

The Veil — A possible addition to the Litany, proposed by the Silver Fangs, who wish the Garou to keep their natures hidden and secret.

Warders of Men — The tribe that will eventually be known as Glass Walkers. Also known simply as Warders (popular) or Warders of Apes (derogatory).





Chapter One: The Dark Wilds

*He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.
Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the
forest do creep forth.*
— Psalms 104: 19-20

Overview

Toward the end of the 12th century, Europe was a continent caught between civilization and savagery. And even moreso was the Dark Medieval world — the Long Night, as some called it. The medieval Europe of the World of Darkness was dotted with warring provinces, stained with blood, caressed with plague and cursed with ignorance.

And yet it was also a land of great, deep forests, of icy, jagged mountain peaks, of sweeping plains. It was a land where wolves ran wherever they chose. It was a place where terrible battles were fought against monsters in human guise — the loser would know death, but the victor could claim glory. Superstition was very real, a means for mortal minds to cope with the truths of a greater, darker world.

This is the world of **Werewolf: the Dark Ages**.

To the werewolves of the Dark Medieval world, life is a struggle — but a sweet one. Game is plentiful, and the waters of woodland streams run clear. The spirit world is vibrant and healthy, sickening only in parts. To be sure, the threat of the Wyrms still looms overhead — but the werewolves are numerous enough to beat back almost any direct assaults. Mankind knows something of the Garou, but the secret of silver has yet to escape. Arrows and swords are poor matches for a werewolf's fangs and claws, and a chain hauberk is nothing compared to the power of Gaia's gifts. The fight for the Mother is not yet so desperate. For now, the Garou can afford to pick whatever fights they choose. They can do as they please, whether it be policing the local human settlements or making war on one another.

In short, it is a time and a place where werewolves can be — *werewolves*.

The Garou Nation

In these days, the Garou Nation is much less of a nation and more of a collection of scattered fiefdoms. The Prophecy of the Phoenix is little more than a cub's tale; not one of the Signs has manifested itself in these times. Of the tribes, only the Red Talons and Silent Striders keep the Prophecy close to their hearts; all others remember the words, as is their duty, but pace their borders content in their belief that the Apocalypse is far, far away.

Most septs are isolationist to a fault — not that this makes them all that different from the humans of the age. A sept can go for generations without communication with the neighboring septs, much less other tribes. In such an environment, it's no wonder that tribes such as the Stargazers, Bunyip and Pure Ones are a long way from any European Garou's mind.

When septs do communicate with one another, it's usually through messengers — often Silent Striders at that. Only the staunchest of allies will open Moon Bridges between two caerns; far too many caerns have changed hands through treachery for one sept to idly trust another.

Intertribal prejudice is sadly common in the Dark Medieval setting. The long-standing rivalry between Fenrir and Black Furies is all too typical; there are countless others, largely depending on whose territory abuts whose. There are few intertribal septs in these days, and those that do exist are riddled with intrigue. In many ways, this is all due to the werewolves being closer to tradition than ever before. Modern medieval life doesn't pose that many challenges to the Garou way — with the exception of the Church, which most werewolves dismiss out of hand as a poor human attempt at spirituality. (Though others consider it to be much more sinister...)

No Garou trusts his neighbor to do his job for him; after all, the traditional ways have held for millennia, and will hold for millennia more. At least, so the thinking runs....

Caerns

Although caerns are hardly commonplace, they have yet to suffer the terrible attrition to human development and the armies of the Wyrms. In a time when the Gauntlet is still fairly weak and the Garou still fairly numerous, the caerns of medieval Europe are nothing to scoff at. The greatest caerns of many tribes — Silver Fangs, Fenrir, Fianna, Black Furies — are all in their heyday. The heart of the Garou Nation is tied to the land, and nowhere else is this more evident than in their sacred sites.

Humans avoid most caerns like the plague. Inevitably, wherever a caern is even somewhat close to a human settlement, the actions of its Garou defenders spark rumors of man-eating wolves, demons in beast guise, terrible wood-spirits and more. Even if they knew the truth, it would make them no less fearful — there are simply some old places that mortal men and women shouldn't go. Pagans are sometimes a little more aware that the sites are sacred to the Earth and Her creatures, but this doesn't make them any more confident about going near the sites. The only exception is the occasional village of Kinfolk, who are sometimes allowed deep within the bawn itself.

One of the greatest threats to Garou caerns comes from the might of the Church. In these times, converting the local pagans is of utmost priority — but the Church doesn't mind assimilating a local pagan tradition or two in the process, if it helps their progress. For instance, the observance of Christmas has been practiced since the 5th century, when it was decided that placing a Christian holiday near or on the winter solstice would help woo pagans into the Church.

Thus, missionaries are in the practice of building chapels on pagan holy sites. In this way, they hope to supplant and assimilate the local faith, while still maintaining a semblance of respect for their ideals. And sometimes, these pagan sites are within the bawn of a caern — in some cases, even the caern grounds proper. The Garou are usually able to repel any attempts made by churchmen, but sometimes clergy of True Faith or other supernatural powers arrive on missions of conversion. The results are usually disastrous for both sides.

Homid Life

Homids grow up superstitious and wary in these times. In the small villages where Garou prefer to keep their Kin, there are often tales aplenty about the great, terrible wolves that stalk the nearby forests. A broken home — such as that caused by a Garou parent leaving its mate to raise their child — is rarer in these times, and cause for gossip. And when the wolves attack a youth, and he somehow survives...

As in modern days, homid children are typically raised by their human parent; those without a surviving human parent are often placed with Kin families. It's a common



practice for many septs to chase and attack their human-born children, in hopes of both provoking a First Change and keeping the local humans guessing as to the Garou's origin. (After all, if the superstitious humans learned that certain bloodlines were actually more likely to produce monsters, the Inquisition would come early.)

There are other considerations for the human-born werewolves. For one, the hamlets and villages of Europe are so small that most townsfolk know every other person within a five-mile radius by name. Even in the larger cities, there's no such thing as a commute to work; unless you have a traveling profession such as a peddler, merchant or the like, you practice your trade not thirty paces away from where you sleep. This is why public shaming is so effective; people remember who's been pilloried or paraded naked through the streets for adultery. It's one of the few bits of variety in their lives.

This familiarity often reflects poorly on homid Garou. A youngster with burgeoning Rage may find his fits of temper the talk of the hamlet. Werewolves in Homid form are dreaded and shunned, as fearful folk try to avoid their predatory gaze. Most peasants die before the age of 40, but Garou are practically immune to the ravages of human sickness, and can live to see their hundredth year without difficulty (although, as always, few Garou die of old age). Thus, even if a Garou is temperate and low in Rage, her superior health can mark her as "not right." In many ways, the honor and heritage of being Garou is more keenly a curse in the Dark Ages, when the difference between friend and stranger is so much greater.

It's not surprising that after adapting to the shock of becoming a werewolf, most homids embrace the life completely. After having to stomach rotten food and shiver through the cold winter, it becomes intoxicating to gulp down fresh, raw venison and wear fur against the cold winds. As a result, Dark Ages homids are often the most progressive-minded Garou — but they are also often more loyal to the Garou Nation than the wildest lupus.

The Lupus Lot

Wolves roam almost all of Europe at these times, from England to Italy. There are very few threats to their population as a whole, save lean winters — and man. The lupus breed is still quite numerous in these times, as evidenced by the thriving state of the Red Talons. Even the Bone Gnawers and Warders benefit from a healthier population of lupus (although this period marks the beginning of the Warders' gradual fall away from their wolf side).

The wolves of this time aren't much different at all — some are perhaps slightly bigger (often thanks to an infusion of Garou blood), but that's about it. They are shy, efficient pack hunters who tend to stay away from humans. Of course, there are a few areas where the Red Talons still enforce the Impergium. Wolves in these areas tend to be more aggressive

and less tolerant of human trespassers — still, wolf attacks on humans are rare and unprovoked attacks are unheard of.

European wolves tend to feed on deer, goats, elk, and livestock. If driven by hunger, they can also feed on rodents and small game, but they prefer larger kills. Wolves tend to be concentrated in the north, primarily in forests, but their territories range as far south as Italy and Sicily. The wolves of the Middle East are found most often in the deserts of Syria, but there they are rare indeed.

Most lupus can actually reach their First Change without ever seeing a human. These lupus become perhaps the most curious and reverent of Garou, as every experience beyond the world of the four-legged is a new one. Inevitably, their curiosity compels them, even the Red Talon cubs, to seek out the settlements of humanity and the wonders they find there.

It's here that most lupus learn their first hard lesson about humankind.

Humans hate and fear wolves. Centuries of tales of man-eating predators have twisted them against wolves,

and many trappers gladly do business in wolfskin. Many a lupus has learned their first scraps of human tongue only to hear terrible stories about the devil in wolf's form, or boasts of slaying wolves wherever and whenever possible. Other lupus have memories of packmates being killed by humans, and begin to understand the idea of revenge.

It also doesn't help that superstitious folk don't react well to a lupus in human form. Walking naked into a village and smiling broadly doesn't quite garner the friendly reaction a lupus might hope for. At best, they're treated with dread and avoided; at worst, they're attacked or driven out of town as madmen. What happens next is up to the individual werewolf. Some develop a lingering contempt or hatred of humans, and begin to sympathize with the Talons' words. Others decide they need to learn more, and begin learning everything they can about humanity in an effort to understand the strange creatures. But the most typical reaction is "never again." Most lupus decide that human society has nothing to offer them; they bear only a little grudge, but are content to live out the remainder of their days without ever having to deal with another human.

Among most Garou septs, the lot of a lupus is simply that of "honored citizen." They aren't treated with any more respect or reverence than are the homids; they're simply equals. In fact, areas with strong wolf populations might see half or more of the sept's Garou born of wolves instead of men. This causes relatively little friction; after all, in the wilds of Dark Medieval Europe, even the human-born understand something of the feral mind.

The Metis Plight

Metis are few and far between in these times — as the Garou are far from dying, the tribes see fewer reasons to tolerate the children of shame. The majority of metis cubs are destroyed upon birth, typically by exposure. Of course, sometimes compassion still takes over, particularly among the Furies, Gnawers and Children of Gaia, but the odds of finding a Fianna or Red Talon metis are virtually nil.

Growing up as a metis is doubly hard in a Dark Ages setting. There are next to no tales of metis heroes in the Silver Record, and there are plenty of humans and wolves to provide the next generation of Garou. Most werewolves just don't see why a metis *should* have a right to live, particularly when he's eating food that a favored Kin might otherwise get. Without a common concept of civil rights, a metis doesn't even have any reason to expect fair treatment. They *are* deformed, they *are* the product of sin — only the most incredibly liberal and compassionate sept would suffer their assistance.

As a result, the average metis' self-esteem is woefully low in these times. They have no real role models, and no reason to expect hospitality should they stray from the sept — in fact, they'd be treated just as poorly among human society (where deformities are often considered "evil luck" or "marks of the Devil") or wolf society (where only the

The Delirium

Players accustomed to gutting whomever they like and letting the Veil cover their tracks are in for a rude surprise in a **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** game. The Delirium is *not* that strong in medieval times. Science does not tell people that monsters cannot exist; nobody has seen enough of life to become jaded and cynical. Most people strongly believe in werewolves, and the Garou don't yet see any reason to correct their opinion. Yes, it can be inconvenient when a peasant's tales reach a vampire's ears, and the response is a series of raids on the local sept and its Kin — but that's a rare enough thing. The folk most likely to know of the Garou's vulnerability to silver are almost always too poor to have any lying around, much less enough to make into weapons — so why fear the humans? If they remember, they remember; maybe they won't be so brazen about wandering around the woods next time.

For the most part, don't give medieval folk any bonus on the Delirium chart — it's not as if they have cause to be any braver because they know that monstrous man-eating shapechangers *are* out there. However, results that indicate disbelief should be substituted for berserk rage or unconditional terror. The hapless observer probably *will* remember what happened, and may well spread tales to his family and neighbors about his encounter with the "Devil's own." Then again, he might just keep his mouth shut — sometimes it just doesn't pay to draw attention to yourself and what you know. You never can tell which way the humans will jump.



fittest have the right to run with a pack). Even so, as the poorest and most downtrodden of werewolves, they can often achieve great deeds, recognized or not. After all, they have nothing whatsoever to lose.

Other Shifters

Europe isn't a hospitable place for other members of the Changing Breeds. As one of the Garou's major strongholds, it has been all but cleansed of the werewolves' rivals. As tales would have it, there used to be Simba among the European lions — but if that were true, there are certainly none of the werelions present in the 12th and 13th centuries. The Gurahl suffered greatly in the War of Rage, and it would be a wonder if so many as five were awake in all of Europe. Even the Ananasi shun European cities, fully aware that between the vampires and the werewolves, such territory isn't worth the bother. Only a few shapeshifters doggedly hang on in Europe — and they mainly manage it by keeping a very, very low profile. In many cases, the Garou would be surprised if they knew that these other Breeds even existed....

Corax

Of all the shapeshifters, it was the Corax who suffered least in the War of Rage. Raven and his children had their own secret allies among the tribes, and they were powerful ones: the Shadow Lords, who have always respected Raven

and his carrion law; the Bone Gnawers, who never fully turned on their fellow scavengers; and oddly enough, the Fenrir, who honored the Corax as brethren of the battlefield. Thus many Corax escaped the fate of so many others.

In the 12th century, the Corax are scattered primarily across the British Isles and Scandinavia, but range across almost every portion of Europe. A few of them maintain secretive alliances with various Garou septs (particularly the Fenrir), and are first to raise the alarm when another nest of Wyrms-serpents begins to writhe.

And if they see any signs of other Changing Breeds, they tell no tales to their Garou allies. One War of Rage was enough.

Ceilican

In wildland, hamlet and city alike, the fae cats dance. The werewolves may have forgotten that the Ceilican ever existed, but the Ceilican remember everything. They blame the werewolves for robbing them of their birthright, for driving them into hiding, even for slaying the last of the European lions and forcing them to breed with simple wildcats. They blame the werewolves for sins both real and imagined — but such is the nature of a true grudge.

When the Ceilican appear, they do so only once they've convinced themselves (with unrivaled tricks of espionage and divination) that no Garou exist in the area. Then they dance. Like the fae courts they ally with, they romp across

moor and heath, woodland and village, and pity be on any mortal that catches their eye. Like the faeries whose blood allegedly runs in the Ceilican's veins, these werecats are mercurial creatures whose first concern is amusing themselves. Gaia is obviously not in any trouble, and there are pleasures to be had — so why not indulge oneself? After all, they reason, after the terrible persecutions they've suffered, it's the least they deserve.

In the end, however, the Ceilican are destined for more suffering. The brutal games they play with mortal hearts and their open celebrations of freedom attract attention not from the Garou — but from the Inquisition. Betrayed by their former fae allies and thrust into the bonfires along with "witches," "devil-worshippers" and the rare vampire, the Ceilican lose almost everything. They are ultimately brought low by the very creatures they caught in their fae-cat-and-mouse games — humans.

But until then, they dance.

Ratkin

Forced to hide in the cities so long ago, the Ratkin still skulk wherever man gathers in numbers. They lost thousands of their number in the War of Rage so long ago — but this was not enough to cripple them. Not the wererats.

The Ratkin are the best-hidden secret among the Changing Breeds. For all the Garou know, they died to the last rat long ago. For all the peasants know, there has never been a rat who could wear a man's form. For all the vampires know, it's just them and the Warders in the cities. More fools they, all of them.

The only hint of the wererats' existence is the occasional nightmarish peasant tale — a tale about intelligent rats who carefully pick out their victims and devour them to the bone, or of rats so fierce they slay cats and dogs alike. Some say that once there was a bishop who hoarded grain and burned the poor who begged him for food — but the rats came and ate him, every morsel. Never is it mentioned that the rats might walk in human skin, or kill in a monstrous rat-form.

This is most deliberate on the Ratkin's part. The wererats have no business with the outside world — yet. For now, their main objective is to breed, to increase their numbers beyond what they were before the War of Rage. Only the Corax (who watch everything) talk amongst themselves about the Ratkin, and exchange gossip of diseases brewed in plague-cauldrons, and of dire curses pronounced by blind rat seers. This knowledge remains with Raven's children alone; for, they feel, to tell others that the Ratkin still exist would expose Rat's children to yet another purge. Better to remain silent than to let another slaughter of Gaia's chosen come to pass.

The Ratkin will not tip their hand for some time to come, although they will leave one present for their enemies in the 14th century. None can say whether they strike in a serious effort to cull humanity or out of simple spite, but the damage they do is unmatched — from one quarter to one

half of Europe's population, about 75 million people, will die from the Black Plague. And to the Ratkin's shining eyes, this is simply a prelude of the Apocalypse to come.

The Land

Europe's vast wilderness is as diverse as anyone could ask; about the only things missing on the continent are jungles and deserts. (And if you want deserts, it's not too far to the Holy Land....) At its north end are the frozen fjords of Scandinavia and the mist-shrouded British Isles; to the south is the balmy Mediterranean coastline. In fact, Europe has a lot of coastline for its size; the European coast from Norway to Greece actually runs longer than the entire coast of Africa. Numerous mountain ranges criss-cross the continent, the most impressive of which add up to the Alpine mountain system. The population has yet to so much as touch certain areas of the continent — ample room for the Garou.

European weather varies radically from place to place. Some areas on the Mediterranean coast remain balmy from December to July; conversely, Russia and Eastern Europe can suffer from pitiless winters and scorching summers. It's little surprise that the Fenrir of Scandinavia and the Shadow Lords of the Carpathians are as rough-tempered and survival-minded as they are, as much as they're tested in winter.

There's also game aplenty for the aspiring werewolf. Reindeer prosper in the north, and there are plenty of deer in the deep woods of central Europe. Even the prairie areas foster a healthy supply of deer, although the local animal populations are often disrupted by encroaching human settlements. The only predators that can really compete with Europe's wolf packs are the brown bears, although there are smaller rivals such as foxes, martens and European lynx.

It's not paradise — but it's certainly a fine land in which to be a Garou. That is, if it weren't for the Wyrms' spawn and the corruption that breeds in the growing cities....

Cities

Although the cities of medieval times aren't yet the nightmarish Weaver-nests that they eventually become, they are hardly hospitable places for most Garou. They stink of human waste (sewer systems aren't a widespread innovation), are imminently flammable, inevitably foul any rivers or streams that might run through them, and are filled with people who are rather less than cheery and outgoing.

Few werewolves can manage to maintain a human life in a city, and few even of those want to. When their Rage is high, they stand out as bestial predators, and it's easy for humans to sense the wolves among them (even if they don't recognize the werewolf for what he is). Most people have to work hard from sunrise to sunset just to maintain the meager possessions they have, and Garou don't have that sort of time.

The Umbrascape of a medieval city is fairly open; most buildings don't show up in the Penumbra at all, save for those invested with much belief, such as churches, or very



old structures such as those in Rome. The Weaver-spirits are present in some force, perhaps enough to unsettle most rural Garou, but hardly the omnipresent threat they are in the Last Days.

Curfews are strictly enforced in the Dark Medieval world: Usually around nine o'clock in the evening, the curfew bell rings, the city gates close, and the watch begins to harass anyone moving around at this ungodly hour. There are cities without curfews, of course, but these are often dripping with thieves and criminals who find opportunity in the night's freedom.

All things considered, it's no wonder that most Garou prefer to live in the sept rather than in a human settlement. Game is usually plentiful in a werewolf protectorate, and there's simply less explanation necessary. Many Garou keep their human Kin in small hamlets just outside the bawn's boundaries; these out-of-the-way villages are often very unsettling to the traveler or missionary who arrives in such a place. The townsfolk are usually clannish and suspicious to a fault after generations of isolation, and there's no telling *what* they believe in, or how much they know of their werewolf relatives. Visitors can feel that they've stumbled into a nest of pagans (which may be true), witches or worse — and depending on how much of a fuss they kick up about it, they might never leave to inform others.

The People

Peasantry

It shouldn't be a surprise that the poor so greatly outnumber the affluent. The great majority of humans in the Dark Medieval world are peasants, those who toil endlessly to keep society running. Many of these are serfs, half-free farmers who are tied to work lands they do not own. They must pay their lord in order to use his ovens to bake their bread, or use his mill to grind their grain. It's a wretched lot, but better than being a slave or landless poor.

Most peasants are highly religious, grossly uneducated and wildly superstitious folk. Still, they know all too well the danger of the night, and stay close to the hearth on the darkest eves. Although they can be a source of danger to the unwary Garou or Kin, they are also sometimes keepers of old wisdom, such as herbal cures and methods of averting the evil eye. The peasantry of a town are a tightly-knit group, given to gossip and conversation. If one member of the townsfolk disappeared every night of the full moon, the rest of the town will certainly know about it, and discuss it at length in their own hovels. In such ways are Inquisitions started....

Nobility

Fairy tales often feature princes or princesses simply because nobility was such an ideal to the common person. It wasn't that the nobility were considered to be better people — many peasants hold absolutely no illusions in that regard. But the nobility are the ones with the wealth, the land and

the livestock — for the most part, they can do what they choose, rather than what they are ordered to do.

Not all nobles of the Dark Ages are the foppish popinjays that some would expect. After all, it is the duty of the lord to lead his men in battle, and so most noblemen are well-schooled in the arts of war. They are expected to be fierce warriors for Christ, and often seek out battles to prove themselves in before returning to rule their fiefs. Small wonder, then, that the Crusades were so popular among nobles — here was a chance to prove oneself to one's king and earn a place in Heaven all at once! Garou can sometimes feel the sting of a noble's pride, as well; few nobles can afford to let rumors spread about killer wolves in their domains.

Although many tribes try to place Kin among the nobility, few werewolves themselves hold noble rank. The castle staff must know where the lord and lady are at all times, or else there will be talk. Only the indolent leave the running of the estate in their servants' hands! A lord cannot be alone even when falconing (and especially not when indulging in the dangerous sport of boar hunting). Perhaps a noblewoman can be shut up in the castle all day (and they often were), but that is the life of a vampire, not a Garou.

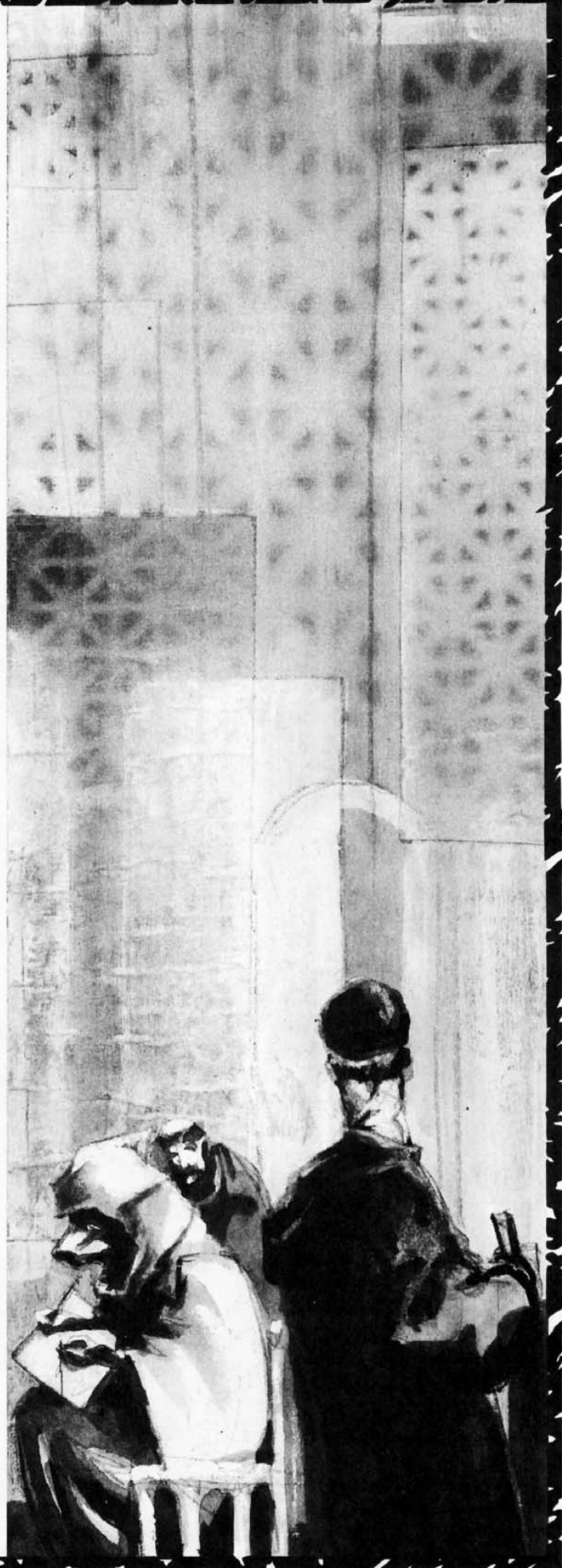
And that is the final trouble that so many Garou find in noble halls. The vampires of the age are drawn to the noble classes, to the power they hold. To most Garou, it's better to live free in the wilds than to seal oneself up in walls of stone and wait for the vampires to discover you in their playground. Only the Silver Fangs disagree — and none are allowed to tell them otherwise.

Clergy

The real power, many argue, lies not with the nobility but the Church that directs them. And in many ways, this is completely true. Even in the face of the internal corruption that plagues the Catholic Church in parish after parish, there is still no organization in medieval Europe that holds a candle to the church as far as organization, education, or power goes. The medieval clergy have access to one thing few others do — writing. The clergy are taught to read and write, and this grants them a great advantage. However, that's only half of it.

The Church is literally the center of most Europeans' lives at this point. Newborn babes must be christened, or else their souls are in peril. The dead must be buried on consecrated ground, or else their souls are in peril. From beginning to end, the Church holds an influence over people that borders on absolute. Most medieval folk would never say "I believe in God" — that would be heresy, for they *know* God exists and does not need their belief to do so.

The Church of this time is very dynamic. It is renewing itself, growing more powerful than ever before. With this renewal comes confidence — and with confidence comes arrogance. There is room for the benevolent and the corrupt alike within the various abbeys, monasteries, chapels and cathedrals of the continent. In all, the Church is a thing of



humanity — and like humanity, it manages to be devil and angel at the same time.

Still, the Catholic religion does not mesh well with the Garou cosmology, and this leads to almost countless conflicts. It doesn't help that werewolves themselves and the very center of their faith are decried as being "of the Devil." Most werewolves see the Church as a tool of the Weaver or worse, and give it a wide berth. Many Garou amongst the Fianna, Fenrir, and Black Furies have whole regions of their Kin keep the old ways alive while paying lip service to the Church at best. On the other hand, a few werewolves see the Church as a useful tool. The Children of Gaia wish to heal the church of its massive corruption from within, and the Warders are interested in its applications as a massive, human-controlled organizational force. They are curious about what the outcome would be if all humans could work together this way, without the stain of prejudice or xenophobia.

Outcasts

Although not really a recognized social class as such, there are still those who don't fit into any of the aforementioned categories, and can probably expect rude treatment wherever they go. These people may be outcast as a matter of prejudice (as is the case with many Jews in medieval Europe), as a matter of pragmatism (in the case of lepers or lunatics), or simply as a matter of superstition. There's no way to categorize the lot of the outcast (as they come from so many different backgrounds), but it is worth stressing that it's a painful burden to bear. In a world where people expect to see the same faces every day of their lives, it doesn't pay to be different. In many places, the "second-class citizens" have very few rights at all, and nobody to defend them when public opinion swings against them — or simply seeks a scapegoat.

[Of course, this is just a very, very brief version of what life's like for humans in this setting. Storytellers more interested in the day-to-day details of Dark Medieval life should probably have a look at **Three Pillars**, which has much more information on the nuances of peasant, church and noble life.]

Kinfolk

Whether fate has chosen them to be arranged mates, brothers in battle or itinerant bards, Kinfolk are just as indispensable to werewolves in the Dark Ages as they are in modern times, perhaps even more so. They are companions immune to the terror of Delirium, the only mortals who can bear the sight of a Garou in the grips of rage. Kinfolk still outnumber their werewolf relatives roughly 10 to one. The number of wolf Kin is far greater than in later centuries, perhaps 30%, particularly in wild areas such as the Scottish Highlands, the Caucasus Mountains and the vast forests of the Holy Roman Empire.

Why are Kinfolk so important? One reason relates to population geography. In the Middle Ages, most people live in isolated hamlets and villages; chances are, they will spend

their entire lives in one place. Even if the werewolves looked to more urban areas, cities are few and far between and relatively tiny compared to modern standards. Paris, with over 50,000 people, is the largest city in all of Europe; London at this time has scarcely over 20,000. The Garou thus have little choice but to maintain their strong ties to Kin, lest the tribes dwindle and become extinct. Among nobles in many tribes, arranged marriages are common; this is a prime tactic for securing lands and property, keeping rich territory in the hands of the werewolves.

A second reason is the Delirium. Most medieval peasants have no resistance to the sight of a werewolf Crinos at all; they pray for salvation, have a fit or go insane. A few 20th century witnesses may be able to put up resistance to the Delirium by invoking laws of reason, but not 12th century serfs.

Human Kinfolk are perhaps more fortunate than most other mortals, who have an average lifespan of little more than 40 years. Because of their werewolf blood, they have better resistance to disease and infections. They also have access to better diets than many humans; even if homid Kin only have meat once or twice a month, picking over the leftovers of their Garou relatives, that's still more frequent than most mortals. Lupus Kin also tend to be a little bigger and harder than the average wolf.

Perhaps more than in the modern world, Dark Ages Kinfolk have a clear sense of place. While 20th century Kin sometimes grumble about being second-class citizens, this attitude is rarer in the 13th century. Mortal society of the time revolves around understanding class and privilege; if one's station in life is to be a servant, handmaid or spear-carrier to a werewolf, then so be it. Of course for the wolves, rank and status are an integral part of life. The pack exists in rank from alpha to omega; it's that simple.

Still, this doesn't mean that a few rotten apples don't fester in the orchard. Although the idea of werewolves is popularly accepted, the Garou deliberately shroud their true origins in mystery, in some cases even from their own Kinfolk. Kin can find themselves in the worst of situations, cast out of society for their cursed lineage. Anger and jealousy serve as easy pathways for the Wyrms, and once in a while a Kin can fall. When this happens, it can lead to trouble — for suddenly the local church might start preaching about how to use silver against the wolves of the woods....

Garou shouldn't discount the potential temporal power Kinfolk can possess. Human Kin in the church hierarchy or nobility can have tremendous influence over acquisition of land and wealth. Assuming they're knowledgeable of the werewolves' needs, they may be able to assure the protection of sacred lands or hold the fear and wrath of the Church at bay. This is no small feat in a time where superstition and faith hold such sway.

The following material describes the locations and activities of Kin from the tribes. Storytellers may want to move certain Kin to different places, depending on the characters' stories and purchased Backgrounds.



Black Furies

Most Fury Kin in this time dwell in Greece, Asia Minor and other Balkan areas, all of which are a strange blend of Byzantine, Turkish, Magyar and nomadic traditions. A few of the Furies' male Kinfolk are shared with other tribes, such as the Children of Gaia, but most remain near their werewolf sisters, mothers and mates to increase their numbers. Female Kin often work as farmers, lay healers or even (very rarely) nuns in the Orthodox Church. Like their mothers, they labor to insure that women are protected and that the lands remain pure from taint and corruption.

Bone Gnawers

Most Gnawer Kin frequent the cities, with Paris, Florence and London being favorites. A number of these Kinfolk are finding niches for themselves around the slowly growing universities or in the rising middle class, and perhaps surprisingly, more than a few are literate. Unlike later times, there's no terrible shame in being a beggar; in a way, the Dark Ages are actually pleasant for the Bone Gnawer Kin. Along with their werewolf allies, they are known to make journeys with the Fenrir and discover new cities to explore.

Children of Gaia

The Kin of this tribe, perhaps more than any other, often seek to serve in the Church. Rumors abound that Children of Gaia Kinfolk were partially responsible for the Truce of God, which limited warfare to certain days of the

week — not a popular sentiment among Garou of certain other tribes. Yet the growing greed and corruption of the Church frustrates and saddens the Children of Gaia and their Kin. Many want to begin exploration to the East, hoping to find more fertile grounds for their messages of peace and hope.

Fenrir

Kinfolk of this tribe are some of the most widespread of all; Fenrir blood flows through human and wolf veins over Scandinavia, parts of England and into the heart of the Holy Roman Empire. The Fenrir expect the same strength and bravery from their Kin as they do from themselves, so most human Kinfolk are doughty warriors and sailors. Still, there's a few who can spin a saga as well as any Fianna. Wolf Kin are likewise strong and fierce.

Fianna

Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Brittany are homelands for many Fianna Kinfolk. This is a prolific tribe, and few of its werewolves have to search far for loyal Kin. A number are bards, poets and artists; moreover, the tribe also claims some of the fae or fae-touched humans as Kin. Wolves with Fianna blood still roam the wild moors and sleep in the craggy hills of their island homelands. As with the Children of Gaia, the bond between the Fianna and their human and wolf relatives is strong. Many too are the Kinfolk that fight alongside werewolves in bloody border skirmishes — and give their lives for the cause.

Red Talons

The Red Talon Kinfolk have spread over much of the known world, inhabiting parts of the Caucasus Mountains, central Europe, the British Isles, Russia and Scandinavia. The passage of human time and events means little to these wolves, except when mortal incursions threaten their territories. Some have encountered savage men with horses and weapons that lay waste to everything in their path, and the wolves have fled in terror. Other Red Talon Kin gladly join their werewolf brethren in striking back at the humans and their settlements.

Shadow Lords

Most Shadow Lord Kin dwell in Eastern and Central Europe, for they are not often welcome in the lands of other tribes. Many of the human Kinfolk seek power and wealth through political marriages, manipulation within the walls of the Church and outright warfare. Some wolf Kin have provided shelter to Red Talons fleeing the Mongols, perhaps in good faith but more likely at the behest of the Shadow Lord elders. As in modern times, these Kin follow the dictates of the Garou, gladly sacrificing themselves for the betterment of the tribe.

Silent Striders

Even as their Garou relatives, the Kin of the Silent Striders have wandered and settled throughout the Holy Land, Northern Africa and into Spain. Many are merchants, healers and scholars; a few have knowledge of the mystical arts. Some Strider Kin, ever restless, have sought passage to the distant lands of England and France.

Silver Fangs

With acquisitions of English territory over the past hundred years, the Silver Fangs have mingled the best of Saxon blood with that of their Kin. Normandy also remains an important area for this tribe's Kinfolk. Still, Russia is the Silver Fang's stronghold, and there reside their purest bloodlines. The many deaths to come at Kiev from the Mongols' swords and Novgorod from the Teutonic knights will be a terrible blow. Among Silver Fang Kin, as may be expected, are nobles, influential clerics and the largest and strongest silver-furred wolves. The tribe is starting to become slightly insular, though the ramifications of this inbreeding won't be apparent for some years.

Warders

The growing cities shelter many Kin of the Warders of Men; this tribe's lupus Kinfolk are growing sparse. The human relatives often occupy themselves in scholarly or business pursuits; many are members of the slowly rising middle class of merchants and artisans. Italy is a hotbed of activity for the tribe, with some renewal of trade with the East, financial success of the city states and the founding of great universities at Salerno and Bologna. The tribe encourages their Kin to get involved in all these activities which promote human curiosity and scientific advancement.

The British Isles **Overview**

The British Isles — a land of a thousand faces and as many moods, from green and pleasant pastures to misty bogs and windswept barrens. The Isles have been inhabited since the last retreat of the great ice sheets. Civilizations unnamed and forgotten flourished and fell, leaving only enigmatic stone circles and tombs to mark their passing. And for over a thousand years, Garou have called Britain home.

These denizens of the British Isles have seen their world grow smaller in the last few years. Human populations spread across the land, breeding conflict wherever they meet. For the Garou tribes who were only just settling into an uneasy equilibrium, the powerful Silver Fangs and their rapacious Kinfolk have arrived to stir up the pot. Villages and fields replace ancient forests. Axe, plow, and cross desecrate sacred caerns and faerie glens. The werewolves' old allies, the Fair Folk, are drifting from this world, a world where friends are needed more by the year.

In the 20th century, some Garou mourn for a world they can hardly fathom except in fairy tales, a world where the spiritual and the magical were still strong. Here at the end of the 12th century, that world is slipping away, and not even the most visionary of Gaia's warriors has any inkling of how far they can fall.

England

Of all the kingdoms in the British Isles, England has endured unparalleled and sweeping changes in the past millennium, suffering wave after wave of invasion. The largest British kingdom, England also commands considerable territory on the continent. Her nobles now look with hungry eyes towards the rest of the Isles.

Land

A good-sized kingdom by European standards, England's face changes considerably from shire to shire. The southeast of England consists of low limestone and chalk hills known as scarplands, flanked by the low-lying fens of and sandy heaths on the eastern shores. It is in this fertile and strategic location that London and Canterbury lie, two of the three most powerful English population centers. With over 20,000 souls, London is a booming metropolis by most standards. Canterbury is the seat of the highest archbishopric in England; in many respects, the archbishop of Canterbury is almost as powerful as the king himself.

To the southwest is Cornwall, a long rugged peninsula with rolling hills, woodland hunting preserves and treacherous marshes; here Cornish, a Celtic tongue, is more common than English. This strip of coast is as wild and isolated as nearly any region in the land.

Manor, Village and Demesne

The basic unit of English feudal economy is the manor, a large estate with plentiful fields, a small village and a noble's manor house. The fields are divided into strips and portions, with the various peasants farming about half to two-thirds for their own use and about one-third or a half, called the demesne, for the exclusive wealth of the noble. Crops vary but usually include oats, wheat and rye. Peasant and noble alike share in the fruits and disasters of this labor. A minor blight or unseasonable hail could destroy the estate's prosperity overnight.

The village attached to the manor usually houses from four to eight peasant families, a village priest and perhaps granaries and a mill. Most villages have their own churches and some have blacksmiths and other artisans. Fencing in land is a product of later centuries, and often livestock live in and among the villagers, or perhaps graze in nearby forests and fields. Prosperous manorial estates might have several attached villages and perhaps as many as a hundred families. In these cases, a lord has one primary dwelling and leaves management of the villages to his bailiff, a man who can usually read and write and who is often the son of a peasant himself. The bailiff also coordinates the working of the demesne and the supplies of the manor. Each village also has a reeve, always a peasant farmer, who serves as a sort of foreman or headman for the other farmers. The reeve takes care of accounting in the village, working with the manor's steward. New reeves take office at Michaelmas, September 29, the first day of the agricultural year.

The manor house usually sits on a hillock above the village, and it can vary greatly in size. Some are large fortresses as opposed to simple homes, but most share the common layout of a main hall and about an acre of land, called the curia, behind a wall of stone or wood. Surrounding the hall and curia are several outbuildings, including a kitchen and bakehouse, granaries and a dairy. Most manors have herb and vegetable gardens, orchards and sheepfolds; some also have dovecotes, kennels, apiaries and moats. One of the most important persons in the manor is the steward or seneschal, always a knight and usually literate and mature in years. This gentleman is a sort of manorial chief executive officer and is expected to be faithful and trustworthy to the lord and his family.

Storytellers may find it interesting to set up a **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** campaign around manorial estate, with pack members holding certain posts in the feudal system as well as positions in the sept. A large estate setting can provide opportunities for fighting and occasional intrigue, too.

Northward one finds the great Midlands, marked by rolling hills, deep woods and fertile valleys. Here as in the southeast, English is the common speech; only the nobles speak the court tongue of the French, and many of them have learned the native language as well. The Pennines Mountains divide the plains of Northern England. York, "the English Capitol of the North," rests among the eastern dales. The lands between Yorkshire and the loosely-demarcated Scottish border are vast moorlands sparsely populated with villages and monasteries.

After many thousands of years of human occupation, there are very few places in England which can be truly called "wild." A tangled wood may hide the foundations of a hamlet that was plague-struck or laid waste by the Norman invaders. But the green and pleasant land becomes more settled and homogenous with each turn of the seasons.

Politics

The history of England is a history of invasions. In antiquity, the Fianna and their Celtic Kinfolk crossed the sea from Iberia. Next came the Romans, building roads and doing their best to mold the Britons into Roman citizens. Then the Romans departed, leaving the pacified Britons ripe for waves of Germanic invaders. Driving the Britons into the far north and west, the Saxons, Angles and Jutes carved the island's southern and eastern portions into seven kingdoms. Half a millennium later came the Northmen, who, after plundering town and abbey, found the land to their liking; these Vikings and Fenrir settled the lands their Saxon cousins stole centuries before. But the Saxons were determined not to make it an easy settlement.

The struggle for England was hardly over when the ships of a new invader touched her shores. With the blood of Vikings in his veins, William the Bastard led his Normans into England, imposing feudalism and laying utter waste to all who would not capitulate. Only now, generations after the Conquest, has the line between conqueror and conquered begun to blur, so that Norman and Saxon alike are all becoming English.

Garou of England

The Get of Fenris hold more of the English caerns than any other tribe. The Get are divided into two branches, the Germanic and the Scandinavian. The latter is found in the old Danelaw, in the north and east of the country where the Northmen settled; as a rule, they are even fiercer than the Saxon Get (if such a thing were conceivable). Travel in Northumbria is a dangerous business, especially for vampires, for packs of Get freely hunt the moors.

The Fianna are more common in the southwest, jealously guarding the caerns in Cornwall. But don't get the impression that Stag's tribe has been driven from England. The Midlands are a sort of melting pot, with Fianna and Get interspersed seemingly at random.



House Winter Snow, the Silver Fangs who arrived with the Norman conquerors, have the best of everything. To them went the stronger caerns, the better lands and the superior Kinfolk. A second House, Austere Howl, was established after the Conquest; though not nearly as powerful, they are making a name for themselves quelling revolts in the troubled areas of the west and north.

There are a scattering of other tribes in England. A small sept of the Warders of Men prospers in London, and they hope to establish another sept in York soon. Both cities are home to packs of Bone Gnawers, though life in Get-dominated York is precarious. And of course, the Black Spiral Dancers have made their foul dens throughout the island.

Listen to any history of England, and you will hear the Garou boast of their glorious Kin. The Fianna claim King Arthur was their champion in the war against the Get of Fenris, while the Get count King Alfred the Great as one of their finest Kinfolk, surrounded by his Garou huskarls. The Get in Northumbria still honor the resting place of their Kinsman, Harald Hardrada. And of course the Silver Fangs hold the memory of William the Conqueror with pride. Is any of it true? Perhaps — after all, the Garou have always claimed the best as their Kin. What's sure is that the Garou stay close to their Kin, now as in the past, as rampaging knights and tax collectors alike have learned at great cost.

Others

Faeries

The Fair Folk appear less and less in England. The power of the Church is slowly killing the old beliefs, and symbols of Christianity — crosses, church bells and biblical passages, for instance — have the power to weaken or even banish fae.

The noble sidhe spend little time in the lands of men these days, save for mischief making and *rades* (traditional processions). On days of power, such as Walpurgis Nacht and All Hallows Evening, the sidhe ride the roads and faerie trods, and woe to any they chance to meet....

The lesser fae are more common, interacting with humans and Garou as household or field faeries, or tricksters. Some “wise women” and a few Fianna are skilled at gaining the assistance or averting the wrath of the lesser Fair Folk.

Mages

Though there are many varieties of English willworkers, by far the most common sorts are witches and hidden descendants of the druids. Most Garou are likely to stumble across these pagans, who in future times are known as the Verbena. Typically, these priests and priestesses of the Earth are neutral toward the shapeshifters, provided the Garou don't trespass or make nuisances of themselves. Werewolves

shouldn't offend a witch lightly; even a minor witch's ire can make life uncomfortable, and like the Garou, they often work in groups. Even the church, which condemns all its miracle-working competition as infernalism, hasn't yet gathered the strength to crush the old gods and ancient ways.

Also dwelling in England are some of the high-ritual wizards known collectively as the Houses of Hermes. Ambitious and prideful, Hermetics sometimes raid caerns and carry off Garou for experiments or for components for powerful magicks. Luckily, they are few in number and spend their time pouring over dusty tomes in their strongholds (known as covenants).

A third type of miracle worker actually resides within the fold of the Church. Clerical magics invoke the powers of God, the saints and angels to achieve mighty things. Garou must especially be wary of these, for to them werewolves are tainted creatures who can best be purified through holy fire.

Vampires

The Sumarie are more common in England than the Garou would like. Saxon Gangrel and Brujah, Norman Ventrue and Toreador, even the occasional Nosferatu, Tremere and Cappadocians — all these roam the night. Some of the undead hold titles and retreat to the safety of stone castles during the day, while others exert their insidious influence over noble, churchman and commoner.

Skinchangers

Less common than in older times, the Corax nevertheless maintain a silent presence in England (as much as any Corax can be silent). England is also the only place in the Isles where the Ratkin have found a home, but they are quietly expanding their range from London to other large population centers in the kingdom. England is also home to a few Ceilican, though not as many as in Scotland or Ireland. The Pennines Mountains hold an additional secret — one of the last Gurahl sleeps the centuries away in a cave deep beneath the earth, forgotten by the younger races in the sunlit world.

The Future

Then next two centuries show some recurring themes. England wars with France almost constantly over territory on the continent, with Wales and Scotland periodically over independence and with itself occasionally over power or succession.

The immediate future is bleak. King Richard the Lionheart, who cared less for kingship than for battle, weakened the kingdom by pouring money into the Third Crusade, as well as requiring money for his own ransom when he was captured in battle. John does little better, losing most of England's overseas holdings and getting the entire kingdom cut off from the church's blessing. His reign culminates with the barons' revolt, in which John is forced

to sign the Magna Carta (Great Charter), which delineates the rights and privileges of barons and the duties of the nobility (including the king). Civil war is only quelled in the time of his successor, the boy-king Henry III.

Places of Note

Silbury Hill

Silbury Hill is an enigma. The chalk mound, which stands over 130 feet high and covers nearly 6 acres, was built long before the Romans came. Fianna legends say a faerie king or worshipful tribesmen built the mound, but no one really knows for sure, as centuries of contemplation by mage and Garou have formed a caern of Enigmas. During the unrest of Stephen's reign, the Garou lost the caern; a powerful group of book-learned mages forced the local sept out with great magicks. A retaliatory attack failed, resulting in the deaths of two packs. Now that things have settled down somewhat, both the Fianna and Silver Fangs are planning to retake the mound.

Draycott Castle

In 1120, Baron Draycott built a small castle on the hill overlooking his estates. A cruel man, he believed that a fearful serf was a tractable serf. To that end, he punished the peasantry harshly at the merest suggestion of an infraction. An old man who wandered too close to the castle was whipped and then hung from the battlements as an example to others. Before he died, the old man vowed that both the baron and the castle would fall soon enough. That night, every Get for miles gathered to make good the Kinfolk's promise. Storming the castle, they killed the baron — slowly — and then proceeded to take the castle apart, stone by stone and timber by timber. When dawn arrived, the wreckage of the fort lay scattered across the hill. The foundations and many of the stones are there today, a testament to the will of the Garou.

Scotland

Scotland at the dawn of the 13th century is a wild, savage place, a land untrammelled by Roman sandals, the land of Lion's pride and Lion's fall. The English crown is determined to have the allegiance of the Scots, but the prideful folk have other thoughts. An uneasy peace between the two kingdoms will not last much longer.

Land

The Scottish border greets the traveler with rocky hills and rolling moors, with fertile pastures and deep wooded valleys. The border actually shifts frequently, and cross-border raids are quite common.

Northward from the uplands flows the River Clyde into the valleys of the Central Lowlands, where most Scots live. Besides forests, the Lowlands boast the best farmland and the most fortifications in Scotland. The Lowlanders speak a



hybridized version of English with elements of Gaelic and Scandinavian. Southern Scotland is somewhat Anglicized; many noble families descend from aristocratic refugees who fled the invasion and subsequent wasting of England by the Normans, and in later times Normans received territory in the Lowlands. The Scottish nobles likewise have land south of the border and have adopted many Anglo-Norman customs and traditions; in fact, Norman French is heard more often than Scots in court.

Leaving the Lowlands and moving northward, gentle hills rise to sharp peaks. These are the Highlands, with barren moors, steep narrow glens and broad valleys known as *straths*. Here the heather blooms on the spongy turf, and golden eagles soar over bogs and crags. Glen Mor, a huge valley, cuts the Highlands in two as surely as if God had cloven the island with a mighty axe; it was here that Saint Columba drove away a great serpent on the shores of Loch Ness.

The land is wild and untamable, as are its warlike inhabitants. The Gaelic-speaking Highlanders live by no one's leave but their own. The chiefs, or lairds, have the power of kings in their small realms. Kinship in the clans is based on a complex system of blood ties, making politics among the warloving Highlanders most interesting. With sword, spear, long-handled axe and club, the Scots make up for their lack of tactical skill with their enthusiasm for killing the English and each other. Many Scots wear wool wraps called plaids (kilts are a much later invention) which may or might not have a pattern — colorful designs as clan heraldry did not come about until years later.

Ringed around Scotland are clusters of islands, the main ones being the Orkneys and the distant Shetlands to the north and the Hebrides to the west. Here the wind is a near-constant roar across the bleak landscape. Yet, the ancient stonework tombs and village foundations make it clear that people have tenaciously clung to these rocks for thousands of years. The dour inhabitants subsist by fishing and some farming. The Islanders, especially in the Shetlands and Orkneys, speak a dialect of Norse and have closer ties to Norway than Scotland.

Politics

Scotland is a divided kingdom. Conflicting interests, oaths of fealty and complex ties of kinship make it hard to sort out sides. Many Normans, or Scots with ties to England, would welcome a connection with England. More independent Scots, chiefly those in the Highlands, think the *Sassenach* — the term for Saxon which is also used more generally to cover all English — are good for nothing except target practice. Caught in the middle are the nobles with estates on both sides of the border — to force the issue of sovereignty from England risks the nobles' English holdings. It is this divisiveness that will help Edward Longshanks and his grandson Edward III break the hopes of independence for Scotland.

Garou of Scotland

The lands of Caledonia were once the stomping ground of the mighty White Howlers, a tribe endowed with great strength, Rage surpassing the Fenrir and a strangeness of ways gained from centuries of isolation on the lonely moors. When the tribe fell into the Wyrms' thrall, the Black Spiral Dancers spread from their homeland to the corners of the known world. In the centuries since, the Fianna and the Fenrir invaded the tainted land, reclaiming and purifying caerns and driving the Dancers' Pictish Kinfolk to extinction. Now, Fianna roam the Highlands while the Get of Fenris guard the coastal islands and southern lowlands against the return of their misshapen enemies. After several thousand moons the Black Spiral Dancers have been driven into their caves; they come to the surface only for sporadic raids for food, slaughter and breeding stock. In the last hundred years, a few Silver Fangs have chanced upon the scene, but they seldom find welcome beyond Hadrian's Wall.

The Garou of the Highlands disdain those who live in softer climes. Harsh weather and lack of arable land allows only a few hardy souls to eke out a living. It's no wonder that Highlander septs hold many caerns of Stamina or Strength. While septs feud with each other on a regular basis, most hostilities are put aside when outsiders — namely the English — threaten caern and Kinfolk. Lowland septs must be ever watchful for Highland raiders.

Others

Faeries

The vile and ever-hungry faeries known as redcaps are uncomfortably common in the ruins and crags of the Highlands; even the Highland Fianna think twice before getting mixed up with these voracious devils.

A common faerie along the northern sea shores is the skin-changing selkie. Also found near streams, lochs and seashores are the faerie water horses, the playful kelpies and their more malevolent cousins, the each-uisge, that seek out unwary travelers for their sport. The high fae are seldom seen here, and the Fianna of Scotland have fewer dealings with them than do the Garou in Wales or Ireland.

Mages

While willworkers often visit, few live here. The ones who do are almost exclusively pagan practitioners, as the high ritualists who stay too long attract the notice of the Garou and others. In the hidden parts of Scotland, a few wizards practice the dark magics of the ancient Picts.

Vampires

Since most Sumarie like target-rich environments and fear Lupines, they are seldom present in Scotland. A pack of Garou are most likely to meet Gangrel on the moors; Edinburgh isn't large enough to support a Kindred population of much size, although a handful of Toreador have taken up residence there (God alone knows why). In far-flung, forgotten monas-

teries, a few of the hunted Salubri reside; harried out of their European havens, they have sought refuge in the farthest lands beyond the reach of the Tremere, or so they hope. Should a Garou act with circumspection rather than simply trying to slaughter her outright (a likely course of action), he may find a staunch if desperate ally who can heal wounded or sick Kinfolk as if she were a Theurge.

Skinchangers

Naturally, the Corax are relatively common in Scotland standing beside both Get and Fianna, and some Raven lines have been tied with individual septs for generations. Particularly in the Highlands, the Corax know they don't have to travel far for a feast.

The Ceilican aren't quite as popular among Garou. Fae-touched werecat tricksters, they are mischievous at best and dangerous at worst. It doesn't help that their cat Kinfolk, the now-extinct lions of northern Europe were tied to the White Howlers; perhaps the Wyrms has tainted the fae cats as well.

Places of Note

Fir Chreig (The Standing Stones of Callanish)

In the western isles sits a large stone circle. A pillar over 15 feet high stands in the center of the 27-foot diameter circle of slabs. A double avenue of stones runs northward a distance of 270 feet, while several shorter stone lines radiate from the circle, forming a rough cross. A chambered cairn and a low mound lie inside the circle. Ancient priests performed ceremonies here, and the Garou continue the practice. On holy days such as equinoxes and solstices, a mixed sept of Fianna and Get (a miraculous occurrence in itself!) comes together to perform sacred rituals. Preparations for the ceremonies begin weeks in advance, as packs scour the island for any trace of Wyrms-taint.

In times of the most dire need, the Theurges perform a ritual which transforms a stone from the northern avenue into a rock giant. The giant will fight, carry or perform other simple requests until the next sunrise or sunset; at that time, the stone shatters. Each use weakens the caern slightly; where once there were 40 of the 13-foot slabs, now there are only 24.

Loch Ness

In Glen Mor lies Loch Ness — twenty-four miles long, a mile wide, bottomless (according to many) and bitterly cold. Fianna from around the Highlands meet at the Loch every summer to feast, revel and hold contests of every kind. Besides the typical Fianna pursuits of music and storytelling competitions, visitors will find mountain climbing contests, foot races, spear throwing and wrestling. The most famous contest is the swim across the Loch, a near impossibility for normal humans and only slightly easier for Garou. Only the greatest Fianna have ever been able to swim to the opposite shore...and back. The evenings are reserved for drink, dance and talk, including the contest for the best tale about the legendary beast which supposedly lurks beneath the frigid waters.



The Future

The next two centuries see the struggle between England and Scotland, and the Silver Fangs' bid for dominance over the very independent Fianna. Of the many Garou and their families who earn glory in the wars for independence, one — William Wallace — will live on in mortal memory. The fierce Kin dies, not in battle, but at the executioner's hands; rumors abound that he was betrayed to the Fangs by a Black Spiral Dancer informant, although glittering claws are the reward for any who mentions it in a Silver Fang's presence. To be fair, some among the Scottish Fianna turn their backs on Wallace as well, though they later come to regret it. The war continues, and the brilliant strategist and Kinfolk Robert the Bruce becomes King of Scotland and humiliates the English in a long series of battles, sieges and raids. The hard-won independence does not long outlive the Bruce. Likewise, the Silver Fangs eventually force the Garou of the Lowlands to show their throats and share their caerns. Only the Highlander Fianna and the Get of Fenris of the northern islands refuse to submit.

Wales

Cymru, or Wales, has long been a wild and beautiful refuge. Green valleys and mysterious forests give way to sodden moors and rocky heaths. These lands offer shelter to human, wolf and Garou alike. Before the Normans, villages were rare and towns almost nonexistent; instead, home-steads were scattered across the hills.

Historians divided Wales in two different ways. First, it is common to make the distinction between the Welsh Marches — the lands under Norman domination (if not control) in the lowlands of the south and east — and the *pura Wallia* ("Pure Wales"). English barons and earls, whose power in their own domains is nigh unto a king's, run the Marches, a jigsaw conglomeration of fiefs. London has allowed these Normans to take as much Welsh land as they can hold; this is no mean feat, for the Welsh are a fractious and rebellious lot.

The *pura Wallia* is almost as fragmented as the marches, for there are many realms vying for power here. Of these, three are the most powerful. Deheubarth in the southwest is a kingdom on the brink of collapse. The prince who held a confederation of smaller princedoms together through charisma and force of will, Lord Rhys ap Gruffudd, dies in 1197, and his sons, Gruffydd and Maelgwn, struggle to take the reins of power. Neither can muster the support of the lesser princes, and many fear the kingdom will dissolve. The princedom of Powys nestled in the mountains and dark forests of the central highlands is in no real position to take advantage of its neighbor's weakness despite the great ambitions of its ruler, Prince Gwenwynwyn. Powys saw stronger days two generations ago, but now feels itself squeezed between two expansionist nations, England to the east and

Gwynedd in the Northwest. It is Gwynedd that seems best able to reap the benefits of Lord Rhys' death. Llywelyn ab Iowerth has driven out or killed many of his rivals to the principedom and looks to expand his territory into Powys.

Wales is the scene of nearly constant, if localized, struggle. The border between the Marches and *pura Wallia* shifts almost by the year as Marchers and Welshmen probe and raid each other. Greedy barons ally with their Cymric enemies against other Marchers. Ambitious Welsh nobles kill, blind or castrate their rival brothers and uncles to clear the path to power. The English king plays Llywelyn and Gwenwynwyn off each other in an effort to keep both in check. To add to the confusion, Welsh law doesn't allow *primogeniture* — the practice of the eldest son inheriting the whole of the father's estate — ensuring that unless a son practices fratricide, individual estates will shrink by the generation as they are parceled up among several children.

The Garou in Wales

Compared to well-settled England, Wales is a wilderness. Its relatively low population makes it very attractive for Garou and their Kinfolk, and it became a refuge for septs pushed out of England by successive waves of Roman, Saxon, and Norman invaders.

Wales is a magical land, with its many caerns chiefly in the claws of the Fianna. Septs in the Marches are largely under the control of the Brotherhood of Herne; these Garou fight against Wyrms-corrupted English, the Welsh and sometimes each other. If pressed, they give grudging respect to the Silver Fangs, although many are still bitter about the wasting of England by Silver Fangs and their Norman Kinfolk.

In the *pura Wallia* live the branch of the Fianna who call themselves the Dyn a drowyd yn flaid. These Welsh Fianna are very insular, secluding themselves in the hills and valleys of their territories and paying little attention to what transpires outside their boundaries. Other Fianna say the Dyn a drowyd yn flaid mingle their blood with the faeries, giving them powers uncanny even among the Garou, but also leaving them touched with madness. Like their fierce Kinfolk, the Fianna of the mountainous north are tougher warriors than those of the lowlands, having proven their worth against both the Get of Fenris and the Normans. They pay the Fangs little respect and even treat other Fianna as outsiders. This doesn't mean that the Dyn a drowyd yn flaid think or act in perfect unity. In fact, almost as many oppose Llewelyn as support him, and others believe they should have nothing to do with mortal politics; between spirits and fae, there's plenty to keep the Garou occupied.

The Fianna of the Marches are a curious blend of Norman and Welsh. The southern tribes are expert bowmen, while those of the north prefer a brace of spears.

Both the native Garou and Kinfolk are masters at guerrilla tactics. Almost instinctively aware of the lay of the land,

the Dyn a drowyd yn flaid can travel with speed and ease over terrain which stymies Norman or Silver Fang pursuers.

Others

Faeries

In all the British Isles, nowhere save Eire are the fae more prevalent. Here the walls between this world and the fae lands are so thin that at times even a mortal is in danger of stepping through the barrier. The common folk know well the charms and little rituals to ensure protection and aid from the fae, whom they call the Tylwyth Teg. High faeries occasionally take the parts of adversaries, allies, lovers or even patrons for the Garou. To keep themselves entertained, the sidhe may devise tests and quests aplenty for a pack or nascent hero. Even the Fianna know the hazards of getting involved with the powerful and capricious fae, though they are often unable to resist the temptation. An unintended slight may earn a crippling or fatal curse, while catching the noble sidhe's eye may earn the Garou a permanent vacation in Arcadia.

Mages

Wales is rife with *rheibau*, or witches, and while they may be dangerous adversaries or useful allies, they tend towards neutrality regarding the Garou. Contention usually comes in the form of disputes over who may use a place of power. Most covens will one day be known as Verbena to outsiders. Other mages are rare, although the House Merinita of the Hermetic Orders has respectful contact with the faeries — and thus the Dyn a drowyd yn flaid. Other mages who come to Wales looking for secrets and power usually pay a price for their folly.

Vampires

If Garou come across a vampire in Wales, the Leech will almost certainly be a Gangrel. Some of the older ones walked the earth before Romans came — these are always dangerous opponents. They come from Celtic stock, and a few were Kinfolk in their breathing days. Whether a Gangrel bares his claws or challenges the pack to a taletelling contest depends on the individual vampire, but meeting someone who knew your ancestors and knows more stories than your average Galliard should earn at least a little respect.

Not so the other undead denizens of Wales. Sumarie have influence if not outright control over a handful of Marcher fiefs. Two or three Ventrue lords maintain their havens in Marcher strongholds, and a Marcher near Chester was made a Brujah by his brother recently returned from Crusade. While the latter have thus far respected Garou territories, the Ventrue have taken several opportunities to hunt down "ravenous Lupines." Both are gaining control of fellow Marcher Lords, and there is concern the Garou may be caught up in a power struggle between rival clans. In addition, some Tremere have visited Isle Anglesey and nearby Gwynedd in search of supernatural creatures for their unwholesome experiments.



Places of Note

Yr Wyddfa Fawr (Mount Snowdon)

The second highest peak in the British Isles, Yr Wyddfa Fawr (pronounced "Ear Withfa Faoor") rises above its neighbors in the range, overlooking green valleys and stony blasted plains of northern Gwynedd. Its Welsh name means "the great tomb," and there are several legends behind the name. Some say a giant sleeps beneath the mountain; others suggest that some of King Arthur's knights — or even King Arthur himself — rests there. Everyone knows it is a place of power. Caves lead to faerie halls and even to the faerie realms. The Fianna claim the mountain top as a sacred caern, while some Welsh witches likewise feel it is a nexus of magical streams and powerful spirits. While Yr Wyddfa Fawr is contested territory, the three groups nonetheless manage to share the immense mountain, though tensions mount in the coming centuries. These mountains become important to the Welsh as well, in particular the leader Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, who retreated to this rocky land during the war against Edward I.

The Shrine of St. Olwen

Wales is blessed with an overabundance of saints who may or may not be recognized by Rome. St. Olwen is one of these. A kind and caring young woman, she aided the poor and even took care of helpless or injured animals. She also

tended one of the three most bountiful gardens in Wales. One day, the story runs, she was attacked by brigands, who stabbed her before they fled. As she lay dying, she drove her staff into a cleft in a boulder, and a spring erupted from the spot. After quenching her thirst, she touched the staff with the last of her blood, and it took root and grew into a rowan tree of unusual size.

A small stone shrine now stands beside the stream, where the sick and leprous come to drink and bathe in the healing waters. The site is maintained by a nearby abbey, which keeps the saint's bones in a reliquary.

The Future

Llewelyn ap Iowerth eventually adds Powys to his Gwynedd holdings, becoming powerful enough for King John to treat with him as "Prince of Wales." The Dyn a drowyd yn flaid finally unite against the English in support of the prince's grandson, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, who gains dominion of over three-quarters of Wales. His push to clear the remaining Marcher Lords from Cymru is checked by Edward I, who reconquers much of Wales in the late 1270s. Llywelyn, "The Last Welsh Prince," falls in battle in 1282, and his Dyn a drowyd yn flaid supporters find themselves in a Gwynedd ringed with English castles. In the course of centuries, the Dyn a drowyd yn flaid become reconciled with the Anglicized Brotherhood of Herne.



Ireland

Ireland is a magical island at the western edge of a world where magic is fading. It is a land of mirth and melancholy, where skill in songcraft is as well-regarded as skill with a sword. The Irish hold poets and musicians in high regard — harming a bard is like harming a priest. But for all that, they love a good scrap, and the Irishman who kneels in church today may have been raiding his neighbor's cattle last night.

Land

Overall, Ireland consists of lowlands ringed by high hills. The west coast is deeply cut with inlets to the ocean, and much of the west coast, called the Burren, is too rocky for crops. By contrast, the east-central region of Ireland contains some of the richest farmland in all the Isles. The mild, wet climate feeds the many streams and rivers as well as the numerous peat bogs in the western and central part of the island.

Politics

There are several levels of kingship in Ireland. Some kings rule kingdoms that might not extend the length of a valley. Several lesser kings are likely under the leadership of an overking, while the king above them might control an entire province. High kings, who could claim to rule all of Ireland, are

rare, and since the death of Brian Boru at the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, no one has truly been called high king.

Much of southeastern Ireland is under the king's control through his Norman and Irish vassals; this has come to be known as the English Pale because of the shape of the territory. Though the Anglo-Irish and some of the native Irish grudgingly acknowledge the English king as overlord, the conquest has changed little about the island. In fact, many of the English conquerors have in turn gone native themselves, adopting the dress, fractious tendencies and even language of the local Irish.

Garou of Ireland

Ireland is unquestionably the stronghold of the Fianna; in fact, the tribe's High King holds court in the ancient palace of Tara. The Irish Garou live like the heroes of myth. Long nights are spent in revelry, where merely providing good food, drink and song may bring a host as much Renown as brave deeds on the field of war. A bard's words may wound more grievously than the keenest steel or make a hero live long after her death. The Fianna, being close to their Kinfolk anyway, follow the raiding tradition with great relish. In the Dark Medieval world, septs guard their caerns against rival packs more often than from any threat of the Wyrms.

Until the coming of the Normans, the only serious invasion for a thousand years was ultimately a failure; the

Fianna drove off the Fenrir in the 11th century. Except for occasional wandering Garou (such as the Children of Gaia or Silent Striders), no other tribe appeared in Eire for over a century. The 1170s saw a new invasion, this time by the Silver Fangs and their Kinfolk among the Norman English nobility. Thus far, the Silver Fang leaders in Ireland have taken a slightly less preemptory tone towards the Fianna, treating them as honored companions, if not equals. The Fianna have likewise been hospitable as their Celtic heritage demands, but the rapacious activities of the Anglo-Normans are straining the laws of hospitality.

Others

Faeries

Ireland is almost certainly the land with the strongest connection to all the fae. Blood and oathbonds have always linked the Fianna and the Fair Folk. The sidhe especially are considered noble friends, although the combination of fae capriciousness and Fianna temper has caused some tensions in the past. In the not-so-distant future, a number of commoner fae seek refuge within Tara's walls after the Shattering. And it is on Tara's slopes that a Compact between Seelie and Unseelie courts is signed.

Skinchangers

Naturally, the Corax are welcome in Fianna lands. Many caerns have towers set aside as roosts for the wereravens, just in case a Corax eventually decides to arrive. (They rarely do, but the Fianna insist on being ready to play host.) The Ceilican are around to stir up trouble, although they don't seem as common in Eire as they are in Scotland. Of course, it's possible they're hiding, waiting for just the right moment to foment trouble.

Mages

Of the various traditions of magick, only the pagan Wyck and their ilk can be found in Ireland, but they are populous by most standards. This greenest of the Isles is a refuge of ancient religions and old ways. A branch of druidism has a school here, and most villages have wise women to ensure bounty, freedom from ills and the occasional love spell. While the Fianna are suspicious of the willworkers, they have on occasion formed tenuous friendships with the Wyck or other pagan magi.

Vampires

The Kindred are a rare thing in Ireland. Only a few Gangrel and an ancient Toreador or two can be found beyond the Pale. The Toreador, drawn by the magnificent artistry of the Irish, vie for power with the Ventrue in Dublin, Wexford and Cork. In the stronghold of Fianna and faerie power, the Sumarie must be careful indeed.

Places of Note

Silver Tara

Since the days before the eagle came to Britain, there were three Taras. Royal Tara, the mortal seat of power also known to the Fianna as Iron Tara, has

crumbled with neglect since being abandoned six centuries ago. High Tara, home to one of the kings of the Daoine sidhe, was once wholly in Eire; with the coming of Patrick, it has drifted into the hidden realms of the fae and now is seldom visible.

And then there's Silver Tara, properly called Airgetteamhair, the palace of the Ard Righ of the Fianna. No place, not even Bru na Boinne, is more sacred to the tribe. A powerful caern of Honor, Tara is the place where disputes are settled and honors are given. It's thought that the original Tara was built several hundred years before the birth of Christ; some claim it was built with the aid of the Tuatha de Danaan. The complex sits atop a hill rising to 200 feet above the surrounding plain, surrounded by seven great earth-and-stone ramparts. Each of the seven gates is faced with silver and hung with the heads of vanquished foes. The main building is a massive two-story edifice of five great stone-and-timber halls, each bedecked with gorgeous tapestries and trophies. Even the massive timbers glitter with exquisite knotwork.

Despite being the jewel of the Fianna, Tara is difficult for the uninvited to find. Numerous spirit Gifts and powerful faerie enchantments cloak the fortress from view. In early centuries, only fae and Fianna visited the vaunted halls. The White Howlers, who were almost the Fianna's equals in storytelling, were more or less friendly and would occasionally meet with the High King on the slopes of the great hill. After their corruption by the Wyrms, they used their knowledge of the ways and paths to slip through the outer defenses and attack Tara. This was the First Battle of Tara; the Second occurs in Cromwellian times and the Third in the 20th century. When the Fenrir raided the land, they tried unsuccess-

The Dow of Colla

There is a tale of a Gangrel, a lost Kinfolk named Colla, who in recent times fought his way into Tara. Long before the undead found him, he had loudly sworn to see the halls of the Ard Righ. One moonlit night, he matched deeds to words. Through his unnatural strength, great speed and razored claws, he fought his way through six of the seven ramparts, eluding or disabling his opponents, just for the chance to lay eyes upon the palace. His body cleared the last palisade, and his eyes drank in the sight of the magnificent buildings in the moonlight for a full moment before his head left his shoulders. Though the defenders were suitably chastened for letting a single Leech get past even one wall, many elders recognized the Kinfolk's daring and courage to fulfill such an impossible oath. After lengthy and heated debate, Theurges purified his remains and laid his ashes to rest in a small rock cairn on a hill half a league west of the fortress, that he may view the majestic palace evermore.



The Treasures of Tara

When they first arrived in Ireland, the Tuatha de Danaan brought with them many great treasures. Two of them reside in the Fianna stronghold. One is the Cauldron of the Dagda, which is ever full so that "no company would go from it unsatisfied." The other is the Harp of the Dagda, which can bring life to the fields, weakness to the enemy and mirth to even the grimmest warrior; it's even been known to cure Harano.

The High King also has three major fetishes, and a number of lesser ones:

The Horn of the Stag

Level 6, Gnosis 7

This fetish carved from the antler of the now-extinct great Irish deer is a prized item which hangs beside the throne of the Ard Righ. In times of great peril, the King blows it to summon the tribe. The moment the horn is sounded, a ghostly white stag appears before the scattered tribemembers, wherever they are in the world (and the Umbra as well). So summoned, by moonbridge and moon path the tribe

assembles at Tara. Created after the First Battle of Tara, the horn has been winded only a handful of times, such as when the Ard Righ dies and a new one is chosen.

The Golden Torc of Kingship

Level 4, Gnosis 6

This is a beautiful neckpiece of heavy braided gold, with stylized wolf heads on the ends. The gold is so bright that it appears to glow. Only those with a Pure Breed of three or greater may wear the torc; when worn, the torc adds an effective level to Pure Breed. Also, the wearer may sense lies as per the Philodox Gift: Truth of Gaia.

Crone's Tongue

Level 4, Gnosis 6, Difficulty 5, Damage Str + 4 (aggravated)

This treasure is a long sword of simple but elegant design; it shines with blazing light in the presence of minions of the Wyrn.

cessfully to find the powerful caern and claim it for their own. Never were they successful, for the Glamours on Tara were too strong to pierce. In more recent times, the Silver Fangs led their Norman Kinfolk to the Emerald Isle, where they were grudgingly allowed an audience with the High King. The old allegiances affirmed, the delegation left in peace.

The Future

Disorganization and lack of any central authority to mount effective resistance ensures that English encroachment continues. Culturally, the Irish make a comeback in the 14th century, but a series of blows from the Reformation to the Plantation, to the Great Famine and a number of failed rebellions causes the development of bitter rifts between factions of the Irish and between camps of the Fianna.

Mortals and Kinfolk of Note

Geoffrey d'Avesnes, Bishop of Chester

Involved in the church almost from boyhood, Geoffrey has amassed a great deal of temporal as well as spiritual power. The county of Cheshire is evenly divided between Geoffrey and the Earl of Chester, Hugh de Kevelioc (see Garou of Note in Chapter Four). Over the course of time,

Geoffrey has learned a little about his Changing Kin at least to know they are a secret to be kept close.

Geoffrey is Kinfolk, but he certainly doesn't let the Silver Fangs bully him around. The fact that he is one of the few who can stand up to the Earl makes him very popular with his superiors. Still, he doesn't push his luck very far, knowing he can get farther by letting the Earl think of him as "my Bishop" than by openly wielding his considerable power.

Elizabeth of Derchester

A village elder at forty, Elizabeth is famed as a wisewoman. Folk from a league in every direction come to her for advice and aid. She is a combination veterinarian, herbalist, soothsayer, arbiter and counselor. While she has a limited ability at the Divination Numina, her most important assets are keen powers of observation and the knack to interpret what she notices. Her status among local folk is greater than that of the village priest, a fact he resents. He secretly hopes to undermine the influence of "that heathen witch," but thus far has had no luck.

Malcolm MacGregor

Malcolm is a healthy lad of 16 summers with an unhealthy pride in himself; one could say he redefines "competitiveness." He refuses to be second best, and he keeps at

Additional Reading

The material presented here is but a thin sketch, enough to get you started and hopefully leave you eager for more. For a richer, more detailed game, devote some time to more in-depth research. Guidebooks are a good place to start for the lay of the land and a brief history; just remember that these are written for the modern traveler. There are scores of pertinent history books, ranging from the most general (e.g., Medieval Europe) to the very specific (e.g., Edwardian Castles in Wales). Besides the various **Vampire: The Dark Ages** supplements, **Changeling: The Dreaming** has two books, **Isle of the Mighty** and **Court of All Kings**, which detail historical places and people in Britain and Ireland. In addition, books from other games set in this time period are also quite useful.

Many of the old myths and epic tales of the British Isles are a must for flavoring a heroic campaign. Besides the King Arthur stories, *Beowulf* (Anglo-Saxon), *The Mabinogion* (Welsh), and *The Tain and The Book of Invasions* (Ireland) are excellent choices.

Here are a few sources to get you started:

Gold, Lee. *Vikings*. Published by Iron Crown Enterprises, this gaming supplement tackles a wide range of subjects including Viking language, culture, superstition, magic and myth of the Northmen, distilling it into a readable format for quick reference. Very useful for background for a Get of Fenris campaign.

Duffy, Sean (Ed.). *The Macmillan Atlas of Irish History*. Filled with maps, this is a slim but useful overview of Irish History from the Celts to the 1990s.

Fines, John. *Who's Who in the Middle Ages*. This contains a number of short biographies of the famous and infamous from the fall of Rome to the Renaissance.

Kenyon, Sherrilyn. *The Writer's Guide to Everyday Life in the Middle Ages*. Covers basic details about everything from food and music to weights and measures to rank and heraldry. This volume concentrates on the British Isles.

Muir, R. *The National Trust Guide to Dark Age and Medieval Britain, 400-1350*

Staplehurst, Graham. *Robin Hood: The Role Playing Campaign*. Published by Iron Crown Enterprises, this thick sourcebook is invaluable for a campaign set in England during the early 13th century. This supplement contains a detailed cultural, religious and historical background, and ideas for encounter and stories. The book also includes a useful bibliography for sources on the period.

Walton, Ken and Jo. *GURPS Celtic Myth*. While the golden age of the Celts was long past when the Normans invaded, traces of the old cultures survive, especially among Stag's tribe. This sourcebook is a fine compilation of culture and magic for playing both historic and mythic Celts. Includes brief synopses of the major story cycles and branches. A must for a Fianna campaign.

something until he wins. Malcolm has wrestled down nearly every boy he's met, has raced up all the local ridges and swum many lochs. The lad's been lucky enough not to get hurt or killed in some of his daredevil exploits, but it's only a matter of time before he challenges some Fianna or faerie to a contest, and then he'll see what it is to be "second best."

Robert of Perth

Robert of Perth is truly a man of mixed heritage. His Viking great-grandfather took a fancy to a Saxon noblewoman; his grandfather, fleeing the Norman Wasting of the North, settled down with a wild Scottish beauty. Robert's father married the daughter of a Norman lord. He bequeathed Robert an earldom, with rich land west of Perth. Political savvy brought him larger holdings, while valor in France earned him two small estates south of the border as well. Now he is a man of some standing, but ever ready to feed his ambition. His Scottish neighbors distrust someone so cozy with the English, while those with strong Norman ties also watch to see where his loyalties lie. The Silver Fangs secretly watch him as well; should they be satisfied with him, they stand ready to "guide" his climb to power. They would use him a tool to solidify the Fang's hold on southern Scotland. Robert should step carefully, for darker beings see his usefulness as well, and the Black Spiral Dancers would love to corrupt a man of rank.

Dyfn ap y Cynnedd

Dyfn is the son of Pedrwn, a minor official of a minor chief in Deheubarth. Though not the warrior his older brother is, he is a peerless tracker and deadly with a bow. Wrongfully accused of a crime by a rival, he was forced to flee his homeland. He headed into the Marches, and eventually found himself guarding a lord's hay (hunting preserve) as a forester. Dyfn spent his days clearing trails, culling deer and hunting poachers and predators. He disliked the English intensely, but it was a living.

A wolf had been caught in a bear pit, and he and a coarse English warden were sent to kill it. As Aedward raised his spear to deliver the killing blow, Dyfn met the lupine's eyes and was spellbound. He saw the intelligence within them and understood in an instant how the suffering of the wolf's kind mirrored the oppression of his own. His axe bit once, twice and the Warden was dead. He helped the wolf — Kinfolk — to freedom, and soon learned he too was Kinfolk. Now branded a wolfshead — an outlaw — Dyfn guards the forest pathways to the sacred bawn of his new Kin. Neither knight nor verderer dares enter his woods, lest a grey-fledged arrow be the last thing the trespasser sees.

Henry of Bristol

A man of great strength and stature, Henry grew to be a stalwart knight. Willing to risk his life in the Holy Land to help his soul, he joined King Richard in the campaign to retake Jerusalem from the Infidel. Though he distinguished himself in battle, he was rewarded not with a clean death, but rather with a fate far worse: he contracted leprosy.

Since returning to England, he traded armor and steed for a coarse woolen robe and a walking staff. Ostracized by



Chronology of the British Isles

1066 — Edward the Confessor dies (May). Harold Godwinson crowned (June). Harald Sigurdsson (Hardrada) dies at Stamford Bridge, near York, in a failed invasion attempt (Sept 25). Harold II dies at Battle of Hastings against Norman Invasion (Oct. 14). William the Conqueror crowned in London (December).

1067-68 — Normans crush revolts and lay waste to much of northern England. First Norman incursions into Wales.

1086 — Domesday Survey, the first comprehensive census of England, is conducted.

1087 — Death of William I, accession of William II.

1096 — First Crusade.

1099 — Crusaders take Jerusalem.

1100 — Death of William II (hunting accident), accession of Henry I.

1105 — Welsh counterattacks push back the Norman invaders, until more or less stable borders are established.

1135 — Death of Henry I; Stephen takes the crown.

1137 — Gruffydd, Prince of North Wales, dies; Owain the Great succeeds him.

1138 — Civil War of Succession in England; Scotland's David I invades England but is defeated.

1145 — Pope Eugene III proclaims Second Crusade.

1147 — Geoffrey of Monmouth writes *Historia regum Britanniae*. Second Crusade fails.

1151 — Chess arrives in England.

1154 — Stephen dies, succeeded by Henry II. Thomas Becket becomes chancellor.

1155 — Pope Hadrian IV grants Ireland to Henry II.

1162 — Thomas Becket elected Archbishop at Canterbury.

1167 — Oxford University founded.

1170 — Richard FitzGilbert (known as Strongbow) invades Ireland (August); several invasions follow in the next 20 years. Archbishop Becket is murdered by Henry's knights (Christmas).

1171 — Lord Rhys holds first eisteddfod (bardic festival) at Cardigan. Henry II and 4000 close friends go to Ireland; he gives Strongbow the province of Leinster in exchange for service of 100 knights (16 October).

1173-4 — Rebellion of Henry II's sons and many barons.

1175 — Treaty of Windsor divides Ireland between the Anglo-Normans (Henry II) and the Irish (under High King-cum-liege king Rory O'Connor).

1177 — John (later King John) becomes Lord of Ireland.

1187 — Jerusalem recaptured from the crusaders by Saladin.

1188 — Geraldus Cambrensis (Gerald of Wales) preaches the Third Crusade with Archbishop Baldwin and later writes a travelogue about his experiences.

1189 — Henry II is defeated by his sons and King Philip II of France. He dies shortly afterwards; Richard becomes king.

1190 — Richard I leaves for the Third Crusade.

1192 — Richard I is captured by Leopold of Austria and imprisoned; he is released two years later after hefty ransom demands are agreed to.

1199 — King Richard is killed while fighting in France (April); succeeded by his brother John.

1202-5 — John loses most of England's continental holdings to France.

1208 — John refuses to accept the Pope's choice for Archbishop of Canterbury, resulting in England being placed under Papal Interdict. John is excommunicated the following year.

1213 — After being "deposed" by the Pope, King John surrenders and places England under the Pope's protection as a Papal fief.

1215 — Under duress from English barons, King John signs the Magna Carta. John dies the following year.

1240 — After dominating Wales for two decades, Llywelyn the Great dies.

1267 — Llywelyn ap Gruffudd acknowledged as "Prince of Wales."

1277 — Edward I invades Wales.

1282-83 — Llywelyn killed and Welsh independence crushed in second war of conquest. Wales annexed by England.

1290 — King Edward expels Jews from England.

1295 — Edward helps put John Balliol on the Scottish throne; Scotland becomes a fief of England. The following year, Edward invades and deposes Balliol.

1297-1305 — William Wallace leads the Scots against the English.

1314 — English driven from Scotland following the Battle of Bannockburn.

noble and peasant alike, he must beg for food from abbeys. Wearing bells to warn others of his approach, Henry spends his days wondering what grievous sin he has committed to warrant this curse. He now wanders through Wales and western England, passing from shrine to shrine in the hopes that his prayers for forgiveness may be answered. Though his face is ruined and he lacks a finger or two, Henry is still strong as an ox. Because his heart is that of a warrior, he could not bear to surrender his sword, which he keeps under his robe. Henry hopes that wielding the blade in defense of some lady or churchman may earn him the atonement he craves.

Cynan

Cynan is the leader of a small abbey in the Connemara region in the northwest of Ireland. Church officials seldom visit the place, which is just as well — the brothers still practice Christianity as the Irish did before the Roman church came to standardize and “reform” Eire’s Christians, who condone such heresies as divorce and marriage within the clergy.

Cynan’s brand of faith says that everything that exists has something of Christ’s truth in it, and therefore everything has some worth. Even supernatural beings like the fae, werewolves and such have a purpose. An inquisitive and very perceptive man, he searches for those purposes. His tolerant nature has earned him the unlikely respect of some supernaturals, and he has been known to discuss truth, divinity and natural theology with druids, Fianna and even a learned vampire. Though he won’t allow threats to his brothers or flock, Cynan has been known to misdirect a werewolf’s pursuers on occasion.

Brian O’Rourke

The son of kings (but then, what Irishman isn’t?), young Brian found his prospects in a Norman Ireland rather limited. Then he discovered his true calling: with his ready wit and penchant for tale-telling, what else could he be but a bard? Some family connections got him into a bardic school. Many years later, he was loosed upon the world, his head full of everything from the major cycles and minor tales to how to play an audience as artfully as a harp. At the end of the 12th century, Gaelic culture is experiencing a revival, and bards are very much in demand at every court. These skilled artisans are highly regarded and handsomely paid. Brian is quite talented and can fashion a satire sharper than Toledo steel, or praise-poems to make a lord renowned and remembered.

Unfortunately, the handsome lad did not go unnoticed by the fair lords; on Midsummer’s Eve, a ravishing trio of ladies spirited him away to Arcadia. There, so he says, he sang and played for a year and a day. Satisfied with his performance, they gifted him with the ability to craft the most stirring songs extemporaneously, making up the words even as he sings them. Ordinarily, such ability would make him much sought after in every court.

However, the fae rarely give unmixed blessings; a sennight never goes by before his tongue betrays him by revealing an uncomfortable secret or dark prophesy. “The king’s cham-

pion has a well-honed sword and finds the king’s daughter a worthy scabbard,” or “Enjoy your lord’s feast, good warriors, for by his betrayal you will feed his ravens ere the year is out” are prime examples of this bard’s wayward tongue. Thus, Brian is a popular man for a night or two, and then he’s swiftly sent on his way before the curse can strike again.

The Mainland Iberia

The lands that will one day become Spain are currently divided and at war. In the north are the Christian kingdoms — Castile and Leon, Aragon, Portugal and Navarre. To the south are the lands of the Berbers and Moors — the Taifa kingdoms. These lush lands are home to conflict aplenty among the humans — and of some interest to the Garou.

The kingdoms to the north have a single priority on their minds — driving the Moors out of the peninsula for good. As such, much of their energy is directed toward this goal. But the true threat that manifests itself in the northern kingdoms — at least as far as the werewolves are concerned — is the vampires. The undead of Iberia are of a particularly aristocratic mindset, and consider themselves almost the appointed stewards of the land. Many of these creatures have rooted themselves deeply in the offices of the Church, the better to direct the Church’s power against their foes. They have quietly directed bloody pogroms against certain villages, all but exterminating the Children of Gaia of the Pyrenees.

Fittingly, a faction of Shadow Lords arrived not long ago in response to this slaughter — seeing weakness and an opportunity to plot against the vampires, they were most pleased to step in. However, this faction now finds itself divided. Several of the Lords have taken the side of the Christian kingdoms, hoping to find opportunity among the ever-scheming vampires hidden within, while their kinsmen have been impressed with the Moors’ ferocity and skill, and have decided to see what the “newcomers” have to offer. This has caused a touch of tension with the Silent Striders of southern Iberia, who claim several of the Moors as Kin.

The lands of the south are quite the contrast to the northern kingdoms. This is the land of the Almohads, an Islamic dynasty which has been in control of North Africa and southern Spain since 1130. Here several ethnicities blend (with some tension, of course); here Berbers and Moors pass Christians and Jews in the tree-lined streets. Though the Muslims may have arrived by force, their civilization reflects the ideals of a culture devoted to art and learning. Seville, the capital of Moorish Iberia, is one of the richest cities on the continent. Cordova is similarly well-off, and boasts a tremendous library which almost rivals the lost library of Alexandria. The Children of Gaia walk quietly among both cities, hoping to do what they can to preserve and spread the genteel ways of the land. Cordova is also home to a small gathering of the Warder Brethren of the



Book, who act most carefully — their goal is to neatly remove the talons of the local Cainites from the library, so that the Leeches don't poison the well of knowledge with their bilious, grasping fingertips. And there are Leeches in these courts — cold, cruel ancients with an eye for art, literature and philosophy.

The Children of Gaia operate in the wilds of southern Iberia, and here also is as strong a Silent Strider presence as one is likely to see anywhere. The great central plateau of the Iberian peninsula — the Meseta — is dry and severe, with blistering summers and freezing winters. As a result, the Iberian Garou claim it as one of their meeting places, far from heavy human populations and the vampires that breed there.

France

From the English Channel to the Mediterranean port of Marseille, the lands of France are lands split by conflict. Currently, the Norman nobility of England owns more of the country's land than does even the King of France. This is an exceptional sticking point among the French nobles, and will eventually lead to the outbreak of the Hundred Years War.

Norman Silver Fangs are in ascendancy here, and their constant mingling with the English Fangs has encouraged most other Garou to give up trying to distinguish between the two. The French courts are primarily home to Silver Fangs and Children of Gaia, although searching may turn up a few Fianna, and even the occasional Shadow Lord. France's wilds, however, are controlled largely by scattered septs of Red Talons, Fenrir, Children of Gaia and the rare pocket of Fianna in Brittany. There's also plenty of rumor about the fae cats, the Ceilican, stirring up their own unique blend of self-indulgent witchery wherever they go.

Paris is growing quickly, and will soon take its place among the foremost cities of the world. Work has already begun on the great cathedral of Notre Dame; once complete (around the beginning of the 13th century), it will astonish and frighten Garou with the power of the human's faith. The city itself is practically crawling with vampires, and only utmost vigilance and shrewd stratagem keep the Silver Fangs and their Kin influential among the nobles of the area. The Warders have taken Paris to their hearts, and would establish a sept near the University if only they could drive out the vampires. The Bone Gnawers, too, have their own presence in the city; and a Parisian Gnawer is a proud and dangerous creature indeed. It's also said that the fae — both werecat and wildling lord — walk Paris' newly cobbled streets, searching for something that only they recognize.

Southern France is an entirely different affair. Its mountains are steeper, its plateaus higher. And, as with the north, not all of France's land is her own. Languedoc is its own land, ruled at Toulouse; Provence is part of the Holy Roman Empire. And it is an unpleasant place to be after dark. Here the local Garou — Talons, Fenrir, and a few Silver Fangs —

search for the source of a mysterious influx of fomori and strange, twisted werewolves. Surely something must be spawning the Wyrms-beasts in droves, but none can say just what it may be, or where it may rest.

The Holy Roman Empire

Extending from the borders of Poland and Hungary to as far as France and Italy, Charlemagne's Holy Roman Empire is one of the worst places on earth to be a human when there are werewolves about. The three tribes who hold the most power here are the Fenrir, Shadow Lords and Red Talons — none of which are noted for their charity.

The Holy Roman Empire is nominally under the control of a single emperor, but the emperor has only minimal rule over the various feuding principalities and duchies. In fact, considering that the mostly German and Bohemian nation is challenging the power of the Catholic Church in the south, just about the only thing "holy," "Roman" or "imperial" about the Holy Roman Empire is the name.

Germany

The greater portion of the Holy Roman Empire is the Kingdom of Germany. It is a land where dukes wage a civil war to decide which man — Otto of Brunswick or Philip of Swabia — will be crowned King of Germany. Vampires dot the growing settlements, but the wild places are unquestionably under Fenrir rule. And Germany has wild places aplenty, from

snow-capped mountains to sweeping plains, not to mention the stretches of forest that still dominate the landscape.

One emerging power is the newborn Teutonic Knights (formally the Brothers of the Hospital of Saint Mary of the Teutons in Jerusalem), a military order akin to the Templars and Hospitalers. Their origins came from the Third Crusade, when German merchants founded the order to serve a hospital. The Knights are all nobles, sworn to chastity, poverty and obedience. They are destined to move into Eastern Europe in the next century on a crusade of conversion — stirring up certain trouble between the Fenrir and Shadow Lords. Not a few Fenrir Kin find their way into the Teutonic Knights, partly as a means of self-defense — for the Knights would be some of the few people in all of Germany bold enough to go hunting werewolves.

Bohemia

Nestled in the hills just north of Austria, the Kingdom of Bohemia is a land of great wealth. Great forests still stand across much of the kingdom, and many metals both utilitarian and precious lie beneath the ground's surface. It has seen its fair share of conflict in its day, but has no ongoing feuds at the moment. The werewolves of Bohemia are relatively peaceful; their concerns aren't as pressing as those of their neighbors, which stirs up equal measures of restlessness and laxity.

As with the rest of the Empire, Bohemia falls largely under Fenrir rule, although a good number of Golden Wheel Warders have established a presence here in order to profit from the nation's wealth. These Warders are able to skim a good amount of gold without the Fenrir caring much, although the Fenrir aren't nearly so forgiving of any Garou amassing too much silver. Further, there is a growing population of Bone Gnawers in Prague, feuding with the Nosferatu that also inhabit the city's ghettos.

Burgundy

The Kingdom of Burgundy is the weakest of all the Holy Roman Empire's component kingdoms. Its lands (which will eventually become western Switzerland and the French region of Provence) are isolated from its neighbors, with no direct roads leading from the Rhine river valley to the Rhone.

Burgundy is one of the few places in Europe where the Garou have managed to keep the peace amongst themselves — as they'd define it, anyway. A strong multitribal sept (mostly Fenrir, Silver Fangs, Shadow Lords and Bone Gnawers) holds sway over the region, compelling the smaller septs of Burgundy to aid them in whatever crusade needs accomplishing. This remarkable alliance is held together by the leadership talents of Guillaume Sun's Glory, an elder Silver Fang with a dire hatred of vampires. At his bidding, the Lupines of Burgundy have managed to slay virtually every vampire foolish enough to enter their wilds; as a result, the kingdom has acquired something of a cursed reputation among the Cainites of Europe.

The Black Forest

The great, deep Schwarzwald is one of the most dense and notorious forests on continental Europe. Although the land is fertile, settlements within have a worrisome habit of vanishing not long after their founding. It is a great, shadowy wood that will inspire tale after tale, up into the time of the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen. And it is unquestionably the domain of the werewolves.

Although there are a number of Red Talon packs which patrol the Schwarzwald, the forest is first and foremost the protectorate of the Fenrir. They are the masters of a powerful caern in the midst of the forest, a land where Roman invaders never managed to solidly gain ground. The caern is held by the Sept of the Blood Fist, whose leader, Lorkush Thunderhowl, is renowned for single-handedly destroying a war party of twisted monsters that made a bid to settle in the woods. The Theurges of his sept proudly claim that he will be responsible for even greater deeds in his time, and that his death will be glorious indeed. These predictions only swell Lorkush's pride — and his willingness to challenge outsiders to reinforce his own legend.



Italy

Only the southern portion of the Italian peninsula is controlled by the Holy Roman Emperor. The Emperor's control is tenuous indeed—for southern Italy holds the seat of the Catholic Church, an understandably self-willed power. The matter is only complicated by the fact that southern Italy isn't exactly accessible to the Empire; an army, should one be necessary, would have to push through the city-states of northern Italy to get to the south.

Northern Italy is an entirely different kettle of fish. This is a land dominated by city-states, which consistently feud with one another. There are literally hundreds of city-states across Italy, some only a few miles in size. This is a center of growth and learning, where cultural advancements are destined to come more quickly than they do across the rest of Europe.

Italy is remarkably urban, perhaps the most urban region in all of Europe proper. Paved roads link most of the settlements, and old Roman architecture still stands in most cities. Of course, this concentrated urbanity has its drawbacks as well; the accursed Italian vampires breed almost as quickly as rats, and are numerous in the extreme. What's more, the concept of sewers and sanitation didn't linger on from Roman times—although medieval city-dwellers might

well be used the stench of a town at high noon, more rural Garou are likely to find it virtually intolerable.

The city-states are a hotbed of supernatural politics. Vampires of almost every description flit among the churches, castles and council-houses, wrapping their talons around whatever pawns they're able to find. The native Warders—the *Luperci*—are the dominant tribe of Garou, although they cannot play their hand too openly against their vampiric rivals. Children of Gaia and Bone Gnawers have their own territories here, as do a few scattered Black Furies. Most notably, Italy is the home to the Conquering Claw, a once-great Silver Fang house now in decline. The Conquering Claw had its heyday in Imperial Rome, and now has a number of banking families under their control, but the house is plagued with Harano. The seers of other houses shake their heads at the mention of the Conquering Claw, and seem convinced that the house is headed for extinction.

The Wyrms has little physical presence in Italy; the high population makes it difficult for the more hideous monsters to pass unnoticed or unchallenged. The majority of its influence here comes from Banes, who tend to circle like vultures whenever two city-states come into conflict. Eventually a city falls, and the period of rapine and looting that follows can please even the most rarefied Bane's palate. There are also a number of subtle Wyrms-spirits that have

settled around the shoulders of favored churchmen, although it's doubtful that they can get too deep into the Papal organization — corruption can strike even at the highest levels, but the level of True Faith directed at Rome can make existence very uncomfortable for all but the most thick-skinned Bane.

Eastern Europe

Poland

Poland is an area of extremes, where the winters are terrible and cold and the summers bake the land. Unsurprisingly, the werewolves of Poland are fiercely resilient, and would have the land no other way. The Shadow Lords and Silver Fangs share rule here, with the Lords obediently standing to the side of the Fangs' throne (although some would say that this arrangement chafes the Lords' muzzles no end). Local legends of great heroes are commonly recounted at both tribes' moots as tales of daring Kin, while more than one dark hearthfire tale has its roots in an all-too-true recounting of wars with the terrible beasts of the Wyrms that still burrow under the hills. As something of a side project, the Lords carefully seed their influence

ever-so-subtly into the Church of the area. While most local Garou prefer to encourage their Kin and neighbors to hold on to the pagan ways, the Lords see opportunity in a religion that stresses obedience so neatly.

Considering that both Fangs and Lords thrive on intrigue, it's no wonder that the two have settled here. No fewer than ten principalities and duchies comprise late 12th-century Poland, and these provinces constantly compete amongst each other for territory and influence. The only hindrance to Garou meddling is an unfortunate infestation of vampires, fiendish creatures that claim to have ancestral right to these lands.

As a counterpoint to the land's tempestuous nobility, the third Garou presence in Poland is no less than the Bone Gnawers. The Gnawers took a liking to the downtrodden Askenazim Jews of the region and rapidly incorporated their bloodlines into these worthies' own. These Gnawers pay lip service to their Shadow Lord masters at best. They can manage to get away with it; the Lords, for their part, are too busy contending with the vampires of the crags and furthering their plots for the Silver Throne to bother enforcing loyalty among the Gnawers. The Gnawers are innocuous enough, and even in the worst of situations, the Shadow



Steve Ellis



Lords do not want to risk the embarrassment of calling in reinforcements to deal with a bunch of unruly Jewish Bone Gnawers, of all things.

The final Garou faction of real significance is a scattering of Red Talon packs and septs. Although not influential at all in local politics, the Talons of Poland are nonetheless making their mark on village culture, sponsoring a very real dread of the woods and the things that live within.

Hungary

A land soaked in blood, western Hungary is settled, and full of intrigues from the Holy Roman Empire. In and of itself, it stands out as an example of the sort of land that werewolves and humans struggle to control. But Eastern Hungary — Transylvania — is virtually uncharted frontier, a land where tiny settlements huddle in the shadows of forbidding castles. Nowhere else is the feud between Shadow Lords and Tzimisce so terrible, so bloody. Of all the lands of Dark Medieval Europe, Eastern Hungary will enter into legend as the domain of the creatures of the night.

The western parts of Hungary are arable, fine for farming and pasture both. Long plains and great lakes mark the land, which is certainly much more settled than Eastern Hungary. Set upon the Danube is Buda-Pest, a city made of three towns

that have combined into one. Buda-Pest enjoys a healthy flow of trade along the Danube, and is perhaps the greatest city in all Hungary. In Western Hungary, Catholicism is the dominant religion, and civilization a growing ideal.

The east, however, is an entirely different beast. Here the Transylvanian Alps, traditional domain of the twisted Tzimisce, surround patches of hills, valleys and several basins. There are hundreds of tiny villages and hamlets across the land, but almost no cities whatsoever. Much of the population clings to Orthodoxy, or even to outright paganism. The traditional rulers — the boyars — lord over their dominions through fear and tyranny.

Without a doubt, this is the territory of the Shadow Lords. In fact, no other tribe dares cross the Lords here, not the Fenrir or even the Silver Fangs. The Lords are simply too strong, and no other tribe possesses the mix of strength and cunning necessary to hold territory in such vampire-infested country. The Lords' feuds with the Tzimisce are already legendary, and will continue for centuries more. The upstart Tremere and roaming Gangrel fare no better with the werewolves of Transylvania; all are either pawns to be used and then discarded, or enemies to be slain with utmost expediency.

The spiritual presence of the Wyrms also makes itself known here. Many of the pagan gods' names are said to be



aliases for great Wyrmspirits, creatures that ruled this land before and will attempt to conquer it again. Of them all, the name most often mentioned is Kupala — a powerful demon-thing that strikes dread reverence into the Leeches' withered hearts. As the wars for dominion of the Transylvanian nights rage on, agents of the Wyrms slip between the cracks, working to wake Kupala once more.

The North

The northern reaches of Europe are cold and forbidding, a land where only the hardest can manage to survive. The settlements of Scandinavia are small and largely scattered across the winding coastline. Holding sway over this territory are the Fenrir, a tribe ideally suited to mastering such a harsh environment. Only a small number of Red Talons share the North with the Fenrir — and these are constantly reminded in no uncertain terms that tampering with any human that a Fenrir might have some attachment to will end in bloodshed.

There are dangers aplenty in the Scandinavian lands for bold Fenrir or other Garou to face. A number of vampires claiming descent from Odin stalk the lands, and many of these have set themselves up as chieftains of small towns. Under their rule, the locals reenact the lost traditions of going a-Viking in search of blood and plunder — mainly blood. Other vampires, called *vargr* by their kin, roam the wildlands feasting on what they can find. There are even, if the rumors be true, a number of serpentine vampires who worship Jormungandr hidden in the frozen north.

And, almost as if the Wyrms were obliging the Fenrir, there are a number of Wyrmspirits that tunnel below the frozen ground, erupting only to slay and defile. Great giants used to walk these lands, and some say they still erupt now and again — immense fomori three times the height of a man, twice as tall as the stoutest Crinos. Not that this worries the Fenrir; in fact, they actually seem to be pleased with the numerous opportunities to prove their might.

Denmark is not so firmly under the Fenrir's control. The country has firmly converted to Christianity, and is in the process of clearing many of its forests for lumber and farmland. Feudalism is becoming stronger and stronger, and hired mercenaries keep the borders secure. The Fenrir are incensed by this creeping civilization, but are hard-pressed to muster the subtlety to work against it; the occasional logger may disappear, or the occasional chapel may burn to the ground, but progress marches on.

Russia

The traditional home of the Silver Fangs is a land under perpetual siege. Invasions have struck it several times in the last century, and will do so again. Dozens of princes jockey for position, trying to raise the status of their principalities through politicking or outright civil war. Famine comes and goes, as the terrible summers and winters are hard on the local



crops. The jewel of Russia, Kiev, was all but leveled some years ago, and the city is still recovering. The settlements are scattered and small — certainly no place for a vampire.

But this is a land of werewolves.

The Silver Fangs take pride in owning this realm, and stand fast against the enemies of Kiev Rus even when no others will. They opposed the great Zmei when all others feared to travel into the “dragon lands.” Despite great loss of life, they managed to bind the Zmei one by one, and achieved the impossible — they actually slew one, the terrible Sharkala. They carefully record the myriad Wyrms-beasts that plague the isolated villages and wilds of Russia, from the frost-demon Morozhki to the man-eating river dweller Vodianoï. They pass the tales of the Baba Yaga and Koschei the Deathless on to their cubs, reinforcing the lesson of vigilance. They stand tall when the Tatar Mongols ride into Russia, even though they are doomed to fail. This is *their* land, and the Devil take any fool enough to say otherwise!

The Byzantine Empire

From the capital of Constantinople in the East, out to the edges of Hungary and down into the peninsula of Greece, the Byzantine Empire holds sway. It is all that remains of the Roman Empire, and yet the roots of its culture come from Greece rather than Rome. It suffers constant raids by the Seljuk Turks, but as of the end of the 12th century, the Empire is still a wealthy, powerful institution.

Constantinople

The seat of the Byzantine Empire is a wondrous place, a city of great wealth and beautiful art that makes it a site of pilgrimage for many Warders. Its location on the Bosphorus is responsible for much of its wealth, as numerous trade routes intersect here at the meeting point of East and West. However, this site gives Constantinople its own set of troubles as well — situated right between Christian Europe and the Islamic East, it is often the site of clashing armies and fierce contention.

The city proper has its slums, to be sure, but is justly famed for its glorious art and architecture. Here Byzantine art is at its peak, and colorful mosaics adorn building after building, particularly the churches. The city produces silk textiles, illuminated manuscripts, ivory carvings — all things so beautiful that Warders or Children of Gaia often bring them to isolated wilderness septs as evidence that humanity can accomplish great things if given the chance.

However, Constantinople has its rotten side as well. It is very much vampire territory, and the undead play at countless schemes and power struggles to control this rare gem. Garou are not advised to linger overmuch in Constantinople, lest they draw the attention of the corrupt ancients that skulk in the alleys here.

Sadly, Constantinople is doomed to fall in the Fourth Crusade, when zealous Crusaders decide that the rich city is as wealthy a target as they'll ever find, and if not properly a



Saracen stronghold, it's at least close enough. Its citizens are slaughtered; its treasures pillaged. It is a particularly dark day in a dark history, and an entire tribe will mourn.

[More information on this jeweled city can be found in **Constantinople By Night**. Be aware that this supplement concerns itself heavily with vampires, and mentions the werewolves virtually not at all; still, it's a fine resource for descriptions of the city itself (complete with a map), as well as vampiric antagonists galore.]

Greece

The peninsula of Greece is unquestionably Black Fury territory. The Furies patrol the toppled pillars and fir forests with an unquenchable fervor, brutally challenging anyone who strays into their territory. They are loyal to the people of the land, not the government — the Byzantine Empire is nothing in the eyes of a Fury. A few pockets of paganism flourish in the mountains, where the Amazonian tribe nurtures a respect for the Mother and not for the Patriarch in local humans; however, the Church has its power here, just as it does anywhere else.

It's said that ancient Wyrms are bound under certain mountains here; legend has it that a great and monstrous creature, possibly a forefather of vampires, was imprisoned long ago under Mount Aetna. Certainly the most sacred spot to Garou is the powerful Fury caern hidden

on a small offshore island, where it's said that the treasures of Artemis are still hidden. The Sept of Bygone Visions, however, does not welcome outsider Garou; no male has ever so much as set foot on the caern's bawn.

The Middle East

The Holy Land

Few tribes have ancestral holdings among the lands of the Middle East. The land here is hot and arid, and the natives must import much of their food from the West. The terrain is not hospitable to wolf packs; it's unlikely that any predator larger than the desert fennec would be able to survive. The Silent Striders have many contacts there, but no more consider these lands their territory than they would Europe. The Children of Gaia also travel the Islamic lands, in the interest of spreading benevolent philosophy and learning. But they, too, have few holdings there. The deserts are simply forbidding, and the native breed of undead — a merciless form of ghoul that some claim is half vampire and half ifrit — are not predisposed toward werewolves in "their lands."

It is certainly ironic that Jerusalem, holiest of holy sites, has a slight odor of the Wyrms to it. When the Crusaders finally captured Jerusalem at the end of the First Crusade, they rampaged through the city in a firestorm of rape, torture, murder and looting. Such wholesale depravity fat-

tened the Banes to no end, opening a temporary Umbral portal directly into the Wyrms' heart and releasing a plague of terrible spirits.

Today, the city itself would be spiritually lost, were it not for the power of True Faith. The concentrated faith of three religions has managed to keep the Banes from fully exerting their will on any mortal they choose. As such, the faith of the populace and pilgrims alike has banished the less powerful Banes outside the city limits, where they flit around like vultures, waiting for the next spiritually bankrupt hypocrite — or the next Crusade. Only the greatest of Banes are able to resist the tides of faith, and these have usually staked out their own "territories" — sites of brutal torture or gang-rapes, mass graves — where the resonance of past evils lingers on, and sustains them.

Nonetheless, the power of Faith cannot be overestimated in these times. Certain sites, such as the hill of Golgotha, are almost impossible for Garou to tread due to the spiritual focus of millions of believers. There is a strong presence of the Weaver in Jerusalem as well — the focus of monotheism and religious order has established a good deal of spirit-webbing in the Penumbra.

Other Sites

Damascus and Baghdad are two of the most visited cities in the Middle East, and neither claims that honor from pilgrimages alone. Rather, both are centers of trade between East and West. Damascus served as a center for Saladin's resistance to the Crusaders for during the last Crusade; Baghdad, by compare, is the seat of the religious leader of Islam (the Caliph). Mosques, libraries, universities and more dot these cities, attracting Children of Gaia and Warders of Men alike. What's more, neither city has an overabundance of hostile vampires; the undead that do claim these cities as home are usually deal-makers, diplomats and manipulators first and bestial predators second.

North Africa

The northern reaches of Africa do not belong to the Garou. The only werewolves in these lands are a scattering of Warders, Children of Gaia and Silent Striders, all of whom are generally drawn to the cities of the Almohad Empire. The capital, Marrakech, is where most of these

The Crusades

Nominally campaigns waged by the will of God, the Crusades proved to be largely nothing but a brutal, bloody mess. In the Dark Medieval world, they are even worse. Although the occasional Garou (and the more common vampire) rides along with the armies in order to see other lands and spill the blood of foreigners, for the most part the Crusades are a human endeavor.

The First Crusade begins in 1096 and ends with a horrible slaughter in Jerusalem in 1099. Bands of poorly armed pilgrims mass at the bidding of priests; their massacre of Jews in the Rhine valley serves as a sort of prequel to the bloodshed of the Crusades. Silent Striders and Children of Gaia lose many Kin in Jerusalem in the final three-day bloodbath. When the Striders spread word to the various septs of the Garou Nation, they are met with reactions from apathy to fury — but, in the end, the werewolves fall back to business as usual. Those with vendettas against the Church strike with even more passion; those who care nothing for the plight of far-off foreigners do nothing.

The Second Crusade is caused by the 1144 Muslim conquest of Odessa — however, it's not until 1147 that the Crusaders actually set out. In the process, the Crusaders gain very little ground, but manage to take Portugal from the Almohad. For years afterward, secret battles rage between invading Shadow Lords and Moorish Children of Gaia, to say nothing of the vampires' own struggles.

The Third Crusade is sparked by Saladin's reconquest of Jerusalem, in 1187. The Crusaders assemble from many sides, and are led by the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I, King Philip II of France, and King

Richard I, the Lion-Hearted, of England. It accomplishes little from the Church's point of view and serves as a poor rallying cry for the Garou. In 1192 it ends, mostly in defeat (for the Christians, that is).

And other Crusades will come. The Fourth Crusade will eventually destroy the Byzantine Empire, as Crusaders tear apart and loot Constantinople itself. (they never reach Jerusalem, however.) Soon thereafter comes the Children's Crusade — a terrible event in which thousands of children, cajoled into marching on Jerusalem, die of starvation and disease or are sold in the slave markets. Of all the Crusades, it is this "crusade" that gives the Defiler Wyrms more strength than any other. Further Crusades stab at Egypt, Tunis, the French Albigenes, Sicily and other targets — but in the end, none recapture the Holy Land.

The Crusades, ultimately, leave a bitter memory. They harden the Muslims against the Christians, and stir the Christians against the "heathen Saracens." Thousands of people die in horrible fashion, for the crime of worshipping the wrong God — or even speaking the wrong language. The Crusades eventually raise doubts among Christians, making religious fervor yield to skepticism and legalism.

It would be easy to see them as a tool of the Wyrms. But in truth, the Wyrms weren't strong enough in the beginning to manipulate innocent, gentle people to venture so far from home to commit such atrocities. Humans managed their brutality all on their own. And in doing so, they gave the Wyrms strength it had previously lacked.



wanderers secretly meet, carefully navigating by means of the secret glyphs clawed into the city's very stones. The Muslim population is not very welcoming to werewolves, and there are no native wolf populations to breed with, and so no tribe claims Morocco as territory.

Egypt itself is merely a legend to most Garou, and then only if a Strider has passed through and told her tale recently. As of the 12th century, no werewolves claim territory in the land of the Nile. Some of this no doubt stems from the lack of an actual native wolf population — the Striders are said to have bred with a long-vanished form of black half-dog, as well as the jackals of the sands, but no other tribe has adapted to such lupus Kin. The powerful Islamic faith of the natives is also a problem; their fierce monotheism doesn't offer much fertile ground for the seed of Gaian thought to grow. The remains of Saladin's military forces are also a consideration, as would be the rumors of terrible crocodile-creatures in the Nile that devour any Garou who stray close enough. But added to all these factors is the problem of the vampires.

The native Leeches of Egypt are a dangerous lot, all told. They appear to be of an entirely different breed than the *nosferatu* of Europe — the Striders' tales paint them as immortal beasts of the desert, creatures of night's deepest blackness who hunger for the very souls of the living. They

are magicians and terrors, almost demons clothed in cold flesh. And their power over their homeland is so absolute that it's said their curses are what have driven the Striders out forever. They have control over the slave trade in Alexandria, and one can only guess at the horrible fate that awaits certain folk luckless enough to end up on the auction block. Although the Striders return to Egypt now and again to make war on these undying serpents, no Strider has yet been able to actually rest on Egyptian soil. And without the guidance of the land's first shapechangers, it's unlikely that any other tribe will be able to claim the Nile for their own.

Further south lies Ethiopia, where Garou dare not go. The kingdom has been Christian for longer than many European provinces, and there are apparently creatures stalking the Ethiopian wilds who can kill even werewolves silently in the night. To be sure, some whisper that the Holy Ark itself is held in this distant kingdom — but it would take something of much more interest to the Garou to make a group of highly territorial werewolves leave their own realm to venture so far south.

The Umbra

Although the rules of the spirit world haven't changed much from the 12th century to the 20th, the Umbra of the Dark Medieval world is a much stronger entity. The spirits

of Gaia are more populous and active, and Banes are rarer. In the right areas, the Umbral sky becomes alive with the passage of spirits. The Weaver is rising, and the Wyrms is stirring, but neither have fully cast their power over the spirit world.

The Gauntlet stands, but its walls aren't as thick as they eventually will be. Particularly in the mystical places — midnight glades under the full moon, ghost-lit moors, gnarled oak forests, hidden mountain pools — the boundary between one world and the next is only the breadth of a single hair. There's truth to the tales of spirits entering the world when the moon hangs fat and low, or when the fall equinox comes; if the place and time are right, it becomes possible to unintentionally pass from one world to the other.

The Gauntlet

Area	Typical Gauntlet
Major cities (Rome, Constantinople)	7
Most cities or towns	6
Villages, hamlets, farmed land	5
Wilderness	4
Typical active caern	3
Powerful caern	2
The greatest caerns	1

The Penumbra

The spirit reflection of much of medieval Europe is vibrant and alive, filled with color and movement. Of course, this is mainly true in the wilds, but only the largest and oldest cities have made much of a reflection on the Penumbra. Where the Gauntlet is weak, the Penumbra closely mirrors the physical world — great trees stand in the same place in both locations, spirits resembling local animal life move through the area much as their terrestrial cousins do, and so on. But where the Gauntlet is high, the Penumbra doesn't offer that much at all. Where blocks and blocks of houses and huts stand in the physical world, only a great dead patch filled with stationary mist might exist in the spirit world. If spirits have inhabited the city, then perhaps Penumbra reflections of the buildings exist, woven out of the Pattern Web — but only buildings with spiritual significance, good or malign, bear a close resemblance to their physical versions. The Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, for instance, has a Penumbra reflection that glows with the color of Byzantine art — and the dungeons of Count Vladimir Rustovich shine with malevolent foulness on the other side of the Gauntlet.

The Wyrms' touch on the Penumbra is rare in these days. Hellholes have yet to spring into being in any numbers. Although the pollution of a major city, even in the medieval age, has a debasing spiritual effect on the





local Penumbra, there are too many other spiritual forces at work in a city. The cities that run with taint lean more toward producing Blights — but these are still weak, nothing compared to the blasted Umbrasces of the Last Days.

There are allegedly areas of pure Wyld in the Penumbra, places where spirit life is created in purest form as if spouting from a spring. These areas are never linked to Garou caerns, for although the spiritual energy is powerful indeed, the everyday process of constantly shifting spirit-form would make caern life exceedingly difficult.

Realms

Not all Umbral Realms are constant from one age to the next. Some arise only when there's been a great change in the spiritual texture of the world, something that ensures the Earth will never be the same again. It's for this reason that Scar and the CyberRealm are yet undiscovered, nor is there even a hint of their birth. The Flux Realm, Pangaea, the Aetherial Realm and the Arcadia Gateway all exist relatively unchanged, and are not common destinations for medieval Garou. The Tribal Homelands are also reachable, but the Garou do not generally welcome outsiders into their own homelands — it is a sad thing that the Croatan and Bunyip will eventually fall, and virtually none among the living will be able to recall what their Umbral lands were like while the tribes lived. Those Realms that remain are still the goal of many Umbral quests, particularly by young cubs who are eager to learn as much as possible about the world outside their bawn.

- **Abyss:** If anything, the Abyss is all the more terrifying in this age — the Umbral embodiment of nothingness and ignorance is a terrifying image to the superstitious. For the longest time, it was believed that nothing could exist along the Abyss' cliffs — until recently, when it was revealed that a powerful Garou of unknown tribe has claimed the Realm for his own. A couple of packs have been sent to learn more about this mysterious "Nightmaster," but none have returned as of yet.

- **Atrocity:** The Realm of brutal violence and cruelty is all too reachable in these times. Although history has yet to contribute a number of colors to its palette, it still remains a grotesque vista of the suffering that humans and werewolves alike inflict on one another. Most disturbing of all are a number of shadowy scenes that have recently arisen, scenes that have yet to make their imagery clear. All that visitors can make out are brief glimpses of indistinct torture, and the occasional glimpse of what appears to be the silhouette of a cross. Surely this is a sign of something to come — but the Garou can't figure out what.

• **Battleground:** To be sure, the Realm of constant war has long been in existence by medieval times. A few septs make a habit of bringing their cubs to Battleground to witness the Crusades being replayed; this is meant to educate the young werewolves in the ways that humans make war. As with the Atrocity Realm, some travelers can find faint shadows that hint at wars to come, but the Garou largely ignore these — after all, there are more pressing current concerns.

• **Erebus:** The Garou's analogue to Purgatory is doing brisk business in these times. The Realm has existed for centuries, but as the concepts of penance and purity through suffering spread across Europe, Erebus has strengthened and expanded its borders. The Realm's name exists on the tongues of most sept elders, and it is often suggested as a means of atoning for mistakes or sin.

• **Legendary Realm:** The Umbral Realm of myth and legend has a distinctly Greek feel to much of it in these times; it has always been fed by the legends of the past rather than the present, and the Romans just didn't leave that much distinct mythology behind. Some Theurges theorize that this Greek touch also has something to do with the humans' continued preservation of Greek literature, scant though it may be. There are also sections of the Realm which draw on Egyptian, Assyrian and Persian themes; theoretically, there might even be a portion dealing with the legendry of the Far East, but it would probably take a Garou versed in Cathayan culture to discover such an area.

• **Summer Country:** It still lingers out there, somewhere. Somewhere in the Umbra's most hidden regions lies a Realm of peace and comfort, where the true of heart can at last find total ease. But it might as well not, for all the attention most werewolves pay it. Most Garou are well content with the savage, free lives they lead in the wilds of Europe — and few people seek a better lot if they can remain content.

• **Wolfhome:** Some homids grow up full of superstition and fear, and believe firmly that they have become cursed to be like the Devil's beasts. Their elders sometimes bring them to Wolfhome, as a merciless education on what the wolf's side of the story is. The result is usually a more mellowed, understanding pup.

Faerie

No examination of the Dark Medieval world would be complete without discussing the Good Folk, the Fair Folk, the Old Ones — the fae. Occasional ally and sometimes foe, the creatures of faerie are living embodiments of wildness and passion. Those who deal with them are encouraged to tread carefully and politely.



In many ways, the fae are manifestations of the Wyld itself. Several bear some resemblance to Nature-spirits; several tales of nymphs, wood-wives, will-o'-the-wisps and intelligent animals are inspired by faeries. Others are almost living personifications of human standards, such as the sidhe (who seem to be nobility given flesh) or the more hideous goblins of greed, gluttony and malice. There are a few human-born faelings, it's said, but their power is nothing next to that of the true fae.

Like the Garou, the fae recognize the Gnosis that lies beneath the heart of the land, and they too are attracted to areas where Gaia's lifeblood lies close to the surface. Faeries claim certain of these territories for their own, much like Garou caerns. And, just as with caerns, the faeries' power is greatly increased within these places.

However, faerie magic is very different than the spiritual powers Gnosis grants. The fae call it Glamour, and the name is appropriate. Glamour is the power to befuddle and lead astray, although the higher-born fae are able to call on greater abilities. Common effects include the ability to make oneself seem more splendid and beautiful; twisting trails and muddling a target's sense of direction; illusions that make objects seem more valuable than they are; completing tasks at incredible speed; calling thunder and frost even in summertime, and so on.

The fae apparently have a realm of their own within the Umbra, but it's as tailored to them as Erebus is to the Garou. The most any Umbral traveler can hope for is to stumble across the Arcadia Gateway, but even this is more of a realm touched and shaped by Faerie than an actual doorway therein. The only known way to enter the realm of Faerie (also called Arcadia) is to be fairy-led — taken by fae who are capable of bringing others with them to their homeland. Even so, tales persist of wanderers entering into faerie places and vanishing into the fae realms, as easily as turning down the wrong track in a dark wood. Fae spirits aren't uncommon in the Umbra, either; these mercurial wildlings can be treated much like any other spirit, but are difficult to barter with.

And what makes the fae of particular concern to the Garou? Many things. Leaving aside the infamous connection between Fianna and fae, the Fair Folk exist in many of the same territories as do werewolves. A wood that's wolf-haunted might also be a "fey place" — and if the faeries commonly cloak themselves in glamours and hide themselves from the Garou, who's to notice? Lupus senses *might* be sharp enough to pierce a glamour, but it's not a given.

The fae are notorious for kidnapping human babes and leaving changelings in their place. If this is true, then certainly human Kin wouldn't be immune. What's more, certain tricksters are fond of playing games with wild animals, so lupus Kin aren't free from fey attentions, either.

There are even certain of the fae that have... fallen. Human legend has it that the Good Folk must pay a tithe of

souls each year to Hell; it may be true that some of the faeries have a pact with an adversary of a different nature. Are the human babes they kidnap meant to be raised as their own, or are they destined for a horrible fate in the place of fae children? Even Fianna legend is unclear whether the terrible one-eyed Balor, king of the first fomori, was indeed a fae prince rather than a mortal fomor. Of all the Good Folk, it's these — those with sullied, muddied blood — that are the most cruel. They're also among the most dangerous of Garou enemies — for there are few werewolves experienced at overcoming the dark glamours of the fae.

The Wyrms

The great enemy of the Garou isn't at its peak in the Dark Medieval setting. This is a time before the blights of industrial pollution, an age when the state-of-the-art in biological warfare is launching rotten meat over an enemy's walls. There are no weapons of ultimate destruction, no factory-produced narcotics, no vivisection labs. The Wyrms have yet to see the full progress of cruelty and corruption — and as such, it isn't strong enough to spark the Apocalypse yet. Were the final battle to take place at the end of the 12th century, the outcome would be anyone's guess.

Even so, the Wyrms are not going away any time soon, and it has *never* been weak. Already the fomori have carved their way into the legendry of the British Isles, and the Zmei have raged across the steppes of Russia. The Wyrms have already achieved one of its greatest victories — the corruption and downfall of an entire Garou tribe. Its monsters breed in pits deep under the world's skin, and its spirit legions flit from city to city, fattening themselves on the myriad blasphemies and cruelties of humanity. People torture, murder, rape and steal as they always have; the only difference is that there are fewer people, so the scale is slightly smaller. The Garou's situation isn't desperate yet — but the werewolves have no room to grow fat and idle.

Spiritual Corruption

The Dark Medieval world isn't the Last Days, but it does have its fair share of spiritual decay. However, this rot is subtly scattered across the continent, rather than heaped up in obvious piles of toxic waste and battlefields ravaged by biological weapons. Wyrms caerns are hardly common; the greatest of the time is a vast Pit deep under the Scottish highlands, carefully concealed from the prying eyes and noses of the newly-arrived Fianna.

Few areas have seen enough atrocity to taint the local spirit landscape, and several that have are also the focus of human True Faith; in effect, the faith of thousands of innocents keeps the Wyrms from hooking a

clawhold into holy ground, even if blood has soaked the cobbles. Therefore, the Wyrms take what it can get. The few major tainted caerns are invariably captured and corrupted Gaian caerns; although the Wyrms' forces are weak by compare to the Gaian Garou, the lack of communication between Garou septs means that a fallen caern's neighbors might not hear of their fellows' fall until years had passed, if at all.

Minor Blights do exist, however. Despite the lack of industrialization, there are plenty of human pollutants to go around, especially without the benefit of many modern ideas about hygiene. Sewage-choked watering holes, poisoned wells, great stretches of burned old-growth forests — there's some territory for the Wyrms to claim for its own. It's all a matter of scale, and the Wyrms' forces simply operate on a scale appropriate to the more sparsely populated Dark Ages.

What's more, humans in this age are as easy to lead down the path of temptation as they are in any other time period. For every priest of true heart who does charitable works and forgives rather than condemns, there are a hundred individuals who mouth their prayers and abide by the letter of the law, not the spirit. Superstition and xenophobia make it terribly easy to set one person against his neighbor; add in a dose of rationalization through patriotism or religious dogma, and a person will do just about anything. And, of course, there are the vampires who manipulate kings and priests, making human puppets dance for their own amusement — there's nothing to delight a Bane's senses like a Tzimisce garden of "delights" or a Toreador grand feast.

And, as always, the Wyrms replace one pawn with another when the time is right. Once the vampires have ceased to be a practical means of spreading suffering, and the humans have finally decided to fight to take back their own lives, the next step is the Inquisition.

No, the Wyrms' not going anywhere any time soon....

Black Spiral Dancers

The fallen tribe doesn't yet have members to spare. Only recently have they completed their tunnels from Scotland to the continent, to begin spreading their influence across Europe as a whole. For now, they act in great secrecy, breeding as quickly as possible and carefully husbanding their strength. Most Dancer caerns spawn a few metis for extra numbers, but the Dancers cannot afford to spend too much valuable time breeding tribemates who can't themselves increase the tribe's numbers. As a result, the percentage of metis among the fallen tribe is relatively low (although still much higher than that of any Gaian tribe). As a whole, the Dancers have yet to exhibit all the deformities that will later plague their line; Pure Breed is still possible for some Dancers, although the tribe's white coats have quickly taken on a fouled gray-green sheen.





The Dancers have one particular edge in their favor in these days: The Ten Tribes still believe that all Black Spiral Dancers are of White Howler blood. Not many werewolves yet realize that any member of any tribe can be made to dance the Spiral, thus breaking their connection to Gaia and starting them down the path of the Wyrms. It's often inconceivable that a clean-limbed Garou of a proud red Fianna coat or the grey pelt of a Fenrir might actually be wholly on the Enemy's side — and this is a weapon the Dancers gladly use.

Monsters

And, of course, there are monsters in these days. Fomori are born here and there, usually one at a time — although that's all it often takes to bring about the ruination or corruption of a single hamlet. The infamous Black Monk of later years is the most terrible and feared example of the evil one fomor can accomplish in his time. What's more, there are a few blasted heaths and slimy pits hidden here and there across Europe, where fomori breed in hordes between loosing themselves on the Garou. The battles in Ireland with a few of these fomori armies battle-hardened the Fianna not so very long ago, and gave rise to numerous tales across the isle.

There are older, greater, more powerful things as well. Of these, the most dreaded are the Zmei, great Russian dragon-things with all the power of Incarna made flesh. However, there are many more monsters of inhuman origin and great age hidden across the continent; some of these become remembered in fearful peasant tales, while others are quickly and deliberately forgotten.

Dragons, ogres and giants are the things of fairy stories — the monsters born of the Wyrms are much less palatable, and often best not mentioned. The tales of emerald-scaled serpents belching fire are often born from a tale-teller's unwillingness to recall the true hideousness of a oily-skinned, acidic Glutton Worm. The fumbling ogres and trolls of later fairy tales are nothing like the hulking, lustful Bane-possessed brutes that ravage the Dark Medieval countryside. Stories of goat-footed wood-sprites bent on ravishing young maidens might allude to the fae — or they might be euphemisms for the horrible servants of the Defiler Wyrms.

The medieval monsters bred in the Wyrms' cesspits are only somewhat numerous, all things considered. There's room aplenty for them to run — but at the same time, they have yet to learn subtlety. A cyclopean beast-fomor might ravage a hamlet before Garou bring it down, but the humans are more easily replaced than the beast. Several species of monster are driven to bloody (and, at least in this case, deserved) extinction by hunting packs of werewolves. Gradually, the Wyrms' minions learn that giant, marauding brutes have their place — but that subtlety is far, far more efficient.



In all, the Wurm may be weak when compared to modern times — but its strength grows with each rising moon. Although the Garou are strong enough to overthrow its forces, they are not organized enough to do so. And they are prideful in these times — so prideful that they leave themselves open to dark suggestions and evil impulses. They

fail only a little at a time, but that's all the Wurm needs over the centuries to come.

Still, one wonders what the world would be like if they had organized, and had actually succeeded in righting the Balance once again....







Chapter Two: The Ten Tribes

*We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he today who that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother.*

— William Shakespeare, *King Henry V*

Of the fifteen tribes still in existence in the Dark Ages, only ten are represented in medieval Europe. The three tribes of the Pure Ones—the Croatan, Uktena and Wendigo—are ending off the war with the monsters and Banes native to their new homeland. The Bunyip have settled completely into Australia; they have adapted away from breeding with wolves and are now completely reliant on their new marsupial Kin. And the Stargazers have yet to leave their Eastern lands in any force — although perhaps the eventual establishment of the Silk Road will change that.

Of course, it is possible for a member of one of these other tribes to venture to Europe via Umbral pathways, but Storytellers should think twice about allowing such a thing. Just as a Fianna would be out of place in a chronicle taking place in ancient Greece, a Pure One or Stargazer would not fit in well to a Dark Ages game, and would probably detract from the isolationist, territorial mood of the setting. Let them in with caution.

Black Furies

Demetria grinned as she watched the flames lick out of the monastery's windows. She kicked the monk's lifeless head toward the rest of his body. These men had imposed their will, their tyrant God's law on the women of the valley long enough. Disgusting creatures — useless even as breeding stock.

Her smile left her as she turned back toward the nuns, who knelt near the monks' corpses, their wails and prayers mingling with the gouting smoke. Poor women — to be so utterly deceived by the Patriarch and his minions, locked inside stone walls, their womanhood offered up as a sacrifice to a despot, jealous deity.

Demetria spat a silent curse at the men who made them that way, and then a second one at the nuns themselves. What weak fools they were!

They continued to scream for Irene's return. Irene's father had consigned her to this life, but Demetria would not allow this girl to undergo her First Change in the Patriarch's lair.

Demetria took her wolf form and howled at the moon. She ran through the woods, knowing her sisters would follow. Her concern was not with the Patriarch's cows — perhaps the others of her sept would return and try to help them, and perhaps they would even be successful with a few. But her duty was to Irene, her newest sister. She couldn't wait to begin showing Irene what the humans had kept from her for so long.

The Furies of the Dark Ages are creatures of the wild woods and long fangs, fiercely defending the old pagan ways. They have carefully watched the expansion of the Christian church over the centuries, and they see it as no less than a gauntlet thrown down by the Wyrn. Although some Furies prefer to gently influence their mortal wards, often spreading the word of Gaia through the gospel of the Virgin Mary, a growing number believe that the only way to keep the Patriarch's grasping talons away is by bloodshed.

Ironically enough, this bloodthirsty attitude comes back to haunt the Furies all too soon. When the Inquisition begins in earnest, the Fury-spawned tales of shapeshifting witchwomen only encourages the Church's bloody campaign of witchhunting. Even the most gentle



and sacred of Gaian rites are denounced as heresy, and a time is coming when many Fury Kin and their allies are burned.

Determined to maintain the all-female tribal membership, the Furies have traditionally killed any male children born to them (although male children born to Kin were allowed to survive). Now an argument divides the Furies, as some of their number denounce the practice as wasteful, foolish and cruel. This growing minority allow their male children to live, so that they may one day be able to pass on the blood of the Furies to their daughters. The Furies intend to carefully watch these male children and their descendants. Elders of both the Children of Gaia and the Silent Striders have agreed to take in any of the male cubs who show signs of undergoing the Change.

One of the few exceptions to this law is that of the metis. From time to time, a Fury breaks the first tenet of the Litany and births a male metis cub. Although some elders charge that a deformed body must house a deformed spirit, the Furies as often as not decide that punishing a child for a mother's sin is poor precedent. Once in a while, the line blurs even further, and male cubs that ordinarily would have been killed are allowed to survive. The reasoning varies from situation to situation (and, after all, this happens very rarely), but usually it's decided that a male metis, raised at the sept by necessity, has a better chance of growing up receptive to the Mother. No Black Fury sept has ever lost a metis to the Patriarch....

Territory

Though they claim Greece as their homeland, the Black Furies range over all of southern Europe. They have some territory in the Italian city-states, and representatives at many of the greater multi-tribal septs in France, Byzantium and Iberia. However, few Furies have been able to establish themselves in northern Europe or Britain, where the male-dominated Fenrir and Fianna resist their presence. Indeed, as wandering Furies push farther across Europe in order to learn more of the land, the Dark Medieval age is the one to see the full flowering of the rivalry between the tribes of Fenris and Pegasus.

Fury caerns are almost always in the heart of the wilderness, far from human-worked lands. According to Fury legend, Artemis herself (one of the faces of Luna) charged the tribe with caring for the wildest of places. What's more, many Furies feel that the Triat's imbalance can only be preserved by strengthening the Wyld — and who better to nurture the force of life and creation than a tribe of women? As a result, the Furies visit their human Kin only rarely, traveling many leagues in wolf-form now and again in order to learn news, breed when necessary, and carry any new-changed Furies back to the sept.

The Black Furies believe that breeding is a sacred duty and gift, and carefully choose the fathers of their children.

Some among the more extreme Furies breed only with wolves, thus avoiding contact with narrow-minded human men. Others carefully maintain small dynasties of Kinfolk, to improve the chance of their children being Garou. There is a small minority of Black Furies who look for a truly loving relationship, but most Furies feel that their role is as a warrior, not a wife.

Camps

The Amazons of Diana and Bacchanantes have existed as long as man has abused woman, and both camps have a lasting grudge against the Church. The Freebooters are in full strength in these times as well, and care more for uncovering fetishes and artifacts of power than they do for securing the areas of the Wyld — for the Wyld is still strong. And the Temple of Artemis continues to keep the tribe's traditions and rituals as they have done since the time of the First Daughters.

By compare, neither the Moon-Daughters nor the Sisterhood have come into existence yet. The Moon-Daughters arise when women begin to have leisure time and are receptive to subtle education — and leisure time is many centuries away. Similarly, the Sisterhood emerges as a response to the not-yet-dawned Inquisition, when the vampires' rule (and in some cases, the Furies' militant acts) sparks the Church into outright persecution.

- The most characteristic camp of the medieval Furies is the **Order of Our Merciful Mother**, which will survive into the twentieth century. This recently founded camp treats the Church not as a foe, but as a possible ally. The Order's sisters focus on changing the Church from within, and trying to reinforce a love of the Mother through the Church. They emphasize the grace of the Virgin Mary, and often ally with the religious reformers among the Children of Gaia and other tribes. Their membership is popular and growing, as more and more homid Furies spend their childhood raised on the doctrine of the Church. Alas, the very existence of this camp offends the Amazons of Diana, and the two frequently find themselves in bloody conflict with each other. Sisters of the Order may select Mother's Touch as if it were a Fury Gift.

Allies and Foes

The Black Furies aren't renowned for having any tribal allies as such; their crusade to better woman's lot has made them quite bitter in these oppressive times, and they're not exactly prone to making friends. Most frequently, any supernatural help a Fury sept might receive comes from the witches and wisewomen of the land, sorceresses who prefer the pagan ways to that of the Church and find themselves working to much the same ends as do the Furies. These alliances are sporadic, however; a canny witch knows it's foolish to off-handedly reveal her presence to a pack of

bloodthirsty werewolves, and the Furies don't exactly look too hard to find allies outside the Garou Nation. Only the Order of the Merciful Mother is open-minded enough to strike such allegiances readily — but they tend to attract allies within the Church, not without.

The Furies are particularly shunned by the fae, due in no small part to a number of poor past encounters. The Good Folk have always been fond of visiting mortals and... playing with them for a time, in the name of good sport. Unfortunately for them, the Furies take brutal offense at anyone using their Kin poorly. As a result, not even the boldest satyr will set foot anywhere near a Fury bawn, for they know full well what the Furies have done to their kind before.

Although there is intense debate among the Furies whether or not the mortal Church itself is a true enemy of the tribe, there's no doubt that the vampires and other monsters in cleric's clothing are their foes. The Black Furies have a particular vendetta against the Wyrms' servants who lurk in the church and use its dogma to their own ends. Even so, that doesn't mean that they focus only on Christian (or mock Christian) threats; the Furies have always striven to exterminate Banes and Wyrms-monsters that prey on women, such as the Hungarian Liderci or the demented fomori of the Defiler Wyrms. Even succubi, Enticers and other demons that take woman's shape are especial enemies of the tribe; after all, such creatures contribute to the poor opinion medieval man has of medieval woman. The Furies have a long, long way to go in their struggle — and with the Inquisition on the horizon, they haven't even hit the worst of it yet.

Backgrounds: No restrictions.

Beginning Gifts: Heightened Senses, Man's Skin, Sense Wyrms

Quote

What's this, king's man? You seem to have dropped your sword! Are you frightened of me? Are you unable to break any woman over the age of thirteen? ANSWER ME!

Stereotypes

- **Bone Gnawers** — They have a greater strength than most suspect, but the rat leads them through the refuse of humans.

- **Children of Gaia** — Their hearts are in the right place, but they cannot see the war around them.

- **Fenrir** — Arrogant and ignorant. They are no strangers to battle, true, but that only makes their lust for conquest all the worse.

- **Fianna** — They try to protect humans from the iron talon of the Church, but they lose their path in too much drink and song.

- **Red Talons** — A noble tribe and true to the Mother. If they would take kin among the humans, they would be doubly wise.

- **Shadow Lords** — A well-named tribe who stray close to the darkest portions of the land. We don't need allies so badly that we should place ourselves in their debt.

- **Silent Striders** — Travelers who are well-learned in ancient wisdom and well-versed in news of the world. We would do well to make them feel welcome at our caerns.

- **Silver Fangs** — They were once our greatly respected brethren, but too many of their Kinfolk have joined the forces of the Patriarch for our liking. We will not let them lose sight of Gaia's plan.

- **Warders** — They embrace the unnatural, cold, Patriarch-loving cities of the Church. The best place for them is on their knees begging for mercy.

Bone Gnawers

Graytooth couldn't stand watching the children begging in the streets any longer. He stood up in his rags, letting the dust and trash fall to the stones. He coughed noisily, and the young ones' pinched faces turned toward him.

"Children, come and follow me," he said.

"Look, Uncle Graytooth wants to help," said one waif, and just like that, they were on their feet and following him.

Graytooth led his tiny mob to the stout fortress home of the merchant Anselmo, a man who'd grown fat off trade in dyes and cloths. His own mouth started to water as he smelled the fine food in the air. He strode up to the guards at the door like a king returning home, although his retinue was rather less impressive than the royal guard.

"Excuse me, good sirs," he said. A brutal glare was the only reply.

Graytooth shrugged — and then cracked their heads together. He kicked open the door with one solid blow. As he shouldered his way through, he whispered words in the tongue of spirits: Great Rat, come and paint the plague on my face.

"What's the meaning of this?" shouted Anselmo, standing up from his dinner table — and then he gasped, for he stared into the lesion-covered face of Death itself.

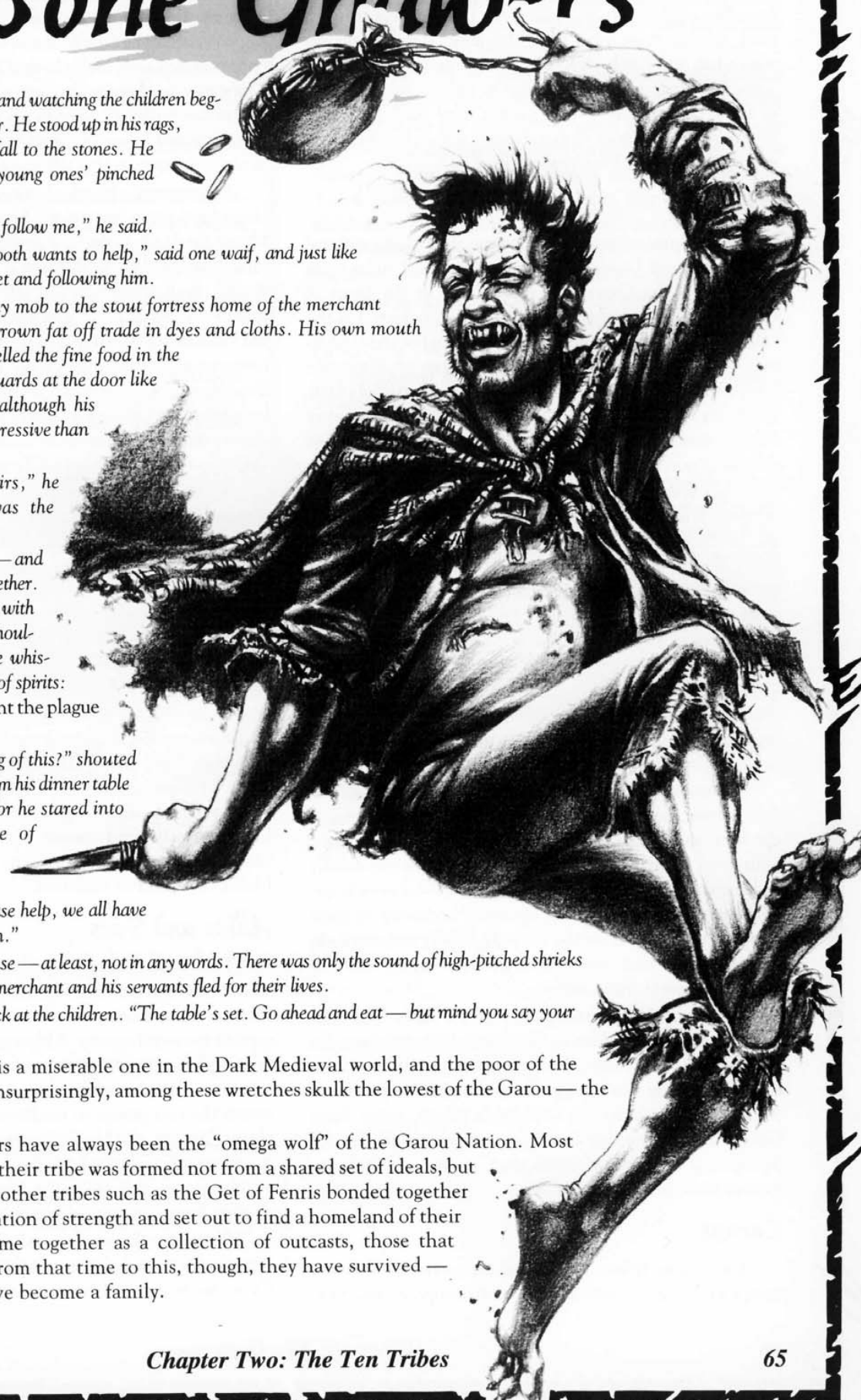
"The plague..." moaned Graytooth. "Please help, we all have the plague. We're unclean."

He didn't get a response — at least, not in any words. There was only the sound of high-pitched shrieks and pounding feet as the merchant and his servants fled for their lives.

Graytooth looked back at the children. "The table's set. Go ahead and eat — but mind you say your prayers first."

The peasant's lot is a miserable one in the Dark Medieval world, and the poor of the cities fare no better. Unsurprisingly, among these wretches skulk the lowest of the Garou — the Bone Gnawers.

The Bone Gnawers have always been the "omega wolf" of the Garou Nation. Most other Garou hold that their tribe was formed not from a shared set of ideals, but from necessity. While other tribes such as the Get of Fenris bonded together from a common admiration of strength and set out to find a homeland of their own, the Gnawers came together as a collection of outcasts, those that nobody else wanted. From that time to this, though, they have survived — and in doing so, they've become a family.



In the days of the Roman Empire, the Bone Gnawers discovered compassion, and learned that they despised the institution of slavery. These days, the feudal system seems to be only a step or two up. And so the Gnawers continue to work among those who have the least, fighting against starvation and harsh weather to keep their charges alive. They face their greatest challenge in warring for the spirits of their chosen folk — no matter how hard the Bone Gnawers try to change things, hope is still in terribly short supply in the Dark Medieval world.

Territory

Bone Gnawers make their home in the growing cities of the world, from London to Constantinople. Unlike most other tribes, the Gnawers prefer to live in the heart of humanity. They see their own persecution reflected in the faces of the humans around them, and do what they can to ease the suffering of the poor. Although they often migrate from territory to territory, they encounter surprisingly little resistance from local Garou — it would seem that most other tribes consider the Gnawers incapable or unwilling to upset the status quo. For the most part, they're right.

They breed with the survivors of hardship, and so there are many Jews, mixed-bloods and other "undesirables" among the ranks of Bone Gnawer Kin. They are a tough tribe of many bloods, which is only furthered by the tendency of some Bone Gnawers to choose mates out of love rather than more practical reasons. Of all the tribes, Bone Gnawers are also the most accepting of metis. This doesn't mean that they encourage their tribemates to mate with one another — for certainly that'd bring the wrath of the other tribes on their heads — but with all the suffering in the world, it seems only right to extend a little mercy to those born with a touch more original sin.

In these days, Bone Gnawer caerns are more often rural than urban; the cities themselves are still rather young, as the spirit world goes, and have yet to flower into spiritual entities in their own right. The tribe's caerns are usually dedicated to stamina, survival or willpower — or even hope. Although the tribe has tried on many occasions to open caerns of fertility and plenty, they are usually without luck; it seems fated that Rat's children will forever have to scabble for what they need.

Disease is the greatest enemy of the Bone Gnawers. They get to watch firsthand as leprosy and plague savage the city dwellers. As a result, the Gnawers have cultivated the friendship of the Children of Gaia, the greatest healers of the tribes. Thanks to the Children's efforts, many Bone Gnawer Kinfolk are able to survive and prosper in even the worst privation — and in return, the Children find that they have at least one ally in any city.

Camps

Like most tribes, the Bone Gnawers have fewer camps existing in these days; the philosophies and pos-

sibilities of the time are still rather limited. With the Apocalypse still far away, the Deserters have yet to form; similarly, the Frankweilers don't exist until the 20th century. Bone Gnawers still live and breed among the impoverished, but the feudal system doesn't allow for the "poor landowner" lifestyle that gives rise to the Hillfolk. The occasional Bone Gnawer rabble-rouser and forebear to the Rat Finks pops up from time to time, but the camp doesn't emerge as such until the public receives a bit more influence in the affairs of their leaders.

However, the Hood is beginning to take shape in these times (and exists beyond the bounds of Sherwood Forest). Many idealistic young Gnawers are joining the Hood's ranks, intrigued by the concept of *organized* redistribution of wealth. As highwaymen and robber kings, they find a new way to take food from those who have plenty and put it in the mouths of the starving. The occasional ghoulish tale of ravenous werewolves also gives credence to the existence of the Maneaters — after all, in times of hunger, it's all too tempting for a Gnawer to feed himself and remove a surplus hungry mouth or three at the same time. However, another Bone Gnawer camp takes a different approach to hunger...

- **Children of Famine:** These Bone Gnawers are renowned for being militant and merciful in equal measure. Hunger may well be a way of life among the medieval poor — but the Children of Famine do their best to alleviate the problem. They're known to poach on royal lands or steal grain from monastic granaries during lean times. However, the Children are also of the opinion that Gaia never meant for Her children to go hungry — and where famine goes, it must be due to the Wyrms. If a drought or blight comes on the land, the Children typically go looking for someone to blame. If they can find someone stockpiling food, then they enact a rough justice on the miser — but even when the hungry times aren't aggravated by outside help, the Children still find *someone* to blame. That someone usually winds up watering the barren fields with his blood as a form of sacrifice.

Allies and Foes

The Bone Gnawers aren't renowned for their diplomacy and etiquette. Small wonder, then, that they have few staunch allies among the Garou Nation itself, much less outside werewolf society. Although the tribal elders of later years will eventually strike up contacts with the Nosferatu vampires, there's nothing but a low, grudging rivalry between the two groups in medieval times. Like other vampires of the age, the Nosferatu are notorious for ghouling as many mortals as they can and feeding without much care for retribution — but since the Nosferatu's hunts typically overlap Bone Gnawer protectorates, blood's likely to flow.

One particular secret, one kept even from the majority of their own tribe, is the knowledge that the Ratkin still live. Only the wisest and most canny of the tribe know this

Stereotypes

- **Black Furies** — They may look down on us, but we both fight the same war for the same purpose.
- **Children of Gaia** — Had churchmen and nobles twice the virtue and grace they claim, they'd still be apes next to the Children.
- **Fenrir** — They don't understand that winning battles isn't worth losing the war.
- **Fianna** — Too wrapped up in their heritage to understand the real world. Yet they're often willing to share their brew — and fine stuff it is! — and all you need do is sit, listen to their boasts and smile.
- **Red Talons** — Beasts even to our eyes! Are they so blind they can't see the pain they bring? Or are they monster enough not to care?
- **Shadow Lords** — Masters of the darkness, aye. They make deals with creatures we don't want to meet and play with powers we don't want to understand.
- **Silent Striders** — It's hard to be at one's ease when one of these princes-in-exile is nearby. What do they see when they go beyond the bounds of city and country alike?
- **Silver Fangs** — Our noble lords are just like any other lords — they forget the needs of their charges for the sake of their own glory.
- **Warders** — A good lot as a whole. Horribly misunderstood by the others.

particular secret, and they pass it on only to their most trusted successors. As a result, the elders of the Bone Gnawers can sometimes call on... resources from surprising directions, including crippling sicknesses that strike their high-born foes with alarming speed.

Apart from these contacts, the tribe generally occupies itself with the horrors likely to infest the Dark Medieval city or hamlet. All too often, this means mundane plague or famine — but there are plenty of Banes that breed in human misery, and are therefore drawn to the poor of the time. Tribal elders warn their young ones that the legends of child-snatching bogeymen aren't all fiction, and many Gnawers find themselves snout-to-snout with night-creeping terrors that make 20th-century urban legends look tame.

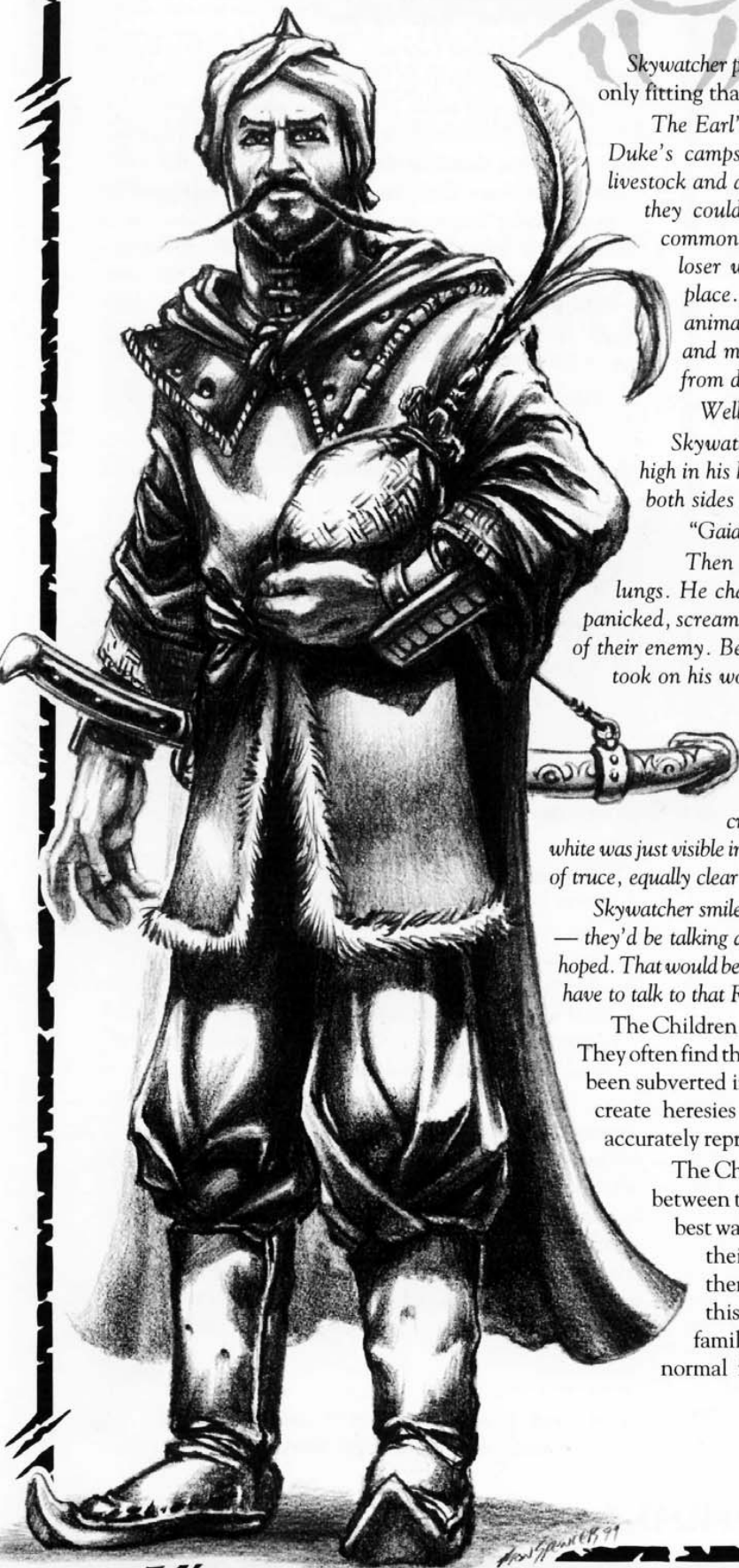
Backgrounds: Bone Gnawers may not buy Pure Breed, or Resources. However, a rare few still possess the gift of Past Life.

Beginning Gifts: Cooking, Scent of Sweet Honey, Trail of the Larder

Quote

"Blessed are the meek" — or don't you remember? Say it with me: "For they shall inherit the earth." D'you know why that's true, little lordling? It's true because the prideful creatures like you have gold and steel and land — but the meek have people like me running alongside them. You can scream if it makes you feel any better.

Children of Gaia



Skywatcher patiently waited as the full moon began its slow ascent. It is only fitting that it is a warrior's moon tonight, he thought.

The Earl's forces camped on one side of the battlefield, and the Duke's camps faced them. Each side accused the other of killing livestock and attacking peasants. Skywatcher shook his head. If only they could talk, maybe they would realize that they shared a common foe. No matter which side won tomorrow's battle, the loser would retreat to their castle. A long siege would take place. Trees would be cut down to build war machines, forest animals and livestock would die in droves to feed the besiegers, and many innocent people, including his Kinfolk, would die from disease and starvation as a result.

Well, no more. Not here. Not again.

Skywatcher walked into the middle of the field, holding a torch high in his hand. He took a deep breath as he heard the sentries on both sides shout alarms.

"Gaia above, I hope they don't have any silver..." he muttered.

Then he rose up into the Crinos, howling at the top of his lungs. He charged at one camp, then the other. Men on both sides panicked, screamed, ran — but a few seemed to hold, to half-see the shape of their enemy. Before the overly brave decided to do something bold, he took on his wolf's skin and raced off.

By the time he'd concealed himself up the mountain once more, the battlefield was mostly silent — or, at least, not filled with the ring of metal and the screams of dying men. Skywatcher settled in, and watched as torches crept carefully from both sides toward the center. A patch of white was just visible in the light of one side — and soon, he could see the other flag of truce, equally clear.

Skywatcher smiled to himself as the envoys from each side met at the center — they'd be talking about what sort of witchcraft had bedeviled them both, he hoped. That would be some suffering ended — or postponed, anyway. Now, he'd have to talk to that Red Talon pack.

The Children of Gaia are busy indeed in this time of war and suffering. They often find themselves at odds with the Church, which many feel has been subverted into an agent of the Wyrms. Many Children support or create heresies and sects within the church that they feel more accurately represent their ideals and reflect Gaia's love for all beings.

The Children feel that the Impergium drove too deep a wedge between the Garou and humanity, and that their Kinfolk are the best way to influence the course of human events. They reveal their Garou natures to especially loved and trusted Kin, then allow them to guide other Kinfolk to action. Due to this network, the Children tend to be much closer to their families, and some are even able to maintain a relatively normal family life — although only in the most secluded

villages are they able to avoid suspicion from superstitious townsfolk. Even the Children of Gaia smell of Rage.

The Children of Gaia feel responsible for all of Gaia's children. Given the opportunity, most of them would gladly claim every living being as part of their protectorate. Practically speaking, however, many living beings are beyond their reach, no matter how hard the Children might wish otherwise. The Children feel a special affinity for the peasants and the outcasts, as well as for some persecuted religious minorities.

Children of Gaia can often be found among the pacifistic Christian sects, using their positions to promote religious and social freedom and tolerance. Some are scribes, using their craft to subtly and quietly subvert the church's stranglehold on knowledge. The Children believe that secrecy and suppression of learning aid the Wyrms' depravities, and some have begun trying to resurrect the teachings of the classical Greeks.

Territory

The Children consider all of Gaia to be their territory. As such, they do not limit themselves to any particular region, although they find that humans are often more receptive to their teachings in the Middle East. They believe that the division of the world into dukedoms and baronies is just as much an affront to Gaia's will as the division among the tribes. The Children pick their mates from anyone sympathetic to their beliefs. Often these are good-hearted peasants, occasionally enlightened nobles or members of pacifist Christian groups — some Children have even gone so far as to quietly seduce the gentlest of monks in hopes that their purity of soul breeds true. Most Children prefer to mate with humans, to strengthen the Kinfolk network; this practice is reinforced by their lack of any real territory where wolf Kin might run.

Like most other tribes of the time, the Children of Gaia keep caerns in the wilderness, yet not too far from their gathered Kin. They have a particular interest in caerns of fertility, healing and calm, and a few of the greater tribal caerns serve as sites of pilgrimage for Garou who require a grievous wound healed or curse lifted.

Camps

The Children of Gaia have few camps; they generally resist the divisiveness that so plagues human and Garou alike. Disagreement and dissent are not only tolerated among the Children — they are expected. The Children of Gaia believe that Gaia's gifts and purpose are too great to be contained in one ideology. As a result, their camps are highly fluid — a Child of Gaia may belong to many different, even contradictory, camps.

The Anointed Ones struggle to exist in these times, but exist they do. The One Tree are much better adapted to the brutality of the times, although they are unpopular among the tribe. The Aethera Inamorata keep a low profile in the Christian West, but exert their influence where they may. Only recently have the Angels of Gaia (one day to be called the Angels in the Garden) arisen. The Angels concern themselves with the plight of children, especially those whose families have been killed by war or disease and those who have been abandoned by their parents.

The Imminent Strike and the Patient Deed camps have not yet arisen, as they are reactions to the nearing of the Apocalypse. Likewise, Demeter's Daughters have not yet formed.

• **Servants of the Unicorn:** The largest and most powerful of the camps is not really a camp at all. The Servants of the Unicorn represent tribal ideals, and most of the Children consider themselves to be Servants. The most dedicated of the Servants actively seek disputes to mediate. In addition, the Servants spread the word of tribal unity, promoting the concept that all Garou are Children of Gaia. A small splinter of this camp calling itself the Crest of the Horn primarily concerns itself with Church disputes, and its most radical members are most often the ones fighting against the influence of the Church.

Allies and Foes

Despite their open manner and gentle grace, the European Children have few converts to stand at their side. A few scattered members of the Changing Breeds remember the tales of how the Children of Gaia refused to participate in the War of Rage — but this makes little difference to most of them. The Corax are sympathetic to the Children's cause, but are often bound by a sense of loyalty to other tribes; for instance, the newly-arrived Children of Scandinavia may be gentle souls, but the Fenrir there have proven themselves raven-friends for generation after generation. The Ceilican are a petty and spiteful folk, and see no reason to exclude the Children from their little pranks of revenge; after all, the Children may have preached peace once upon a time, but what good did *that* do? And the Ratkin — the Ratkin hate with only one exception, and that only an obligation to brothers and sisters of Rat.

Indeed, the Children have only a few scattered allies, and these are most often drawn from the ranks of witches and mystics. A Child of Gaia's protectorate often overlaps that of a village healer or magickally gifted priest, and if both are persons of compassion and spirituality, then the two may find they have something in common. These alliances are always individual in

Stereotypes

- **Black Furies** — True daughters of Gaia with great wisdom, but they may stray too far and sin too much in their efforts to protect females.
- **Bone Gnawers** — A wiser and stronger tribe than most realize. Do not judge them with your eyes.
- **Fenrir** — We grant them their due as soldiers, although their unwillingness to compromise with others may tear all tribes apart.
- **Fianna** — The bards and lorekeepers have powerful passions. They need our guidance to keep them from being consumed by their anger and guilt.
- **Red Talons** — They keep watch over the forests and the wolfpacks, but they must learn to survive without bringing back the Impergium.
- **Shadow Lords** — They can be the greatest of enemies and the greatest of allies. Be cautious in your dealings with them.
- **Silent Striders** — They come from lands of learning, yet share their knowledge grudgingly. What compels such silence?
- **Silver Fangs** — Trust in our leaders' decisions, yet remember that we should never give up our voice.
- **Warders** — Their ways are strange to us, and they seem overmuch enthralled with the art humanity makes, rather than the spirit that drives that art. Even so, they too are Gaia's children. They will play their part to make us stronger.

nature, however; if any greater sects of sorcerers exist, the Children know nothing of them.

Much as the Children are loath to admit it, many of the tribe's enemies lie within the medieval Church, and within the religions it opposes. The Crusades are nothing less than an abomination, and the revenges of the Muslim nations little better. But rather than take up sword and fang against the corrupt priests, the Children do their best to work slowly, countering messages of damnation and holy war with sermons of acceptance, redemption and love. It is a hard battle to fight, though, and the Children are too few to cut hate away from Christianity, Islam and pagan faiths alike.

Obviously, this frustrates the Children greatly. It's no wonder that when they hunt and catch a foe too corrupt to redeem, their justice is often more brutal than one might expect — but then again, even the Children of Gaia are werewolves, after all. Gaia's Rage cannot be denied.


Backgrounds: No restrictions.

Beginning Gifts: Eve's Blessing, Mother's Touch, Resist Pain

Quote

My teeth and claws are always in your service, milord, if Gaia wills it. But I will take no command that does not serve Her name. There's killing enough in all Christendom already, and much of it supposedly in the name of peace. Find another "warrior" if you want someone to slaughter humans at your bidding—but if it's the Serpent itself you're after, then command me and I'll obey.

Fenrir



Rethgar stood sentinel at the edge of the village, gripping the wooden haft of his axe. Howls filled the air. Once again, the northern wolves had come to attack the holding. The men of this place had fled or died. Only he, a third son looking to prove himself to Lord Haaken, had the courage to stand in the ice-crusting snow as the dark ones surged from the pines. They might be many, and they might even overwhelm him, but he would take their measure before joining the feasts at Wotan's hall.

He saw a shadow move in the moonlight, before a powerful snarling mass bowled him over in the snow. Rethgar flexed his muscles against those of the beast, throwing it off of him. He grabbed his axe and hefted it for a solid blow before the others came.

With a curse against their numbers, he swung his weapon and then felt the fury of the berserkers in his blood. The gods must have heard his curse, because the rage within him was far greater than any he could remember.

Finally, Rethgar lay bleeding and battered in the snow. There was less pain than he'd expected — his

wounds itched as much as ached. The smell of blood was alarmingly strong — all the smells of the battlefield were too strong.

A huge man, no villager, knelt over him, holding Rethgar's head by the hair. The man looked into Rethgar's eyes as snarls echoed through the village. "You're the one we've been looking for..." he said. Rethgar tried to say something, but only a wolf's growl came from his throat. With a gasp, he moved

his arm into view — and it was long and thick and coated in a wolf's black fur.

The man smiled, watching Rethgar's eyes, "Welcome to Fenris' Chosen — brother."

The time of the Vikings may be past, but the glory days of the Fenrir have yet to recede. These foremost warriors among the tribes prosper in the medieval age, and hold more caerns than ever before — and if some say that these caerns are the rightful property of other tribes, it must be mere jealousy. After all, the Fenrir believe that they are the only hope for Gaia's survival. The Silver Fangs may lead, and the Shadow Lords may scheme, but the Fenrir must do the work of Gaia. They look to expand to all regions where minions of the Wyrms, Weaver, or other powers threaten Gaia. If other Garou are present, then they must learn how to defend their protectorates or give them up to those who know how to fight. Teuton, Saxon or Norseman, it matters little — they are the Fenrir, and their enemies are without number.

The Fenrir see all of Gaia as their protectorate. When they learn of Wyrkish or infernal activities, they will send a war party to set things right. Using the longships of their Kinfolk, the Fenrir may travel anywhere in Europe. The Fenrir are not intimidated by anyone, even the Silver Fangs, though they do try to help first — before teaching their weak brethren a lesson for allowing Gaia's enemies to gain power.

As a point of interest, a subtle change is sweeping over the usually militantly traditional tribe. In the British Isles, where the Fenrir arrived with their Saxon kin, the Fianna have taken to calling the migrant Fenrir "the get of Fenris," rather than using more honorable terms such as "sons" or "daughters" of the great Fenris wolf. And much to the Fianna's chagrin, the Fenrir have taken this new appellation as something of a badge of honor. After all, they reason, better to be the least-favored get of Fenris himself than the pampered princeling of a weaker totem. The name is beginning to stick.

Territory

The Fenrir have strongholds across northern Europe, from the heart of the Holy Roman Empire up into Scandinavia and the Arctic Circle. They share, often grudgingly, parts of their territory with the Red Talons and the Silver Fangs. The main concentrations of Fenrir are found in the Black Forest, where bloody legend becomes all too real to foolish trespassers, and in Scandinavia, in small villages and hidden valleys where the old gods are still worshipped. The Fenrir hold caerns across the rest of Europe as well, many of which they have captured from other tribes; even the British Isles have a sizable population of Saxon Fenrir.

The Fenrir breed almost exclusively with their Nordic and Germanic Kinfolk. The Fenrir believe that their strength passes through their bloodline. They do not wish to mix their blood with that of weaklings. They strive to choose only the strongest and healthiest of mates among humans and wolves. Their Kinfolk have a demanding lot, for the Fenrir don't accept cowardice or weakness in their relatives — but even so, a Fenrir Kin often has a better lot than the average human or wolf. The family bonds among Fenris' chosen are powerful indeed, and mistreating a Fenrir's Kinfolk is nothing less than suicide.

A terrible rivalry exists between the Fenrir and the Shadow Lords; where the Shadow Lords must cut the occasional deal in order to survive the plague of vampires in their homelands, the Fenrir are enraged by such capitulation. There is also bad blood between the Fenrir and the Fianna, who blame the children of Fenris for much of their Kin's woes. And, of course, there are ample threats to the Fenrir from the beasts of legend, Leeches, and Wyrms-things against which they wage endless war.

Of all the tribes, the Fenrir are the least likely to find peace. And they would have it no other way.

Camps

The camps of the Fenrir have not changed overmuch from the time of the Dark Ages, when many of them were formed. The Valkyria of Freya are at the peak of their struggle, for Fenrir sexism, at least among homids, is strongest during this time. When a female is able to prove herself stronger than those she strives to lead, then by all means the males follow — but many homids raised on the words of the Church are painfully resistant to the very idea that females can be strong.

The Hand of Tyr, Mjolnir's Thunder and The Fangs of Garm are all well-established by now, and spend much of their time enforcing their various policies of justice. In particular, a few of the Hand of Tyr have seen much of Europe by now — they've heard tales from their Crusade-following brethren of the atrocities committed along the road, and have stalked numerous Crusaders to their homesteads. Although their justice doesn't find everyone who raped and slaughtered along the way, more than a few rabble-rousers and overzealous knights have had their sins catch up with them. The Glorious Fist of Wotan are little more than a tenuous group of Red Talon sympathizers, but their numbers are destined to grow over the next few centuries.

Although twentieth-century Swords of Heimdall will argue that their beliefs are the embodiment of ancient Fenrir tradition, the cold truth is that the Swords do not exist during the medieval period. Certainly, racism is all too real in the Dark Medieval world — but the Fenrir don't feel the need to practice it as a policy. The strong and the weak exist, and that is all the medieval Fenrir need to know.

Allies and Foes

The Fenrir aren't the most accepting of tribes; few outsiders match their standards of strength and virtue. Even the most bold and savage Gangrel *einherjar* is seen as a worthy rival or a trophy to be collected. Still, the Fenrir aren't without their allies. Even during the War of Rage, Fenris' children often chose to look the other way rather than attack their Corax allies, and the Corax remember this gesture. Their alliance is somewhat tenuous — the wereravens are unwilling to directly offer advice in situations that haven't become completely desperate — but just as Odin has his Hugin and Munin, the Fenrir are often blessed by outside warning on ravens' wings.

The Fenrir also have a volatile relationship with the faelings. The British Get find that the local fae dislike their presence, and would be happy if the Saxon werewolves were driven from the isles. Conversely, the Nordic Fenrir have stood both with and against the earth-born trolls in battle. Few Fenrir can tell the difference between an earth-troll and a Wyrn-troll at first glance, and hasty first impressions have sparked long blood-feuds.

The foes of Fenris' chosen are as varied as the lands the Fenrir defend. Countless tales are told of Fenrir heroes struggling against Wyrn-trolls — a particularly poisonous breed of cannibalistic, light-fearing, perverted fomori that are common in the lands of the midnight sun. Fenrir have fought against *einherjar* and Tzimisce *voivode* alike, against linnorms and dead men risen from sea or grave, against demented spirits of the underworld — a Fenrir warrior never lacks for foes.

Backgrounds: Fenrir may not purchase Contacts. However, in this age they still believe in the process of fosterage and mentoring, although a Fenrir's mentor never does his charge's work for him.

Beginning Gifts: Razor Claws, Resist Pain, Snow Running

Quote

If you were strong enough to protect your mountains and valleys, I wouldn't need to be here.

Stereotypes

- **Black Furies** — Good enough fighters, but they don't understand the ways of the world. In time, they will be put in their proper place, suckling the cubs of the great warriors.

- **Bone Gnawers** — Less than scum, these scavengers should be culled from our numbers. The few worthies they have should swear allegiance to true tribes.

- **Children of Gaia** — Foolish weaklings who try to solve differences through peace, instead of trusting Gaia to take her course. Treat them as ignorant children, befitting their name.

- **Fianna** — Strong fighters once they have their rage flowing. If they didn't waste too much time with song, dance and drink, we could respect them. Still, they let the White Howlers fall.

- **Red Talons** — They challenge us for the forests, and we respect their strength in doing so.

- **Shadow Lords** — Cowards and Leech lovers, they use deception in the stead of true strength. No songs of glory come from an alliance with the Lords.

- **Silent Striders** — These scavengers have let others take their territory from them. They are prey, not predators.

- **Silver Fangs** — They are our lords and leaders, the greatest of tribes. We challenge and test them as it is the will of Fenris, but when they command we follow. We shall show them the skill of the greatest warriors of Gaia.

- **Warders** — These miserable dogs choose to sit beside the tables of men and beg for scraps. They do have a use in Gaia's plan — their furs make good bedding in the winters.

Fianna

Ronan could feel the call of the ancient stones pulse in his blood. Here he felt safe and whole, quite unlike when he prayed in God's cold house. He never felt right around priests or with all of the rules of decorum and chivalry. He preferred to be here at the circle of stones, with his chest bared to the cold winds rather than wrapped in the trappings of heraldry.

The old warriors were the ones in his heart, those who fought against the Romans and who had driven the giants from the world. He had learned the songs and the rites of the Old Ways, the ways of Gaia and the Incarna, which Christians called false idols. What fools they were for that, too. How could anyone look across the play of green fields, the stretches of cool, dark woods, and not realize that they were looking into the loving face of their Mother?

The wind played about his ears, and on it was the sound of distant shouts. That would be the damnable soldiers once again. They believed him oathbreaker for shunning his liege, and had come to drag him back to what passed for Norman justice. Ronan would sooner die than bow his head once more to the fat fool who thought himself noble — as if the word of a blind king had anything to do with nobility.

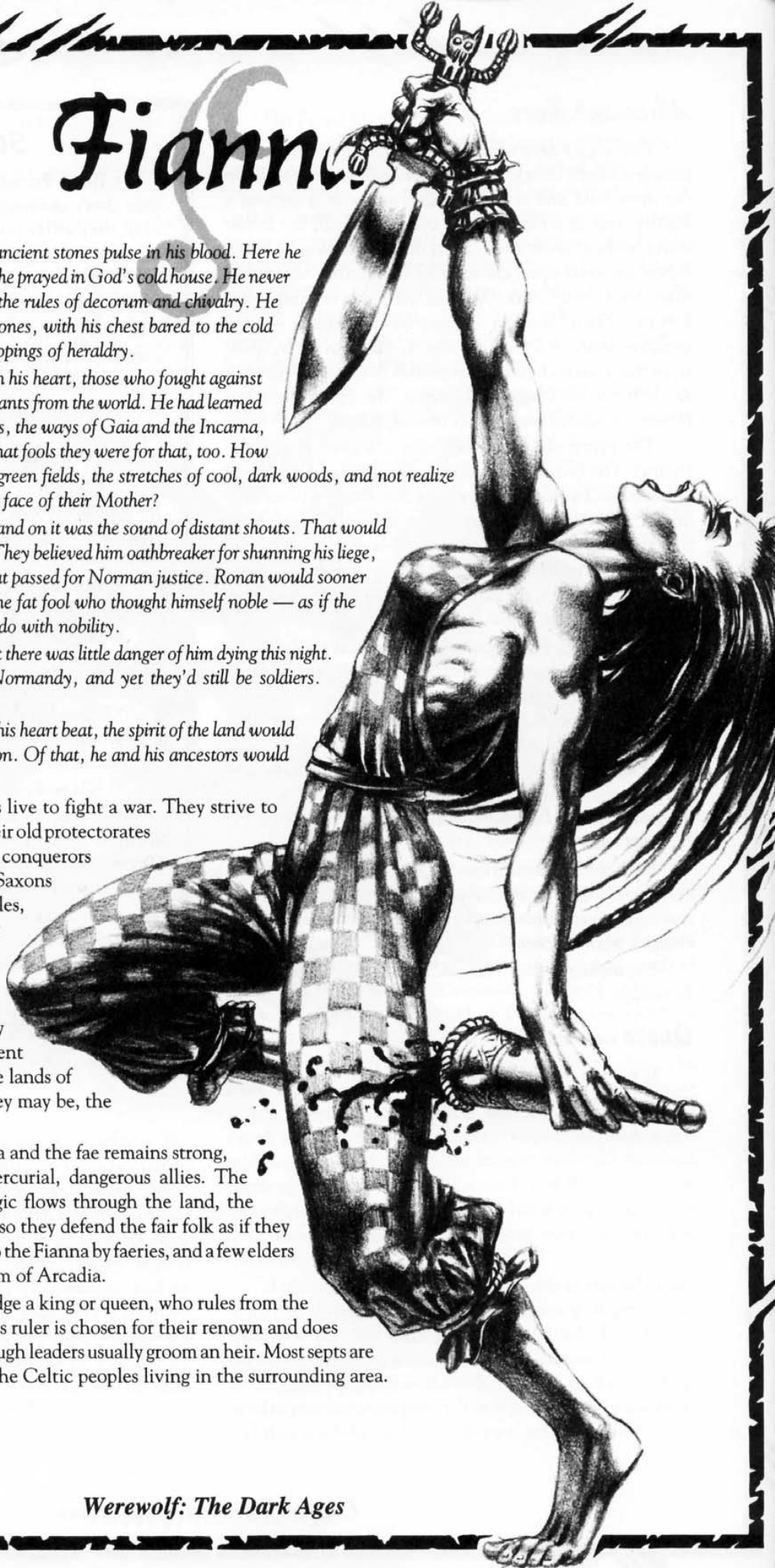
Of course, Ronan also knew that there was little danger of him dying this night. The soldiers might be the pride of Normandy, and yet they'd still be soldiers. Outsiders. Fools.

Well, let them come. As long as his heart beat, the spirit of the land would endure any of civilization's desecration. Of that, he and his ancestors would make certain.

The Fianna in the Dark Ages live to fight a war. They strive to regain their ancient culture and their old protectorates from usurpers. Though the Roman conquerors and Vikings alike are now gone, Saxons and Normans now blanket the isles, with the Get and Fangs following behind them. Their distant cousins, the White Howlers, are gone. Many of their Kinfolk have embraced Christianity, turning away from Gaia. And finally, their ancient allies, the Old Folk, are fleeing the lands of mortals. Yet embattled though they may be, the Fianna endure.

The bond between the Fianna and the fae remains strong, though the Good Folk make mercurial, dangerous allies. The Fianna know that as long as magic flows through the land, the faeries may walk the earth — and so they defend the fair folk as if they were Kin. Several gifts are taught to the Fianna by faeries, and a few elders have even traveled to the fae realm of Arcadia.

The Fianna always acknowledge a king or queen, who rules from the great caern at Tara in Ireland. This ruler is chosen for their renown and does not possess a hereditary title, although leaders usually groom an heir. Most septs are organized in a manner similar to the Celtic peoples living in the surrounding area.



Territory

Some Fianna are scattered across Europe, but the majority dwell in the British Isles. Ireland is their main holding, and they are the dominant tribe throughout Wales, Cornwall, England and southern Scotland. They have caerns in Brittany and Galesia. Many members of the tribe travel throughout Europe, and the Fianna are commonly members of multi-tribal packs.

Scotland is a holding of particular concern to the Fianna. Although the Black Spiral Dancers seem to have largely vanished from the area, some traces of their blasphemous legacy remain. There are villages up in the highlands whose inhabitants have been brutally used, and the Fianna find themselves helpless to heal these people. Fionn's tribe are often reluctant to venture into the northern highlands, for those who visit such unholy sites as Damburrow do not return.

The Fianna will breed with any descendants of the Celtic tribes of humans found across Europe. The devotion that the Fianna feel to their Kinfolk is the stuff of legends. The Fianna go to great lengths to aid and protect their Kinfolk. Other tribes claim that the Fianna will mate with faerie lords and ladies, giving birth to changelings with Garou blood.

Fianna caerns are never urban; the few cities that are cropping up in the British Isles cause the Fianna no small distress, and the Gallic Fianna of the mainland are far from comfortable in the cities there. The Fianna hold many virtues sacred, and are almost archetypal in the range of caerns they hold. Whether wisdom or glory, cool mystery or earthy fertility, Gnosis or Rage — the Fianna probably have, or had, a caern of that virtue. The bawns of these caerns are always well-marked even to the local humans; many a legend of wild hounds roaming the moors can be traced to the Fianna's zealous defense of their borders.

Of all their enemies, the Get of Fenris cause the Fianna the most difficulty. They often battle alongside the Fianna against common enemies, yet packs of Get have seized caerns, slaying entire septs of Fianna. Get Kinfolk have driven the Celtic peoples out of their homelands. The warlike among the Fianna sometimes suggest declaring an all-out war with the Get, but other tribes, especially the Silver Fangs and the Children of Gaia, always argue that such a war would only weaken Gaia's defenders. Still, tensions remain high. In some cases, groups of Fianna have slain other Fianna who associate with the cubs of Fenris.

Camps

The Fianna's camps are largely unchanged; future generations see this time as not far from the Fianna's heyday, and continue the ideals served here. The Grandchildren of Fionn are fewer in number than they even-

tually will be. They are closer to their ideal of the ancient Celtic warrior, and more than the thuggish brawlers that typify the 20th century camp. The Whispering Rovers are not so much a camp as they are an alliance of the scattered Fianna of continental Europe — their name comes from how quietly they must tread away from their ancestral homeland. The Tuatha de Fionn are great in number, and are embattled in the fight to preserve their fae cousins.

The Children of Dire are strong in these times, and their infamous Hispo hunts give rise to many a bloody legend about black dogs of the moors, or terrible hounds of the otherworld. The remaining few wolves hidden in British forests are often under the Children's protection, and a bloody death is the price a human pays for drawing too near. As a counterpoint, the newly emerging Brotherhood of Herne is adapting well to the human concepts of chivalry, heraldry and knighthood. However, they are held in low regard by their tribemates; although most other Fianna wouldn't think of breeding with anyone not of pure (or mostly pure) Celtic descent, the Brotherhood have been known to adopt the occasional brave, sympathetic Saxon as Kin.

Finally, the Songkeepers are the most loosely-knit of camps among the tribe. In many ways, they resemble the Silent Striders in their lack of real organization and nomadic ways. Whenever two of these Galliards cross paths, they typically stay up until sunrise trying to outdo each other in performing ballads — sharing information as they go. They're rare as basilisks, but highly valued by the rest of the tribe. If a Songkeeper stops by a Fianna caern, he usually has his pick of the brew and the best seat by the fire — in exchange for sharing news, of course.

Allies and Foes

As was previously stated, the Fianna's greatest ties outside of the Garou Nation are with the fae. In some cases, the Fianna can even call on the wild spirits of heath and forest to aid them in their battles. Certainly many of their Gifts have the touch of the fae to them, and the tribe's strong connections with the Good Folk have lent a certain amount of strength to Fianna passion — although it's also adversely affected their self-control.

The Fianna are also moderately well-acquainted with other supernatural denizens of their isles, although their influence is virtually nonexistent on the other side of the English Channel. A few Fianna septs know where to find witches and shamans of the old ways, although they prefer to leave these folk alone; a mage is all too readily an enemy as well as an ally. And out of all the tribes, only the Fianna have anything close to a working relationship with the Ceilican — and even then, werewolf and werecat must be introduced by a mutual fae friend before they'll consider working together.

Stereotypes

- **Black Furies** — Powerful and mysterious; they could be allies, but we see them rarely. Always give them the respect of Gaia and be careful of getting friendly if you dance with them.

- **Bone Gnawers** — Weak scavengers who feed off the refuse of the tribes. They are the runts of the tribes; straighten them out if you can, but don't waste much time on them.

- **Children of Gaia** — We have no quarrel with these healers, but their love of peace goes against the passion in the heart of every true warrior.

- **Get of Fenris** — These thick-skulled Viking wolves have aided us in our battles, and then they've turned and raided our Kinfolk. Trust them only while fighting the Wyrms, and if you find their packs or their Kin trespassing on our lands without good reason, give them your claws!

- **Red Talons** — These savage beasts don't understand anything of the world or its ways. They're part of the reason that the Church has turned so many humans against the old ways.

- **Shadow Lords** — Don't trust any of them. They think the rest of us don't see how they scheme and plot, but we know better. Their pride will lead to doom.

- **Silent Striders** — I don't know much about them or the forgotten totems they revere. Welcome them to your fires and share your mead like a good host, but the sooner they move on, the better.

- **Silver Fangs** — The lords of us all, and it's not as though they've not earned their place. There's truth in the songs about their greatness, and we await their guidance in our struggles against our enemies.

- **Warders** — These wolves have forgotten the importance of the wilds and spend too much time in the foul-smelling cities of humans. It would be best if they stayed far from our lands.

The tribe likes to fight as much as they like to love, and it's no surprise that they have enemies aplenty. Of these, a few are again fae; not all hobgoblins are benevolent, and the Fianna aren't as tolerant of faelings who prey on their Kin. As Celtic legend records, there's also a long history of fomori in the isles, and though the Fianna kill and kill wherever the fomori are found, they can never manage to exterminate the beasts entirely. There's always another generation.

No tribe hates the Black Spiral Dancers more than the Fianna do. The fall of the White Howlers lives in the songs of every Fianna Galliard. The vile monsters who have replaced the fallen ones are fit only for death. Many elders feel a sense of guilt, blaming the twisting of an entire tribe on their lack of diligence against the Wyrms. All Fianna feel a debt to the White Howlers, to avenge them on the Black Spiral Dancers at all costs, to save the land and their Kin.

Backgrounds: No restrictions.

Beginning Gifts: Faerie Light, Persuasion, Resist Toxin

Quote

Try and take my life, but yours will be the blood that strengthens the land.

Red Talons

The only thing left of the screaming was a tiny remnant of an echo, and that too was losing itself among the tops of the pines.

No birds sang; there was no sound but the gurgle of a brook, the crackle of flame and the soft padding of paw on earth. But to a wolf's nose, the air practically shouted — blood, fire, rent bowel.

The elder wolf sat on her haunches, watching the younger as he nervously took the burning brand's unlit end by his teeth, lifted it carefully, and quickly trotted over to the brook. There was a splash and a hiss; then the smell of fire was gone, with only wet smoke and steam filling the air. The cub then padded carefully back to the woodcutter's body and nosed it heavily. But apart from a shifting in the spilt entrails, there was no more movement.

Is that enough, alpha? The young one's posture was apologetic, hopeful, worried — and it matched his low whine. Will they stop coming now? Will they keep to their territory?

The elder lowered head and tail alike.

No, cub, it is not enough. Her growl became a deep whine. When you see their nests, you will understand why even we cannot keep them out forever. Her head snapped up, and her posture stiffened. But this is enough hunting for one night. It will do for now.

The Red Talons are a wounded tribe. Since the First Days, they have taken exception to humans and their domineering ways. They have watched numerous species fall to extinction — the mammoth, the sabertoothed cat, the giant European deer — and each time, they have realized that wolves might be next. Since the end of the Impergium, they have been forced to give ground to human expansion, and they don't bear it well. So they quietly cull the human herd where they can, and try to advise the other tribes not to let the apes grow too strong — but their fight is beginning to seem futile.

In some ways, the Red Talons are more doomsayer than berserker in these times. They are painfully aware of the slow rise of humanity, but as yet do not have convincing proof that the humans will bring doom to Gaia. They are like the soothsayers in ancient pagan drama — uttering dire warnings that their

recipients choose to ignore. The elders send the young packs on visionquest after visionquest, hoping to bring back news that will convince the other tribes; but so far, what they've found has fallen on deaf ears.

The Talons' relations with the other tribes aren't as extreme as they will be someday. This is probably likely due to the still-high levels of lupus blood among all tribes; even the Warders have a number of lupus who can at least partially understand the Talons. The tribe's anti-human policies do extend into bloody extremism now and again — but most just don't speak of this. Even the Children of Gaia tend to nod sagely and appeasingly at a Talon's dire preaching, rather than vehemently challenge their claims. Although the tribal elders still mutter grimly at concolations



about the wisdom of rescinding the Impergium, their howls have yet to take on the tenor of desperation.

Territory

The Talons go where there are wolves — and in the Dark Medieval world, they are distributed across continental Europe from Spain to the Rus. They keep well away from the burgeoning cities, for they still have a choice in the matter. In fact, most Talon septs are die-hard isolationist, preferring to avoid man's settlements rather than contest them (unless, of course, a caern's territory is involved). Only dire need will force a Talon to walk in human skin among the works of man — and then, their feral nature causes many to shun them as idiots or (ironically enough) possessed or fey people, such as werewolves. They have no real presence in the British Isles or the Middle East, but almost every other country has felt the Red Talons' tread.

Indeed, it's said (but only by a very few) that the Talons have a few of their tribe in far-off lands beyond the ken of Christendom. Legend has it that the Talons have found their way to certain Umbral trails guarded by spirits of nature, trails that are unknown to even the Silent Striders. Whole packs are rumored to have wandered along these trails to lands across oceans, perhaps to the far-off East — or even in the other direction.

Whatever they've found there, none can say, for they have yet to return or establish Moon Bridges back to their European caerns. If they did so, however, it would certainly expand the size of the world as the European Garou (or at least the European Talons) understand it.

Camps

The Red Talons have never been given much to organizing themselves within camps. Even so, the tribe has its touch of divisiveness, particularly in these times — when the threat of imminent Apocalypse has yet to remove the doubt from some members. The Lodge of the Predator Kings exists among the medieval Talons; indeed, the members of this camp outnumber that of the Warders of the Land. In these times, the Predator Kings' moderate (for the tribe) beliefs are more typical of the average Talon — this changes with the coming of the Industrial Age. Although these two camps claim the majority of Talons, two other small camps work at furthering Gaia's ideal.

• **The Night-Fear** — This camp, composed largely of Ragabash and Galliards, are most interested in the tales that humans share amongst themselves. It is their hope that the humans can learn to respect the Mother through fear, and through fear teach one another caution. The Night-Fear are known to attack humans who they deem as visibly trespassing, but never to kill — they

only wound and terrorize, in hopes that the humans spread word that certain places and deeds are taboo. So far, they've been partly successful; the new tales of werewolves as savage creatures are blossoming, and spreading from hamlet to hamlet. Regrettably, the humans have learned little save a fear and hatred of wolves, but the Night-Fear persist. They continue to do so until the coming of the Inquisition, when they learn that tales of horrid monsters can provoke an equally horrid response from humanity. The camp breaks up in disgust, and most of its disillusioned members fall in with the Warders of the Land.

• **The Setting Moon:** The seers and wise ones of the Talons sometimes arise from this tiny camp. They are chasers of visions and keepers of prophecy, and it is their dire predictions that fortify the tribe's beliefs that humans will someday be the death of Gaia. The Setting Moon sometimes sends emissaries to other septs, and often contributes members to multitribal packs, in hopes of warning the other tribes before it's too late. They eventually cease to exist as a camp, as the march of time proves more and more of their prophecies right. When the rest of the Talons have no choice but to heed the Moon's omens, the camp regretfully dissolves — realizing they have failed.

Allies and Foes

Although the Red Talons have no contacts among humanity, and perforce none among the vampires, they aren't without allies of their own. No tribe is better versed in the ways of nature spirits, and a Talon Theurge often has allies in every glade and gully within his pack's protectorate. Furthermore, they are still on passing fair terms with the Corax wereravens; the Talons don't see the wereravens as much of a threat, and have never really called them enemy. Red Talon Galliards claim that the tribe sheltered the Corax from the other tribes during the War of Rage, and the wereravens have never disagreed. Although the Corax are rather disbelieving of the Talons' gloomy portents, they do appreciate the Talons' goodwill in sharing such visions; it's the most conversation they've gotten from the all-lupus tribe in centuries.

In fact, it's a tribal secret that the Red Talons, remorseful of their part in the War of Rage, covertly guard some of the caerns and sacred sites of the lost Gurahl. The few Talon septs entrusted with this duty act more as custodians than anything else, keeping the caerns safe for the Gurahl's return. If indeed any Gurahl are alive and awake in medieval Europe, perhaps only the Red Talons would know about it.

Ranging as they do in the deepest wilderness, furthest from human lands, the Talons sometimes cross the paths of foes unknown to other tribes. Red Talon

Theurges are less familiar with Urge-Wyrm Banes, embodiments of dire impulses, than they are with the Banes of corrupted nature. The Wyrm occasionally sinks its teeth into wolf packs, and the Talons are most likely of any tribe to encounter the lupine fomori that result. The Talons also come across the occasional Black Spiral Dancer, as their deep-wilderness haunts make mostly ideal hiding places for the fallen Garou.

But not all of the Talons' enemies are of the Wyrm. Wyld-spirits are more plentiful in the Dark Medieval world, and not all of them are benevolent. Occasionally, the Talons must move to intercept a rogue Wyldling that threatens their Kinfolk, or prevent a vortex of Wyld-energy from drastically altering the natural landscape. Similarly, not all of the fae are born from humans — the true fae, the creatures of the wildest lands, occasionally have border disputes with the Red Talons. Such conflicts are relatively rare, for many fae prefer to live somewhat near humans to entertain them. Even so, the Talons don't always have much of a sense of humor when the wildlings decide to torment their Kinfolk....

Backgrounds: Red Talons, as always, may not purchase Allies, Contacts or Resources. Their only Kinfolk are wolves.

Beginning Gifts: Beast Speech, Prey's Cry, Scent of Running Water

Quote

No other animal gathers in such numbers, or passes sickness among its family so easily. You let your human blood dull your nose to the stink that rises from the apes' nests. Soon Gaia will leave their cities entirely, and what will you say then?

Stereotypes

- **Black Furies** — Fools, if they think that only one half of the man-breed is responsible for the stink that rises from human works.

- **Bone Gnawers** — Dogs.

- **Children of Gaia** — Tamed animals as well, but worse. The humans needed meat to chain their dogs, but only words to tame the Children.

- **Fenrir** — Strong companions when the need is there; powerful rivals when the need is not.

- **Fianna** — Who are they, and what have they to do with us?

- **Shadow Lords** — Do they enjoy what the world has become? Yes? Then who will they fight for when the Apocalypse comes?

- **Silent Striders** — What sort of wolf keeps no territory? If your dark-skinned humans are so precious that you would breed with them, perhaps you should remain with them.

- **Silver Fangs** — They are our leaders. We should not question them, though they do not explain the walking dead humans that breed in the cities like maggots in meat.

- **Warders** — If they do not learn to smell the rot that marks their boundaries, they will be our enemies soon enough.

Shadow Lords

Gregor the Terrible, aspiring voivode, stood on the rampart like a proud standard bearer, his carefully tanned cloak snapping in the night wind. The torches below were faint reflections of his eyes, which blazed like bonfires with the zeal of victory.

The Countess Nastassia, bitch-breeder and bone-sculptor, was naught but smoldering ash. Her ghouls were so much meat heaped in the courtyard, and the acrid tang of their rent flesh rose up and tickled Gregor's crooked nose. It had gone so perfectly. Her look of fear had been exquisite, the chase exhilarating — and her final stand on the parapet pure art. His... "allies" had done his will most obediently, like the dogs they seemed. They'd been hostile at first, but his expert promises had soothed them. Like dogs.

Now, he and he alone would rule over the dark Carpathian peaks of the valley. The river would run with blood if he so chose; the soil would be nourished with flesh if it was his bidding. He laughed long and loud, drawing out his laugh until the echoes of his voice sounded back from the empty halls of the castle.

The young vampire's laugh was cut short by a deep rumble, like shifting stones. Gregor fought to choke back a smile — the massive brute by his side had cleared its throat to catch his attention, like a deferent chamberlain. Gregor turned on his heel, and looked up into the creature's golden eyes.

"Is that the last of the vampires who opposed you, Gregor... my voivode?" The beast's voice was almost human. Almost.

"Yes," he thinly smiled, "that is the last of them. Now, my loyal ally, we reign supreme over the night." He made a flourish with one hand, for effect. "I suppose you wish for me to pay your price. I will do so gladly. In fact, I shall hold a feast in your honor, now that victory is complete." His smile was razor-edged. "What suits your... lusts? Women? Or young boys? Wine? Steel and yielding flesh? Hot blood?"

The werewolf was a black blur. Gregor saw his arm spin end over end, down into the courtyard, before he understood what had happened. He glimpsed the silver weapon raised high into the air — and then, his head rolled free of his body.

"Now, Leech, victory is complete." Claws-of-Thunder howled his victory loud and long — until the echoes of his howl, and the answering howls of his pack, sounded back from the empty halls of the castle.

The Shadow Lords believe that they must know evil in order to conquer it. And in these times, there is evil aplenty to go around, even if some of it hides behind handsome human faces. The Lords are harsh disciplinarians, and many townships in their protectorates still suffer from enforcement rather reminiscent of the Impergium — "the better to keep them pliable," the Lords maintain. As always, the Shadow Lords are heavily concerned with the hierarchy of dominance and submission — and in their homelands, the humans will damn well submit.

The tribe has its talons in many pies across the continent — it's always been the way of the Lords to keep themselves busy. Keeping the humans in their place is only one affair; there's also the matter of ensuring that their wolf Kin remain unmolested by others — and that they, too, know their place. Of



course, there's the business of fighting the Wyrms' minions, although that's laughably easy — or so the tribe boasts.

Even so, there are two issues that vex the Shadow Lords in particular. The first — unsurprisingly — involves the leadership of the Silver Fangs. Many Shadow Lords believe that the Fangs rule out of tradition, not action. They contend that adhering to the laws of weak rulers will only bring doom upon the Garou. Although the Fangs are still first among tribes, the Lords harbor an ill feeling of discontent; after all, if the Fangs were truly so strong, how is it that the Rus has fallen so far?

Secondly, the Shadow Lords are concerned with the undead, far more so than are other Garou. They have felt the presence of the elder vampires and their demonic allies in the Carpathian mountains. They have uncovered the machinations of these beasts even among their Kinfolk. The Shadow Lords feel that the undead are the greatest threat to the Garou. Once they are gone, humanity can be controlled with the proper amount of manipulation and culling.

Territory

The Shadow Lords dwell primarily in Eastern Europe, across the Carpathian mountains from Bohemia to Bucharest. It is a dangerous, strife-torn protectorate, and the Lords are locked in constant struggle with the vampires who also claim dominions in these lands. Among the greatest and most notorious of their bastions is the Sept of the Night Sky, a sept with a long history of treachery and war with the Leeches.

Even so, the Lords are not limited to Eastern Europe. Ambitious Shadow Lords have established holdings scattered in the mountains of western Europe, such as the Alps, Apennines, and Pyrenees. Many have slid into the noble houses of the northern Iberian kingdoms, where they carefully plot to take best advantage of the rising Reconquista movement. The Ragabash of the tribe have ranged as far as Constantinople (and, following the occasional Crusade, beyond), where they quietly take notes on how politics are done in the Byzantine Empire. There are even a few in Britain these days, although these are rare enough in number; after all, mindless brawls between Fianna and Fenrir may be amusing, but they do tend to grow tiresome after a while.

Shadow Lords, as has been their custom for ages, breed with whoever they deem worthy. They have Kinfolk in many noble houses, as well as among the families of noble servants, especially the kennel or hunt masters, who look after their wolf Kinfolk. They look for the strongest and most intelligent, ambitious people they can find, particularly those who would find a mixed heritage advantageous rather than a curse.

Camps

The Shadow Lords camps are rooted in traditions of pragmatism and cunning as old as the tribe itself. Most of them are much the same as they have always been. The Lords of the Summit remain the leading force among tribal politics, and most Lords of the time belong to this camp. The Bringers of Light are relatively new, but have found plenty of hardships with which to test themselves, and vampires aplenty to study. Their ranks are swelling rapidly, as the sheer number of Leeches of the time is resulting in an increased demand for werewolves able to play the vampires' game. The Children of Crow are also relatively strong — in fact, they are encouraged by other Lords of the time.

The secret societies of the Lords also have their roots in this time. The Masks ply their trade among the villages of Eastern Europe, and ensure that outsiders respect — nay, fear the Lords' boundaries. In addition, although the Society of Nidhogg is currently no more than a few croaking elders, they will gain more and more adherents over the coming centuries.

The Dark Ages are notable for giving birth to the Judges of Doom, the all-Philodox camp that travels from sept to sept, judging other Garou's adherence to the Litany. Margrave Andrei Konietzko is recognized as the first among this fledgling camp, and this mighty lord's word is enough to send other Judges on errands to the four corners of the continent. The Judges of Doom are one of the few Gaian camps that has realized that Garou from any tribe can fall to the Wyrms and become Black Spiral Dancers in more than name alone. Armed with this knowledge, they are harsh arbiters indeed, careful to watch for signs of taint in even the most temperate Child of Gaia. But they are also selfish with their knowledge; they have yet to share their secret with any other tribe, for fear that their influence might be diluted.

Allies and Foes

Although few other tribes actually trust the Shadow Lords all that far, the Lords nonetheless have countless truces and allegiances among their peers. In many cases, these pacts have little to do with common ethics or goals, but everything to do with the advantage of shared strength. As one Silver Fang noble dryly noted, "One wouldn't choose to place a Shadow Lord in charge of one's kitchen — but who can afford to be without a counselor of their particular talents?"

Thus it is with outsiders. The Shadow Lords have few permanent allies beyond werewolf society, but they are positively drowning in constantly shifting pacts of convenience. They've been known to entertain truces and bargains with the darker half of the fae, the goblins of bramble and nightshade. Thanks to their allies among

Stereotypes

• **Black Furies** — The bitches have their uses, like all other good tools. Even so, their peculiar notions about the sexes are irritatingly disruptive. Do they truly want our Kinfolk to become intractable and full of illusions about their own worth?

• **Bone Gnawers** — Don't underestimate this tribe. They may climb through the refuse of humans, but they know how to survive. They can be used to further our ends... with the proper persuasion.

• **Children of Gaia** — They lack the courage to meet Gaia's enemies; instead they run behind her skirts and need other tribes to do the real work. Treat these peace-lovers with the same respect you'd show for their fighting... none.

• **Fenrir** — The Fenrir are easily manipulated, but once they have a thought in their heads, their determination and stubbornness will not allow them to give up. They live by the claw and they will die by the claw.

• **Fianna** — They are caught in the past and the old ways, unable to adapt to a world of good steel and great stone castles. Like the White Howlers before them, they will soon be a tribe of the past.

• **Red Talons** — A breed that lives by little more than wolfish instinct. They cause more harm than good. Do not suffer them.

• **Silent Striders** — Their appearance never brings good tidings, and their secrets are fiendishly difficult to wrest from them. Be wary, for their arrival can shift a delicate situation beyond your control.

• **Silver Fangs** — The weak lords of our kind. They make their beds with those who pretend to have power, while we seek to place our Kinfolk in true positions of power.

• **Warders** — Do not discount them or their strange powers. They can be very useful to us.

Stormcrows and other Raven-spirits, the Lords often have access to the Corax's wisdom. They've been known to buy the favors of warlocks for brief interludes, and some have even been known to strike short-lived agreements with vampires — although this last is almost invariably an alliance of convenience against another vampire rival.

Indeed, apart from their ongoing feud with the Tzimisce, the Shadow Lords have few "kill on sight" relationships with their enemies. It's a point of simple pragmatism to maintain sufficient relations so that there's always some room for negotiation. If one cannot reason with one's enemy, one cannot understand one's enemy enough to bring him down. Of course, it goes without saying that the Shadow Lords would *never* offer to negotiate with any creatures fully of the Wym. Why, the very idea...


Backgrounds: Shadow Lords may not buy Allies or Mentor.

Beginning Gifts: Aura of Confidence, Fatal Flaw, Resist Toxin

Quote

If you have come only to whimper and question our methods, I suggest you hie back to the safety of your own holdings. Our lands are treacherous; those who fear to dirty their hands are perhaps unsuited for survival here.

Silent Striders



Stefan Mooncloud carefully rolled away the rock that sealed the fallen duke's tomb. It had been a long journey here — not by the measure of leagues, but by the measure of toil. Too many territories crossed, too many Garou taking offense... at least one new scar would be itching on cold nights.

But when the stone came free, and the must wafted out from the tomb, Stefan remembered that there were worse things than scars.

He took on his wolf's skin, knowing full well that a wolf's nose would be a far better asset than human eyes inside the crypt. He crept into the darkness, feeling his way through the must and dirt. The scent of death was in the air, but there were... other scents as well. He froze as the rock rolled back into place.

"Well, stranger, I see that you've found our lair," hissed a sibilant voice, more reptile than lupine. "A pity that your eyes and nose are sharper than those of the Saxon fool who came before you."

Green light — a torch of balefire — illuminated the chamber like the devil's own lantern. Twisted, shadowy wolf-things lurched out of the blasphemous radiance. And yet — there, the Sceptre of Re, gleaming mournfully in the balefire's light, still in the withered hand of the Fianna crusader who'd taken it. Stefan leapt for the corpse laid across the duke's coffin, and for the fetish in its grasp, even as the Black Spiral Dancers lunged for him....

The Silent Striders are homeless and adrift, wanderers in an age when territory has its greatest importance. Some seek the artifacts and lore of ancient Egypt, hoping to recapture their heritage. Others seek signs of the Wyrms, hoping to learn the future from their travels. Others seem compelled to explore the entire world out of a burning desire for knowledge. Many feel as though they have a divine quest, but most admit that they simply can't find a place of their own. They alone travel far enough to see the true breadth of the world — and it is a dagger in a Strider's breast to know that the world is vast and huge, beyond anything the other tribes might guess, and that he has no place in it.

Although the Striders are more comfortable in Araby and North Africa, many commonly pass through Europe. This is in their own best interests — they fear that without the occasional visit from a Strider, some of the more reclusive septs might forget about them entirely, and treat them as intruders. Most European Garou view them as mysterious and untrustworthy, but grudgingly accept that the Striders' greater perspective can be highly useful. Some septs heed the visions of the wanderers more than those of their own Theurges, while the guardians of more insular caerns go to great lengths to drive Silent Striders out of their protectorates. More fool they — for in these times, the Striders are often the only reliable source of information about the outside world.

Outsiders believe that the Silent Striders have no organization, that they are a tribe of loners passing in the night. They aren't far from the truth — with the loss of their Ægyptian homeland, the Striders lost much of their hierarchy. But although the Silent Striders do not gather often, they still meet and even maintain a few hidden caerns in Europe — the most prominent of which is hidden among the hills of southern Spain. They pass information through stories, and when two Silent Striders meet on the road they spend many hours sharing their knowledge.

Territory

The Silent Striders do not claim any territory of their own, much to their sadness. They travel where they will and can be found in all lands. Striders have journeyed to the Scottish Highlands and the frozen fjords of Scandinavia, as well as to the kingdoms of Ethiopia and sultanates of Araby. Some say that the Silent Striders have even ventured over the deserts and mountains to far-off Cathay, following the trails of Alexander the Great. If this is true, then the Striders have never shared the knowledge of what they found there.

The territorial werewolves of other tribes usually tolerate their unannounced arrivals since they know that the Silent Striders will soon be on the move; unfortunately, the humans of the day are far less receptive to strange wanderers from far lands. As a result, Striders often take the guise of pilgrims, in order to raise fewer questions. In a search for acceptance, Silent Striders sometimes join multitribal packs with mixed reactions from others. Some of their elders will settle into multitribal septs as revered advisors, although this isn't common — the Litany, after all, demands that elders not suffer their people to tend their sickness. It's said that no Strider will ever choose a place to live — only a place to be buried.

The Silent Striders primarily breed with the people of North Africa, Moors and Saracens, although they are said to have Kin even farther east. All Silent Striders feel a degree of kinship with nomads and will defend them from attacks. They also feel a connection to all peoples of the East, defending them from persecution as well. A few of these Garou have extended some influence into families of notable crusaders, in order to return East and make certain that Christian looters don't destroy ancient sacred sites.

Camps

The Striders' camps are well-entrenched by this point, and most of those that exist in the modern age exist in the medieval era as well, often with little change. The Harbingers are one of the most fledgling of camps, but contains some of the Garou most attuned to the signs of trouble in these times. They are one of the few to listen to the Red Talons' prophecies, and although they've yet to take the doomsayers' claims as gospel, they are at least visionquesting to see for themselves.

The Seekers and the Dispossessed alike exist in the 11th and 12th century, and both represent the stereotypical Strider in other tribes' eyes. Indeed, the traditions of each camp have been relatively unchanged since the tribe's exile from Ægypt. For their part, the Wayfarers are beginning to emerge, but do not come into their own until later — there simply aren't enough portable resources to justify their existence. The few members of this loose confederacy of opportunists generally deal in barter and favors. Oftentimes, they reason, they wouldn't even be welcome in most septs if they didn't do favors for those in charge — so why not get a good meal and some information in return, to sweeten the deal?

• **Daggers of Nut:** Taking their name from the Ægyptian pagan Incarna of night, these Striders are well and truly angered by the rise of the vampires. Their hatred for the undead surpasses even that of the wildest Fianna or purest Silver Fang — for they avenge a lost homeland and lost Kin. The Daggers act as assassins wherever they wander, silently selecting a Leech or three for extinction, even though it might upset any existing truces between the natives. Wherever the Daggers of Nut pass, the war between werewolf and vampire is kindled into new fury — and it is always the local Garou who bear the brunt of the Cainites' vengeance, for the Daggers have moved on. Eventually, they are destined to anger even those in their own tribe, and charged to disband — but until then, they carry on their crusade with terrible fervor.

Allies and Foes

The Silent Striders have long had an affinity for the restless spirits of the fallen. Some tales blame this on an old curse laid on the tribe; others point to the role of Owl, their Tribal Totem, as a messenger of Death itself. The Striders themselves speak little of such things. But they have allies in the world of the dead, to be certain. More importantly, the Striders can call up ghosts anywhere from the peat bogs of Ireland to the battlefields outside Constantinople. Although these ghosts have little influence on the mortal plane, the Striders can coax information from them that gives them the edge in dealing with any local lord or sept.

Other tribal advantages are scattered and unreliable. Nomads that they are, the Striders tend to avoid the territory of other supernaturals, whether fae, shapechanger or warlock. As a tribe, the Striders do not cooperate at all with vampires, even under dire circumstances; the tribe's hatred for vampires exceeds possibly even the Red Talons' loathing of humanity.

In fact, the Striders' greatest enemies are the serpentine Followers of Set. More than vampires — for it's said that an unwholesome ichor floods them, something more potent than the tainted blood of most Leeches — and less than any beast, the Setites are held responsible for most of the tribe's ills. Legend holds that Set, the god of darkness himself, was responsible for driving the Striders from their rightful homeland. To this day, the Striders repay the favor whenever possible, introducing any Setites (and, with only a little less fervor, any other Leeches) they discover to Final Death.

Backgrounds: Silent Striders may not buy Past Life or Resources.

Beginning Gifts: Heavens' Guidance, Sense Wyrms, Speed of Thought

Quote

Salutations, wise Athro-rhya. I bring news from the South, across the sea. Will you have me at your fire and hear my message?

Stereotypes

- **Black Furies** — The males among us should stay wary, but they offer safety and solace to any female.
- **Bone Gnawers** — Should you need the news of a land, go to the wolves of the cities. They see and hear much, and will often offer their wisdom in exchange for kind words.
- **Children of Gaia** — They are friends, and will give what they have for even a wanderer. Still, they see the world through naïve eyes.
- **Fenrir** — The wildness of the North and the iron of the Holy Roman Empire alike, in one tribe. They are strong allies and vicious enemies. Be cautious and quiet among them.
- **Fianna** — They do not trust strangers, but if you can win their friendship, they will be fast allies to the end.
- **Red Talons** — There is no need to be so intolerant and savage. Civilization and learning have their uses, wildest brothers.
- **Shadow Lords** — Their hospitality is precise, and they are most interested in exchanging news. But beware — many of them are more dangerous than vipers when angered.
- **Silver Fangs** — The lords over the Garou are still great, but a faint scent of sickness is blowing on the west wind. How can this be?
- **Warders** — No stranger than we, and they, like us, often have assets and strengths that others don't realize.

Silver Fang

Dark shapes filled the air around Konstantinov Icehowler. He growled deep in his throat, half at them and half at himself for letting the witch catch him partway up a cliff wall. For a moment, he nearly gave into his instinct and shifted into Crinos — but at the last, he relented. The extra weight could all too easily send him tumbling down the rocks, and then all his effort would be for nothing. He steeled himself for the attack and slowly reached for the next solid handhold.

The bats crashed into him again and again. They bit and clawed at his eyes, hands, and most importantly, the pendant which protected him from the witch's powers. Icehowler cursed and redoubled his efforts. His pack was up there, in the dungeons of that madwoman — his sister. If only the others had listened to him, this wouldn't have happened.

He was a Silver Fang, born to rule, and he knew the truth about the madwoman. Even if his comrades didn't respect his pure coat, they should have trusted his instincts. This was what he should have expected from a mixed pack. The Child of Gaia wanted to parley, and the Fenrir insisted on being there to do battle. The Shadow Lord wanted to dispute him as a way of indirectly challenging Konstantinov's leadership, and even his best friend among them, the Warder Julian, didn't want to trek across the tundra to find the pendant. They were supposed to wait for him to complete his quest, but impetuosity got the best of them. No matter. It was fated to end in a confrontation between himself and Tatiana.

He pulled himself to the top of the cliff, the scratches and bite marks already fading from his skin. She stood there waiting, dressed in a royal black gown trimmed with gold. Her skin was paler than the snow around her and her scent was that of the dead. In one hand was the sceptre of authority with which she had fled from the caern after her transformation. She stared at him with crystal blue eyes, empty of spirit.

"I have seen our future, my brother."

"Then the gifts of the Theurge haven't left your shell, monster."

She shook her head, only a hair's breadth. "My fate is the fate of us all."

Before he could move, she threw herself over the edge of the cliff. He watched her strike off the rocks on the way down and roared with his frustration.

Icehowler sat a time and thought. There was no glory in this, no honor in losing a sister and fellow Garou to this fate. Finally, he lifted his head. Perhaps she destroyed herself out of fear or shame when she saw her brother, the glorious hero. That would make a better addition to his tribe's legends.



The Silver Fangs are recognized as the leaders of the Garou, the tribe of heroes. Although many of the greatest Silver Fangs are already long gone, the legends of these heroes keep growing with the passing years. The Silver Fangs do their best to live up to their heritage, sometimes going too far to maintain their glory. There are still many years of heroism left to the Silver Tribe, and woe to those Wyrms-beasts fool enough to oppose them.

The Fangs believe that they must control the expansion of civilization; and as always, they consider it their lot to lead by example. To this end (or perhaps with this justification) they try to breed with humans in positions of power, raising Kin and young Fangs in the stone halls of nobility. Some tribal leaders are concerned that they are losing their wolf blood and their connection with Gaia. Others see the young Kinfolk becoming soft, living in luxury and being corrupted by the petty material desires and politics of humans.

The Silver Fangs consider the whole continent their protectorate, although they pay particular attention to the steppes of Russia. When they travel, they often intervene where they feel other tribes need their aid — which is usually everywhere. As often as not, the help they provide is resented, but this doesn't stop the Fangs.

Territory

The Silver Fangs are primarily concentrated in the east, in the kingdoms of Poland, Lithuania and Kiev Rus. However, they have a wide range, and individuals live wherever there is royalty in Europe. A Silver Fang population can be found in nearly every major seat of power.

They mix with royalty, lesser nobility, and any humans or wolves with remarkable traits, such as strength or beauty. Recently, noble station among humans has become more important to the Silver Fangs than skills or attributes. Many Silver Fangs even choose to spend the majority of their time among the courts of humans.

There are few threats to the Silver Fangs' rule. Vampires and the workings of subtle Banes constitute the greatest threats to the Silver Fangs, followed by the Shadow Lords who wish to usurp their place in the hierarchy of the Garou. The Silver Fangs view their position as secure almost to the point of arrogance in some cases. At times, the Silver Fangs will teach particularly rebellious Garou a lesson in divine right.

Indeed, it's a painful wound to the Fangs that the most contested of their territories is the motherland of the Rus. The Russian Silver Fangs are in for a long, hard time; the invasions that have scarred their land aren't over by a long shot, and the worst is yet to come. It will be a long, long time before the rise of the tsars and the return to glory of the motherland. Thankfully, they have territories aplenty to soften the blow, and they are quite strong across Europe as a whole.

Ironically enough, this time marks the beginning of the Fangs' long slide into degeneration. As the tradition of hereditary rule has become the standard throughout Europe, the Dark Medieval world's rulers are rarely chosen for their ability. And the Silver Fangs, in their insistence on breeding with the rulers, are beginning to unconsciously adopt some of the practices of inbreeding that will someday plague their tribe. A few wise souls have noted this disturbing trend — but almost none will listen to them, for the Silver Fangs show no sign of weakness. Yet.

Houses

The Silver Fang's houses are strong now, before time and madness chip away at their cornerstones. The Gleaming Eye holds influence in the Holy Roman Empire and northern France, where they foster ideals that will eventually blossom into the birth of chivalry. The Fangs will eventually boast that the first human knights derived their practices from the Gleaming Eye's example — although it's not sure whether this is true or not. The Unbreakable Hearth holds dominion (at least in name) over Italy, Spain and southern France. Of these holdings, the house is strongest in France — Italy is a hotbed of intrigue, and the Muslim kingdoms of southern Iberia aren't any more welcoming than are the kingdoms of the north.

The Austere Howl is currently making a name for itself in England alongside its Norman Kin, much to the irritation of Fianna and Get of Fenris alike. Neither tribe is happy to see the silver lords arrive to claim their due, but they have no choice but to bow their heads. Likewise, the Winter Snow still reigns in Saxony and Denmark. Even the Middle East and the Mediterranean see Silver Fang nobles walk their rulers' halls, as the Wise Heart breed among the best and noblest of these countries. The Wise Heart are growing in power, albeit slowly — regrettably, they are due for a setback in the future. Constantinople's fall will shake the power base of the Fangs, coming at a time when they are just beginning to establish themselves in the Byzantine Empire.

Without a doubt, however, the strongest house of the Fangs is House Crescent Moon. They have seen hard times in the last century, as invaders sacked Kiev and rode across their steppes — and yet they endure, too proud and strong to let the misfortune of their Kin drag down the entire house. Under their guidance, they claim, the Motherland will rise again.

The weakest house, by compare, is the Conquering Claw. The Claw were once tied into the Roman Empire itself, and failed to adapt to the times when Rome fell. Today they have some scattered influence in the Italian city-states, but many of their members are wracked with Harano. As the house gradually loses territory to the more capable

Stereotypes

- **Black Furies** — Loyal and true, the Furies remember Gaia in Her glory and seek a return to the old times. Their dedication to females is admirable, but a bit misplaced in modern times. Even so, they should be treated as true priestesses of Gaia when they visit us.

- **Bone Gnawers** — The least of the tribes, the Bone Gnawers are almost beneath notice. Still, *noblesse oblige* demands we abandon none of our own.

- **Children of Gaia** — They have a special gift of wisdom that transcends tribal lines. Even those who claim to disrespect them come to the Children for healing and aid. Of all the tribes, there are few more trustworthy.

- **Fenrir** — They are among the greatest warriors of us all, but are also a constant source of trouble.

- **Fianna** — Bards to all our kind, the Fianna are wise and passionate — if sometimes forgetful of their place.

- **Red Talons** — An unruly tribe; their cries of impending doom are most tiresome. The Apocalypse is mere rumor, and only a fool would believe that the humans will be the ones to bring it upon us.

- **Shadow Lords** — We know that they seek to take our place on the Silver Throne. This drive aids them against the vampires with whom they struggle, but it also gives them envious eyes. They are not as great as we, but many a ruler has been undone by a traitorous servant.

- **Silent Striders** — These strange wanderers serve as the eyes and ears of Gaia. A gracious king should treat them with all hospitality.

- **Warders** — Though their ways may be strange to many tribes, they provide a great service.

Umbreakable Hearth and Wise Heart, it becomes apparent that House Conquering Claw is not long for the world.

Allies and Foes

The Fangs cultivate few allies outside the Garou Nation — after all, they reason, when every werewolf save the Dancers is technically your liegeman, who could feel a need for more? They are, for the most part, largely unaware that other Changing Breeds survived the War of Rage — and those shapeshifters that remember the Fangs' part in starting that war are in no hurry to remind the Fangs that they missed a few. They entertain the occasional truce with the otherworldly nobles of the sidhe, but the Fangs find any fae, even noble fae, too wild-spirited for their tastes. Finally, a few among the Ivory Priesthood cultivate contacts with the restless spirits of the departed — but these allies are a resource of the Priesthood, not of the tribe as a whole.

On the other hand, the Silver Fangs have external foes aplenty. Like any warrior tribe, they count numerous Wyrmbests as particular foes, including the great tainted dragons called the Zmei. The European Changing Breeds often count themselves as enemies of the Fangs, and a few Ceilican and Ratkin plot secret revenge on Falcon's tribe. But worst of all is the conflict with the vampires. Like the Fangs, the vampires often seek to influence European nobility, and are highly territorial. The vampires are even said to have instigated the downfall of Kiev — something the Silver Fangs will never forgive.


Backgrounds: Silver Fangs must spend at least three of their Background points on Pure Breed.

Beginning Gifts: Eye of the Falcon, Lament Flame, Sense Wurm

Quote

Remember your place, cub, or I will remind you of it by burying you there.

Warders



Brother Ambrose's pale face split with a grin that reflected a soft yellow in the cell's candlelight. His fingers ran covetously yet gently over the tome resting on his desk. "Why, dear Brother Giles! Lives of Eminent Philosophers? Why, I thought this would have been burned along with poor Abbot Dunfry and the rest of his books!" His eyes glanced up. "How ever did you...?"

"A trifle," came the answer from Brother Giles' cowl. "It was a bequest of sorts, just before he was taken to the stake. He was most insistent."

"Yes, yes," murmured Brother Ambrose. "The poor man. How tragic that one of our own was a practitioner of witchcraft! Why, if I hadn't seen those blasphemous tomes with my own eyes, I'd never have believed it myself. And the rest..." Brother Ambrose looked up, almost pitifully, to his fellow monk. "Is the rest... true? I hadn't the heart to see for myself..." His voice faltered and trailed away.

Brother Giles crossed himself, his fingers rustling on the rough fabric. "I'm afraid so, Brother Ambrose. I saw the... remains myself. The poor children — they'd been slashed so badly, there wasn't any blood in their..." He stopped, lowering his head.

Brother Ambrose repeated the sign of the cross; his brow tightened. "The monster. Unbelievable that he passed for a man of God. And yet..." He paused. "And yet, he kept volumes of philosophy just beside Satan's works. A shame that such great knowledge of things past resided in a twisted mind, with a fallen soul."

"Please, brother, trust in God's wisdom." Giles Tales-in-Paper's smile shone like daggers in the candlelight, though his voice was still soft and soothing. "The abbot had forfeited his immortal soul, in the end, for the promise of immortality of a different kind. More fool he."

Some call them the Warders of Men. Others call them the Warders of Apes. But the tribe that will one day be the Glass Walkers is content to simply answer to "the Warders"; it encourages other Garou to avoid insulting all of humanity that way, and is more convenient besides. Although largely homid in their numbers, the Warders also have a moderately healthy lupus population — still, they tend to encourage their lupus members to think in "more human and less bestial" terms, in the interest of improving communication. They have yet to see just what they might lose by taking such a tack.

The Warders believe in the grace of humanity; they tell tales of a time when the humans were more learned, and they work towards encouraging the return of such enlightenment. They encourage their cubs to learn multiple human languages, the better to analyze and understand human ideas from multiple angles. Much of the tribe is well versed in the teachings of Plato and Aristotle, and more than a few Warder Galliards learn the epics of Homer and parables of Aesop alongside the ancient ballads of Garou heroes. Unfortunately, the other tribes often scoff at the human works they try to share, particularly the more legendary fictions — it's a common complaint among werewolves that human myth "gets all the details wrong."

Some members of the tribe blame the current environment of ignorance and xenophobia on a great Umbral fire, which they say set back humanity's progress when it injured the great Incarna they call "the Machine." This fire allegedly occurred not long after the fall of Rome, and was thusly responsible for the beginning of the Dark Ages proper. (The other tribes remember something about an Umbral fire, but don't remember it being as destructive as the Warders claim.) As a result, the Warders often see themselves as working against setbacks — and so they double their efforts to encourage trade, promote learning and foster science. They have to move slowly, however, for their actions tend to attract the Church's attention. And the Dark Medieval Church is very dubious of progress....

Territory

The Warders concern themselves with the cities of Man. In doing so, they have no real geographical territory of their own. In fact, most of the other Garou are glad to leave them to their chosen protectorates; the medieval city is a filthy, reeking place that disgusts the lupine senses. The Warders can be found in almost any of the major cities of the time — Constantinople, Paris, London, Prague, Buda-Pest and the like — but they must tread most carefully there. The great numbers of vampires native to the age are a very real threat to the Warders, who cannot expect help to arrive quickly from neighboring wilderness septs.

A notable exception to the Warders' seemingly random distribution is the city-states of Italy. Here the *Luperci*, or Italian Warders, bask in the rising power of these tiny nations. Here folk with no noble title accumulate wealth, shifting the balance of power into a few more hands. Here the guilds are beginning to arise, placing influence in the hands of talented crafters. If the rapid deforestation of the peninsula is the price, the Warders seem willing to overlook this in the name of progress. As always, there are much greater concerns — in particular, keeping this burgeoning empire from falling wholly into the corrupting hands of the Leeches.

Camps

As befits a tribe that changes with human society, none of the Warders' camps survive to the 20th century, nor are any of the 20th century camps extant in the Dark Medieval world. The following are examples of the sorts of camps the Warders currently further; they aren't necessarily the only ones, but they do demonstrate the sorts of causes medieval Warders are likely to champion.

- **The Bellows and Crucible:** As the "science" of alchemy begins to strike its first few, guttering sparks,

certain among the Warders do their best to blow softly on the flames and bring the art to blossom. The "Firetenders" (for so they're called for brevity) are largely Theurges and Philodox, all versed in elemental lore. They do their best to guide human alchemists toward enlightenment, hoping to open their charges' eyes to the glory of the spiritual world beyond — after all, if humanity can manage to discover the remarkable structure of Gaia's plan, the wondrous interconnectedness of the elements, then perhaps they will strive again for the spirituality they've largely abandoned. (And, of course, there are certain benefits to reap by furthering scientific advances....) It's said that the Firetenders have a few connections among mortal alchemists who are able to work real magic, but these alliances are almost certainly few and far between, if there's any truth to them at all. The camp does not formally dissolve — it merely evolves into different forms in the Renaissance, certain that humanity has finally taken its first step toward true greatness.

- **Brethren of the Book:** These Warders champion what they believe to be humanity's greatest achievement — the written word. The members of this camp stockpile rare scrolls and illuminations, and have been known to slip into monasteries and keeps to steal away books before war or disaster can ravage them. The Brethren breed among scholars, priests and other lettered folk, and often strive for literacy in as many languages as possible. Sadly, the Brethren aren't well loved among other Garou, who champion the old oral traditions and condemn books as detrimental to the memory. The camp is eventually rendered superfluous by the dawn of mass publications, newspapers and, in time, the Information Age — but in the Dark Medieval times, they are kept all too busy preserving written knowledge.

- **The Golden Wheel:** Trade and commerce drive human achievement — or, at least, that's what the Wheels maintain. This camp does their best to further trade relations between cities and countries, reasoning that where goods are exchanged, ideas will be exchanged as well. Some Garou charge that the Wheels act more from avarice than great-heartedness, but there's been little enough evidence found of any great corruption within the camp. The Golden Wheel's activities range wildly from gently encouraging local authorities to sign trade treaties, to lending money to promising merchants, to hunting down bands of highwaymen or brigands who discourage trade. Eventually, they pass from the world as a camp, as humanity's avarice and ambition makes their encouragement unnecessary.

Allies and Foes

The Warders have perhaps more allies and contacts among humanity than any other tribe, due to their careful process of cultivating friends. However, they're rather more limited in their contact with other supernatural beings. The few European Changing Breeds that survive avoid the cities, save for the Ratkin — and the Ratkin avoid contacting the Warders as religiously as they would any other tribe.

Conversely, because the vampires of the cities greatly outweigh the Warders in influence, the Warders avoid moving in vampiric circles as much as they can. Indeed, a Warder reveals himself to be a werewolf only when he's absolutely positive his secret won't be spread — and this often keeps the Warders from making other contacts among mystick or similar circles. Even the fae keep well away from the tribe, as they're the only Garou who positively reek of cold iron.

Appropriately, the Warders also have relatively few enemies to call their own. They fight against the teeming Leeches and the forces of the Wyrms as does any Garou, but find the majority of their challenges in the mortal realm. To be sure, the Banes that prey on human thought and weakness are an especial concern of theirs, but they pale next to the greater portion of the tribe's task. The Warders struggle against human convention itself, striving to open the minds of an entire populace — which is an epic struggle in its own right.

Backgrounds: Warders may not purchase Pure Breed or Mentor — however, they still walk fairly softly on the land, and have yet to lose the spark of Past Life as a tribe.

Beginning Gifts: Artisan's Command, Persuasion, Smith's Blessing

Quote

You don't understand that these wretched times aren't the best that humanity has to offer. There have been periods of learning and enlightenment before — they can happen again, if you'll just give the humans a chance.

Stereotypes

- **Black Furies** — Terrible tales come out of the wilderness regarding our wild sisters. I hope that there's more slander than truth to them.

- **Bone Gnawers** — Do not decry these low-born souls, for they are perhaps our only allies within reach should the need arise.

- **Children of Gaia** — Their philosophy has great merit, although they waste themselves by taking it out into the wild lands. Why not work to redeem the multitudes inside stone walls, rather than preach to a few barbarians?

- **Fenrir** — Savages. There was no glory in pillage and conquest; they should follow their Kin's lead and give up venerating those brutish Northlander Incarna of theirs.

- **Fianna** — A rowdy band of heathens who think there is no world beyond their islands and live accordingly.

- **Red Talons** — Morbid, croaking doomsayers who won't hear of even the possibility of enlightenment. Trust a beast to have no vision for the future.

- **Shadow Lords** — They've the pragmatism to appreciate progress, but they rule a land that seems scornful of new ideas. Perhaps we can work with them to bring some civilization to those blood-soaked peaks and valleys.

- **Silent Striders** — They say they appreciate human learning, but if that's so, why are they so eager to leave it behind for the roads? Our vagrant cousins grow quite strange in their absences.

- **Silver Fangs** — We pursue our ways at their tolerance — something our august lords never fail to remind us of.





Chapter Three: Warriors of the Long Night

Culhwch invoked Olwen in the name of Kei, Bedwyr, Greidyawl Enemy Subduer, Gwythyr son of Greidyawl, Greid son of Eri... Hueil son of Caw, who never submitted to a lord's hand, Samson Dry Lip, Chief Bard Talyessin... Drem son of Dremidydd (who from Kelli Wid in Cornwall could see a gnat rise with the sun at Penn Blathaon in Scotland), Eiddoel son of Ner, Gwlyddyn, the carpenter who built Arthur's hall Ehangwen... Gwarae Golden Hair, the two pups of the bitch Rhymhi, Gwyddrud, Gwydden the Difficult... Kelemon daughter of Kei, Tangwen daughter of Gweir Servant of Birds... — in the name of all these Culhwch invoked his request.

— "How Culhwch Won Olwen," *The Mabinogion*

In most ways, character creation isn't all that different for **Dark Ages** chronicles than it is in the world of **Werewolf: The Apocalypse**. To be sure, there are fewer tribes to choose from, but most of the rest remains the same.

Of course, the devil lies in the details. This chapter describes the different options available to **Dark Ages** characters, whether useful Gifts that eventually became obsolete thanks to 20th-century technology or rites that were lost along with the isolated septs that practiced them. If the Storyteller likes, she may make these options available to modern-day **Werewolf** characters as well, although some might be wholly inappropriate; nobility, for instance, is very different in the modern world than it is in a time where having serfs to work the land is vitally important.



Character Concepts

It all begins with a seed — the idea of a personality that would lend itself well to a medieval shapechanger. Who are the werewolves of the Dark Medieval world? What types of characters can troupes construct? The following descriptions offer both Storytellers and players some ideas for creating personalities in the Dark Ages.

Mercenary:

A sword for hire, the mercenary travels the land, selling his warrior's art to whomever will pay the price. This type of soldier has no permanent home and no real roots; he may have wealth but for whatever reasons keeps roaming and fighting. Why does he not return home? What is he afraid to face? Perhaps he has no home or cannot return there until some quest or mission is satisfied. Perhaps his inner Rage keeps him from growing too close to the people he grew up with. Mercenary characters could end up in any part of the known world.

Wandering Holy Person:

Something drives the wandering cleric to keep searching for truth, offering aid wherever she travels. The wanderer's faith is not so important; she might be Muslim, Jewish or Christian. What matters is her passion for discovering enlightenment and seeking a higher power. The holy person may be a healer or midwife; she might also be a teacher. In any case, mortals and Garou look to this person for comfort and aid. How does she resolve the dilemma of following both God and Gaia? That's up to the player, and the conflict may be a major part of the character's theme and story.

Wolf of the Great Forest:

Whether in the dark Black Forest of Bavaria or the verdant Sherwood Forest of England, the lupus Garou has a pleasant life in the great woods, at least for the moment. Game is not so scarce, and only a few humans trample the forest lands with their horses and strange traveling contraptions. Still, mortal hunting parties occasionally break the stillness of the woods, and some even hunt wolves. The player character will have influence in how the werewolves face this issue — by running away or tackling it with sharpened claws.

Proud Noble:

Gaia has seen fit to reward this werewolf with power and wealth in the world of humans. How does she use it — selfishly for personal glory and gain, or generously for the betterment of her pack and tribe? Does she come by wealth and title through inheritance or marriage? What are her relations with mortal nobles in the kingdom? This character is proud of her fine bloodline and perhaps seeks advancement in her tribe as well as the temporal world. She may face many difficult choices in the course of the chronicle, and not the least is whether or not to give in to the hubris that haunts her day and night.

Rebellious Peasant:

Fomenting an end to the feudal system is what this character lives for. He sees the arrogance of mortal and Garou nobility taking freedom from the werewolves and has resolved to do something about it. The penalties for inciting rebellion are terrible, but this proud wolf cares not. He believes that death is preferable to a life of serfdom, bound to the land, and if death is the price, so be it. This rebel gladly takes as many of the enemy as possible with him if he must travel the darker road.

Bailiff:

Born to a respectable peasant family, this character has had a good life within the feudal system. Because of his service, perhaps even because of his wisdom in fighting the Wyrms, the lord has seen fit to award him the position of bailiff, an office responsible for managing the villages of the estate and assuring that the manor has everything needed to function properly. The bailiff can read and write; he's also a stickler for detail. Plus, the job description includes some travel, more than enough to satisfy the simple tastes of this werewolf.

Merchant:

This character escaped the bonds of serfdom by living in a town for a year and a day, becoming fast friends with a merchant there. Now the Garou is a merchant herself, traveling in a caravan, perhaps with other werewolves, selling fine cloth, amber and occasionally spices from the East. She's slowly learned to read and write and is successfully cultivating a network of contacts throughout the continent and down into the Mediterranean. Even though she misses her family, seeing new towns and meeting new people is her meat and drink.

Scholar:

Perhaps this character listened in secret to the lessons of a noble youngster or wheedled a priest into teaching the knowledge of reading and writing. However he learned, this character has an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. Making his way to a university, he tries to continue his learning by sneaking into the vast lecture halls because he has no money to pay the tuition. Other werewolves think he's a bit touched in the head, wanting to spend so much time around mortals in their stinking cities. For the scholar character, however, knowledge is ecstasy.

Fae Friend:

Likely, the blood of the Shining Host runs strong in her veins. Or maybe her gold-green eyes and siren's voice simply draw fae like bears to honey. Whatever the reason, the fae folk respect and admire this character. She's not above their trickery, but most of their games are meant in jest and good spirits. They often give her sage advice and likewise expect her protection and friendship. Other Garou are admiring but also a little suspicious; they know that the fae often work to their own purposes and can never be trusted. So what does this say about the character herself?

Verderer

Unlike many who claim this position, this woodwise Garou isn't an outlaw and poacher. He seeks to protect the forests from harm, albeit turning a blind eye to the occasional Kinfolk who wants to snare a rabbit for dinner. The verderer is exceptionally attuned to animals and the land, perhaps having some sort of special communion with the spirits of the forest. He also has access to the local feudal lord and may be in charge of supervising hunts for stag or boar, warning his wolf pack mates and Kin when to lay low.

Sea Wolf:

With every voyage, the sea wolf encounters a new adventure. Maybe there's gold and treasure to be had, but like as not, all that's waiting on the shore is a bloody fight. This matters not, for it's excitement and glory the sea wolf craves, much more than the rewards. This character may even be a lupus who travels with a mixed crowd of Garou and Kinfolk over the high seas.

Steward:

The steward is one of the most important persons on the feudal estate. He is in charge of accounting, correspondence and management of the manor and demesne. The steward also keeps in close contact with the lord and the bailiff; in other words, the position brings with it great power and responsibility. Why might a Garou want this position? Well, if the feudal lord is also a werewolf, being granted the office of steward is a singular honor. While prolonged absences from the estate might weaken the steward's power, he'll

Roleplaying the Medieval Werewolf

One thing to keep in mind as you create your **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** character is the overall mood of the setting. This is no world of reason and bright lights, where science reassures people that monsters don't exist (even if they do). This is a world of superstition and fear, where even a passing stranger might be a sorcerer or beast in human shape. This is a time of ignorance, when people clung desperately to faith because it was the only hope they had. As a werewolf walking in this world, you should be *scary*.

Keep in mind the stories of this age, the tales of wolves tearing apart lost children or of witches taking animal form to bedevil their enemies. Pick a concept that evokes the feel of this setting, and add a personality that says *werewolf*. Even the most compassionate Child of Gaia feels her Rage bubble within her in these nights of blood, steel and fire — even the subtlest Warder should retain a feel of the predator, of the wolf walking among the sheep. If you pay careful attention to creating a character who emphasizes the stormy, isolated feel of the times, you're doing your part to make the chronicle something your group can talk about for years and years.

certainly have to travel the lord's lands and perhaps visit other local nobles and even the king. Roleplaying a steward thus offers some interesting chances for intrigue.

Breeds

There are almost no rules changes for the various breeds in the Dark Ages setting. In particular, homids are treated exactly as they are in the modern day.

Metis are much rarer in the Dark Medieval setting. The practice of infanticide is more common in these times, and rare is the sept that will allow such a blasphemous consummation to reach adulthood. Metis characters are created as normal, with deformities as usual — however, metis suffer a +1 difficulty on all social rolls involving other Garou. Without the threat of the imminent Apocalypse, Garou are less likely to see a metis' existence as a necessary evil; they are not accustomed to any sort of metis presence, and have no desire to become so.

Other Changers

But what, you ask, if I want to play a shapechanger other than a Garou? What guidelines exist for medieval Corax? What about a transplanted Mokolé?

Space precludes listing specific rules for all the Changing Breeds in medieval times — we *did* want to include other chapters in the book, after all. If you have rules for the shapeshifting race in question, and the Storyteller doesn't mind sitting down and doing the work of adapting the rules, you're good to go.

Naturally, though, some changes are common-sense. All characters will replace Abilities like Computer and Drive with Academics and Ride. Most technological Gifts should be replaced with appropriate Warder Gifts, and Backgrounds should be tailored to fit the setting.

Of the shapeshifters available, we recommend you try the most compatible ones first. Corax always have some reason to discreetly help out a Garou pack, and the scavengers of medieval battlefields are no different. You *might* be able to play a Gurahl — but you'd be one of maybe three that are awake on the continent, so don't expect the Storyteller to allow this. The Ceilican are the only European Baster, and they don't play well with Garou — but a temporary alliance with a Fianna pack might be appropriate. And it's the rare Ratkin who'll work with any shapeshifter apart from a Bone Gnawer or two — still, the dirt-crusted wererats are thematically perfect for a Dark Ages game.

But if you're dying to play a Nuwisha, Mokolé, Nagah or Kitsune — well, don't get your hopes up. Trying to drag in a shapeshifter from the other side of the world is the sort of thing that makes Storytellers give up on **Werewolf** and take up birdwatching.

Lupus characters cannot purchase Archery, Crafts, Ride or Academics with their beginning Ability dots — similarly, Etiquette, Law, Linguistics, Medicine, Politics and Science remain off-limits. For your lupus character to begin play with any of these traits, you must purchase them with freebie points.

Abilities

Most Abilities from **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** are perfectly suited to Dark Ages play. Athletics means you probably spend time hunting game, not playing football — but it's still the same thing. Similarly, Primal-Urge has been Primal-Urge since the Garou were born. Firearms, however, isn't an option (unless the Storyteller wants to advance the timeline sufficiently into the Renaissance). The following Abilities replace the more modern traits on the character sheet; players may also devise others as Secondary Abilities as they like, with their Storyteller's permission.

Talents

Larceny

This represents a knack for petty crime, whether slitting purse strings or trying to find a buyer for a nobleman's gold signet ring. It doesn't entail "streetwise" as the modern term goes, as there's really not much of a "street culture" in the medieval city. Instead, this Talent can be used for numerous criminal activities, such as forging documents, poisoning wine or picking a crude lock. The difficulty tends to vary, but most relatively involved jobs (such as picking a Middle Ages-level lock or moving a wax seal from one document to another) are difficulty 8.

Needless to say, the punishments for theft are nowhere near as lenient as they are in modern days — a thief could lose his hand, rot in a diseased gaol cell, or be hung without trial. And although Garou are rather less at risk from human justice, they have a great deal more to worry about from their own kind — stealing an Italian merchant's pay chest is one thing, but swiping a Silver Fang's fetish will bring you suffering on a truly epic level.

- Novice: You could steal a drunk's horse.
- Practiced: You've picked a pocket or two.
- Competent: You don't have to work for a living.
- Expert: You could almost buy into nobility with your ill-gotten gains.
- Master: You'd do well among the Shadow Lords.

Possessed by: Robbers, vagabonds, Ragabash, Bone Gnawers, beggars, entertainers, assassins

Specialties: Pickpocket, Fencing Goods, Lockpicking, Sleight of Hand, Poisoner

Other Talents

Intrigue, Acting, Weather Sense, Search, Mimicry, Scavenging, Begging



Skills

Archery

This is the ability to fire bows and crossbows accurately. Archery is a tricky skill to learn; the popularity of the crossbow in later times didn't stem from the crossbow's superior stopping power (which it didn't have), but from its ease of use. Militia and guards could be issued crossbows and expected to be familiar with their use (if not expert) in a remarkably short time. By compare, kings of the time preferred to recruit peasants in wartime when they needed archers, simply because it would take far too long to train soldiers in archery.

With this Skill, you can also string a bow and care for bows, crossbows, arrows and quarrels. You can even make minor repairs to the tools of your trade.

- Novice: You can fire a crossbow all right.
- Practiced: You've learned how to shoot a longbow fairly well.

••• Competent: You rely on your talents to put game in the pot.

•••• Expert: One Bane Arrow is usually all it takes.

••••• Master: They'll tell tales of you shooting stars from the sky.

Possessed by: Peasants, hunters, game wardens, poachers, town militia, Caern Warders

Specialties: Crossbow, Trick Shots, Long-range, Twilight, Game Animals, Target Shooting, Welsh Longbow

Crafts

This is the ability to make and repair things with your hands, whether pottery, wood-working or even weaving a thatch roof. This talent is of paramount importance in these times, where almost everyone works with their hands. There are few people of the day who specialize in more than one craft — one trade is plenty to master when life is short and hunger a very real concern.

Although the Storyteller may rule that true masters of a craftsman's profession should purchase an appropriate Secondary Skill, this Ability should suffice to represent most skilled laborers' trades. This Skill is particularly useful when crafting fetishes, for spirits will refuse to enter a vessel that doesn't please them; a high Crafts trait may mean the difference between a Sun Crystal and a mundane hunk of rock.

- Novice: Apprentice
- Practiced: You can put food on the table, although nobody's falling over themselves to purchase your wares.
- Competent: You earn a fair living, and folk try to apprentice their sons to you.
- Expert: The King himself might be your employer.
- Master: Someday your creations will appear as illustrations in college textbooks.

Possessed by: Laborers, townsfolk, Theurges, ladies-in-waiting

Specialties: Blacksmithing, Cobbling, Embroidery, Farming, Leatherworking, Pottery, Silversmithing, Tanning, Wheelwright, numerous others

Ride

This trait not only covers the ability to remain seated on a horse (even during hectic situations such as combat or forest fires), but the ability to judge horseflesh fairly accurately, utilize tack and harness correctly, and even participate in mounted combat.

Werewolves, however, have distinct trouble with domesticated animals. Any beast that has accepted man's rule is very uncomfortable with the wild Rage in a shapeshifter's breast, and doesn't like to be near such an obvious predator. Some Garou are able to use their skill with animals to overcome this and ride as well as any knight, but they are rare indeed.

[For details on the tricky relationship between Garou and horses, as well as guidelines on mounted combat, see the Appendix of this book.]

- Novice: A slow, beaten-down jade is about all you can manage.
- Practiced: You can gallop or clear small jumps.
- Competent: You can readily hunt from horseback.
- Expert: You're practically a Mongol corsair; you could ride for weeks without discomfort.
- Master: You could snatch a lady's handkerchief from the ground without slowing from a gallop.

Possessed by: Knights, nobility, barbarians, messengers, huntsmen, wealthy merchants, priests, Warders

Specialties: Jousting, Jumping, Forest, Mountain Paths, Mounted Swordsmanship

Other Skills

Carpentry, Cooking, Boating, Fletcher, Herbalism, Hunting, Smithwork, Weaving

Knowledges

Academics

A rare trait among many Garou, the knowledge of the lettered world is still stressed as important among Silver Fangs,



Shadow Lords, Silent Striders, Children of Gaia, and of course, the Warders. This Knowledge represents the standard medieval education — literacy, fluency in Latin, some measure of theology and philosophy, and possibly a few other courses. Needless to say, this isn't a skill that one can pick up just anywhere; even a single dot in Academics presumes you have attended a cathedral school, monastery or the like (or perhaps had a private tutor, if you're of noble blood), while a high rating indicates an education at one of the burgeoning universities, such as those in Paris, Salerno, Oxford or Bologna.

Literacy is not assumed in the Dark Medieval setting; at least one dot in Academics is required to be able to read and write.

- Dabbler: You can speak Latin, can read simple texts, and write (if crudely). You've heard of Aristotle.
- Student: Your Latin grammar is excellent, and you have a good grounding in math, philosophy and theology.
- Learned: You are well versed in the writings of learned theologians and pagan philosophers such as Aristotle.
- Scholar: You could teach at any university, or serve as a king's scribe or tutor.
- Savant: You must be careful, for surely your vast reserves of knowledge have attracted the attention of the vampires that skulk in educated circles....

Possessed by: Scholars, nobility, churchmen, scribes, administrators

Specialties: Ancient History, Theology, Calligraphy, Heresy, Grammar, Mathematics, Scripture

A Note on Linguistics

We heartily recommend that Storytellers adapt the variant Linguistics rules from the **Werewolf Players Guide**, which are more appropriate in many ways. A proper scholar would have to have Linguistics 3 just to have the requisite education in Greek and Latin — never mind if he's lettered in French, German and Italian besides! In case you don't have those rules, assume that every dot doubles your number of additional languages; one dot means one extra language, two dots equal two additional languages, three dots becomes four extra languages, and so on.

There are a lot of languages extant from one end of the continent to the other in these times. The following list offers just a few possibilities for character creation. It is by no means comprehensive, but it does offer some idea of how many languages a far-ranging traveler might expect to encounter.

- Greek, Latin, English, French, Italian, German, Hebrew, Hungarian, Romanian, Slavonic*, Baltic*, "Arabic" (Kurdish, Armenian, Persian), Turk, Finn, Norse, Icelandic

*actually a collection of similar dialects

Backgrounds

The Backgrounds already given in **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** work, for the most part, almost without modification in a Dark Ages setting. The only difference is the precise definition; for instance, instead of a computer hacker, a Bone Gnawer Ragabash might instead count a seller of false relics among his Allies. Only one Background needs some redefinition: Resources. Income is a drastically different thing in this period, and luxuries like the spare clothing and vehicle that we take to mean "strictly middle-class" are the trappings of nobility in this era.

Resources

Medieval Europe has no common coinage system, and most people have little to no contact with money at all. The average person is a farmer who grows his own food and either makes his own clothes and tools, or barter for them. In such an environment, it's almost impossible to denote a specific rate of income to a Resources level. Rather than actual income, Resources instead is fairly loose, and represents purchasing power appropriate to where you live. It's just easier to say that your Warder purchases a crossbow with the profits of his latest deal than to try keeping track of how many coins you have in your cache. (And besides, the best things in **Werewolf** can't be bought from peddlers at all.)

Remember, though, that these assets are not static. In order to raise the money to purchase a sword, you might have to sell off a few pigs or send your taxman out early. You must either manage these assets in person or employ a bailiff to do so in your stead; most Garou take the latter path, entrusting a Kinfolk with the position of bailiff. Just remember that your bailiff might grow tempted by handling all your wealth....

- You're better off than a serf, and not quite impoverished. You can make small purchases (simple clothing, light armor, a meal in a tavern, a simple tool or weapon such as a shovel or spear) once in a while, if you've saved your pennies.
- Your resources are sufficient to sustain you without too much privation. With a little bit of scrimping, you can purchase a bow and arrows, a plow, a livestock animal, a dagger, or a bag of salt. You can also stay in an inn for a night if need be, or purchase a wagon for travel.
- You live comfortably, all things considered. You might have a small house of your own, and you likely have some trade which fetches in coins. You can purchase a crossbow or sword if need be, or even heavy armor if you save for it. You can acquire a mule to ride or work, and can muster the funds to bribe a knight or scribe.

- You are quite wealthy, and can even afford to purchase and keep a horse. You might be a wealthy merchant, or perhaps you own and oversee a hamlet. You can afford servants of your own, and have a modest spending allowance each month.
- You are rich as any wealthy noble. You can purchase almost any luxury item you choose — an illuminated book, a suit of knight's armor, fine furs or a merchant boat — although you can't make many such purchases at a time. You might own a castle and lands, with serfs to work them, or many villages. But be warned that many eyes are upon an august personage such as yourself, and keeping your Garou nature concealed will not be easy.

Merits and Flaws

Selecting Merits or Flaws for your character should never be a question of trying to gain rules advantages (although, sadly, many players use Merits and Flaws for that purpose alone). These optional traits are designed to offer just a touch more individuality, the opportunity to select something a little out of the ordinary. But first and foremost, they should be used to flesh out a character's concept and theme.

Therefore, it's particularly important that you select Merits and Flaws (if your Storyteller allows them) that reinforce the mood and themes of **Werewolf: The Dark Ages**. If you choose a particular Merit just for a rules advantage, you're the only one who benefits (and that only until your Storyteller gets annoyed with your greed). But if you select a Merit or Flaw on the basis of how well it conveys and represents your character and the game, the whole playing group benefits.

To be perfectly honest, many of the best Merits and Flaws for recreating the mood of medieval werewolf stories already exist. The following, from the **Werewolf Players Guide**, are particularly appropriate for a Dark Medieval game:

- **Psychological:** Code of Honor, Berserker, Pack Mentality, Vengeance, Territorial
- **Mental:** Common Sense
- **Awareness:** Any
- **Aptitudes:** Animal Magnetism, Natural Linguist, Uneducated
- **Supernatural:** Ancestor Ally, True Love (a medieval romance favorite), True Faith, Banned Transformation, Cursed, Forced Transformation (the last three are good for a game inspired by medieval werewolf legends), Mark of the Predator, Sign of the Wolf
- **Garou Ties:** Reputation, Notoriety (it's a very small world)
- **Physical:** Longevity, Animal Musk, Strict Carnivore, Wolf Years

New Merits

Acute Sense: (1 point Merit)

One of your senses, most likely your vision, hearing or sense of smell, is particularly keen. You might be able to pick out a man's eye color from your post atop the battlements, or hear the creak of rope as a rat runs down your boat's mooring line. The difficulty of any Perception roll involving the chosen sense is decreased by two; combined with the Gift: Heightened Senses, your awareness becomes truly preternatural. This Merit may be purchased for multiple senses, but not multiple times for the same sense.

[Yes, this isn't an exclusively Dark Ages-oriented Merit — but it's one that we foolishly left out of the **Players Guide**, and lacking any universal means of distributing errata, here you are.]

Nobility: (1-5 point Merit)

This Merit is certainly appropriate for Silver Fangs (or, more commonly, their Kin), but the occasional Garou from most other tribes has been known to attain such high station. The advantages (and responsibilities) of nobility are open to you; some werewolves have been known to exercise the *droit de seigneur* in order to breed with whatever promising stock they choose, although be warned that this is an activity that attracts the servants of the Defiler.

Unless you purchase the Resources Background you are presumed to be landless. However, if you have at least two dots in Resources and spend two extra Background points on this Merit, you have legitimate title to the lands that your sept claims as their own. This means that you have legal right to forbid trespassers, work the land as you choose, and generally keep people from prying into the sept's bawn. However, be warned that just because you have legal rights to the land, that doesn't mean that other nobles might not try to take that land by force — or even that your sovereign won't demand that parcel of land if it strikes his fancy. Nothing is guaranteed in the Dark Medieval world.

Bone Gnawers may not purchase this Merit; they've never bred into high society. It is possible for a Gnawer to earn a title through merit, but this is such a difficult thing for a hot-tempered werebeast that it should only be earned through play.

Vampire Ally: (4 point Merit)

For reasons of your own, you have an... understanding with one of the walking dead. This may be a truce called in the name of avoiding mutual annihilation, a pact of vengeance on a mutual enemy, or even an actual friendship. However, the rest of your kind are well aware that there are too many Leeches stalking the medieval European nights, and would look very poorly on your support of one of the enemy. The Storyteller will create this vampire ally, although you can certainly offer suggestions.

Gifts

The following Gifts are by no means the only ones known to the werewolves of the Dark Medieval world. However, they represent the average body of lore familiar to most Garou of the time. Storytellers may feel free to add Gifts from tribebooks and other sources to round out the medieval Garou — perhaps even let the players be the first to use such Gifts! After all, it's a pretty significant honor to be the one who brought the secret of Paws of the Newborn Cub back to the Garou Nation....

Most of these Gifts are out of common use in the 20th century; modern science and conveniences, no matter how begrudged, have rendered some of them less useful. Others, such as Man's Skin, are simply not as necessary in a 20th century Western environment. Storytellers who want to use these Gifts in modern-day **Werewolf** chronicles are welcome to, although the lore is usually fairly deeply buried, and Garou may have to go on particularly challenging quests to find spirits who remember how to teach these tricks. It's been a long time since anyone asked, after all.

Homid

A homid's mystical tricks of survival are relatively unchanged in this era. Even Gifts like Assimilation aren't inappropriate (particularly considering that Rank Five Garou might well be the few well-traveled werewolves of the times). One of the few exceptions is the Gift: Jam Technology, which arises only when technological advances become more of a concern. The following Gift is available in its stead.

- **Speech of the World (Level Two)** — Those who wander can encounter a new human dialect in every valley. This Gift allows the Garou to speak any human language he encounters, although his speech is slightly accented in any tongue but his own. Unlike the Rank Three Gift: Tongues (a Warder Gift; also **Werewolf Players Guide**, pg. 35), this Gift does not convey literacy. The Gift is taught by an Owl-spirit.

System: The player rolls Intelligence + Linguistics, difficulty 7; the effects last for the entire scene.

Metis

The few metis that survive in this era are heirs to the same legacy of scorn and suffering as are the metis of modern times — even moreso, in fact. Their Gifts are practically unchanged from one time period to the next, although Gifts of spite and venom such as Curse of Hatred and Wither Limb are often more popular amongst the breed.

Lupus

Lupus Gifts remain largely unchanged from the Dark Ages to modern times. Almost all of the basic lupus Gifts were granted long ago, and of the lupus Gifts given in the **Werewolf** rulebook, only Leap of the Kangaroo is unavail-

able in the Dark Medieval setting. It is replaced by the following Gift.

• **Sense Prey (Level One)** — Although game is still plentiful in these times, a hard winter or hungry sept can drastically reduce the number of prey animals available. What's more, wolf packs aren't terribly efficient at bringing down game — hence, sometimes a Kin pack needs all the help it can get. This Gift allows the lupus to mystically locate enough prey to feed her pack, drastically cutting hunt times. If there's prey within 50 miles, the lupus will know. Humans don't register as prey animals to this Gift, although some Garou mutter that the Red Talons know a variant of this Gift that dictates otherwise.

This Gift is taught by a Wolf-spirit.

System: The hunter rolls Perception + Primal-Urge, difficulty 7. Success indicates the location of enough prey to feed a large pack; if there are multiple groups of sufficient prey within the Gift's 50-mile radius of effect, the Gift leads to the nearest source (not necessarily the easiest to acquire).

Auspice Gifts

The Gifts granted by Luna's shifting face have undergone little change since the First Times; for the most part, an auspice's tasks remain the same regardless of human technology or cultural innovation. As such, there are fewer "new" auspice Gifts than there are Gifts of breed or tribe.

Ragabash

The Ragabash auspice is one of the most adaptable. By her very nature, the New Moon is expected to be able to twist any situation to best effect. Therefore, the Ragabash's list of Gifts undergoes the most changes of any auspice's — few though they may be.

The Gift: Open Seal exists, but is rare — after all, few human locks can withstand an angry Garou. It is commonly replaced by the more utilitarian (at least in the northlands) Gift: Snow Running. Similarly, the Gift: Gremlins will become more common alongside the human technology it will plague, but against medieval technology, it is more trouble than it's worth. Instead, the Gift: Reynard's Lie is in common favor among Rank Three Ragabash.

• **Snow Running (Level One)** — The severe winters in much of Europe can immobilize a village or greatly impair a wolf pack. This Gift allows a werewolf to circumvent the problems caused by heavy snowfall. The Garou using this Gift can run across snow or ice as if it were solid ground, without sinking in or leaving footprints. The Silver Fangs are said to have a version of this Gift that lends them more supernatural grace while treading on ice or snow, but leaves their tracks behind.

The Gift is taught by an Ice elemental.

System: The Garou need only spend a Gnosis point. The effects last for a day.

• **Reynard's Lie (Level Three)** — The Ragabash can tell the most blatant lies and have them accepted as truth, at least for a little while. Even the most stern-faced priest or suspicious baron will believe the Garou's pleas of innocence, no matter how guilty she may be.

This Gift is taught by a Fox-spirit.

System: The player tells the lie and rolls Wits + Subterfuge (difficulty is the target's Wits + Subterfuge, or the highest rating in a crowd). Two successes convince a single individual; three are required to dupe multiple listeners at once. In any event, convinced listeners believe the lie for the duration of the scene. However, the roll must always be made *after* the lie has been told; it's easy to get into trouble by trusting this Gift to protect you. A failed roll raises suspicion; a botch makes the listeners outright hostile.

Theurge

The Crescent Moon's Gifts are essentially unchanged; they are as effective, if not moreso, in the Dark Medieval World as they will be in the End Times. The medieval-era Theurge remains the withdrawn, superstitious tribal mystic that the Theurge has always been — which is frankly perfect for the mood of **Werewolf: The Dark Ages**.

Philodox

The tools of the Half Moon are also effectively timeless. A medieval Philodox's selection of Gifts is much the same as that of his modern descendants.

Galliard

The Gibbous Moon's Gifts are essentially the same as they are in modern times, although some of the names are different. Not all Galliards refer to the Gift: Eye of the Cobra by that name; more frequently, it's attributed to a local snake, such as an adder, or simply called "Come Hither." Further, Coyote hasn't yet taught the trick of Head Games to the European Garou; instead, powerful Galliards are granted the following Gift.

• **Call for Vengeance (Level Five)** — When a person's crimes against Gaia have been too great, a Galliard may use this Gift to stir her brethren against him. As the Galliard howls the name of her enemy to the heavens, her cry resounds through the land. Any werewolves who hear the cry know that a great offender has just been named, and must be punished.

This Gift is taught by an Ancestor-spirit.

System: The player rolls Stamina + Performance, difficulty 7. The howl echoes for a twenty-mile radius per success. Any Garou who hear the howl are not obligated to attack the victim named, but if they decide to join the crusade, their Willpower is effectively increased by three for the duration of their hunt (to a maximum of 10). In addition, if the target can hear the howl from his current location, his Willpower is effectively reduced by two points for the next week — giving

the Garou ample encouragement to hunt him down quickly. The Galliard cannot invoke another Call for Vengeance until the target of the first has been justly punished in the eyes of Gaia; the Storyteller decides what constitutes just punishment, and will let the player know via messenger spirits when the deed is done.

Ahroun

The tools of the Ahroun are little different from this time to the modern age; the Garou have fought with fang and claw since their birth, and learned the most effective ways to do so long, long ago. Most Gifts remain the same. However, the Gift: Sense Silver is not in common use in the Dark Ages setting; those humans steeped enough in hearth wisdom to know that silver affects werewolves are rarely those who own any silver of their own. Instead, it is replaced by the following Gift.

- **Gift of the Salamander (Level Two)** — The Ahroun with this Gift can become virtually impervious to flame. She can walk through a blazing building, hold her hand in a torch flame or even plunge her arm into a cauldron of boiling oil without ill effect.

This Gift is taught by a fire elemental, most often a Salamander.

System: The player spends one Rage to activate the Gift; the effects last for one scene. While under the Gift's protection, the Ahroun receives four extra dice for the purposes of soaking any form of heat or fire damage, whether supernatural or not. She also becomes immune to the effects of smoke inhalation, although she still needs oxygen to survive.

Tribe Gifts

Black Furies

Level One: Heightened Senses, Sense Wyrms — As the standard Gifts.

- **Man's Skin (Level One)** — There are simply some places where women are not allowed in the Dark Medieval world. This Gift allows a Black Fury to circumvent those rules; a woman might not be allowed to serve as a soldier, but a man may do so easily. The Fury using this Gift effectively changes gender in the eyes of onlookers; her features and build become decidedly more masculine, and her garb adapts to that of a man (although of the same social class — a peasant's frock won't become a baron's doublet). Her hair color, eye color and skin color remain the same. The end result is a man who shows a slight family resemblance to the Fury, but is a much more effective deceit than a haircut and change of clothes.

This Gift is taught by an Ancestor-spirit, often one who needed to dress as a man in life to accomplish her own ends.

System: The player rolls Charisma + Subterfuge, difficulty 7. The illusion lasts for a scene, or until the Fury shifts form. The change even withstands cursory tactile contact, although heavy or violent contact will reveal the truth.

Man's Skin is entirely illusory in nature — as a "male" the Fury cannot impregnate another woman, nor would she lose her child if pregnant.

Level Two: Curse of Aeolus, Sense of the Prey — As the standard Gifts.

- **Flames of Hestia (Level Three)** — This Gift mixes the Furies' capacity to heal and harm at the same time. The Fury may summon a corona of white flame to surround her hands, flame which purifies anything it touches. The Fury may cleanse tainted food or water in this manner, cure the ravages of disease or poison, or even damage Wyrms-tainted creatures with the purity of the flame.

This Gift is taught by a spirit servant of Hestia, an Incarna of purity and healing.

System: The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Gnosis, difficulty 8. Each success allows the Fury to remove any taint from enough food to fill a trencher, or a barrel's worth of water. Alternately, each success heals one health level of damage inflicted by disease or poison. Finally, if a Fury invokes this Gift in combat, the flames do one health level of aggravated damage per success to any Bane or fomor they contact.

- **Visceral Agony (Level Three)** — As the standard Gift.

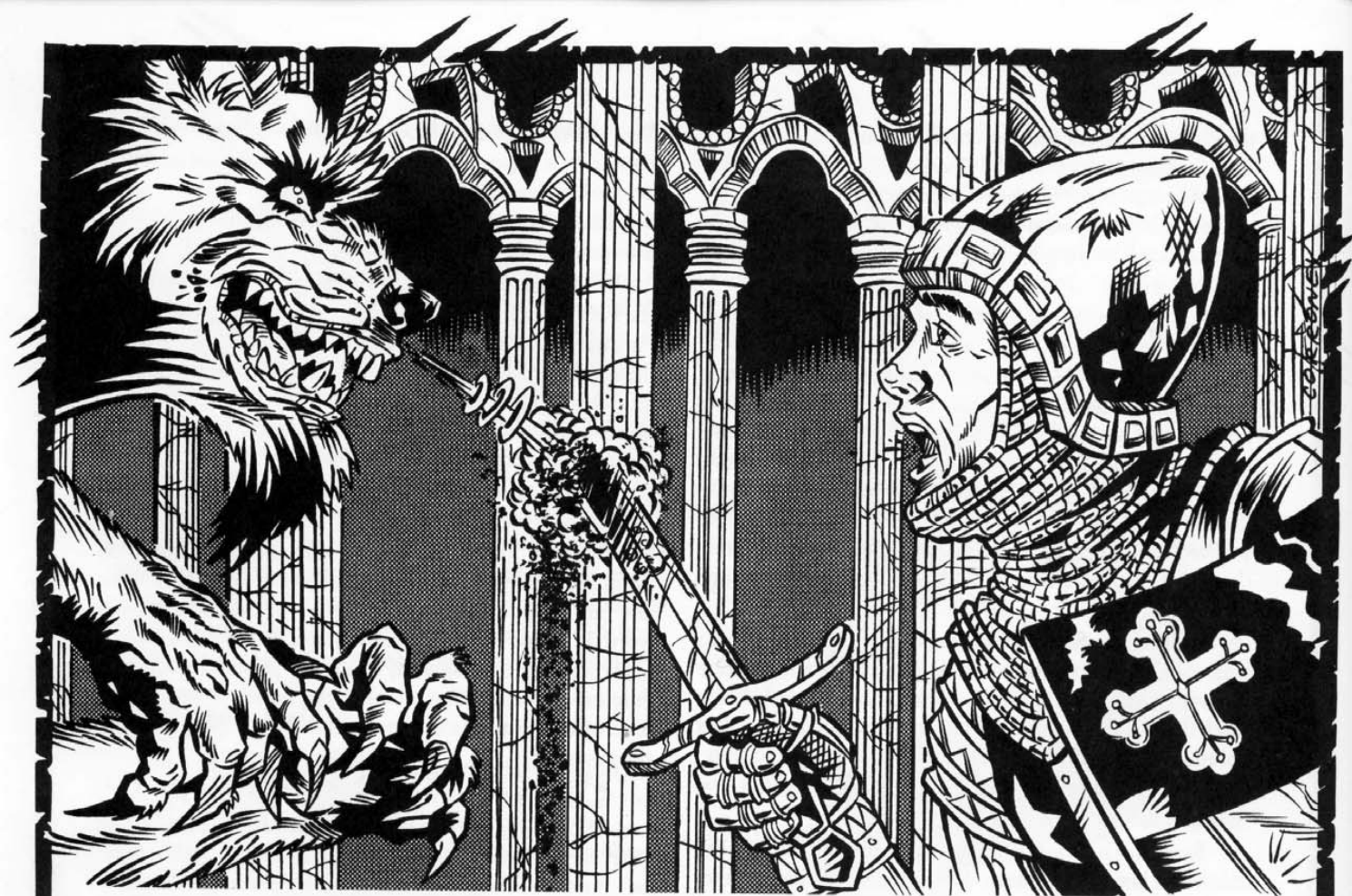
Level Four: Body Wrack, Wasp Talons — As the standard Gifts.

- **Arrow of Artemis (Level Five)** — To honor Luna in her aspect as Artemis, the huntress of the moon, the Black Furies strive to master the art of archery. This Gift is the ultimate expression of their skill. By invoking the huntress' name and freeing her mind of distractions, a Fury can invest a single arrow with the light of Luna — and celestial killing power. Virtually no force on Gaia can make her miss, and when the arrow strikes, it does so with the force of a thunderbolt. This Gift is taught only by powerful Lunes in direct service to Luna-the-Huntress.

System: The Black Fury spends a point of Gnosis as she draws back the arrow and sights on her target; this takes a full action. While she is looking down the shaft of the drawn arrow (which glows with a faint silver light once "charged"), she can see through any illusion or darkness that might impair her sight; this includes vampiric Disciplines, Gifts and magick.

When she fires the arrow the next turn, the archer rolls Dexterity + Archery to hit as usual. However, this Gift gives her 3 bonus successes on the roll, and reduces the difficulty of the shot by 2 — only the most incredible botches or superhuman evasion can make the shot miss. The arrow inflicts ten dice of aggravated damage; those slain by the missile are immolated in a quick-burning silver fire that does not spread further than the corpse, and leaves only bones behind.

However, this Gift must only be used in time of war — else Artemis becomes very displeased. If the Fury releases the arrow without a genuine living (or undead) target, or relaxes the bow and doesn't fire at all, the spent Gnosis point



is permanently lost. Furies only invoke this Gift when they know they have a target that must be slain; using the illusion-dispelling abilities to “scan for invisible enemies” is highly disrespectful, and counts as abuse of the Gift.

- **The Thousand Forms (level Five)** — As the standard Gift.

Bone Gnawers

Level One: Cooking, Scent of Sweet Honey — As the standard Gifts.

- **Trail of the Larder (Level One)** — It’s said that the Children of Famine were the first to learn this Gift and teach it to their fellows. This Gift allows the Bone Gnawer to scent out the best source of *surplus* food — that is, food currently in the possession of someone who has more than he requires. Said food is almost always guarded or locked away — not that this bothers the Children of Famine. The Gnawers also use this Gift for more creative effects from time to time; the renowned elder Simon Clubfoot found his way out of the twisting dungeons of Count Kimos by following his nose to the kitchen.

A Squirrel-spirit teaches this Gift.

System: The player rolls Perception + Primal-Urge (difficulty 7) and spends a Willpower point. The number of successes determines how far away the Gnawer can sense the food, and how accurately he can gauge the amount of surplus.

- **Blissful Ignorance (Level Two)** — As the standard Gift.

- **Plague Visage (Level Two)** — Anyone in his right mind fears a leper. This Gift allows the Bone Gnawer to draw an illusion of terrible disease on his features, repelling even the most stout-hearted onlookers. It’s a useful trick in many situations. It can earn charity from well-meaning monks, terrify locals, and even serve as a way of blending in — after all, people are afraid of you whether they think you’re a leper or just bewitched, but at least disease is more acceptable than witchcraft.

This Gift is taught by a Rat or Disease-spirit.

System: The Bone Gnawer rolls Manipulation + Medicine; the effects last for a scene. The imaginary disease may appear to be anything the Gnawer is familiar with, such as leprosy or pox, or even something entirely invented. Mortals viewing the illusion must make Willpower checks at difficulty 8 or shrink away in revulsion; a botch might even send them into the streets, screaming about pestilence. Supernaturals who are immune to disease have less to fear — they must still make Willpower tests, but the difficulty falls to 6.

- **Call the Rust (Level Three)** — By whistling softly through his teeth, the Bone Gnawer can summon a sudden and destructive rust onto metal in his vicinity. Spearheads crumble, swords corrode and mail falls apart at the werewolf’s command. Some Gnawers use this trick to protect their Kin from armed men in a humane fashion, but others prefer to inflict little poetic justices — such as attending the latest bear-baiting and corroding the chain holding the bear in question.

This Gift is taught by a Water-spirit.

System: The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Wits + Crafts. Each success allows the Gnawer to corrode one ferrous metal object into fragile uselessness, although detailed works such as a chain hauberk count as two objects. The Garou need not be touching the object at the time, but he must be able to see it and be within conversational earshot.

- **Gift of the Skunk (Level Three)** — As the standard Gift.

- **Infest (Level Four)** — As the standard Gift.

- **Wither Limb (Level Four)** — As the metis Gift.

Level Five: Riot, Survivor — As the standard Gifts.

Children of Gaia

Level One: Mother's Touch, Resist Pain — As the standard Gifts.

- **Eve's Blessing (Level One)** — Childbirth is a risky thing in these dangerous times, and the Children cannot stand to see unnecessary suffering. This Gift allows the Garou to improve a mother's chances of surviving a birth, as well as keeping the newborn free of disease for a short time.

This Gift is taught by a Cow-spirit.

System: The Child of Gaia need only lay her hands on the mother-to-be's womb and spend a Gnosis point; this can be done even during labor. For the next week, the mother and child are treated as having an extra dot of Stamina each, for purposes of surviving childbirth and resisting illness, infection or the like. If the mother is pregnant with multiple children, the Garou must spend one Gnosis per child to protect them all; however, in the process of invoking this Gift, the Child will automatically learn how many children are to be born, and can adjust his Gnosis expenditure accordingly. The Gift can be used on wolves (although it's less necessary); the Gnosis point spent will protect the entire litter for three days.

- **Calm (Level Two)** — As the standard Gift.

- **Grandmother's Touch (Level Two)** — This Gift is identical to the Level One Gift: Mother's Touch, save that the Garou can use it to heal herself as well as others.

[Most Children of Gaia have yet to learn the secret of Luna's Armor, although the struggles in Iberia and the fall of Constantinople eventually compel Unicorn to bless the Children with that rather more martial Gift.]

Level Three: Dazzle, Spirit Friend — As the standard Gifts.

- **Angel's Semblance (Level Four)** — The Children of Gaia don't believe in terrifying humans unnecessarily. This Gift allows a Child to act in Crinos form without invoking the terror of the Delirium; but instead of seeing a werewolf, onlookers see an angelic figure of exceeding grace and holiness. Witnesses might remember a Child's battle with a Wyrmbest as an angel's struggle with a demon, or a warning to leave the woods as the gracious guidance of a guardian angel. Onlookers need not even be Christian to be

affected; Islamic witnesses might remember one of Mohammed's fiery messengers, while Norse pagans might think the Garou was one of the Valkyries.

This Gift is taught by a spirit of Hope.

System: The player spends a Gnosis point to invoke Angel's Semblance for a scene. The effects are automatic against humans; use the Delirium chart (with no modifications for the Children of Gaia's weak Veil, if the optional tribal weaknesses are used) to determine how strongly a witness is affected. Responses of fear are replaced with rapture; even "catatonic fear" should be seen as "complete bliss."

- **Serenity (Level Four)** — As the standard Gift.

Level Five: Halo of the Sun, The Living Wood — As the standard Gifts.

Fenrir

Level One: Razor Claws, Resist Pain — as the standard Gifts.

- **Snow Running (Level One)** — As the Ragabash Gift.

- **Snarl of the Predator (Level Two)** — As the standard Gift.

- **Wearing the Bear Shirt (Level Two)** — A Fenrir with this Gift is spared the dishonor of fleeing a fight in terror. The Garou can only ever enter berserk frenzies, never fox frenzies. This Gift is taught by a Bear-spirit.

System: No roll is required; once this Gift is learned, the effects are automatic. In addition, the warrior can make a Willpower roll to resist any Gifts, Disciplines, enchantments or the like that incite fear, even if a resistance roll is normally not allowed.

Level Three: Might of Thor, Venom Blood — As the standard Gifts.

- **Hero's Stand (Level Four)** — As the standard Gift.

- **Iron-Can't-Bite (Level Four)** — By carving the "iron-can't-bite" rune into her flesh, the Fenrir can make herself invincible against the iron and steel weapons of her foes. Spears bounce off her hide and swords snap rather than cut into her.

This Gift is taught by a War-spirit.

System: The player spends a Gnosis point and a Rage point; the rune-carving inflicts no actual damage. For the duration of the scene, the Fenrir takes no damage from attacks inflicted by ferrous metals, although wood, stone, silver, claws or teeth and other non-ferrous attack forms can wound her as usual.

Level Five: Horde of Valhalla, Fenris' Bite — As the standard Gifts.

Fianna

Level One: Persuasion, Resist Toxin — as the standard Gifts.

- **Faerie Light** — The Fianna can conjure an eerie flame of witchlight to illuminate even the darkest moonless night.



The light is often shroud-white, a pale green or faintly blue in color, and will move about as the Fianna directs. It can only illuminate an area of three feet or so in radius, although this is often plenty. The Fianna often use this Gift to lure enemies into ambush or to ward away superstitious humans; tales are told of Raven-Ghost, the Ragabash who baited an entire patrol of mailed Normans into the treacherous bogs.

This Gift is taught by spirits of the marsh or fae.

System: The player rolls Wits + Enigmas, difficulty 6. The light may appear anywhere within the Garou's line of sight. If bidden to move, it may bob along at about 10 yards per turn. The witchlight lasts for one turn per success, although the Fianna may spend a point of Gnosis to make the light last for an entire scene.

- **Howl of the Banshee (Level Two)** — The werewolf may throw back his head and unleash a long, ululating howl like the wail of a hundred ghostly mourners. The howl can strike fear even into the heart of the undead, and peasants who hear it even from afar cross themselves — for surely such a noise is Death himself walking the valleys.

This Gift is taught by a Banshee, a Death-spirit whose task is to mourn and foretell.

System: The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Intimidation (difficulty 6). Anyone who hears the howl, friend or foe, must make a Willpower (difficulty 8 if the Garou's foe, 6 if a friend) or flee in terror for one turn for every success on the werewolf's Charisma + Intimidation roll.

[This write-up supersedes the system given in **Werewolf: The Apocalypse**, for reasons that are probably already apparent.]

- **Warrior's Draught (Level Two)** — By stirring a bit of his own blood into a jack of wine, beer, ale or mead, the Fianna transforms the drink into a potent elixir. Once quaffed, this potion drives the drinker into a berserk rage, lending him even more strength than usual during his fury. The Fianna often use this Gift when alone and making a desperate stand, but many Ragabash also use the draught to wreak havoc in the household of an enemy by serving it to their foe's loyal retainer.

This Gift is taught by a Boar-spirit.

System: The Fianna spends a point of Gnosis as he mixes the draught. The elixir remains potent for a day (the Fianna may increase the duration by one day for every extra Gnosis point he expends during mixing). Once drunk, the draught drives the drinker into a berserk frenzy — but for the duration of the frenzy, she gains an additional dot in Strength and Stamina.

- **Faerie Kin (Level Three)** — As the standard Gift.

- **Lleu's Spear (Level Three)** — The name of this Gift derives from a tale of the Welsh, wherein Lleu Skillful Hand was nearly murdered by his rival Goronwy and sought retribution. Goronwy asks if gold or land will satisfy the debt, but Lleu claims that Goronwy must stand where he

stood, and Lleu will throw a spear at him just as he had thrown his spear at Lleu — nothing else. Goronwy finally agrees to his fate, but asks if he can hold a stone between himself and the spear (for it was a woman who compelled him to attack Lleu). Lleu agrees — but it does Goronwy no good, for Lleu hurls the spear straight through the stone and right through his foe.

So it is with this Gift. The Fianna may invest a spear with supernatural piercing power, striking with more strength and accuracy than one might expect from even a mighty Crinos. Some say that a Fianna full of spirit could even stand at a castle's gates and put a spear clean through the wall's crenelation and the man standing behind it.

This Gift is taught by an Ancestor-spirit.

System: The Fianna concentrates with spear in hand for a full turn, makes a Willpower test (difficulty 8), and spends a variable number of Gnosis points. Each Gnosis point spent grants the Fianna two additional dice for the spear's throw; these dice may be split between the Dexterity + Athletics roll to hit his target, to the damage roll (normally Strength + 2), or even spent to increase the spear's effective range (by twenty yards for every die allocated in such a manner).

The Gift functions only on a spear's throw; it cannot be used to augment a blow made in melee, or any other missile attack. However, the spear need not be metal-tipped; this Gift proves very effective at placing a six-foot wooden stake through a vampire's black heart.

- **Balor's Gaze (Level Four)** — As the standard Gift.

- **Warp Spasm (Level Four)** — As tales would have it, the Hound of Ulster would work himself into such a battle-rage that he would literally glow with heat. This power has been passed on to the Fianna, who may use this Gift to radiate heat enough to ignite nearby flammables and melt any metal they touch. If used in a city (the cities of this time being absolute firetraps), this Gift would no doubt trigger an inferno. The Gift may only be used while the werewolf is in a berserk frenzy; when the frenzy ends, the heat dissipates.

The Fianna's Ancestor-spirits teach this Gift.

System: The player spends one point of Rage to begin the warp spasm. The werewolf immediately flies into a berserk frenzy, and any flammable material she touches instantly catches flame. Her blows do two health levels of aggravated damage in addition to their usual damage; these wounds count as fire damage.

Level Five: Call the Hunt, Gift of the Spriggen — As the standard Gifts.

Red Talons

Level One: Beast Speech, Scent of Running Water — As the standard Gifts.

- **Prey's Cry (Level One)** — Medieval legends aplenty tell of terrible beasts that mimic human voices or the cries

of game animals to lure travelers into their gaping maws. The Red Talons have learned this trick for themselves. Many a traveler has died at Talon jaws after following what they believed to be a fair young girl's cry of distress....

This Gift is learned from a Raven, Mockingbird or Manticore-spirit (the last is a member of Griffin's spirit brood).

System: The player rolls Wits + Expression. The difficulty depends on the animal noise imitated; a rabbit's death-scream or wild bison's call is difficulty 5, whereas a human plea for help might be difficulty 7, or even 9 if the Talon wants "a voice that sounds like one of their priests" or a similarly complicated mimicry. If successful, any mortal or animal believes that the cry is that of the Red Talon's intended creature, even to the point of recognizing "a noble's inflection" or believing a female voice that of "a maiden pure of virtue." The Red Talon need not even know that much about the creature mimicked — even if the Talon has never heard a soldier cry for help, he can emit a cry that humans would instantly take for the call of a man-at-arms.

- **Sense of the Prey (Level Two)** — As the standard Gift.

- **Snuff Flames (Level Two)** — The Red Talons are mistrustful of humanity's control of fire. This Gift allows them to take one of the hated humans' most prized tools away from them, dousing almost any fire within their line of sight.

This Gift is taught by a Water-spirit.

System: The player rolls Willpower, difficulty 6 (or 8 when trying to affect oil fires). The Talon may extinguish all fire within a radius of two yards per success. The fuel may be relit, but it's difficult to do so — a torch becomes as tricky to light as if it were damp, extinguished oil fires gutter fitfully and refuse to catch fully alight, and so on.

- **Snap Man's Chains (Level Three)** — The Red Talons look on humanity's domestication and subsequent abuse of animals as nothing less than a sin against Gaia. With this Gift, the Red Talon can undo that offense, if only for as long as a night. The Talon releases a howl that drives domesticated animals completely feral — horses throw their riders and bolt as far as they can, oxen throw themselves against fences in a frenzy, dogs turn on their masters at the first sign of weakness. Needless to say, this Gift's use often drives surviving humans on a quest for the witch among their number that surely must be responsible.

This Gift is taught by any Animal-spirit, although the spirits of wolves and wild oxen are particularly generous with its secret.

System: The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Manipulation + Primal-Urge. Success makes any animals within earshot uneasy and difficult to manage, but the actual amount of animals driven feral depends on the number of successes rolled.

Successes	Area of Effect
One	A single barn, kennel, stable or mews
Two	A farmstead
Three	A small keep
Four	A village or large keep
Five	A town
Six+	A city or valley

The Talon cannot influence the actions taken by the newly feral animals; most will try to flee human territory, although some might attack their masters in a fit of panic or hunger. The effect lasts until the sun rises or sets, whichever comes first.

• **Trackless Waste (Level Three)** — As the standard Gift.

Level Four: Avalanche, Quicksand — As the standard Gifts.

Level Five: Curse of Dionysis, Gaia's Vengeance — As the standard Gifts.

Shadow Lords

Level One: Aura of Confidence, Fatal Flaw, Resist Toxin — As the standard Gifts.

Level Two: Clap of Thunder, Luna's Armor — As the standard Gifts.

• **Icy Chill of Despair (Level Three)** — As the standard Gift.

• **Raven's Curse (Level Three)** — As the name implies, this Gift lays Raven's Curse — the curse of death by arrows — on the Shadow Lord's enemy. While the curse is in effect, arrows, bolts, hurled spears and other projectile weapons are invisibly attracted to the target. Although this Gift can be used in battle situations, most Lords prefer to secretly use it on their foes just before a major battle, ensuring an "unfortunate accident."

This Gift is taught by a Raven-spirit.

System: The Shadow Lord must caress the intended target with his fingertips. At that time, the player spends one Gnosis and rolls Manipulation + Archery. The number of successes determines the duration of the curse's effect.

Successes	Duration
One	One hour
Two	One day
Three	One month
Four	One year
Five+	Until somehow broken

The difficulty to strike the target with any sort of missile weapon (except bullets, which explains the eventual wane of this Gift's popularity) drops by two; archers and other



missileers in battle situations are also (as determined by the Storyteller) more likely to fire at the marked target than at other targets around him. The curse can be broken by certain methods at the Storyteller's discretion; a Rite of Cleansing, for instance, is usually effective.

- **Dolorous Stroke (Level Four)** — The Shadow Lord may deliver a blow so merciless and terrible that it strikes fear into the hearts of those around her. Anyone witnessing the Dolorous Stroke becomes faint of heart, and finds it difficult to oppose the Shadow Lord capable of such a strike.

This Gift is taught by a Death-spirit.

System: The player spends a Gnosis point and then rolls to hit; she may take no other action this turn. If she misses, the Gift's effects don't take place. But if she hits, she gains two bonus dice to her damage pool. If she does at least three health levels of damage (after soak) to her target, any onlookers are dismayed by the brutal expertise of the Shadow Lord's attack, and suffer a one-die penalty to any rolls made against the Shadow Lord for the remainder of the scene.

- **Open Wounds (Level Four)** — As the standard Gift.

Level Five: Obedience, Shadow Pack — As the standard Gifts.

Silent Striders

Level One: Sense Wurm, Speed of Thought — As the standard Gifts.

- **Heavens' Guidance (Level One)** — A Silent Strider must be able to make his way through unfamiliar territory without benefit of chart or compass. While under a night sky, even clouded, the Strider with this Gift can never be truly lost. Although this Gift cannot tell a Strider exactly where he is at all times (the constantly shifting borders of province and country alike are hard to foresee), the Strider will always have a perfect sense of direction, as well as how many leagues he has traveled that day.

Various Star-spirits and other spirits of the Aetherial Realm teach this Gift.

System: No roll is necessary; the Strider's sense of direction and distance is absolute while he is under a night sky.

- **Messenger's Fortitude (Level Two)** — As the standard Gift.

- **Speech of the World (Level Two)** — As the Homid Gift

Level Three: Adaptation, The Great Leap — As the standard Gifts.

- **Dam the Heartflood (Level Four)** — The teeming numbers of vampires in the Long Night are a slap in the face to the Striders, who count the Leeches as their direst enemies. This Gift is one of their weapons against their nemeses; it allows a Strider to block the flow of blood in a vampire's withered veins, preventing the vampire from using any blood-related powers.

This Gift is taught by a Cobra-spirit.

System: This Gift works only on supernatural creatures who gain power from a blood pool trait, such as vampires, ghouls or even Ananasi. The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Manipulation + Medicine (difficulty of the target's Willpower). Each success prevents the target from spending any blood points, for whatever reason, for a full turn. A Garou may use this Gift only once per scene against any given target, but multiple werewolves may use this Gift on a target once each.

- **Speed Beyond Thought (Level Four)** — As the standard Gift.

Level Five: Gate of the Moon, Reach the Umbra — As the standard Gifts.

Silver Fangs

Level One: Lament Flame, Sense Wurm — As the standard Gifts.

- **Eye of the Falcon (Level One)** — This Gift allows the Garou to look over long distances with the acuity of a bird of prey; it is particularly favored by falconers among the Fangs. It is taught by any member of Falcon's spirit brood.

System: The player spends one Gnosis point; the effects last for one scene. While the Gift is in effect, all visual Perception, Alertness and Archery rolls are at -1 difficulty.

Level Two: Awe, Luna's Armor — As the standard Gifts.

Level Three: Silver Claws, Wrath of Gaia — As the standard Gifts.

- **Lordly Will (Level Four)** — As the Gift: Mind Block. The Gift's name varies because fewer Garou are likely to think in terms of mind-to-mind contact; instead, this is Gift seen as a means of standing resolute against the tricks and blandishments of others.

- **Mastery (Level Four)** — As the standard Gift.

- **Divine Regalia (Level Five)** — The Silver Fang girds himself in shimmering, mystical armor, and a terrible light plays about his countenance. His very appearance causes even the boldest warriors to flee, but brings hope to the hearts of his packmates.

This Gift is taught by an avatar of Falcon.

System: The player spends one Rage and one Gnosis to invoke the armor; the effects last for a scene. While the Gift is in effect, the Fang gains three extra soak dice, which can be used to soak even silver. Anyone meeting the Silver Fang's eyes (for example, if attempting to Dominate the Fang) must make Willpower rolls, difficulty 9, or immediately flee in panic as if entering a fox frenzy. For as long as his packmates are within line of sight of the Fang, they gain one extra die on all their dice pools, and two bonus successes on all Willpower tests.

Divine Regalia cannot be invoked if the Garou is already wearing armor of any sort, whether mundane mail or a Gift such as Luna's Armor.

- **Luna's Avenger (Level Five)** — As the standard Gift.



Warders

Level One: Persuasion — As the standard Gift.

• **Artisan's Command (Level One)** — By speaking with the spirits in mechanical devices, the Warden may operate the devices as he sees fit. He can discharge a crossbow, unbolt a door or raise a winch from a bowshot away. This Gift is taught by any technological spirit.

(In later times, when technology becomes more complex, this Gift becomes known as "Control Simple Machine." However, in the Dark Ages, virtually every machine is "simple" enough to control via this Gift; the Warders will no doubt be surprised to find that this Gift does have its limitations.)

System: The player spends a Willpower point and rolls Manipulation + Crafts (difficulty 7). The Garou's control lasts for the scene.

• **Smith's Blessing (Level One)** —

The tools of man have great value in a world that resists shaping, and few people can afford to lose even one. This Gift allows the Warden to make a broken, worn, rotted or dulled tool like new once more — wood becomes hale, notches vanish, cracks mend. Although the item doesn't become precisely new — anyone can tell at a glance that it's obviously been used before — it is once again in good shape, as though lovingly maintained since its creation.

This Gift is taught by a Hearth or Forge-spirit.

System: The player spends a Gnosis point and rolls Intelligence + Crafts, difficulty 6.

The more successes, the better the condition of the item; a good roll can even make a flawed creation superior to when it left the forge.

• **Gift of Salt (Level**

Two) — This unassuming and yet highly useful Gift allows a Warden to preserve

food at the peak of its freshness, that he might enjoy its bounty year-round. The Warders use this Gift often, not only to assure that they have a supply of food that won't offend their acute senses, but also to help maintain the health of their Kin. The only drawback is that all food preserved in this

manner takes on a slightly salty taste (as if dusted with tears) — but most folk consider this aftertaste, even on fruit, much preferable to the usual flavors of mold and rot.

This Gift is taught by a Salt-spirit.

System: The player spends a Gnosis point for each twenty pounds of food to be preserved, and rolls Intelligence + Herbalism (difficulty 6). The food remains fresh and insect-free for one month per success.

• **Mask the Predator (Level Two)** — Even the gentlest Warder unsettles horses, dogs and other domestic animals with his presence. This Gift allows a Warder to temporarily hide his inner Rage, allowing him to ride horses or work with dogs as if he were an ordinary man.

This Gift is taught by the spirit of any domesticated animal — a fact that has earned the Warders much derision among other tribes.

System: The player rolls Charisma + Animal Ken. Success means that animals treat the Warder as if he were an ordinary human for the duration of the scene. However, this power is ineffective against wolves; the Warders have had little luck in winning the confidence of their wild relatives.

• **Tongues (Level Three)** — A more effective version of Speech of the World, this Gift offers both fluency and literacy in any human language encountered, whether the King's English or ancient Sumerian cuneiform.

This Gift is taught by a Raven-spirit.

System: The player spends a Willpower point and rolls Intelligence + Linguistics. The obscurity and relative age of the language determines the difficulty. A contemporary, common language such as Latin or English would be difficulty 4; an ancient and obscure tongue such as Etruscan would be difficulty 8. (The maximum difficulty is higher in modern days, largely because more time has passed since the death of the most ancient tongues.) The number of successes determines the character's fluency.

• **Weaponmaster (Level Three)** — Over the past few centuries, humans have developed a bewildering array of weapons. The Warders have great respect for this talent for war, and have learned this Gift to take advantage of that talent. A Warder with this Gift can utilize any man-made weapon as if he were fully trained in it from childhood; this Gift is particularly popular among lupus.

This Gift is taught by a War-spirit.

System: No roll is necessary; the granted expertise is automatic. When using any weapon, no matter how unfamiliar, the Warder's attack dice pool is equal to the total of his Dexterity + Melee (or Archery, as appropriate) or his Gnosis pool, whichever is higher. In addition, no matter how many modifiers may apply, the difficulty of his attack roll cannot exceed 8.

This Gift is not effective when dealing with firearms, a fact that contributes to its eventual obsolescence.

Level Four: Attunement, Doppelganger — as the standard Gifts.

• **Calm the Flock (Level Five)** — As the standard Gift.

• **Command the Blaze (Level Five)** — Just as a wood actually needs the occasional forest fire to cleanse away the dead underbrush, cities too are said to require the occasional blaze to sweep away the filth and allow new life to grow. However, the cities of the Dark Medieval world are often tarred, thatched firetraps. This Gift allows a Warder to direct the inevitable fire, urging it towards areas that can suffer the burning and guiding it away from valuable territory (such as libraries or the homes of Kin). Needless to say, it can prove quite useful when hunting vampires as well.

This Gift is taught by a fire elemental of great strength.

System: The player must spend a Gnosis point and roll Willpower, difficulty 7. The Warder's area of control originates around her person; the more successes, the farther her area of control stretches.


Successes	Radius of Control
One	Arm's reach
Two	The entire room
Three	A medium-sized building, such as an inn
Four	A city block or small keep
Five	Three city blocks; a castle
Six+	An entire city

The Warder's consciousness extends wherever the fire is within her area of control; however, it must be a single great blaze in origin (no bidding torches and lamps across the city to leap from their sources and run wild). She must remain still with eyes closed and concentrate to maintain control; if attacked or otherwise distracted, the control is lost (but can be regained by invoking the Gift again). The fire cannot travel underwater or across bare stone, but can otherwise leap and twist in unnatural fashion — the flames can extend up to fifteen feet away from their fuel. Needless to say, a vampire confronted with writhing tendrils of flame that seem to intelligently seek him out will probably fly into immediate Röttschreck — it would certainly seem as though God Himself were reaching out to strike the damned creature down.

Rites

Modern Garou still practice the rites of their ancestors. All of the rites given in the main **Werewolf** rulebook were performed during the Dark Ages. The rites of the period differ primarily in the formality of the performance. Each tribe and sept has several minor rites which Garou are expected to perform before the main rite begins. Usually these involve paying homage to totems and spirits, but they may also include a symbolic purifying of the rite location and the participants. Many rites have an almost Church-like quality to them. In more radical tribes, such as the Red Talons, these formalities are discarded as too "human" for true Garou.

Rites were very important to the Garou of the Dark Ages. Werewolves who did not participate in rites or practice their own minor rites were treated with suspicion and



disdain. Failing to successfully perform a rite was considered a great dishonor to the ritemaster. A werewolf who interrupted a rite was considered to be making an offense against Gaia. Once a Garou achieves any increase in rank, she is expected to have some knowledge of Rituals, even if she is a crusading Ahroun.

Just as in modern times, different tribes perform rites in their own unique ways, but all rites serve the same purposes. The different types of rites still exist, using the same combinations of attributes and abilities. Storytellers should feel free to create their own rites or "dress up" rites from **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** with tribe and sept-specific references to give them a Dark Ages feel; for instance, a largely homid sept of Norman Silver Fangs might lead the assembly in a mournful chant or Gaian hymn before performing the Rite of the Opened Caern. The important thing to remember is that the general attitude of Dark Ages Garou is that the performance of a rite is as important — if not more so — than the end result.

Some of these rites have fallen out of favor with the tribes over the ages. Others have little use in the modern world. A few rites have been lost to the wise as the number of werewolves has diminished. Finally, some rites remain known to a few, but have not been performed in ages due to the lack of proper conditions in the banal industrial modern age.

Rites of Accord

These rites restore and renew a place or Garou to harmony and balance with Gaia. In the Dark Ages, Rites of Accord were used to increase the strength and power of the subjects as well as to cleanse. In modern times, these rites of strengthening have become all but useless due to the power of the Weaver and the touch of humanity on much of the world. A Garou must possess a talen, fetish, or object related to the target; this "focus" object must not have ever felt the touch of humanity. To enact such a rite, the ritemaster must make the usual Charisma + Rituals roll at a base difficulty of 7.

Awakening of Gaia's Strength

Level Three

The Warders learned this rite to strengthen the resilience of a structure, such as a wall around a city or the gates of a castle. Only walls and doors made of wood or carved from rock may be the subject of this rite. Glass, steel or any alloyed metals are unaffected as they are too far removed from Gaia's natural materials. Most other tribes believe this rite is heretical, and hold its practice against the Warders during moots.

Warders are careful to reserve this rite for the protection of their Kinfolk and their caerns.

System: The ritemaster must acquire an object similar to the item to be strengthened. For example, a piece of stone of the same type (such as granite) as those making up a rock wall could serve to protect the wall. If the object is a perfect match for the target, such as a stone from the same quarry as the rock wall, then the difficulty of the rite drops by 2. Smaller objects are also easier to strengthen than larger ones. Anything smaller than a wall, such as a door decreases the difficulty by 1 or more, at the Storyteller's discretion. Likewise, attempting the rite on an entire castle wall would increase the difficulty by 2 or 3.

The participating Garou must walk the length of the object to be strengthened, while calling on Gaia to restore the wood or stones to their natural living strength. If successful, all difficulties to damage the structure will increase up to a maximum of 3 until the end of the next full moon. Legends say that in times of war, the Warders have even performed this ritual to protect the holdings of other tribes, such as the Silver Fangs.

Rite of the Wilderness

Level Four

When the Garou feel that human expansion threatens an area of the wilds, they may perform the Rite of the Wilderness. If this rite is successful, the spirits of the land will resist any attempts by humans to settle the area. Small animals steal food, gnaw through rope and leather, and do their best to annoy travelers or home-builders. Larger animals, such as bears and wolves, attack horses or even people in order to drive off the humans. Springs and wells become fouled with algae if humans use them as a water supply for more than a day. The wood itself radiates an aura of gloom, with the trees casting strange shadows and rustling in frightening ways. Most superstitious inhabitants of the Dark Ages will avoid a place where the Rite of the Wilderness has been performed. Unfortunately, stories of a haunted wood may well draw the attention of the Church or Infernalists seeking a base of operations.

System: The ritemaster must possess an item of nature untouched by humanity. The participants in the rite gather for three nights in the area calling on the spirits of nature to defend themselves. Once this rite is completed, the effects last for a full year if they are not countered by magicks or True Faith. Obviously, if the forest is destroyed, the spirits may not protect it. The area protected and the degree to which the wilderness comes awake depend on the Storyteller's discretion. This ritual may not be cast over the entirety of the Black Forest, for example. If a caern lies within five miles of the location, the difficulty of the rite is reduced by 1. Tribal totems may play a role in this rite, leaving a protected area with the "signature" of a certain tribe, such as ravenous wolf packs unafraid of fire in the case of Red Talons.

Caern Rites

Caern rites remain among the most important of rites, because they aid in sustaining the lifeblood of the land. These may only be performed within a caern, and the dice pool for the rite may never exceed the ritemaster's Gnosis. More caern rites have been lost over the ages than any other type of rite. Most of them were specific to a given tribe or even sept, and vanished when their practitioners failed to share the knowledge with others. The following Rite of the Tempest is an example of this type of rite. Unlike many others, the Rite of the Tempest is known even in the modern day to a very few Garou ritemasters.

Rite of the Tempest

Level Four

It's said that Grandfather Thunder himself taught this rite to his favorite tribe, the Shadow Lords. This rite brings down terrible storms, full of driving rain and gale strength winds, against the enemies of their sept. Allegedly, other tribes have learned similar rites, including a Silver Fang rite which summons blizzards and snowstorms.

The ferocity of the storms depends on the skill of the ritemaster and the natural weather conditions. These storms are not gentle and may last for days; in the crags of the Carpathians, their ferocity is as though Gaia herself lashes out in fury. The tempest may destroy poorly constructed homes. It can also wash out roads, and lightning strikes may start wildfires. The eye of the storm centers on the caern, which suffers little effect from the raging weather. A sept that performs this powerful rite frivolously or often typically finds itself the target of angry Storm-spirits.

The rite itself involves chanting and dancing, to the sound of pounding drums which imitate and invoke the thunder. During the performance, the participants splash water liberally to represent rain, and loose long howls to call the wind. Some groups even invoke the names of powerful Incarna, such as Thor, Perun or Jupiter, to help bring the storm.

System: The ritemaster must roll Charisma + Rituals to invoke this rite. The difficulty depends on the caern rating; subtract the strength of the caern from 10 to determine the base difficulty. In order to perform this rite, the ritemaster must also spend a point of Gnosis to gain the attention of the Storm-spirits. A single success may bring distant thunder, fog and a light rain. Three successes will generate a powerful storm for a few days. Five or more successes generate terrible weather, which may spawn other, natural, storms in the surrounding countryside.

Rites of Death

The rites of death practiced today by modern Garou remain much the same as those of the Dark Ages; of all the rites, they have changed the least. Like most of the other rites, they may vary somewhat from tribe to tribe and sept to sept, but Storytellers don't need to make any changes to the death rites in the main rules.

Mystic Rites

Individuals often perform mystic rites without the ceremony that surrounds most of the other rites. These rites commonly involve the Umbra and interaction with spirits. With the weaker Gauntlet of the Dark Medieval age, all mystic rites have their difficulties reduced by one.

Rite of Blood

Level Two

This is a rite of single combat between two Garou. Many believe that the Children of Gaia initiated this rite as a way to resolve conflicts between packs, septs, and even tribes with a minimum of bloodshed. Although only two combatants face off during the rite, all Garou present must take part in the ceremony. The ritemaster may be one of the combatants, although this happens only rarely.

The two sides meet during the night of the full moon after agreeing to participate in the rite. The totem spirits (or manifestations thereof) of the two sides at odds are summoned to bear witness to the event. Each Garou must pledge before the two totems to accept the outcome of the rite. Each side chooses a champion. Most times, but not always, these champions are chosen in advance.

Each champion has the symbols of her pack, sept and tribe painted on her skin; the two face off in a circle of silver. Only fang and claw are allowed in most versions of the rite; however, many Dark Ages Garou have begun using klaives as well. The totem spirits protect the circle of combat, not allowing any Garou to interfere or either combatant to leave until the matter is settled. The fights are often to the death, although usually if one werewolf wishes to yield, the victor will grant her opponent his life. All Garou who are present for the fight must accept the victory or defeat for their side. Variants on this rite are sometimes used to settle differences between Garou within septs. Any Garou who fights in a Rite of Blood earns Renown, even if defeated.

System: The ritemaster rolls Wits + Rituals, difficulty 6, modified by the number of participants. As long as the ritemaster scores a success, the results of the rite are binding. Those who fail to recognize the outcome of a Rite of Blood invoke the wrath of the totem spirits of the ritemaster and the combatants.

Punishment Rites

Modern punishment rites have many precursors in the Dark Ages. Some Dark Age punishment rites are directed at Kinfolk and enemies of the Garou, rather than the werewolves themselves. These rites are often seen as curses by the common folk and have spawned many superstitions over the last several centuries.

Curse of the Wolf

Level Five

Garou use this rite to punish humans who have offended them, but particularly when they desire the target's town or family to suffer along with him. This rite turns the named offender into a Crinos during the nights of the full moon, but it grants him no control over his anger. During the nights that the target changes, he becomes a rampaging beast. The effects of this ritual last until the second full moon after the rite is completed.

On a few rare occasions, the curse has remained with the target for their natural lives. Most humans cannot endure the memory of becoming a Crinos and go quite mad. Others decide to kill themselves, often by ingesting large amounts of belladonna. Sometimes, the accursed seeks aid from dark powers, such as vampires, infernalists, or Black Spiral Dancers, who may unleash him against the sept. When this rite is cast, the target is almost always from among the upper classes.

In order to cast this rite, the Garou must gather some of the subject's blood and clothing. These are then presented before a totem spirit, while the target's offenses against Gaia are declared to the spirit. The totem will then seek out the target during the full moon, and work the change upon him. Many Garou do not like this rite, such as the Children of Gaia, who believe that unleashing an uncontrolled Crinos in the land will only lead to suffering. The Red Talons, on the other hand, find it satisfying to witness the carnage the accursed can cause in a town.

This rite becomes outlawed in modern times, after too many instances of the target drawing the Wyrms' attention and gaining aid from its minions. In the Dark Ages, however, it is still popular.

System: The ritemaster must roll Charisma + Rituals with a difficulty equal to the target's Willpower. The number of successes equals the number of nights around the full moon that the accursed must change.

Minor Rites

Most Garou not only pay homage to Gaia, but also to the ancient spirits or gods of their homeland. Fenrir may invoke Wotan or Thor, while the Fianna praise the fae. Dark Ages Garou should show respect to Gaia and her spirits, but

also to their human traditions. Spirituality played a large part in the lives of Dark Ages people—the Garou are, if anything, even more exemplary in their spiritualism.

Fetishes

Many fetishes of the Dark Ages Garou have since been lost to their modern descendants. Some tales speak of great fetishes which did not need to be activated and which held powers beyond belief. Storytellers should feel free to use potent fetishes in their chronicles; however, fetishes were not passed down as easily as in modern times. The leadership of septs often would rather keep these sacred items hidden than give them to an unworthy wielder. The Church encourages its faithful to destroy anything that even resembles a witch's talisman, the better to eliminate infernal and pagan influences in Europe.

As always, Storytellers should create their own myths and stories about fetishes. This is a time of legends as much as any other; the Belt of the Giants might well be made from the skin of a giant killed by Fenris himself. A similar fetish in the Black Furies' hands might contain the essence of one of the ancient Titans.

Bear Blanket

Level 1, Gnosis 5

Legends say that the Gurahl taught the Garou how to create these fetishes before the War of Rage. They commonly appear as animal furs or quilts. When activated, this fetish sends a Garou into a state of hibernation for any time period up to a full lunar month. During his slumber, the user doesn't need to eat, drink or excrete, and suffers no ill effects from exposure to the elements (unless the weather is supernaturally intense). The hibernation ends if the blanket is removed. A few werewolves believe that some of these fetishes are traps left by Gurahl after the War of Rage. It is rumored that some Bear Blankets will put the user to sleep for hundreds of years.

To make a Bear Blanket, the help of a Bear-spirit is needed, although some Garou claim that Sleep-spirits and Winter-spirits may also be bound into such a fetish.

Leper's Rags

Level 1, Gnosis 6

A fetish most commonly associated with Bone Gnawers, these rags keep away unwanted attention. Anyone viewing a Garou wrapped in these filthy tatters will assume that he is a diseased beggar and avoid him if at all possible. As long as the Garou does nothing to challenge this assumption, such as draw a klaive, shift into Crinos



Other Fetishes

Most Garou fetishes are fairly venerable in origin — the secret of the klaive, for instance, has been passed on for millennia. However, not all fetishes trace back to the First Times, and not all fetishes are prized equally in all centuries. While Storytellers can allow their players to purchase almost any fetish from the main rulebook or the **Players Guide** (with a few obvious exceptions, such as the Moonwatch or Loon's Refund), the following are particularly appropriate for **Dark Ages** games.

- **Fetishes** — Baneskin, Fang Dagger, Phoebe's Veil, Sanctuary Chimes, Spirit Whistle. **Werewolf Players Guide:** Fang of the Wurm, Bones of Shielding, Kinship Doll, Coin of Wealth, Gaia's Poultrice, Spirit Bell and Candles, Tongue of the Leech (quite popular), Gnostic Bag, Hearthstone, Soothsay Runes, Spirit Drum, Taltos Drum, Scar Fetishes

- **Talens** — Bane Arrows (obviously more common), Death Dust, Moon Sign, Nightshade, Wurm Scale

or speak like a noble, the illusion will be maintained. Silver Fangs refuse to don these rags.

To create a set of Leper's Rags, a Garou must bind one of the following types of spirits: Illusion, Disease or a Rat-spirit. Not just any clothes will do, either; the Garou may have to procure fine clothing to please an Illusion-spirit (which will make the fetish seem like filthy rags from then on), or perform some truly noisome acts of "consecration" to attract a Disease-spirit.

Trail Branch

Level 1, Gnosis 5

A Trail Branch appears to be an ordinary small twig or stick, usually with a bit of foliage still attached. When active, if the branch is run along the ground, it will remove any trace of passage. Even if the holder of the branch is following twenty humans through a forest, as long as he brings up the rear and runs the branch along the ground, his trail vanishes. Even a Garou in Lupus form may use this fetish, holding it in her teeth, as long as the bushy end of the branch touches the ground.

A Wood-spirit or a Deer-spirit may be invoked to create a trail branch.

Feather of the Waters

Level 2, Gnosis 5

This feather is a gift from the assembled spirits of waterfowl to Gaia's warriors. When activated, it lets a Garou

gain a bonus of three dice to all swimming rolls. In addition, a werewolf carrying one of these fetishes may not sink below water, but will float on the surface, even in the roughest seas. (Of course, he may still dive underwater of her own volition, or be forcibly dragged under the water by an opponent.) Septs found near fast rivers, deep lakes, or seacoasts often make these fetishes. They are also given to Garou who may be voyaging across the seas, although most Fenrir avoid them, believing that their skill alone should preserve them against the fury of the northern seas.

Any spirit of a waterfowl may be bound into a Feather of the Waters. The feather, of course, must match the type of spirit bound within.

Heart of Fire

Level 2, Gnosis 6

This fetish holds a Fire-spirit who will, upon command, set any object aflame — even substances such as stone. Once activated, the heart glows with heat for a round before bursting into flame. The bearer may hold the heart of fire without suffering any damage from the fetish. The flame may be touched to another object or even flung at a target. The blaze will leap from the Heart of Fire and strike its target (Dexterity + Athletics roll to strike accurately). This is a small fire, only capable of doing two aggravated health levels of damage. Once the target is ignited, the flame will burn for one turn. Depending on the nature of the target, this may start a natural fire which will burn in subsequent rounds and may grow larger. If the flames are targeted against something which does not burn, such as wet green wood or stone, they burn for a turn before going out. These fetishes come in many sizes and shapes and Garou use them for many different tasks. Red Talons, however, abhor these fetishes and gladly destroy them. They see Hearts of Fire as a danger to the forests and find them too similar to the torches used by men.

To create a Heart of Fire, a Garou must bind a fire elemental into an appropriate vessel. Some tales speak of large Hearts of Fire containing powerful lords of flame or even solar spirits.

Sun Crystal

Level 2, Gnosis 7

A Sun Crystal is a piece of cut glass which contains a bright star in the center. When activated, it releases a single ray of sunlight. Garou may use these fetishes in the same way that modern people use flashlights. The main use of the crystal, however, is as a weapon against the vampires that choke the Dark Medieval nights. The sunlight which issues from this fetish is natural and affects a vampire in the same way that an actual ray of sunlight would. This causes aggravated damage to the undead. Few dedicated Leech slayers fail to carry one of these fetishes.



Solar spirits must be bound into the glass to create the fetish. At times, packs have ventured into the Aetherial Realm to visit the castle of Helios and enlist the aid of more potent solar spirits for Sun Crystals. As Helios is reputed to loathe the undead, these quests are notably more successful than most.

Beast Masks

Level 3, Gnosis 8

Before the time of the War of Rage, the first Beast Masks were created by all shapechangers. When a Beast Mask is activated, the wearer may transform herself into the creature whose mask she wears. While in this form, she gains the physical appearance and attributes of the creature, but she retains her own mind. Thus, while she may be able to soar on a falcon's wings and see with his keen eyesight, she also has his fragile bones. Any wounds suffered in beast form remain when the wearer resumes her natural form, although she may regenerate them as usual once in her own skin again. Crow, owl, lion, bear, crocodile and fox masks are among the most common (see the **Dark Ages Companion** for the attributes of these animal forms). One legend even claims that a dragon mask was lost in the Umbra. During the War of Rage, the Garou are said to have used these fetishes to infiltrate the camps of their enemies. If the Beast Mask is removed, the owner shifts into her own base form. Wearers of Beast Masks may not shapeshift while the fetish is active.

In order to create a Beast Mask, the werewolf must have the cooperation of the Animal-spirit whose form is borrowed when the fetish becomes active. Few Animal-spirits are willing to help a Garou create one of these fetishes, so often times, a werewolf must go on a quest to earn the help of the desired spirit.

Belt of the Giants

Level 3, Gnosis 6

A Belt of the Giants increases a werewolf's strength to mythic proportions, even by Ahroun standards. When activated, the Belt of the Giants raises a Garou's Strength by three. However, activating this fetish will draw the attention of all spirits in the area, both friendly and malevolent. These fetishes can be found among all tribes of Garou.

These fetishes are extremely hard to create. The belt itself, whether it is made of rope, chain, or leather, must be dipped in the blood of a mythic beast of great power. Then, either the spirit of the creature must be bound or another spirit of strength, such as that of an earth elemental or an Elephant-spirit must be bound to complete the fetish.

Cloak of Woven Mists

Level 3, Gnosis 6

The Cloak of Woven Mists appears as a chain or rope necklace with an intricate brooch. When activated, shadows and vapors creep into the air, making the wearer hazy and indistinct. The fetish gives a werewolf a bonus of three dice to any Stealth rolls. They are particularly prized by Ragabash and Silent Striders.

Spirits of air, fog, shadows, or the night may be bound into a Cloak of Woven Mists.

Staff of Life

Level 3, Gnosis 9

A Staff of Life usually takes the form of a large walking staff carved from a hardwood, such as oak. In some cases, they may have living foliage. A Staff of Life can cure both wounds and disease. By spending a point of Gnosis and activating the staff, a single touch will cure any disease and heal a single health level (even aggravated). This fetish can be used to heal both Garou and non-Garou.

A Tree-spirit or a spirit of healing has the abilities needed to create this fetish. Sometimes, one of the Children of Gaia may even create this fetish with a Unicorn-spirit.

Bone Flute

Level 4, Gnosis 8

Theurges craft these flutes from the skeletons of long dead enemies. The sound of a Bone Flute reminds the undead of their nature. Any vampire who hears a Bone Flute must make an immediate frenzy check at a difficulty determined by the Garou's musical skill or lose control to their bestial sides. If a Leech can resist the frenzy, he is unaffected by the fetish for the remainder of the scene. Many times these fetishes are played outside the walls of a suspected vampire's stronghold to prove the nature of the fiend. Some of these fetishes are reputed to have similar effects on wraiths.

To create a Bone Flute, a vibrant spirit of life must be bound to the instrument. Bat, Wolf, and Rat-spirits are often willing to be bound to take revenge against the creatures that manipulate their relatives.



Forest Crown

Level 4, Gnosis 7

This is a crown of leaves attached to the antlers of a mighty stag. Unsurprisingly, the Fianna are attributed with creating the originals of these fetishes. Once the fetish is activated, wild animals may not attack the crown's wearer under any circumstances. When activated, the antlers merge with the head of the wearer, giving her an optional extra attack (Strength + 2 non-aggravated damage, difficulty 7) each turn. Some believe that the wearer of a Forest Crown may draw the attention of the Wild Hunt.

To create a Forest Crown, a Stag-spirit must be bound within the antlers. Garou who try to create one without the permission of Stag himself put themselves at great risk.

Iron Crown

Level 4, Gnosis 7

This fetish, often used to reinforce pacts between septs or to ensure that a Garou keeps his oath, usually appears as a circlet of iron or steel. It will fit the head of any who wish to wear it. The owner (not necessarily its wearer) of the fetish must choose a taboo for the crown, such as "any who wear this crown may not lie" or "the wearer may never attack any member of the Sept of the Great Mountain." Once activated, an Iron Crown cannot be removed from the head of the wearer unless the owner wishes the fetish removed. Any successful attempts at using force will remove not only the fetish, but the skin and skull of the wearer as well. Whenever the wearer of an Iron Crown tries to break the taboo, he suffers a single health level of damage (no soak roll allowed). These wounds continue every turn until the wearer desists from his course of action. This damage is not aggravated, unless it is the final wound the wearer can withstand — in which case, the crown severs the top portion of the wearer's head. The taboo must be set before circlet is placed on the wearer's head. Once in place, the taboo may not be changed. If the owner of the fetish dies, the effects of the fetish immediately cease and it may be removed. The owner of the fetish may also remove the circlet at will.

These fetishes may be made using Pattern Spiders, spirits of Judgment or Earth-spirits.

Keystone

Level 4, Gnosis 8

Keystones appear to be simple slabs of carved rock — however, they are hardly innocuous, and contain powerful earth elementals. Once a Keystone is activated, the wielder may create an opening in any earthen or stone structure, such as a castle wall. The opening will be wide enough for one Crinos or two humans to enter. Blessed structures or those protected by vampiric rituals

or Garou rites require the wielder to roll Gnosis against a difficulty of 7 or higher, depending on the nature of the protection. Keystones that are made from the same stone as the structure have an easier time creating a breach, reducing the difficulty by 1 or 2. Keystones may also be used to close breaches in the same manner. Warders often make Keystones.

Dreamcaller

Level 5, Gnosis 8

This horn of bone or ivory may be sounded to open a path between earth and Dream. The gate may be crossed both ways. Spirits of dreams and nightmares may be summoned to the waking world, while Garou may venture into Dream. Use of a Dreamcaller is extremely unpredictable and only the wisest of Garou dare wield them. The gate remains open for one minute per success on activating the Dreamcaller.

To create a Dreamcaller, Garou bind various spirits of Dream into the horn.

Harp of Enchantment

Level 5, Gnosis 6

These musical instruments are almost exclusively kept at powerful caerns. When a Garou activates a harp, the strings produce a beautiful unearthly sound, which a skilled performer may use to produce powerful effects. Each success scored reduces the difficulty of all social rolls involving the sept members by 1 for the remainder of the scene, even if the musician ceases playing. A Harp of Enchantment may also be used to mesmerize a single target, leaving him helplessly swaying to the music unless he makes a Willpower roll with a difficulty of 9. Some harps are rumored to have other effects activated with certain songs or musical accompaniment.

In order to create a Harp of Enchantment, a Music or Emotion-spirit must be bound. Some harps may use Songbird or Insect-spirits instead.

Ice Blade

Level 5, Gnosis 8

A weapon born of the coldest blue ice of the Arctic North, the Ice Blade is a treasured fetish among the Silver Fangs and the Fenrir. Once the fetish is created, the blade will not melt or break. In the hands of a warrior, the Ice Blade does Strength + 3 aggravated damage (difficulty 6). In addition, the Ice Blade removes a point of temporary Willpower from any opponent it strikes, due to its bitter cold.

An Ice Blade may be created with the help of an Ice or Winter-spirit. It must be forged of ice taken from the Umbra or the far North. Similar fetishes take the forms of axes or spears. A few ancient Ice Blades have been infused with spiritual energy from their former users and

other bound spirits. These weapons have superior abilities and names of their own, such as Winterfrost, Northwind, and Icebeard.

Lionfang

Level 5, Gnosis 8

A Lionfang is a great weapon carved from the bones of a terrible beast, much like a Fang Dagger. There are rumors that the secrets of forging these weapons were stolen from the Bastet. These weapons may be of any type, such as an axe, mace or sword, but they are all massive weapons, requiring two hands for even a strong human to hold. Only a Garou with a current Strength over 5 may use a Lionfang in combat (Strength + 4 damage, difficulty 7). If a Garou should strike an opponent with a Lionfang, she receives two automatic successes on her damage roll. In addition, if the Lionfang is activated, the fetish adds a further two automatic successes. Damage from a Lionfang is aggravated.

To create a Lionfang, a Lion-spirit, War-spirit, Death-spirit or the spirit of a fearsome mythic beast must be bound into the weapon.

Ring of the Elements

Level 5, Gnosis 9

One of the most powerful fetishes, a Ring of the Elements gives a Garou power over all four of the elements, earth, air, fire and water. When activated, a Garou may not be harmed by attacks involving these forces. For example, torches would refuse to burn a Garou, stones or even a metal sword would bounce harmlessly off her skin, and she would not drown underwater. She remains vulnerable to claws, fangs and other attacks (such as wooden spears).

To activate this fetish, a Garou must spend two Gnosis. The effects last for a single scene. Silver cannot be stayed by this fetish, as it is the metal of Luna rather than of the elements; rumor has it that Helios prevents these rings from having power over gold as well, but until a foe willing to hurl money at a Garou is found, this tale remains rumor.

A Ring of the Elements may only be created by binding a spirit from each of the elements into the receptacle — not an easy task, given the general rivalries between elementals and the far more intense rivalry between those of fire and water. If one of these fetishes is found at a caern, the sept Lorekeeper will certainly have a song recounting the epic visionquest taken to create the item.

Talens

Alicorn Dust

Gnosis 5

This talen is equally useful for surviving both in the wildest lands and in the most “civilized” courts. When activated and dropped into any drinkable substance, the dust will purify the liquid instantly. One full dose of Alicorn



Dust is enough to make a polluted stream run clear for an hour or so, purify an entire tun of poisoned wine, or even clear a drinking horn or huge tankard of supernatural poisons. The only disadvantage is that Alicorn Dust purifies alcohol along with other toxins; a poisoned tun of wine purified with this talen would be safe to drink and even retain its flavor, but couldn't make a choirboy tipsy.

To create a dose of Alicorn Dust, the werewolf must bind a Gaffling of Unicorn's brood into a mixture of powdered horn from many beasts.

Blood-Drinker Stone

Gnosis 5

An exclusive secret of the fledgling Shadow Lords camp, the Bringers of Light, this talen is highly useful in certain dealings with vampires. After one Ragabash brought the secret of ghoulings back to the camp, the Bringers devised this talen in order to neatly fool their vampire "allies." It takes the form of a pebble, which is swallowed upon activation. Until the next sunrise, the user can drink vampiric vitae without an allergic reaction or any other ill effects — the "ghouled" Garou does not gain Potence, ages as usual, and is not subject to the Blood Oath. The stone actually absorbs all the blood into itself, and passes harmlessly through the werewolf's system. Needless to say, this talen is put to use in "deep cover" missions, often ending very surprisingly for the vampire involved.

To craft a Blood-Drinker Stone, the Bringer of Light must bind any of the following spirits into a perfectly smooth river stone: Blood, Bat, Mosquito, Spider or Leech.

Faerie Food

Gnosis 7

Usually resembling small, pearlescent mushrooms, this talen is of utmost utility when dealing with the fae folk. Upon consumption, the talen grants the ability to see any fae or fae-crafted item for what it truly is, as well as the ability to discern glamours and fae illusions for what they are. The talen also allows the Garou to see through any illusion

crafted by Chimerstry, although it does not reveal Obfuscated vampires. The effects last for a scene.

This talen is rarely crafted, but more commonly traded for with the fae. As the creatures of Faerie prefer to have people unable to see through their glamours, the cost is usually fairly high.

Fleshbiter

Gnosis 7

A favorite trick of bloody-minded Ragabash, this talen appears to be a simple hunting arrow with a sharpened point instead of a metal arrowhead. It completely ignores any metal in its flight path, passing through even the best steel as though it were so much morning dew. Needless to say, it's most effective against armored targets.

To create a Fleshbiter, the werewolf must bind a spirit of War, Metal or Death into the arrow.

Salamander's Scale

Gnosis 6

Before the advent of gunpowder, this talen was a werewolf arsonist's best friend. Seeming to be a single scale from a serpent (and thus usually as small as a babe's fingernail), the Salamander's Scale nonetheless holds great power within it. When activated, the scale may be set someplace and instructed to ignite at a given sign. When that sign comes to pass, the scale erupts into a gout of fire some two feet across and five feet tall, igniting any combustibles nearby. The "trigger" sign must always depend on a natural phenomenon (moonrise, the sun at its zenith, the third cock's crow at morning, and so on) — the scale cannot be triggered by the actions of any sentient creature. The tiny size of the scale requires great care, lest the user lose it from a rough-stitched pouch or to a gust of wind. However, the scale is also devilishly difficult to find once hidden, unless a searcher knows what he's looking for.

To craft this talen, a werewolf must bind a fire elemental of some sort into the scale of a reptile.

Character Creation Chart

Step-by-Step

• Step One: Character Concept

Choose concept, breed, auspice and tribe

• Step Two: Select Attributes

Prioritize the three categories of Physical, Social or Mental (7/5/3)

Choose *Physical Traits*: Strength, Stamina, Dexterity

Choose *Social Traits*: Charisma, Manipulation, Appearance

Choose *Mental Traits*: Perception, Intelligence, Wits

• Step Three: Select Abilities

Prioritize the three categories: Talents, Skills, Knowledges

Assign points (13/9/5)

• Step Four: Select Advantages

Choose Backgrounds (5; restricted by tribe), Gifts (1 each from breed, auspice and tribe lists), Renown (by auspice)

• Step Five: Finishing Touches

Record Rage (by auspice), Gnosis (by breed), Willpower (by tribe), Rank (1)

Spend "Freebie Points" (15)

Breed

• **Homid**: You grew up superstitious and full of unholy Rage. It was only when you grew into an early adulthood that you discovered that the legends of wolf-shifters were true.

Initial Gnosis: 1

Beginning Gifts: Persuasion, Smell of Man

• **Metis**: You are one of the painfully few metis allowed to survive past birth. You have learned wisdom and savagery alike in order to deal with a brutal world.

Initial Gnosis: 3

Beginning Gifts: Create Element, Sense Wyrms

• **Lupus**: Deep in the wild European woods, you grew up among your pack. It's likely that until your First Change, you had never even seen a human.

Initial Gnosis: 5

Beginning Gifts: Heightened Senses, Sense Prey

Auspice

• Ragabash

Initial Rage: 1

Beginning Gifts: Blur of the Milky Eye, Scent of Running Water, Snow Running

Beginning Renown: 3 in any combination

• Theurge

Initial Rage: 2

Beginning Gifts: Mother's Touch, Sense Wyrms, Spirit Speech

Beginning Renown: 3 Wisdom

• Philodox

Initial Rage: 3

Beginning Gifts: Resist Pain, Scent of the True Form, Truth of Gaia

Beginning Renown: 3 Honor

• Galliard

Initial Rage: 4

Beginning Gifts: Beast Speech, Call of the Wyld, Mindspeak

Beginning Renown: 2 Glory, 1 Wisdom

• Ahroun

Initial Rage: 5

Beginning Gifts: Inspiration, Razor Claws, The Falling Touch

Beginning Renown: 2 Glory, 1 Honor

Tribe

See also **Chapter Two** of this book.

• **Black Furies**: The woman-warriors of the Garou, the Furies struggle to defend women in a world where persecution is inescapable.

Initial Willpower: 3

Backgrounds: No restrictions.

Beginning Gifts: Heightened Senses, Man's Skin, Sense Wyrms

• **Bone Gnawers**: Lowest among the Garou, the Bone Gnawers breed among the peasantry and make war on hunger and pestilence.

Initial Willpower: 4

Backgrounds: Bone Gnawers may not buy Pure Breed or Resources.

Beginning Gifts: Cooking, Scent of Sweet Honey, Trail of the Larder

• **Children of Gaia**: The peacemakers of the Garou Nation, the Children of Gaia struggle for understanding and mercy in a world that wants little to do with either.

Initial Willpower: 4

Backgrounds: No restrictions.

Beginning Gifts: Eve's Blessing, Mother's Touch, Resist Pain

• **Fianna**: Born of Celt and Gaul blood alike, the Fianna strive to hold their own even as their homeland is overrun by invaders. They are torn by the loss of the White Howlers, and have sworn to avenge the Howlers' fall.

Initial Willpower: 3

Backgrounds: No restrictions.

Beginning Gifts: Faerie Light, Persuasion, Resist Toxin

• **Fenrir:** Although the days of the Vikings are past, the Fenrir still keep the ways of Fenris alive in the lands of the Teutons, Saxons and Norse. They are the most besieged, and the most frequent besiegers.

Initial Willpower: 3

Backgrounds: Fenrir may not purchase Contacts.

Beginning Gifts: Razor Claws, Resist Pain, Snow Running

• **Red Talons:** The Talons pace guardedly among the European forests, prophesying a time when the humans will bring about the doom of Gaia. But as with many oracles, their prophecies fall on deaf ears.

Initial Willpower: 3

Backgrounds: Talons may not purchase Allies, Contacts or Resources. Their only Kinfolk are wolves.

Beginning Gifts: Beast Speech, Prey's Cry, Scent of Running Water

• **Shadow Lords:** Masters of the Carpathian mountains, the Shadow Lords vie constantly for territory against their vampire rivals — that is, when they don't plot with the Leeches to further their own schemes.

Initial Willpower: 3

Backgrounds: Shadow Lords may not buy Allies or Mentor.

Beginning Gifts: Aura of Confidence, Fatal Flaw, Resist Toxin

• **Silent Striders:** Hailing from far-off Araby and Afrik, the Striders are seen only rarely at the septs of Europe. When they do appear, the tidings they bear are often grim.

Initial Willpower: 3

Backgrounds: Striders may not purchase Past Life or Resources.

Beginning Gifts: Heavens' Guidance, Sense Wyrn, Speed of Thought

• **Silver Fangs:** Lords of the Garou, the Silver Fangs have yet to sink into the sunset of their tribe.

Initial Willpower: 4

Backgrounds: Silver Fangs must spend at least three Background points on Pure Breed.

Beginning Gifts: Eye of the Falcon, Lambent Flame, Sense Wyrn

• **Warders:** The tribe that will one day be called Glass Walkers, the Warders of Men (or Apes) remember the days of ancient civilization and try to encourage humanity to rise out of the Dark Ages.

Initial Willpower: 3

Backgrounds: Warders may not purchase Mentor or Pure Breed.

Beginning Gifts: Artisan's Command, Persuasion, Smith's Blessing

Backgrounds

- **Allies:** Your close friends, whether human or wolf.
- **Contacts:** Loose associates within human society.
- **Fetish:** A potent magical object.
- **Kinfolk:** Your treasured family.
- **Mentor:** The elder who watches over you.
- **Past Life:** Your mystical connection to your ancestors.
- **Pure Breed:** The purity of your bloodline.
- **Resources:** The goods and wealth you've managed to accrue.
- **Rites:** The number of rites with which you begin play.
- **Totem:** Your investiture in your pack totem.

Gifts

One Level One Gift from each list: breed, auspice, tribe.

Renown

As according to auspice, above.

Rank

All characters begin at Rank One.

Rage, Gnosis and Willpower

As above: Rage as per auspice, Gnosis as per breed, Willpower as per tribe.

Freebie Points

All characters begin with 15 freebie points.

Trait	Cost
Attributes	5 per dot
Abilities	2 per dot
Backgrounds	1 per dot
Gifts	7 per Gift (Level One only)
Rage	1 per dot
Gnosis	2 per dot
Willpower	1 per dot





Chapter Four: Sit Down by the Fire

Seldom do you come upon a space...when you may stop and simply be. Or wonder who, after all, you are.

— Ursula K. LeGuin, *The Farthest Shore*

Whether you're a novice Storyteller or a veteran of many chronicles, this chapter is designed with you in mind. Here are tips, story seeds and an assortment of other useful ideas for starting and continuing a memorable **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** saga. Keep in mind that not all material here will be ideal for every chronicle; take into account the style of your troupe and remember to remain open and flexible. If you're creative, attentive and patient, you and your troupe will likely weave a story that's told and retold for many seasons to come.

Using Theme and Mood

Theme and mood are essential flavorings for any good chronicle. A theme broadly describes what major goals your story is going to cover; long-running chronicles may have more than one theme. Examples of themes include a quest for unity or bringing renewal from strife. Mood, on the other hand, is the general impression you want to leave behind when the story is done and the players are packing up their dice. It's the emotional tone of the game that lingers, like the finish of choice wine on the palate. Of course, most Storytellers find that these aspects of the game overlap and compliment each other. A certain mood set by the Storyteller enhances the theme and vice versa.

What is the Story's Theme?

If a friend asked you what your chronicle was about, could you answer her question? Maybe you'd start explaining how the latest adventure, the siege of a vampire's castle, let the characters perform a daring rescue of a kidnapped Kinfolk. Your friend might shake her head and say, "Yes, but what's the chronicle *about*? Are you just running a bunch of unconnected adventures?" What your friend is desperately trying to discover is the theme of your chronicle, the big picture, in other words. Talented Storytellers often know the theme (or themes — chronicles can certainly have more than one) as they begin thinking about possible adventures and how all the stories fit together. This isn't to say that all sessions must relate to the theme; sometimes a break from routine is great fun. But your chronicle can take on a whole new level of intensity if you weave in threads that pull the characters and story back to one overall theme.

Following are several classic themes appropriate for a **Werewolf: Dark Ages** chronicle. Some may be more appropriate for one troupe than another, so pick and choose as needed.

Survival of the Fittest

Werewolves have an innate understanding of competition. In the Dark Medieval world, times are hard, and the instinct for survival must be strong. Chronicles relying on this theme will find the Garou facing frequent conflicts over food, a place to live and even the best Kinfolk to sire or bear young. Other werewolves won't be allies; instead, they'll be rivals for precious resources. How does this shape the player characters' worldviews? In what ways will they be forced to compromise their personal desires to assure the survival of the pack or even the tribe itself? Sometimes the need to weather the storms of daily living can exact a high price. This theme is great for a chronicle centered around grim, high destiny.

Power

Power for the Cainites may be many things — material wealth, knowledge or favors. For the werewolves, it is land — fair territory for hunting, protection of caerns and safety for the packs and tribes. How will the player characters acquire this form of power? Will they take land by force, or do they have more cunning and wily plans to secure their domains? What about the tribes such as the Warders and Bone Gnawers — do they have the same needs as tribes away from the cities? Chronicles with this theme may well pit the Garou against vampires and mortals who possess lands vital to the werewolves.

Secrecy

Among all the tribes, secrecy is important. However, some werewolves are more careless than others about revealing their natures, particularly to their allies, human and immortal. The Silver Fangs are demanding that new laws be added to the Litany to prevent mortals and others from





discovering more about the Garou. Who supports this view? Who challenges it? Too many tales of werewolves may attract the attention of witch hunters and the Church. But are there ever sufficient reasons for sharing knowledge, and if so, what are the boundaries of secrecy? Using this theme adds a touch of internecine conflict not only between tribes, but also between different werewolves within each tribe.

Discovery

The 13th century is like the new moon; a time of darkness on the edge of growing light. Within a hundred years, the first European explorer, Marco Polo will journey east to Cathay; about 200 years previous, the first Viking has supposedly already journeyed west to discover a cold, northern land. Great learning in mathematics and medicine is slowly coming to Europe from the Arabs, via the return of the Crusaders. Wolves and humans are both curious creatures; how could many resist the urge to travel and discover new places and ideas? Lots of Garou want to stay firmly entrenched in their own territories, but many, such as the Silent Striders, may be driven to wander. Allowing the characters to travel throughout the known world can add an unusual and exotic element to the chronicle.

What is the Story's Mood?

When you're creating mood, think about emotions. What do you want the player characters to feel? Do you want them to think everything's going to work out in the end? Or do you prefer them to be fearful and apprehensive? Is the tone of the chronicle whimsical or deadly serious? In terms of pacing, is everything do-or-die, fast-paced and edge-of-your-seat tense? Or are things more laid back and easy going? Clearly setting the mood helps players get involved in the drama of the chronicle.

The following examples of mood, like certain themes, will be better suited for some Storytellers and players than others, so use your best judgment on what works and what doesn't.

Doom and Gloom

The darkness of the Wyrms and the stale order of the Weaver have not fully descended upon the werewolves in the 12th and 13th centuries. Yet the time is still bleak in terms of the difficulties of daily living. In a chronicle with this mood, an air of hopelessness permeates the land. Happiness is fleeting, and tomorrow will be no different than today. Invoking this mood can be tricky, since you don't want all the characters overcome with Harano. Done well, though, any victories and triumphs the troupe archives will be all the more sweet since these defy the darkness of the times.

Superstition

From fear of things that go bump in the night to faith in the potions and charms of the village midwife to trust in the Church, everyone in the Dark Ages relies on superstitions. These beliefs help them get through an average day, offering

an explanation for unbelievable events. Maybe some mortals deny that werewolves exist, but many peasants and even some nobles and priests believe in the dark powers of the shapeshifters. Whether they merely look askance at the werewolf player characters or attempt to bar their presence in the local village with wolfsbane, the air of fear and superstition hangs over the medieval mind like a shroud.

(Another possibility, if you want to do a more daring chronicle, is to enforce the paranoid mood by making several superstitions *real*. What if the vampires are repelled by crosses and garlic, and must be invited into a home if they want to enter? What if werewolves automatically fall into a state of near-frenzy during the full moon? And if you really want a change of pace, what if werewolves aren't born at all — but infect new converts via a highly dangerous rite that passes on the Curse of Lycaeon? These changes might provide an interesting new way of looking at the World of Darkness for a while.)

Carpe Diem

A chronicle with this theme emphasizes the importance of living for the moment. Precisely *because* life is often bleak and dreary, chronicles with this mood encourage player characters to live life to the fullest. Chances for passion, fame and glory must be seized, not passed by. A werewolf never knows when the sun sets whether it will be

the last she watches, so the time for avenging wrongs or indulging in a rowdy romp in the hay is *now*, not tomorrow. Storytellers should play up the fact that no one is ever really safe from harm in the Dark Ages.

Nostalgia

True, the werewolves have many years before the darkness of the Apocalypse settles on them. However, even by the medieval era, they have much to look back upon. Are there still Garou who long to renew the Impergium or the War of Rage? What of the glorious elder days, when the Triat were balanced as one? Some werewolves may wish to rekindle the mood of these ancient times, both the bitter and the sweet. Others may want to dwell in the past to the detriment of the present and future. Such differences are likely to lead to disagreement at best and open conflict at worst. How will the characters work out these disputes?

Tips for the Storyteller

If you're a veteran Storyteller, you may have heard the lines about good characterization, plotting and drama before. But take a minute to scan through these tips anyway; you may find something new you hadn't thought about. For the novice Storyteller, here are the basic building blocks for establishing a great chronicle that'll earn you much praise and probably more players than you need.



Characters

Never forget that the characters should be central to your chronicle. If you have flat, two-dimensional Storyteller characters, your players will be bored. If the players' characters are cardboard cutouts with no flavor and nothing that inspires you, you'll have trouble coming up with plots for them. Everybody in the game needs to invest some time in creating meaningful, interesting characters.

To get some inspiration for involving the characters, think about the concept of theme once more. Remember that theme is what the story is about; now, apply that concept to characters, too. Most good characters are rooted in some theme; each one has a story to tell. It's your job to discover those themes among the players' characters and bring them into the chronicle. For example, let's say Wayne's Shadow Lord Kaspar Nyveski suffered a particularly embarrassing defeat at the hands of an elder of his tribe. Kaspar has a vengeful streak and being a Shadow Lord, he wants to return the favor one day. Over the course of the chronicle, Kaspar collects evidence to show that the elder has been conspiring with Leeches. Then, at an extremely important moot, he seizes the chance to utterly humiliate and dishonor the elder. Kaspar can then gain acclaim and soothe his own long-wounded pride.

Of course, the more difficult part for the Storyteller is making sure the characters' stories are told dramatically. Wayne would have been bored silly if Kaspar managed to show up the elder in the first adventure. Spread threads related to the character's story out over time, and you'll increase the drama and suspense tenfold. The Storyteller should also remember that this same use of character drama and story must take place for every player character. Sometimes, Storyteller characters also become intrinsic to the troupe, and players will be disappointed if their characters' friends and enemies in the chronicle don't get creative development. One way to help the troupe flesh out their characters is to have players write letters or stories from their characters' points of view. Another tool is the solo or pair game. This lets most of the attention focus on one or two player characters' interests without worrying about boring others. This is also a great way to give Storyteller characters a chance to show off their personalities. Now that many troupes have access to e-mail, plots can also advance over the Internet; the Storyteller gets copies of all exchanges between players and keeps thinking about the chronicle in between sessions.

Players and Storytellers have a dual obligation to each other. First of all, players should contribute ideas and wish lists for their characters; telling the Storyteller how much they want to visit the forbidden forest or throw out the inept baron is one way they contribute to the game. Most Storytellers appreciate feedback and suggestions from players on what they want to do next. The Storyteller also has an obligation to help players make their characters interesting, or in the worst case scenario, to gently explain to players that

certain characters may not work. If you're running a chronicle set around finding three ancient legends of the Fianna, a character who's a loner or likes to just sit around the crannog all the time is not going to fit. It's no fun for anyone if the Storyteller can't make sure that all the characters have a reason to be involved in the chronicle.

Plots

A plot is simply a series of causes and effects. It's the sum total of events in your story and how you predict the characters will shape or provoke those events. When thinking about plots for Garou, ask yourself some basic questions. What's the general sequence of the story? What actions will likely precipitate a climax? Are there certain settings and Storyteller characters you'll need to detail? What is the source of conflict in the story?

Many Storytellers jot down their ideas in a rough list of events. If the end goal is to have a climactic showdown between Lord Ranulf the Silver Fang Ragabash and Halvdan Fenrison, a vicious Norse Ahroun Storyteller character, consider how the actors in this drama arrive at that point. First of all, the characters need some kind of history. Perhaps when young Ranulf was just a pup, the cruel Halvdan kidnapped some Silver Fang Kin, including the young Ragabash's sister. This might be a great way to start Ranulf's prelude. Later, maybe Ranulf himself suffers defeat or dishonor at the Norseman's hand, which could be a single story

Nameless Evil

Memorable villains never do anything just because they can. Think about your favorite outlaws, enemies and adversaries — they're often cruel, evil bastards, but they're anything other than boring and predictable. Remember when King Edward callously defenestrates his son's foppish advisor in *Braveheart*? Hardly what someone would expect from a king!

When creating adversaries, think about their motivations. What's their history? Why do they act the way they do? What led them down their path? Are they trying to prove something? Are they making up for something missing through their crime and villainy? Or is their own vision of how the world should be all that matters?

Mannerisms are also key. Maybe the corpulent baron has a tendency of speaking in a wheezing whisper and breathing loudly through his mouth. Perhaps the manipulative, murderous abess has a signature thin-lipped, bloodless smile and a penchant for running a thumbnail down her rosary. The outcast Fianna might have teeth perpetually stained pink with his prey's blood.

Trust us, your players will love you for making wonderful, dastardly, unforgettable villains.



in itself. His packmates too may have personal reasons for hating Halvdan and make it their goal to bring him down. And so the process goes on, from idea to idea, until the skeleton for a story is in place.

Once you've got a basic idea for a game outlined, expand it into a series of scenes, just like you were writing a play. Try to put yourself in the players' shoes; what possible reactions will they have? How will these alter the plot? Any experienced Storyteller will quickly tell you that the only certain thing in laying out a plot is that the players will change it! Often, though, this can turn out to be more fun than what you'd originally planned, if you're willing to go wherever the wind blows. It's one thing to gently steer the players towards certain events in the plot; it's quite another to shove them along your strict path of encounters and settings. Letting the players and their characters make some choices and become interwoven in the story is a must.

Likewise, you need to develop elements of suspense and drama in your story. Don't put all your cards on the table at once; let the characters discover what's really going on over several sessions, not the first time you play. Feel free to drop some red herrings and even have some of the most helpful Storyteller characters turn out to be rats in disguise, if you think it will add to the sense of excitement.

The wise Storyteller invests some time in writing out her ideas and preparing notes and characters. A basic plot outline, like the one for Ranulf, is often enough for experienced Storytellers; others prefer more detailed summaries ready at hand. Flowcharts are also useful, as are maps and floorplans. If you anticipate a big fight, make a quick reference sheet for the adversaries that includes Willpower, Health Levels and certain statistics and powers, such as Initiative (Wits + Alertness).

In short, do whatever it takes to be prepared for just about any direction the players take. This won't stop them from radically altering your carefully laid plot, but it does help you improvise and roll with the punches. Remember, the bottom line is for everyone, Storyteller included, to have a great time.

Settings

An easy mistake for Storytellers to make is dwelling too much on the setting, even one as flavorful as the Dark Ages. Most players will shiver with delight when you tell them about the thunder and lightning crackling outside the shadowed tower keep, with the echoes of an enemy's howls shaking the thick stone walls. But if you start droning on and on about the carefully laid four by six foot blocks of gray

limestone set seamlessly together....Well, you get the picture. The players will be bored stiff while you describe to the point of trivia.

On the other hand, you don't want to leave out important setting details. If you don't make the sure the players *know* about the archer with silver-tipped arrows sitting in plain view by the roadside, they're going to get pissed when he plants one of those clothyard shafts in the alpha. Think about the medieval ambiance and how to convey the atmosphere to the players. Consider all the sense groups. Try to find a happy medium between endless droning and skimpy details; in other words, be sure you describe the setting concisely, but creatively and well.

Of course, a setting is much more than one scene; it also includes the places where characters live and spend time. Ask your players what their characters' dwellings are like. Perhaps most of the pack are family, living in a small keep. What's the local village like — a booming town of over a hundred people, a collection of cottages attached to a manor or a tiny, independent farming community? Who's the noble in charge of the land, and what kind of estates does he maintain? Are he and his family Garou or Kinfolk? If not, why are the characters there? Where do the characters enjoy eating and drinking — is there good hunting to be had? Are there abbeys or monasteries nearby? Do the characters have to travel a long way to encounter other werewolves? Player input is vital in developing the local scene, and many times they might surprise you with interesting details that can grow into great stories.

The bottom line is this: The setting is actually only as good as the characters and plot within it. A good setting will enhance your story, not overshadow it. Make sure you can achieve a balance between interesting places to visit and a creative, exciting tale.

Resolutions

Two kinds of conclusions occur in a chronicle: a temporary end, where one story thread ends and the next thread of the adventure picks up, and permanent, where you draw the entire chronicle to a close. Both are a matter of pacing, good record keeping and paying attention to the needs and desires of the players and their characters.

The trick to ending one segment of a story is twofold: end in a logical place and leave enough unanswered questions to start the next segment off on an exciting note. Always remember to let the troupe finish what they started. Don't end a session in the middle of a battle; no one will recall what was going on by the next time you play. Similarly, try not to end a multi-part story without allowing the characters to reach a good stopping point. Even if they weren't able to complete their quest, ending for a winter respite in the Fenrir's meadhall is much better than leaving characters stranded in the wilderness during a snowstorm. Then, when you're ready to continue the story, revisit the

unresolved issues. This will get players reinvigorated about the plot and their characters.

Most importantly, after the game is over for the day, sit down and talk to the players. Did they like the session? What was the most fun? Did they write down all pertinent information about secrets discovered and people met? What things about the game would they like to change? Many times, players themselves come up with excellent ideas for the next series of adventures. If they mention how neat it would be to visit the Black Forest, then you already have the beginnings of a new plot in hand.

A good ending to a long-running saga isn't a simple thing; it's takes a lot more effort than just ending one session. Storytellers need to make sure they have all plot threads neatly tied up and that everyone's had a chance to fulfill their character's purpose and story. If you the Storyteller don't deliver on the players' hopes for their characters, they'll be disappointed, and they'll remember the chronicle with a bad taste in their mouths. Make some time to talk to the players before you plan out the final session. Think about how you can make the death-defying battle against the big enemy dramatic and memorable. Make sure everyone goes home speechless at the clever climax and roleplaying opportunities.

After a chronicle closes, you may find the opportunity to run one-shot games for the players. This is a good option for nostalgia, to remember how great a game was. Likewise, the players may enjoy their characters being guest stars in your new chronicle or that of another Storyteller and setting; having a werewolf show up as the big enemy in a **Vampire: Dark Ages** chronicle is quite conceivable; maybe there's even some plausible reason for the Leeches and werewolves to cooperate for a one-shot session. When players tell tales about your skills, you'll find it's pretty easy to get another chronicle going. Don't forget to enjoy a break from Storytelling, too; join another troupe and have a character of your own for a change. You'll find this refreshes your enthusiasm and gives you more ideas for your own players.

Period Conventions

*In the middle of the journey of our life
I came to myself within a dark wood
Where the straight way was lost.*

— Dante, *The Divine Comedy*

To really set the right stage for a good **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** chronicle, you'll need to think a bit about the psychological mindset, culture and society of the late 12th century. Those usual 20th century analogies and references so common in your modern game won't have much meaning in the Dark Ages. This portion of the chapter gives you some hints on description, ambiance and belief systems prevalent in the late 12th century, all intended to help you, the Storyteller, enhance the mood and flavor of your Dark Ages saga.

The Mind of the Medieval Werewolf

Werewolves are a testy, temperamental lot. They fly off the handle at the drop of a hat, and few mortals, sometimes even Kinfolk, can bear the Rage they tote around. But these are 20th century werewolves. They've learned to greater or lesser extent to adapt to the overwhelming numbers of people running around; even lupus Garou have had to make allowances for humans tramping around in their territory. They don't like it one bit, but they've learned to avoid mortals when possible.

Now imagine it's 1197. Human settlements are scattered, and the population, while growing, is still a tiny fraction of what it will be 800 years in the future. Lawlessness is the rule, not the exception. The closest person to a conservation officer is the *verderer*, who is more often a ruthless thug than a protector of the forests and animals; there are certainly no treehugger types who might accidentally thwart a werewolf's enemy. Even moreso than in the 20th century, if the werewolves don't protect themselves, no one else will.

These experiences have caused Dark Ages Garou to adopt a "might makes right" attitude about nearly everything, from territorial rights to the best way to cross the Carpathian Mountains. Werewolves of the Dark Ages are more self-assured and cocky than their descendants, if such a thing is possible. They don't stop to quibble and debate; they *act*. Laws are immaterial, and often those who support

the rights of humans, such as the Warders, are in the minority. Rights are cut out with one's own claws, rather than waiting for someone else to take the initiative.

So how does this mindset affect characterization? For starters, the troupe may want to play up the quintessential things that make Garou what they are — pride, passion and the pack. Werewolves are still going to place great emphasis on rank and respect for leadership. But when it comes to dealing with other beings, they're probably going to be less tolerant and spare little time for talk. Especially with Leeches, their reaction is probably going to be gut first and ask questions later. Of course this makes survival quite a bit more risky, but then again, what better way to reflect the times?

Three Societies

In the Dark Ages, mortals are generally members of one of three categories of people: those who fight, those who work and those who pray. A person's status is generally fixed and immutable; tales of peasant farmers becoming ennobled are mostly myths. If a nobleman or woman discovers that his or her spouse had peasant blood, the marriage could be annulled. People take rank and privilege quite seriously. The slowly emergent merchant and artisan class is starting to blur these fixed lines of society slightly, but the time of the prosperous middle class is yet to come.

Those who fight are the warriors and nobles of the realm. Being noble is a birthright, and these folk consider



Death and the Werewolf

If you already play **Werewolf: The Apocalypse**, you know it's a pretty deadly game. Given the setting, **Werewolf: Dark Ages** is probably going to have an even higher body count. During character construction might be a good time for Storytellers and players to talk about how they want to handle fatalities in the game. Here are some options for dice rolling that can raise or lower the mortality rate.

- All Storyteller dice rolls are on the table, from the beginning of the chronicle to the bloody end. This makes for an intense, realistic game, but often one that has fairly frequent character turnover; the Storyteller can't really fudge rolls without the players knowing about it.

- The Storyteller opts to roll for the most important battles out in the open but makes dice rolls for random and stray fights behind a screen. This way, if she's planned for Caitlin the Fianna bard to sing at an important moot after the brief encounter with a grumpy Black Fury, the plot's not terribly changed should the dice say that the Fury tears out the bard's throat. The Storyteller tells Caitlin that she'll have a helluva scar, but that she lives to sing another day. The dice results for the minor fights are the Storyteller's discretion, but Fate decides the outcome of major confrontations.

- The Storyteller makes *all* rolls behind a screen and thus has control over many of the random elements of the chronicle. This may not be so bad for novice players, who'd probably like to have a decent chance to try out the game before their characters die, but experienced ones may well resent the constant *deus ex machina* and the controlling Storyteller.

As always, make a decision about this matter in consultation with the troupe and after consideration of their needs and wants for the chronicle as a whole.

themselves aristocrats who set trends in fashion and manners. Chivalry, courtesy, grace and hospitality are of paramount importance to the noble. A noble lady has these rights because of her father and eventually her husband, and she is also expected to uphold the ideals of her station, which occasionally include political and military obligations as well as social ones. For it is military service that truly defines a feudal lord; the fact that he should use his leisure to perfect skill at arms sets him apart from the peasant, who has little if any leisure time. In exchange for almost unlimited freedom to rule his territories as he sees fit, the lord owes military allegiance to his royal superior, usually the king. The lord's responsibilities include raising and commanding troops in times of war, protecting his serfs and vassals and acting as judge and jury during disputes.

Those who work are the peasant farmers. A few may be prosperous and have their freedom, but most are serfs, bound to the land. Freedom is difficult to obtain. A serf can run away for a year and a day to a large town and join a guild, which will then assure his freedom. If he can save his meager earnings and then persuade a trustworthy third party to purchase his freedom from the lord of the village, this is also acceptable. In many cases, serfs are freed by the feudal lord himself, perhaps as a kind gesture but more likely because he can no longer afford to keep the serfs. Modern historians estimate that about 90% of the total populace in the 13th century were peasants. The weather, which sources indicate was pleasant and warm during the 1200s, and the daylight dictate their working hours. Seldom do these folk ever journey more than a day's distance from their village. Life for the peasant centers on work, family and faith.

Those who pray are the priests, monks and nuns. Some are wanderers, healing the sick and perhaps teaching nobles' children during their travels. Others dwell in priories, convents or monasteries, ostensibly living a simple and pious life. The fact is, most members of clerical orders are the sons and daughters of nobles. They've taken positions in the Church primarily because they're younger children of a highborn family. The religious orders can afford to pick and choose, and generous donations from a family helps insure acceptance of its son or daughter. Estates of ecclesiastical lords share many commonalties with the noble's manor, though instead of a steward, the post is referred to as clerk or cellarer. Otherwise, the structure and management is quite similar, and in some cases, monks and friars are skilled in combat as well as more peaceful arts. Daily work for the cleric involves a ritual of prayer, study, music and management of the estate. Moreover, the religious orders' ordained intent is to serve as counselors and spiritual guides for nobles and peasants alike.

As a Storyteller, think about how homid Garou and their Kin will fit into this society. What class of people are they? Do mundane matters ever interfere with the business of the pack and tribe? For those who revere both God and Gaia, where do conflicting responsibilities lead to trouble? Don't ignore the intricacies of the feudal lifestyle; instead, try to find ways to weave these elements into stories centered around the werewolves. Fangs and claws or no, homid Garou and human Kin have to live in this world and deal with it as best they can.

A Realm of Senses

When detailing your setting for **Werewolf: The Dark Ages**, don't forget that werewolves have exceptionally keen senses. Remember to describe not just what people, places and things look like, but also how they smell and what sounds they make. Also think about the norm in the medieval world. For example, most people bathe only a few times a year, and to a modern nose, they'd probably stink to high heaven. But this stench and that of animals might be

perfectly normal to a medieval nose. Better yet, there aren't any diesel fumes, factory pollutants and landfills to smell up the place. Of course, there's still the stench of rotting bodies and excrement to deal with.

Likewise, there aren't any plastic surgeons in the Dark Ages. Warts, poorly set bones and the heartbreak of sarcoptic mange don't go away, unless Gaia decides to take a hand in matters. Minor bodily defects that are quickly corrected in the 20th century were commonplace in the 12th. Physical beauty is prized, but since nearly everyone has some bodily imperfections, as much merit is placed on wealth and power as good looks. Now consider the Garou. Sure, they may have battle scars, but they aren't going to have hideously marred flesh from smallpox or misshapen arms and legs because of a mere tumble off a horse. Their physical prowess and ability to regenerate allows them to be much better looking than the average person (or wolf). In the Dark Ages, like the present, people often tend to rally around men and women who are pleasing to the eye. Having such health and vigor often guarantees a werewolf a measure of power and command over others.

Finally, think about touch and texture. The 12th century is an age without benefit of mechanized looms; even the finest linen cloth is rougher than that of modern times. Meal is more coarsely ground, bread is tougher and crustier and the most delicately baked cakes are still granular and gritty. Any preconceptions of softness are quite limited in this more primitive time.

Travel

Travel, even for hardy werewolves who can easily trot about 40 miles a day, is risky business in the Dark Ages. The rising and setting of the sun sets the hours of a working day, and while the darkness may not hinder the werewolves' movement, it does limit that of their Kin. Moreover, peasants and nobles alike are going to wonder why a group of travelers journeys in the middle of the night; their suspicions and superstitions will quickly be aroused, and the player characters might find themselves in a heap of trouble. Keeping away from population centers would probably be a smart idea.

Werewolves are lucky to be able to travel on four legs. Roads at this time are rough and muddy. In various places, the remains of ancient Roman roads still exist, but many are in a shoddy state of repair. It may be much easier and quicker for characters to travel in Lupus form, though that also has risks. An early morning hunting party with a brace of wolfhounds might be eager to bring down a lone wolf, particularly if wolves have been feeding on the deer and hares of the noble's hunting preserve.

Lords and Ladies

Doubtless through this chapter, you've been wondering whether or not ladies could supervise manorial estates and be prosperous independent women in their own right. As is the case with many elements of the Dark Ages, the answer is yes and no.



Fosterage

Rarely did the children of nobles live at home after their eighth or ninth birthdays; instead, they were sent to the house of another lord or lady for tutelage in arms or in the running of a medieval keep. This practice was called fosterage and served a number of purposes, from cementing alliances with fellow nobles to ferreting out marriage prospects.

Among the Garou, fosterage is an old Fianna tradition. So it stands to reason that other werewolves, particularly if they hold noble status, may well do the same. Fosterage provides an ideal means to have a ready-made pack of player characters who may be from diverse backgrounds and tribes. As Storyteller, you could also opt to run a chronicle with characters being members of the same tribe, all under the care of one werewolf elder. Letting the characters gather and work with one another as fellow fosterlings is a lot better way to start the chronicle than, say, the ubiquitous fight at the local tavern.

Peasant women share equally in the hard labor on the estate, whether in fields, dairies or around the home. They are also in charge of budgeting food and brewing beer, the staple drink of the times. Many peasant women also have useful folk remedies and bits of wisdom. Without these women's shrewd management, residents of the manorial village would doubtlessly be in dire straits.

Noblewomen often hold tremendous power and responsibility. While confined to childbearing in their youth, their mature years afford them the opportunity to savor more experiences. Especially in the absence of the lord, a lady can buy and sell property, make important decisions about the estate's management and even raise troops and send them out against a foe. Some women know how to hunt, particularly with the bow, and many are skilled healers. The same is true for women of the church. Priors and nunneries have structures similar to feudal estates, and a prioress is almost like an independent noble lady. The history of the Middle Ages is full of examples of highly intelligent and powerful women. Hildegard von Bingen was a prioress and well-respected composer while Eleanor of Aquitaine was one of the most powerful rulers, male or female, of the 12th century. These are just two examples of many.

A Storyteller and troupe have a couple of choices regarding the treatment of female characters. First, they can ignore the real history of the Dark Ages and let women be equal to men in every way; they're Garou, after all, not human, even though they have to deal with a human world. All members of a pack have certain places in the hierarchy having less to do with male and female and more to do with ability and strength. Second, they can let women be equal to men in werewolf society but limit their status in the

human world; lupus characters probably won't even have to do that much. Finally, for the gritty approach, they can decide that women characters, particularly homicidal werewolves, have to conform to the general standard of the times — that women were second class citizens with less rights and privileges than men.

Family

The family is an important social unit for werewolves and mortals alike, and contrary to popular belief in the 20th century, childhood was not *completely* miserable in the 12th century. Mortality was quite high, and young children often had guardians other than their biological mother and father, but this doesn't mean parents hated their offspring or always ignored them. Young werewolves are indeed raised by the entire pack. A number of touching letters and notes still survive from medieval times which tell of parents' sorrow over the death of infants and their instructions to remaining children on proper comportment, education and well being. Werewolves of course are immune to natural diseases, and perhaps their human and wolf relatives too are more resistant to infections. Certainly their staple diet is better. For this reason, Storytellers may decide to allow Kinfolk a little better chance at survival than the average child or wolf pup.

Childrearing wasn't as gentle as it is today, but given the difficulty of the times, it doesn't seem overly unreasonable. Peasant children begin working at a young age, doing small, light chores, such as watching babies or gathering fruits and nuts. Then they gradually progress to adult tasks. There is some time for games, but the family depends on their labor. The lack of reliable birth control of course allowed for large families, but the truth is that children provided a good labor force, even if they were extra mouths to feed.

Most noble families have four or five children, perhaps out of a total of 10 or 15, that survive to adulthood. These children have much more opportunity for fun and games than peasant children, at least until seven or eight years of age. They have simple toys and are often taught basic lessons about honesty and charity. Their fate is usually decided in the cradle, the eldest and healthiest sons and daughters becoming betrothed and prepared for life as lords and ladies, while the others are slated for the church.

An interesting tidbit for the Storyteller is the plight of the knight bachelor. Since young noblemen don't come into their inheritances and properties until their fathers die, they have to find something to do with themselves. So they wander around, fighting and wenching, until the time comes to settle down, get married and produce heirs. Imagine what kind of trouble a youthful Garou in this position could find! A troupe composed of rowdy young werewolves could be an ideal way to first get player characters together.

Girls generally get married when they are about 16, to husbands in their thirties, forties and fifties, to guarantee at least a dozen years of childbearing (and hopefully more than that). It's often difficult for women older than this to find suitable

husbands. The trouble with lonely young wives and old, busy husbands is the influence of the local knight bachelor. He may be in service to the lord of a manor and privately seek to... assuage the lady's loneliness. Many of the laws of courtly love come into play because of this natural attraction between lively young people. Add a lovesick Fianna lady to this equation and imagine the delightful complications — particularly if the young knight is also Garou.

Health and Illness

Medical care in the Dark Ages is frightening. From accidents on the feudal estate to wounds in battle and the torrent of illnesses, the chances of someone suffering infection and painful, prolonged death are high. Peasants believe that anything from elfshot to evil numbers cause sickness, and even nobles have little understanding of the cause and effect process of contamination, infection and disease. Smoke and soot from fires cause frequent irritation of the eyes, and poor sanitation in the kitchen contributes to complaints of dysentery and vomiting. Influenza and pneumonia are rampant and unstoppable. Women greet pregnancy and childbirth with fear as much as hope. And both humans and wolves suffer from fleas, lice and other such vermin.

Surprisingly the clerics, despite certain laws forbidding it, are among the best healers. Many nuns and monks have studied ancient Greek and Roman texts on medicine, and most have a decent grasp of herbal remedies, even those for fighting infection and easing pain. A few noblewomen are also talented healers. The Garou fortunately have to worry little about all these matters, both because of their natural powers of healing and resistance and also because of certain curative Gifts. Their Kinfolk, however, may well feel the impact of poor medical knowledge. Too easily do the werewolves forget that their human and lupine relatives lack supernatural hardiness and vigor, even if Kin are in better health than most other mortals and wolves.

The Wolves

Compared to those of later years, the wolves of the Dark Ages are fortunate. About 30% of all Garou and Kinfolk are lupus, and most dwell in the great primeval forests of the continent or the isolated moors. Unlike the trite phrase of the 20th century, that no healthy wolves have ever attacked people, wolves in the Dark Medieval world do strike at humans, lone travelers and terrified villagers alike. One reason is that humans are slowly encroaching on lupine territory, through settlement and hunting. The wolves' only natural enemies are humans, and their werewolf brethren don't like the mortals' expansions and taking of wolf pelts one bit. Some even speak of restarting the Impergium, though they're often talked down by the Children of Gaia.

So for the wolves, life is pretty much the way it's always been. Competition for food is part of the normal routine, though game is perhaps more plentiful than it will be in later centuries. Alphas mate and have litters, with the whole



Dark Ages Ambiance in Your Own Home

One way to evoke the ambiance of the Dark Ages is to do a little redecorating of the gaming room. Try long-burning candles instead of overhead lighting, and don't forget to use good mood music. With a little work, you can have a medieval "traveler's fare" of cold meats, cheese, bread and fruit instead of the usual chips and sodas. For more ideas on medieval food, look at some of the tasty and interesting selections in *To the King's Taste* by Lorna Sass; it's a collection of medieval recipes for the modern kitchen. Too many 20th century phrases creeping into your roleplaying vocabulary? Watch some period movies for ideas on grandiose speeches and turns of phrase. If you get the players in the right mood, chances are your enthusiasm for running a great Dark Ages session will be strong, too.

pack raising the young. Strong young leaders challenge weak old ones. Those who are a burden to the pack leave and die alone. The packs endure, and the cycle continues. Yes, overall, it's a pretty good time to be a wolf.

Antagonists

In the Dark Ages, it's not so much a question of who the enemies of werewolves are but rather who they *aren't*. This section details a variety of antagonists for **Werewolf: The Dark Ages**, including mortals, supernatural beasts and even fae and sorcerers. For information on the Cainites, see Chapter Five; their relationship with Garou is brutal enough to warrant more than a brief overview.

Mere Mortals

One on one, even a seasoned mortal warrior has little hope against the might of a werewolf. But an entire unit of battle-hardened soldiers may well prove to be a nasty enemy. It's probably not in a medieval werewolf's nature to worry overmuch about mortal foes, although some of the following human warriors should make any creature a little concerned.

The Norse

Alas for the Fenrir that the heyday of the Viking has ended. After 11th century defeats at Clontarf in Ireland and Stamford Bridge in England, the Norse raiders more or less have returned to the far north. They still make occasional forays into the lands of Novgorod and Kiev, using the same types of ships and weapons they employed centuries ago. The spread of Christianity has stymied the tide of Vikings,

but their ire can still rise should they have to deal with invaders or any other outside threats.

The Golden Horde

In 1206, Genghis Khan becomes Prince of the Mongols, and for the next 200 years, this fierce band of nomadic tribes cuts deeply into territories of the Far East, Middle East and even into Eastern Europe and Russia. Persia falls in 1218; Moscow and Kiev follow in 1237 and 1242. At the hands of Genghis' grandson Batu, the Rus come under Mongol leadership, with the overlords ruling from the city of Sarai on the Caspian Sea. The Mongols allow the Russian princes to continue to rule, but the conquerors choose the lines of succession. Mongol justice is swift and terrible; to prevent further trouble from Kiev, they murdered the inhabitants and burned the city to the ground. Any rebellion is put down with murder of the upstarts, their families and any servants and followers. The Mongols also levy heavy taxes and tolls on goods and travel; much of the fine art and culture of the Rus has been lost with this invasion. How can even the mighty Silver Fangs fight against foes so ruthless and destructive?

Teutonic Knights

Shortly before the Mongols terrorize the south, the northern city of the Rus, Novgorod, has to face the might of the Teutonic Knights. This well-disciplined band of Catholic Christian soldiers believe they have a holy mission to put down any infidels — and this means the Orthodox Rus as well as any followers of Mohammed. In what will become modern-day Prussia, the Teutonic Knights were quite successful at moving in and setting up a highly organized and effective government. Even though the Poles had requested this help against the Prussians, their western neighbors, they were dismayed to find the Knights moving even further east into the Poles' own territory. Now it seemed they were staying, using Eastern Europe as a staging ground to assault the infidels in Russia. The Teutonic Knights are unfailingly loyal to their brethren and their leader, the Hochmeister. Allegiance, strength in unity and tenacity mean more to this band of fanatics than life itself. This is one group that would never back down from a pack of werewolves.

The Church

Storytellers should never underestimate the power of the Catholic Church in Europe's Dark Ages. It controlled the populace by offering a spiritual community, a chance at eternal life, safety and a way to keep the fears of everyday life at bay. Many clerics of noble birth ended up better off than their elder brothers and sisters who spent their life's blood on a battlefield or in childbirth. Yet the unfortunate side to this is that the Garou don't

fit into the Church's worldview; therefore, werewolves are an enemy. Should the faithful get word of shapeshifters plaguing the countryside, they will send hunters to track down and murder these demonic aberrations. A few clerics with a deep and true understanding of the ways of the world might prove to be useful and interesting allies; consider men and women of the Church who might be Kinfolk. But the Church can also be one of the Garou's most dangerous antagonists. They have both temporal and spiritual power as well as limitless resources. The might of the Church is perhaps one of the strongest reasons for initiating the Veil.

The Wyrms

During the Dark Ages, the Wurm is nowhere near as powerful as it will be in later years. The local tanner's toxic byproducts are nothing compared to the waste of the modern day, and the horrors of outright genocide are only beginning to come into their own. Even so, where there's human misery, the Wurm feeds and breeds. And the human's lot in the Dark Medieval world is wretched enough to provide the Wurm with ample outlet for its insane urges.

Indeed, one of the Wurm's greatest weapons has always been ignorance — and the Dark Ages are a breeding ground for ignorance. Entire hamlets can fall under the sway of one charismatic Black Spiral Dancer, and whole monasteries can give in to a powerful Bane's lure of unearthly gratification. Although the Garou reprisals to such infestations are usually very thorough (for who's to stop them, or even know?), the werewolves can hardly be anywhere. A traveling pack may well stumble across an area where the majority of the population is already lost to the lure of corruption — which leads to a more terrible question. Should the pack risk death or worse by moving among these corrupted folk long enough to find any innocents that *might* still have evaded damnation? Or should they pragmatically burn the whole place to the ground and later answer for such sins in the name of pragmatism?

The Wurm's minions in this age should be portrayed for maximum horrific effect — the isolationist, embattled, superstitious nature of a Dark Medieval settlement is nicely balanced by monsters that cannot be easily resisted. The more effective of the Wurm's servitors are quite subtle, neatly avoiding the attentions of the Garou while tightening their grip on the hearts of the populace. However, there's also room to be as unsubtle as you like — if a vampire lord doesn't have to worry about the people of his village understanding his true nature, can't a powerful Black Spiral Dancer openly rule a terrified, abused and gradually degenerating hamlet?

There's ample room for Wurm-monsters in the Dark Medieval setting. No, that doesn't mean stocking labyrinths with creatures straight out of medieval bestiaries — a two-

The Black Spiral Dancers

Something to bear in mind when using the fallen tribe in a **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** game is simply this:

The Garou tend to think of them as a joke.

The attitudes held by 20th-century Garou and medieval Garou toward the Dancers are radically different. The Dancers are rare in the Dark Medieval setting; they haven't had quite as many centuries to build up their numbers, and the Garou Nation is much stronger than they are in these times. By the time of the Apocalypse, the Black Spiral Dancers will be at least as strong as any two Gaian tribes — but right now, they aren't even the strongest of the tribes.

It's not surprising, then, that most Dark Ages Garou feel rather confident about their odds against the fallen White Howlers. By rights, any one tribe could, if they could find them, eliminate the Dancers entirely (though they'd suffer horrible losses in the doing).

But the Black Spiral Dancers are aware of this, too.

The Dancers of the Dark Medieval time are much smarter than anyone wants to give them credit for. Their relentless inbreeding is taking a toll on the tribe, but they aren't as degenerate as they will be. Like the clever beasts they are, they go to ground and dig very secret tunnels under most of Europe. The Scottish Fianna, in fact, are relatively convinced that they've rid the highlands of the lion's share of the Dancer tribe. They're partly right — but only because most Dancers of the time live outside Scotland's borders, spreading their blighted influence slowly and subtly wherever they can.

This is the opportunity for you to use the Dancers in an entirely different manner, but to great effect. The Dancers don't even have enough cannon fodder to provide the impression of a howling mob of mutant berserkers, so they don't show themselves much at all. Reassure the characters that the Dancers are little more than a tale for cubs, a cautionary fable that has very small teeth. Show them evidence of how clean and fresh the land is, and let them appreciate the glory of a land that has never seen the touch of the Black Spirals.

And then, just when they least expect it, peel back the skin and expose the hidden rot. Show them an enemy with terrible cunning and cruelty, something that has learned to survive by its wits — and that only exposes itself when it's sure that it's already won.



bodied lion might be “true” to medieval legend, but it’s hardly terrifying. You might have much better effect in devising monsters that are hideous, alien and completely horrific, creatures so blasphemous that the (by compare) sanitized tales of ogres and hobgoblins and serpents are the only way that peasants could speak of these creatures without going mad....

Following are a few samples of the Wyrms’ servitors in the 12th century. Storytellers are encouraged to devise as many more as they can, for evil can take any face, from the milkmaid to the archbishop. Be creative, and when all else fails, consult a history book for inspiration — the atrocities of Vlad Tepes, for instance, were the source for a legend much greater than the Dragon’s son himself....

Glutton Worms

The Fenrir call them linnorms; to the Furies, they are the Hydrae or Tarteran Worms. The Silent Striders name them Aaapef or Sebau, and the Silver Fangs have pronounced them “shit of the Zmei.” Whatever the name, they’re monsters of the worst sort.

These hideous beasts range across medieval Europe — or to be precise, *underneath* medieval Europe. They look roughly like a cross between a giant grub and a bloated, skinless serpent; they have no eyes, only rolls of pale pink-

ish-gray flesh surrounding a long, barracudalike set of jaws. For the most part, they’re big around as a horse’s belly and long as any two pikes — although there are rumors of worms much larger.

The glutton worms are a common sort of Wyrmonster in these times — not ever-present, but with enough numbers that they can survive having a few nests winnowed out and put to sword and claw. They dig great tunnels underground, tunnels that are often enlarged by Black Spiral Dancers into labyrinthine warrens. But they also possess an instinct that will be their downfall. For some mysterious reason, adults of the species are drawn to the surface world on nights of the new moon, where they gorge themselves on any plants or animals they can find.

Unsurprisingly, the Garou take advantage of this habit. Whenever there’s sign of a glutton worm or three in the area, the local werewolves take the new moon as a signal to go a’hunting. The results are what you’d expect from the average “dragonslaying” ballad — the worms are ruthless, vicious opponents, but nothing compared to a pack of Gaia’s finest. By the end of the Renaissance, the glutton worms are winnowed out to nothing, or only to a few heavily scarred survivors. From the 17th century on, no glutton worm is sighted by any Garou.

Still, it's possible that the last survivors of the breed made it into the 20th century — where they were eventually mutated by the birth of the Atomic Age. It would be ironic indeed if these last weak, blasted creatures became the monstrous Thunderwyrms, capable of wreaking a blind, unknowing vengeance on entire Garou septs. Perhaps only the Black Spiral Dancers could say for sure.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6, Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 0, Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 2, Brawl 5, Dodge 3, Intimidation 3, Primal-Urge 4, Survival 4

Attacks: Bite (8 dice), Constrict (7 dice, continues each turn until victim succeeds in a contested Strength roll), Thrash (6 dice, difficulty 8, makes attack rolls against all targets along the worm's length)

Health Levels: OK, OK, -1, -1, -2, -2, -3, -3, -5, Incapacitated

Powers: Armor (3 dice; insulating flesh layers), tunneling (as the metis Gift: Burrow), toxic bite (as the Black Spiral Dancer Gift: Crawling Poison)

Liderci (Jagglings of Karnala, Urge Wyrms of Desire)

These cunning spirits are manifestations of pure desire, spirit tempters and demon lovers. They are especially common in Eastern Europe, Hungary in particular, although they've been sighted elsewhere. A Liderc's methodology depends on its whim, although they seem to prefer two particular pastimes; using Blighted Touch on adulterers, thus inciting the lovers to take ever more desperate and drastic actions to sate their lusts, and appearing in material form to seduce mortals, feeding off their victims for a time and then exposing the affair to the village. The results are invariably ugly.

In the Umbra, Liderci appear as whirling gouts of bright flame with mocking shark-toothed grins at the center. The flame of their forms is often visible just before they materialize and just after they vanish, leaving many to believe that the Liderci are physical monsters who can transform into fire and turn invisible. Their Materialized forms are invariably very attractive and sensual, although due to some odd quirk, one foot is always deformed in some manner. A Liderc whose deformed foot is exposed in some manner (and the foot can take almost any form, including a bear's paw or a goose's web) will usually try to flee — the Bane feels an intense shame over its imperfection, and cannot fight well after being embarrassed in such a fashion.

Charms: Airt Sense, Blast Flame, Blighted Touch, Blood Sucking, Materialize (Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Seduction 4, 7 Health Levels, Strength + 2 Bite; cost 15 Power), Reform

Rage 4, Gnosis 8, Willpower 5, Power 50

Gahoej, Bane Ally of Angu, Urge Wyrms of Cruelty

Gahoej enjoys watching earthly creatures despair over their own misdeeds. His favorite trick is controlling a sleeping mortal or Garou, then forcing the victim to eat her own offspring before ending the possession. The Bane particularly relishes doing this to people who love their children. This evil creature will also usually stay close and watch the punishment of the murderer, savoring the suffering of everyone involved. Gahoej appears as a hairless male humanoid with dark skin covered in oozing pustules. His belly is distended, and his body reeks of excrement and rotten flesh.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 1, Manipulation 5, Appearance 0, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Intimidation 4, Stealth 4

Charms: Corruption, Materialize, Paralyze, Possession
Rage 8, Gnosis 2, Willpower 9, Power 60

Nimphlax, Jagglings of the Defiler Wyrms

Nimphlax loves filth and disease, and her appearance reflects her dark passions. This Jaggling looks like a ghost; tatters of burial shrouds cling to her pale, bony body, and her matted hair falls to the ground. Her nails are jagged, long and covered in dirt. When she uses her Blighted Touch Charm, Nimphlax appears to claw at her victims, though the touch is spiritual rather than material. This Jaggling prefers to prowl around the poverty-stricken streets of cities and larger towns, striking those who have little resistance to her Charm.

Charms: Agony, Airt Sense, Appear, Blighted Touch, Blood Sucking

Rage 10, Gnosis 1, Willpower 7, Power 76

Claude Boudelier, Fomor

About 20 miles south of the city of Paris is a small town called Niente, and this otherwise pleasant setting is the home of freeman Claude Boudelier, a Black Spiral Kinfolk and fomor. Claude isn't sure how he received his "gifts," but he's used them for a number of years, always happy to earn the approval of the voice in his head. The fomor is the town's blacksmith, surprisingly well liked by all of his neighbors. What they don't realize is that Claude is responsible for killing off dozens of otherwise healthy stock animals. Claude is clever enough never to infect the horses and cattle in the local village; instead, he passes on his taints to the animals of travelers, particularly crusaders and pilgrims, while he shoes their horses and repairs saddles and harnesses. The visitors leave, never suspecting their stock may die and leave



them stranded in enemy lands. Claude is about 28 years old and has no family at present, though his Spiral relatives may change that.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Academics 1, Alertness 2, Animal Ken 3, Brawl 1, Crafts 4, Dodge 1, Linguistics 1, Melee 2, Riding 3, Stealth 1, Subterfuge 1, Survival 1

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Resources 2

Powers: (All are only effective on horses, cattle and other beasts of burden.) Cause Insanity, Fungal Touch, Infectious Touch

Rage 0, Gnosis 0, Willpower 5

Demons

No one is exactly sure what demons are — perhaps fallen angels, Umbral lords or damned souls. What the Garou do know is that these creatures are foul and evil beyond belief, and that they are willing to go to extreme measures to tempt mortals to fall under their sway. They reek of the Wurm, and yet do not quite follow the rules that Banes do. While their actual bodies dwell in some distant realm, they sometimes send their spirits into earthbound animals or humans, temporarily possessing these vessels for a variety of nasty purposes. Demons have a wide range of powers, simulated by werewolf Gifts, that include healing, great strength, mind control and resistance to damage. Demons are often solitary and may seem like normal beings, at least at first. But usually something gives away one of these creature's true infernal nature, such as glowing red eyes, a forked tail or the distant whisper of screams that follow the demon. Werewolves may not ever encounter them, but if as a Storyteller you *do* decide to include demons as adversaries, make them sufficiently foul and irredeemable. They're nightmares given form, not trustworthy allies.

Aughisky, the Demon Steed

Occasionally, a Fenrir or other well-traveled Garou will tell of these dark demonic horses that haunt crossroads or prowl near brackish ponds and streams. The Aughisky at first glance looks like a dark horse with no spots or markings. Closer inspection will reveal its fanged maw and razor-sharp hooves. The Aughisky's eyes burn with a dull red glow, and its mane and tail quiver with buzzing flies. Though wily, this isn't a particularly bright creature, and it attacks with a mindless fury. If losing a fight, it may try to flee or possibly bargain for its life.



Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Animal Ken 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Intimidation 3, Occult 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2

Attack: Hoof Strike for 5 dice, Bite for 3 dice (both aggravated)

Health Levels: OK, OK, -1, -1, -2, -3, -3, -5, Incapacitated

Gifts: Gnaw (as Lupus Gift), Grandmother's Touch (as Child of Gaia Gift), Head Games (as Galliard Gift), Luna's Armor (as Child of Gaia Gift), Might of Thor (as Get of Fenris Gift)

Rage 5, Gnosis 2, Willpower 6

The Fae

The Shining Host, the Tylwyth Teg, the Little People — the fae have many names and natures, and are scattered all over Dark Ages Europe and even into the Middle East. Most Garou are on at least polite terms with the fae, and the Fianna and a few others claim kinship with these magical creatures. Storytellers should note that these beings are *not* changelings, the modern entwining of fae souls and human flesh. While the time of the Shattering and the departure of the fae approaches, it is not complete in the 12th century.

Player characters who expect the fae to be tricky and whimsical won't be disappointed, but those who imagine the fae to be weak and easily controlled are fools. The common folk of the time are *terrified* of the fae, and will do what they can to appease the "Old People" — for the fae can be beautifully and terribly cruel to mortal cloddlings when it amuses them to do so (and it often does).

Fae generally fall into a couple of broad categories; these include the noble sidhe, nature faeries, household faeries and tricksters. Any Garou with Faerie Lore knows that two courts exist, the Seelie and the Unseelie, and that the two courts split the year in twain for their leadership. Faeries thrive on something called Glamour, a sort of mystical energy that fuels their magic, and they often glean it from joining in werewolf celebrations. The fae use this Glamour to shapeshift, spin illusions and travel quickly from place to place; an observant Garou will note they usually sing a song, repeat a rhyme or perform some other small action when using their magic. Faeries also have a penchant for "borrowing" things from mortals and other beings, though seldom from each other and never anything irreplaceable, such as a prized sword. Fae may well be an intrinsic part of chronicles set in Britain and Ireland; they make both useful allies and problematic foes. (For even more details on the fae, see **Changeling: The Dreaming**).



The Unseelie Court

A few of the Unseelie are merely cruel pranksters. Others are downright malevolent and don't hesitate to commit terrible atrocities. Some steal children, replacing the babes with logs and rocks, and only with proper begging will they return the little ones. A few of the darkest Unseelie perform unspeakable rituals with the babes, basking in the suffering and horror just like the Seelie revel in music and dance. A powerful Unseelie fae who is snubbed by a Garou may well spin a long vengeance that affects the entire pack; many of these faeries are skilled in laying curses and making dark prophecies come true.

Ceilican

The Ceilican are a tribe of werecats who also have blood ties to the fae. Hailing from Britain, Scandinavia and even as far south as Brittany, they dwell among all types of wanderers. Not unlike the Fianna, the Ceilican are drawn to passion and pleasure — but their hedonism is a very selfish sort, and when they've chosen a particular game to play, they don't particularly care whether their playmates want to participate or not. They're flamboyant dressers, drinkers and fighters with a professed streak of romanticism, something quite out of place in these times. But their fae nature also shows

through in their moodiness and lack of caution. If one's temper turns, she'd as gladly kill someone as make peace, even over a tiny slight or misunderstanding, in plain view of mortals. The Ceilican also aren't too particular over the company they keep, and they've been known to lead others into traps set by the Church and various hunters. They breed with European wildcats and often any attractive creature they come across. The Ceilican are magnets for trouble, and if one encounters the werewolf pack, some sort of torment is sure to follow.


Ceilican have three breeds — homid, metis, feline — and five forms: Homid, Sokto (Glabro), Crinos, Chatro (Hispo) and Feline. They have Gifts, Rage, Gnosis, Honor and Willpower just like Garou but exchange Glory and Wisdom for Ferocity and Cunning. Pryio replaces Auspice with the options of Daylight, Twilight and Night. (For more specific information, see **Bastet**). The following template is for a typical young Ceilican.

Breed: Homid

Pryio: Twilight

Tribe: Ceilican

Attributes: Strength 2 (2/3/2/1), Dexterity 4 (6/7/8/8), Stamina 3 (4/4/4/3), Charisma 4, Manipulation 3 (3/3/1/1), Appearance 3 (4/1/1/3)



Abilities: Alertness 3, Animal Ken 1, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Enigmas 2, Etiquette 2, Faerie Lore 2, Linguistics 2, Melee 3, Occult 3, Primal-Urge 3, Stealth 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Secrets 3

Gifts: Catfeet, Satyr's Wisdom, Sweet Hunter's Smile

Rank: 1

Rage 4, Gnosis 2, Willpower 6

Magicians

As in modern times, werewolves find magicians difficult to understand. Many seem aloof and disdainful; a scant few are folk healers and witches who have some measure of respect and appreciation for the Garou way. Like werewolves and fae, magicians have secret places of power, and they apparently are greedy for more. Naturally, this brings them into contact with werewolves, who object to the magi's lust for the Gnosis of the sacred places. Sorcerers aren't stupid; they know better than to attack angry shapeshifters head to head. They're much more subtle — and dangerous.

A Storyteller has a couple of options when constructing magi characters. First of all, he can choose for these mystical enemies (or allies) to be hedge magicians; **World of Darkness: Sorcerer** is the definitive guide for this ilk. Another option is using either **Mage: The Ascension** or **Mage: The Sorcerers Crusade** to build True Mages, the willworkers who can actually shape static reality. In either case, it's probably better for the balance of the chronicle for magicians to remain in the hands of the Storyteller.

Other Garou

Finally, there is the animosity among the werewolves themselves to consider. More often than Ceilican, demons and Mongols, the Garou's worst enemies will be their own kind. Territory rights, offenses to honor (real or imagined) and a need for resources drive the werewolves to frequent quarrels. The most dangerous antagonists of all may be just over the next hillock — howling to the same moon as the player characters' pack.

Stories to Tell

At some point, every Storyteller's wellspring of creative ideas runs low. The following story seeds are brief scenarios centered around Dark Ages Garou; they're not full-length chronicles in themselves but germs of ideas to get your own imagination flowing. Pick and choose or mix and match as you desire, as always adjusting for the needs of your chronicle and player characters.

Ancestor's Footsteps

One really creative way to link modern day and Dark Ages chronicles is to let the player characters step into the shoes of their ancestors for a few games; they might enjoy this brief foray into the past so much, they ask you to start a



Werewolf: The Dark Ages chronicle from scratch! Playing ancestors also gives the troupe a chance to switch roles. Maybe the quiet, contemplative Theurge suddenly has to become an Ahroun of legend while the boisterous Galliard must play the part of a cool-headed Philodox. Take a look at the Pure Breed Background of all the modern characters; this will give you an idea of what kind of roles and status the ancestor characters might have.

Having a great story and interesting adversaries is vital to making the ancestral game enjoyable. Epic quests are one good option, such as retrieving the Three Forgotten Treasures of Odin; figure out what the treasures are and where they are located, then plot from there. Next, consider how the modern characters step into their ancestor's place. Is this a mission ordained by Gaia or a pack totem? Perhaps the shift in perspective is unexplained; it simply happens during a moot to the shock of everyone. Maybe the adventure is a shared dream, or the result of imbibing too much faerie mead. Whatever the case, be sure you know what's happened, even if the characters don't.

If this adventure is meant as a surprise, it's the Storyteller's responsibility to prepare all the characters, then distribute them for the session. If the players are in the know, they can assist in character construction; there's less drama but also a lot less work for the Storyteller. Have some resources on hand for players who may be unfamiliar with history; for example, if the characters are Fenrir warriors, a

book with pictures of Vikings and their artifacts may come in handy. Pay close attention to some of the suggestions in this chapter for enhancing the mood and flavor of the time.

Finally, figure out how you're going to deal with fatalities. Will an ancestor's death cause the character to wake up back in his own body? Or does death in the past equal death in the present? If you choose the latter option, make sure there's a plausible reason why this is so. Players are much more apt to be forgiving when the rationale for Draconian measures are logical.

A Tale of Demesne

A feudal Garou lord has a serious problem; for unexplained reasons, several Kinfolk peasants from his large estate have disappeared, only to be found mauled and murdered in the nearby forest. The player characters are asked to find out what person or thing is responsible for these deaths. As it turns out, the lord has unwittingly released an ancient and powerful Bane that's preying on the mortals. The characters must track down the Bane and stop it before more peasants die, then confront the lord about his careless actions.

Ambassadors to Arcadia

The characters' sept leader has chosen them for an honorable task, to carry the pack's greetings and gifts to the faerie court on Beltaine. This is an opportunity for a fun

crossover adventure; it can be a lighthearted romp that centers on simply having a good time, or it can have darker overtones. Perhaps the Unseelie lords and ladies do the unthinkable and refuse to give over their crowns; the Seelie court could no doubt use some aid from the Garou to set things right.

Mission of Mercy

The Kinfolk mate of a powerful homid or lupus character is soon to deliver her child or pups; several Theurges have foretold that this birth will produce a great hero of the Garou. Then suddenly, disaster strikes; the female is poisoned by an evil spirit, perhaps one sent by a rival. The sept leader sends the characters to find a cure from a healer in the East, such as Nadim (see *Werewolves of Note*). Time is running out; the characters must travel through the Umbra and brave any enemies that seek to block their passage in order to save the future hero.

Delicate Diplomacy

A temporary truce has been called with a rival sept, a local vampire or band of vampires, or even a cult of magi. As part of the arrangement, the pack must travel with their tenuous "ally" to a given locale, where the allied group can destroy a mutual rival or procure information important to both sides. There should ample tension between the two sides, although a vampire might enjoy the friction she's causing among the Lupines.

Needless to say, a double-cross is almost guaranteed. Will the characters be the ones to do their "guest" dirty, or will the guest be the one to strike first? Either way, remember that opportunity is everything — the side that moves first should be the side that has the most reason to believe they could get away with it.

The Grand Hunt

A harsh winter and dry summer have hit the land hard, and the sept's Garou and Kinfolk alike, whether wolf or human, have little to eat. After much deliberation, the Theurges beseech a powerful Incarna (such as Stag or Boar) to aid them and the land. The Incarna agrees, and sends a powerful representative of its kind to the mortal plane — if a chosen pack of Garou succeeds in hunting this animal, and killing it cleanly and honorably, then its body will provide the locals with enough food to nourish them for a little longer. In fact, if the hunt is performed as part of a great ritual, perhaps the noble animal's sacrifice will bring rain and new growth to the land, ending the time of hunger.

However, the hunt shouldn't be easy. The Garou will have to use every inch of their primal instincts to pursue the animal, great strength and skill to bring it down (the supernaturally potent prey is a match for any single Garou), and utmost wisdom to be certain that the ritual hunt is fulfilled exactly. As an added complication, a pack of Black Spiral Dancers may well try to prolong the famine by

sabotaging the hunt, either by attacking the hunters or killing the prey themselves. The pack will have to be at the top of their game, so to speak; the welfare of their sept and Kin depends on it.

Bear-Baiting

Whether by luck or by the artifice of an outside player such as a totem, the pack becomes aware of the impossible — a Gurahl lives, and nearby. The werebear in question might be a newly-changed cub, throwback to the ancient bloodline, or it might be an older Gurahl newly awoken from centuries of hibernation. If the pack notifies the sept, the Gurahl might be killed outright — and yet the pack, like other Garou packs, should feel loyalty toward their sept and mentors, and might feel the need for advice. Can the pack alone manage to acclimatize the Gurahl to the Dark Medieval setting, and help him achieve his goals of healing? And if the Gurahl is a cub, how will the pack find an appropriate mentor to teach the youngling the ways of her race?

God Wills It

Not far from the local sept, a priest has arisen, claiming to see visions that compel him to raise another Crusade. Like Peter the Hermit before him, he quickly stirs a number of locals into following him, with promises of Saracen gold awaiting the taking, sweetened by the reward of paradise for those who carry it away from the heathens. With his ragtag army following him, he sets off toward Jerusalem — and into the sept's protectorate.

Needless to say, when the army arrives, they're both hungry and fervent. The pack may find their Kin at risk from these zealots; although the army might beg for food at first, things might grow violent when it's revealed that there really isn't enough food to go around. If the locals have any minorities among them such as Jews, then overzealous "soldiers" might decide to start their Crusade early (as they usually do). How will the sept deal with this? Massacring the army would just call the attention of the Church in full (as well as horrify more compassionate sept elders and spirits); killing the priest isn't exactly the easy solution, either. But whatever solution they find, they'd better find it soon....

Black Nativity

The sept's territory is visited, either in the deep woods or in the local city or village, by a hugely pregnant young girl with bloodied, bare feet. It soon becomes obvious that she's traveled a long way — but why, in this condition, and with nobody to assist her? Depending on whether the pack questions her or not (and how she responds to them), she might not give them the answer right away — but they learn the truth when she gives birth. Her child is a hideous monster, clearly a fomor babe. If the girl died in childbirth, then the pack might summon and question her spirit; if they helped her survive, then she tells the truth. Her village has a curse on it, she says, one that causes babes born there to be

horrid and deformed. She'd hoped that by giving birth elsewhere, she'd be free of the curse.

The truth is much more vile than a curse. Some chosen beast of the Defiler Wyrn, whether a fomor or a Black Spiral Dancer, has settled in the girl's village. There he impregnates many of the local womenfolk, whether by seduction or rape, in order to birth a new army of the Wyrn's chosen. The pack's quest to destroy this monster and his pack of allies has the potential to be a truly horrifying story — particularly when it's stressed that the tiny village has no hope of escaping this blasphemous fate on their own.

Werewolves of Note

The following personalities can occupy a wide range of places in your chronicle, from sept leaders to adversaries and allies. These werewolves are both famous and infamous, probably evoking some kind of emotion from other Garou who know them. What will the reactions of your troupe be? Use these Storyteller characters to enhance your plot, add spice to the chronicle or as fodder for ideas during a creative drought.

Sister Helena Agnes Adostopoulis

In the rocky lands of the northern Peloponnesus rests an isolated priory of the Orthodox church. The sisters make their

humble living through tending several groves of olive and fig trees. Yet there's always plenty of meat on the table, usually succulent lamb taken from nearby meandering herds. Not all is as it seems here, for the prioress, Helena, is a Theurge of the Black Furies and the other sisters are werewolves or Kinfolk, who've all taken a vow of celibacy. At least two packs exist at any given time. Helena is a genuine nun; it's just that she gives a bit more credence to Gaia than God. She was already a postulant when she discovered her Garou nature, and rather than leaving her order, she decided to build a place for her tribe and Kin. While Helena and many of her sisters are peace loving, they fight as fiercely as any werewolves should their territory be threatened. The priory has become known among the Changing Breeds as a place of refuge and sanctuary, particularly for women. Helena is just approaching her middle years, her dark hair turning silver at the temples. She's a small, compact woman who's just as clever with her voice as her claws.

Hugh, Earl of Chester

The Earl is a tall, dark haired man in his late 30s. A scar across his right cheek and a missing left hand attest to his gallantry in war. This Norman Ahroun is powerful and makes sure everyone knows it. He is known for his independence and reliability, as well as his tendency to be utterly ruthless when facing a threat to his possessions. Yet for all that he seems heavy handed in this regard, behind his glowering brow resides a sharp mind and much political acumen. Hugh has a





way of maneuvering people into doing what he wants with little cost to himself. In addition to Chester and its surrounds, the Earl owns land in Normandy. King Richard considers him an asset, perfect for the strategic region of Chester. He pays the taxes without fail, quells rebellion in his own lands and has never been caught plotting for more power. Some of the more fractious barons would love him to defy the King even as his grandfather (the late earl of Chester) did during King Stephen's reign. Unless the earl undergoes a strange sea change, this isn't likely to happen.

Lady Elsebeta von der Nacktschwert

Elsebeta's father was her first sept leader, and when the opportunity arose to marry her off to a politically well-placed but doddering Shadow Lord Kinfolk, her parents did so quickly. Her new husband already had a young son by a previous marriage, also Kin, and it appeared the boy would be his only issue. The old man died soon after the wedding, leaving Elsebeta a wealthy and powerful widow, ostensibly holding the family's lands for her stepson. She immediately made a series of shrewd trading investments, reaping much from Shadow Lord contacts in the Near East. Then, when the boy turned 10, she married him as well, determined to maintain her status as de facto head of the household. Her family, at first shocked, has come to admire her cleverness; in a short amount of time, she's also increased their wealth and prestige as well. Elsebeta, a Philodox particularly adept

at manipulating others, is always looking for agents among the Garou to undertake trading and spying missions. Currently, the lady is in her late teens; her fair hair, bright blue eyes and genteel manners mask a ruthless demeanor.

Aidan FitzBurke

Aidan's history is strange even for a Fianna. His mother, a lupus whose pack roamed the Burren, had a dalliance with a human nobleman, and some time later, Aidan and his littermates were born. Perhaps because his mother was fond of spending days and nights in her two-legged form, Aidan also has a penchant for it. When he was in his late teens, well after his First Change, the boy tracked down his human father, an Anglo-Irish Burke. The man couldn't make Aidan his heir, but he did offer his son a position in the household as bailiff. This allows Aidan to do quite a bit of traveling and have some status in the human world as well. He's quite familiar with travel routes all over Ireland and knows quite a few useful fae and werewolf contacts as well, both homid and lupus. The Ragabash is a handsome wolf, with green eyes and a thick sable coat. In his homid form, he's clean shaven and wears his black hair down to his waist.

Nadim the Healer

Nadim likes to say that having only one eye forced him to peer inward from an early age. The Silent Strider physician certainly has accumulated a great deal of knowledge,

perhaps from his extensive travels through the Levant, Byzantium and North Africa. At present, he resides in Spain and offers his services as a healer and troubadour. The Galliard metis speaks little of his own background, but most other werewolves suspect he is some sort of outcast from Morocco. Nadim actually comes from a minor noble family in Ethiopia and ran away soon after his First Change. He believed that he had brought shame to his family and wanted to spare them dishonor. Moreover, she realized that it would be an even poorer life to live as a female metis. For the truth is that Nadim, born with the name Abia, is a woman. After escaping her family, she donned a boy's garments and sought entrance to the medical school at Alexandria. She gained admittance and since then has wandered, offering her tremendous skills to humans, wolves and even Christian crusaders. The Galliard asks no payment but is always appreciative of songs, stories and a good meal.

Hilario Blanco

At the beginning of the 13th century, the library of Cordova is one of the finest in the world, holding over 400,000 volumes. The city is also one of great beauty and learning. This is where the Bone Gnawer Theurge Hilario Blanco makes his home. That the Muslims hold Cordova makes no difference to Hilario; he's much more interested in the books and unusual artifacts in the library, a few of which come from the lands of India and Cathay. Hilario counts several Fenrir, Silent Striders and Warders among his friends, and in addition to being literate, he speaks several languages. The Bone Gnawer has gazed at maps and read ancient scrolls from places that are so old, people have forgotten they ever existed. Hilario is small and squinty eyed, usually wearing a dusty patched cloak when he walks around the city. He'd be an invaluable resource to any Garou seeking long lost lore.

Thibault L'Emile

Thibault prides himself on being a warrior, not a scholar; he doesn't really understand all the Theurge's talk about Umbral fires destroying the Machine and such. However, he's dedicated himself to helping his sept rescue "heretics" who are pursued by the Church for their interest in science and learning. Paris is home to the largest medieval university on the continent, and this is where Thibault brings most of the mortals who are in danger of excommunication, torture and death. He's traveled throughout the Holy Roman Empire and even into the Italian city-states. The Ahroun is always chafing for more chances to travel and antagonize knights of the Church. Thibault is a giant in any form, standing almost six feet tall as a Homid.

Father Russell

Though he has long put aside his faith in the Christian Church, Father Russell still maintains the trappings of a wandering monk. The old Philodox is a clever amateur psychologist and is exceptionally talented at goading humans and werewolves into thinking for themselves. He's been known to appear at a sept and begin critiquing their protection of Gaia and her sacred places. Often as not, a fight breaks out, and then the werewolves realize that the Child of Gaia can more than take care of himself. Father Russell is well acquainted with many of the septs and caerns throughout the British Isles, though most of his wanderings are confined to England and southern Scotland. He appears to be in late 40s, with a lean build.

Proudfang

North of the Danube at the western edge of the Carpathian Mountains is the Sept of Dark Waters. The caern is secluded in a glade of ancient fir trees where the hills meet the forest. The sept's leader is a Red Talon Ahroun known as Proudfang. The dark gray wolf is in his prime, and he's deeply concerned over the influx of travelers from the east and west. Many of the human brutes are vicious and wasteful, burning down trees and laying waste to the land. Worse, they often hunt wolves for their pelts. Proudfang is suspicious of the Shadow Lords to the north and wonders if they are somehow responsible for all the killing and destruction. The Ahroun is on the verge of striking back against the invading humans or the dark Shadow wolves. His packmates are likewise ready to attack, making the chances for war in this part of the continent greater each day. Any Garou who prize the shaky peace between tribes must intervene soon if this violence is to be averted.

Astrid Snorrisdottir the Foebreaker

In her youth, Astrid gained fame as a skald and brewer; Fenrir came from many miles away to hear her stories and drink her honey mead. One spring day, however, she gained a new name and reputation. Most of the sept's warriors had sailed south, seeking plunder, when a strong wind blew in a group of enemy Norse from the Severnaya River. The raiders attacked with swift swords, cutting down Kin and young Garou alike. Singlehandedly, Astrid held off the attackers from the caern until spirit ravens could summon the sept's warriors home. Bloodied and scarred, Astrid thereafter took her place as a guardian of the caern. Now in her later years, the Galliard still wields a klaive, though the raiding ships of the Norse are fewer. Many Fenrir still visit the sept to hear her wisdom and taste her mead.





Chapter Five: Blood and Fury

Death is better, a milder fate than tyranny.

— Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*

Inevitably, the werewolves and vampires of the Long Night are going to cross paths. The vampires have a very high population in the Dark Medieval world, as they swell their numbers without fear of reprisal. Similarly, although the Garou have never been numerous, they are far from the dying breed they are in the End Times. Both sides have a tendency to think of Europe as “theirs.”

Not only is conflict inevitable, but it’s a bloody, howling mess. Perfect for a **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** story.

Of course, bringing in the vampires full force (or bringing Lupines into your **Vampire: The Dark Ages** game) isn’t necessarily a wholehearted call for mixed-bag parties of Cainites and Garou. The two factions are at war, and have been for centuries upon centuries. To be sure, a few temporary truces are called here and there, but the bloody feud is bigger than either side. The Saxons will embrace the Normans wholeheartedly and the Crusaders and Saracens will call one another brother long before there is peace between the vampires and werewolves.

But that’s all right — because a millennia-old, blood-steeped, poisonous feud is fodder for stories aplenty.

What the Werewolves Know

The vampires are terrible creatures created by the Weaver and the Wyrms, with the worst parts of each. They are functionally immortal, unless killed by claw, fire or sunlight. They are embodiments of hunger, and feast on blood and innocence alike. What the vampires cannot control or possess, they spitefully destroy, much like the dog in the manger. They can control the minds of man and beast alike, and their supernatural powers enforce a terrible loyalty in their subjects. Many of the people poisoned by a vampire's presence are better off dead, for their souls are no longer their own and their free will is gone.

The spirit world wants nothing to do with vampires, save the Wyrms' brood of Banes. Helios hates them, and has cursed them to burn in his rays or with the touch of purifying flame. They are not creatures of the world — they are merely on it. They do not belong, and like children who sense their parents' hatred of them, they strive to contaminate their parents' works out of spite.

They are not without their uses, and some of them have yet to lose the last vestiges of what once made them human. But they are beyond redemption. Redemption is for those who still have souls.

What the Werewolves Don't Know

The Garou are in the dark as far as clan lineage goes — some elders are somewhat cognizant of the vampiric tendency to organize in family groups, but to a werewolf, the word "Gangrel" means "wanderer." To be sure, a few careless vampires have let the occasional clan name slip, but to most Garou, there's no real difference between "accursed Tremere" and "accursed Rostalich." Similarly, there's no real association with a vampire's lineage and the variations in his power — the Garou of Iberia believe that shadow-control is a power possessed by many vampires, but not all have learned the trick.

Similarly, the werewolves know nothing of the Cainite myth, and would scoff at it if they did. They are unaware of the concepts of "generation" ("Vampires get older with age — how can it be any simpler?") or the methods of the Blood Oath. ("They control their subjects' minds with their powers — any cub knows that.")

What the Vampires Know

It is accepted fact among vampiric scholars of the occult world that werewolves are savage beasts that labor under the Curse of Lycaeon. They are brutally powerful and fiercely territorial. They hate vampires uncontrollably, and there is no reason the sentiment should not be returned. The werewolves have learned the tricks of walking as human and as wolf, and therefore have the best of both minds. They know secret talents of witchcraft, and can sometimes perform sorceries to vanish suddenly or call down fire. They can appear from nowhere, perchance because they are master shapeshifters able to take forms other than the wolf. They

are berserkers, as prone to frenzy as any vampire. And they are doubly hard to kill.

Vampires don't understand werewolves, and they can't control them. The human — and inhuman — response is hate.

What the Vampires Don't Know

The concepts of tribes, auspices and breeds are unfamiliar to Cainites. Most vampires presume that werewolves are infected, not born — the common Garou practice of attacking their human-raised progeny just before the First Change deliberately furthers this misconception. A Cainite is unlikely to think of werewolves as gathering in tribes or clans — merely extended packs, their numbers bolstered by their infected victims. A rare few have deduced that some werewolves are wolf-born, but tend to think of this as the curse affecting human and wolf alike.

The secret of silver is actually not all that well-known at this time; only in the twentieth century is the werewolves' allergy widespread among human lore. Those vampires who have deduced the weakness (usually the alchemically-minded who experiment with the werewolves' lunar connections) are prone to keep it a secret. After all, the Lupines' weakness is an excellent bargaining chip to bring to the negotiating table — or a wonderful thing to withhold from your poor, wolf-besieged rival. The Cainites *do* know that fire inflicts wounds on the werewolves that don't quickly heal — giving them a decidedly double-edged sword to wield. Such a weapon is often a last resort, as the werewolves seem far less vulnerable to flame than are the Cainites.

[In most cases, ask for an Intelligence + Occult or Hearth Wisdom roll, difficulty 8, to deduce the Lupines' weaknesses. One success reveals their vulnerability to fire; two, their allergy to silver.]

Except for a rare few astral travelers, the Cainites know absolutely nothing about the Umbra. It wouldn't surprise them that the Lupines hold to an animistic ideal — such would only prove that the primitive beasts are bound by superstition as much as Lycaeon's curse.

The Devil's Deal

Sometimes, however, the two breeds of monster can cooperate, for however fleeting a time. Inevitably such a pact is necessitated by a mutual enemy — an intruding clan of vampires that threaten both sides, a cabal of sorcerers — something that threatens Garou and Cainite alike, and that is too much a threat to for either side to handle on their own.

As well, there is the occasional pact between individuals for other reasons. A Garou might find that a beloved relative has been Embraced, and take up the impossible task of bringing her redemption. A vampire might learn that his mortal descendants have produced a wolf-breed among them, and feel similarly protective of the poor cursed child. A pair of scholars might exchange theories about the invisible world (although neither one is likely to offer details



about his own kin to the other, for fear of betrayal). Two schemers might strike a bargain, that each may have access to a weapon his rivals know nothing about. And there is even the possibility of forbidden love (although this is an extreme example of a couple with nothing in common).

However, these examples are, virtually without exception, truces between individuals. The war between werewolves and vampires dates back to the First Times, and has only been fanned by the ever-expanding vampiric population. Those who seek allies among the enemy camp do so at risk of being caught and executed (or worse — far worse) for treason. Such alliances are called only when times are truly desperate.

Even so, in war-torn medieval Europe, a desperate situation will arise every now and then....

Areas of Contention

Although almost any hillock or vale can be the site of contention between Leech and Lupine, it's simple fact that neither vampires nor werewolves are evenly distributed across Europe. The Scottish Highlands, for instance, simply don't have enough vampires to be a warzone between the two races; any Gangrel who skulk through the shadows there cannot afford to start a fight. Similarly, Constantinople is rife with the descendants of Caine, and is no place for a well-meaning Lupine to begin a crusade.

But there are several places where both sides have built up power over the centuries, territories where neither werewolf nor vampire are willing to give ground. The following are areas particularly appropriate to chronicles focusing on the struggle between undead and shapechanger; the conflicts there have been brewing for a long time, and are unlikely to end any time soon.

The Carpathians

The most famous area where werewolf and vampire come into conflict is Transylvania. From Prague to the Black Sea, from Kiev to the Adriatic, all along the Carpathians and the Danube — there is midnight war. The terrible Tzimisce have been here for as long as any human record can recall, and the same is true of the Shadow Lords. The castles among the Carpathian crags give refuge to the terrible Fiends (and their hated rivals, the Tremere), while the dense forests across Eastern Europe are unquestionably Shadow Lord territory. The two sides are well aware of each other, and their bloody mutual history is a story of violent war, the occasional tense truce — and the rare devil's pact.

Ostensibly, the battle between vampire and werewolf here is one for the control of the scattered, terrified human populace; the Lords want to maintain control over a pliable breeding stock, and the Tzimisce wish to tend sufficient herds to meet their every hunger. Both Lord and Fiend alike also recognize powerful adversaries in one another, and are unwilling to accept the presence of rivals that cannot be



controlled. But in truth, the ongoing war has as much to do with territorial pride as anything else. Both sides have always been here. Neither will accept the other's claim to the lands. And so it continues, and will continue until the time of the Apocalypse.

However, the Carpathian mountains are also notable for being one of the places where enemies make pacts just a little more readily than elsewhere. The Shadow Lords are a pragmatic, scheming sort; if there's a sin in striking a temporary alliance against a third foe, then it is a little one that is of small import in the greater scheme of things. These truces are usually directed against other vampiric households, such as Tremere or Gangrel (although the Lords sometimes temporarily ally with Gangrel against the Tzimisce as well; the tribe has never been averse to playing one side against the next). These alliances are often terribly efficient, but as both sides know that the other will certainly try betrayal once the task at hand is completed, they aren't *quite* so common as all that.

This region simmers with potential conflict. Tzimisce marshal their packs of Lupine-hunting revenants into the woods, and Garou use fire, claw and spirit-magics to fell the vampire-bred monsters of the land. The spirits of storm and night sky shake the heavens, demanding brutal tests of their supplicants. The Silver Fangs and Fenrir hover at the borders, waiting for the final evidence that the Shadow

Lords are unfit to hold their lands. The Tremere, Tzimisce and Gangrel continue their three-way pavanne of blood. The Black Spiral Dancers slink quietly through earthen tunnels, drawn by the smell of depravity and despair. And underneath it all is the threat of dread Kupala, said to be one of the greatest demons ever birthed from the Wyrms' loins.

If one thing is certain in the Carpathians, it's that none of the land's werewolf or vampire scions will grow fat from idleness.

[The Carpathians area is heavily detailed in various **Vampire: The Dark Ages** supplements. Of these, **Transylvania by Night** is probably the most useful to **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** games, although the **Transylvania Chronicles** series might offer interesting ideas — or even (with quite a bit of work) a full chronicle from an entirely different point of view!]

Scandinavia

The days of the Vikings and their raids against the rest of Europe have passed. The names of Wotan and Thor have fallen from favor, and instead the halls of Scandinavia resound with paeans to the Christ-god. Be that as it may, there are still creatures in and of the North who remember the bloody times with fondness. On one side stand the Fenrir, the great wolves of Fenris — on the other, the *Einherjar*, the dead who fight again. Neither one has any

patience for the weak ways of the Scandinavian folk and their new god. Neither one has any patience for the other.

Scandinavia is notable in that it's one of the few areas across Europe where the vampiric population is disproportionately large even without any large cities to sustain it. The vampires of the Northlands have a great number of *vargr* among their numbers — Gangrel or others who are used to lean diets of animal blood and whatever foolish villagers they can dominate. Some even command old longships and revisit their living days by raiding other communities — although this time, the spoils of gold and rapine go to their vassal crews, while they choose the far more precious spoils of blood.

The Fenrir and the *Einherjar* hate one another with a passion. Each one sees in the other a mockery of what Norse honor should be; each believes the other to be a ravaging beast, no more man than a wild boar. The Fenrir are well aware of the vampires' blasphemous retellings of old legends; any vampire daring enough to speak of Odin as the father of the vampire race is likely to get his lying tongue torn from his skull. Similarly, the *Einherjar* believe the Garou to be children of Fenris Wolf, grandchildren of Loki and the enemy come Ragnarok. Both groups share a similar faith, and that faith sets them one against the other. (And then, of course, are the Norse Setites, who see themselves as the children of *Jormungandr*. The Wyrm by any other name...)

[The supplement **Wolves of the Sea** contains plenty of information on Norse vampires, as well as lots of details on Scandinavian life during the time of the Vikings. Storytellers interested in a 10th-century chronicle involving the Fenrir should definitely check it out.]

Iberia

The struggles over the Iberian peninsula have drawn Cainite and Garou alike into the mess. As the Church bids the *Reconquista* to take back southern Iberia from the Taifa kingdoms, the Shadow Lords see opportunity to expand their territory — as do the equally tenebrous Lasombra, and their Toreador contemporaries. Similarly, the squabbling Taifa kingdoms have their defenders, who would not see such a civilization crushed under the heel of European ignorance. The Assamites stand foremost among the Taifa's Cainite defenders, but there are also many Brujah at their side. And for their part, the Children of Gaia and Warders of Men also do what they can to stymie the northern armies, with occasional assistance from the Silent Striders.

In many ways, the struggle for Iberia is simply a mix of the same motives that drive other vampire/werewolf conflicts across Europe. There's the issue of territoriality, and using a human war as an excuse to acquire more territory for oneself. There are the issues of human culture, and how supernatural creatures will battle to further the ideals they admire most — or find most convenient. There's the problem of the Church and its oppression of the Kin of most tribes (although this admittedly is a slightly different form). In Iberia, however, any

and all of these issues come to the forefront at once. With, no less, two warring fronts of vampires running in the same circles and working toward similar ends.

It's really small wonder that the paths of Garou and Cainite cross in Iberia more often than they do elsewhere. Here the Garou who hold power are Garou willing to walk in human cities. The werewolves are more interested in seeing which of the human cultures will prove victorious than they are in ensuring that no humans overstep their bounds. To be sure, that doesn't mean that every Lasombra has a Shadow Lord contact, or that every Assamite knows where to find a Silent Strider — but if you're interested in a story with quite a bit of intrigue and flavor, setting it against the triple background of Christian Spain, the Islamic Taifa kingdoms and the Iberian wilds would be a fine choice.

Crossing Over

There are vampires everywhere in the Dark Medieval world. You're fully aware that you need to emphasize that the cities are under the rule of the undead, but that the great forests are unquestionably werewolf territory. You note that most Dark Ages supplements just don't get way from the subject of vampires. So you decide to make the most of it and run a game with a high frequency of crossover. Maybe you decide that letting a player roleplay a werewolf in a **Vampire: The Dark Ages** game or a vampire in a **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** chronicle might just work. Or maybe you even figure a mixed band would be just the thing for jaded players.

Tricky. But possible.

Invoking Mood

Transplanting vampires into a **Werewolf** game, whether as guest stars or antagonists, adds a touch of cold, murderous intrigue. In most cases, the game's pace actually slows down a little. The savage, fast-paced course of an average **Werewolf** chronicle takes a new turn, as the werewolves find themselves having to slow down and deal with an entirely different form of adversary. Vampires are chill and calculating, and get the best results when they're patient. Invoking this feeling, the meticulous, careful creeping, is definitely important to making the players feel that Leeches are taking a hand in things. Vampires should slowly stretch and uncoil where werewolves howl and leap; vampires step carefully and slowly, crossing a room like a slow dance where Garou launch themselves from one doorway to the next.

By compare, adding werewolves to a **Vampire: The Dark Ages** chronicle will brutally speed things up. Suddenly, the Cainites are dealing with creatures who want to accomplish things in *their* lifetimes, and who refuse to sit on their haunches to let their plans unfold. Werewolves are like a forest fire, a lightning bolt, a runaway carriage — they can skulk in the background, slowly stalking their prey for some time, but when they appear, they should explode on the scene. The werewolves' enemies (often the players' charac-

Spiritually Bereft

Do note that even if a highly sympathetic vampire were willing to abandon his own kind and ally himself permanently with the Garou, he could never be their packmate — pack totems, like any spirit save Banes, do not deal with the living dead.

This little fact is going to cause all sorts of trouble for vampires who try to get too buddy-buddy. The caern guardian won't suffer a vampire to enter the bawn; without great power to the contrary, the Leech's Garou allies can't pull him into the Umbra; and just forget about those Rites of Summoning calling up friendly spirits when that *dead* thing's standing next to you.

Well, adversity builds character....

ters) find themselves very much on the defensive, trying hastily to match the Lupines' electric brutality.

Mixing and matching — there's the rub. If you're interested in giving both sides equal attention, then contrast becomes the rule of the day rather than an infrequent, powerful tool. Perhaps calling attention to the cycles of night and day can serve as a tool for shifting focus from the werewolves to the vampires when the time is right. Other narrative tools might work well — contrasting a vampire's memories of antiquity to a werewolf's Past Life, for example — but in all cases, remember that balance is what you seek. Let both sides contribute equally to the story's mood and advancement.

Story Ideas

Werewolves Against Vampires

The following sample story hooks are meant to present a few ideas for conflict between the two groups. Each one can be played from either the vampires' or the werewolves' point of view; it's easy enough to shift around details so that either side seems like the truly wronged party, or the one with the weight of justice on their side. (If you even care about that sort of thing, that is; both werewolves and vampires are well known for hewing to their own standards and no one else's.)

- **Blood of My Blood:** Nothing infuriates werewolves more than tampering with their precious Kinfolk. And the Lupines' Kin are tempting targets indeed; they're often better-fed, of finer stock and sharper wit than their mundane contemporaries. Perhaps a vampire takes a liking to a particular sept's darling (perhaps even the one slated to marry a Garou cub of much promise when both come of age), ghoul-ing or even Embracing the Kin. The werewolves will seek revenge, and do their best to avenge, rescue or (if necessary) put down their Kinfolk. And from the vampire's

side of things, what if the victim in question is genuinely happier on the other side of the conflict?

- **Pilgrimage:** One of the few things that would cause medieval folk to leave their homes was pilgrimage. They set out across unfamiliar territory, pleading sanctuary as they went, all in the name of faith. A vampire or two with some remnant of human faith might do this as well (particularly those on the Road of Heaven), intending to find a particular sacred spot in the wilds and pay homage. Although it's rarer for Garou to do this, perhaps they seek the blessing of a particular caern some distance away — a caern of Healing or Fertility, perhaps. And of course, the pilgrims' journey takes them into the territory of someone who doesn't want them there. The advantage of this story is that the pilgrims have no idea what to expect from the locals (or vice versa, if you're having the characters be the ones whose territory is invaded by these travelers). A pack used to dealing with the fleshcrafting locals might be horrified and bewildered by the shadow-wielders of the new territory; similarly, how can the vampires who have prepared for the Lupine storm-shamans like those at home be ready for werewolves who call on the very fae themselves as allies?

- **The Traitor:** Someone has run to the other side. Most likely, it was a mistreated Kin or an abused ghoul who slipped her leash — but someone who knows just a little more about her superiors than she should. Admittedly, her information is sticky and incomplete — but even directions to the local caern or haven is deadly enough. The players must trace this traitor, slipping into the enemy's territory to drag her from her newfound allies' side without getting caught themselves — for surely the enemy is powerful enough to slay a single pack or coterie on unfamiliar territory. And although she must surely be punished, this episode will certainly color the characters' dealings with their retainers and Kin — or it least, it *should*.

- **Blood Feud:** People carry grudges — it's in their nature. No less so the denizens of the Long Night. The Scandinavian blood-feuds of the Viking era were the subject of many sagas; some time spent with a history book of any country will uncover stories of feuds that outlived the people who started it. A mentor to one or more of the characters has been waging just such a feud — and now sees fit to send his childer or protégés into the battle for him. The characters now have to examine the depths of their loyalty — can they go and kill the household of an enemy down to the least servant? Honor demands no less, but surely such a thing is a blight on the soul. And when it's revealed that the enemy is one of *them* — well, the characters may regret their loyalties before all is through.

Temporary Allies

Stories involving a compact between Leech and Lupine require a little more rationalization. Still, they can be even easier to devise once the chronicle's in place; after all, the reasoning behind the alliance in the first place probably

lends itself to a number of story hooks. After all, if Tremere and Shadow Lords are allied to wage war against a band of Tzimisce, the first thing the players are going to expect is a story that sets them against the Fiends in question. Nonetheless, the following are a few possible seeds that can act as diversions for many chronicles.

- **The Great Hunt:** This seed might serve well as an "ice-breaker" story, in order to prove to the characters that cooperation is possible. As such, this story is a classic. The characters are captured by a brooding Fiend warlord, who has grown most jaded and requires sport — in other words, the characters. The *voivode* has the characters brought before his court, where each vampire is shackled to a Lupine with infernally strong chains (if the numbers are uneven, supply Storyteller characters as needed). The characters hear various courtiers tittering and placing bets on which pair will last longest, or which pair will kill one another first. Of course, the characters are released into the wilds and then hunted down by the *voivode* and his monstrous hunting party. In order to survive, the Garou will probably have to teach their vampire "fellows" something of pack tactics; in return, a gift of blood might strengthen the vampires enough to aid in survival. Only working together do they have a chance of survival. Admittedly, this isn't the most original plot hook ever — but it might be a good one for beginning roleplayers, and it certainly starts a chronicle off on a tense

note. There's also the presence of the recurring antagonist, the *voivode*... a weakened band of prey might run him off, but it'll take time and greater cooperation to bring this mighty warlord down....

- **Visions of the Dark:** Banes are attracted to vampires. They flit around the most monstrous of the undead, glutting themselves on the suffering and horror such beasts create. Vampires who still retain their consciences to some degree are most vexing to the Wyrmspirits. Banes might try to visit such creatures with tempting visions and dire suggestions, urging the Cainites to give in to sin. Where can a vampire turn? Certainly not the Church! In the meantime, the local Theurges have detected the increase in Bane activity, and send young ones to stalk the Wyrmspirits. And yet, when it's discovered that the Banes are desperately pleading with the vampires rather than feasting on their deeds, that may give the Garou pause. After all, why would the Banes need to encourage the vampires at all? And why do these vampires resist?

- **Infernalism:** The devil-worshipping Baali have many enemies, and for good reason. No sane Cainite would allow one to trespass through her territory unchallenged, and the Garou can almost smell the Wyrms-stink of the infernal vampires from leagues away. If such an elder Baali arrives in order to claim the territory for his own — craving the mystic power of the local caern and the blood of any vampires he



can find — the players have a problem. But rather than the devil-born simply arriving, announcing his attentions and waiting to be cut down by the characters, things should be much subtler. Most likely, the werewolves learn only half the picture from their spirit divinations — and the vampires learn the other half from their influence networks. And to piece the puzzle together, unearth the identity of their enemy, and marshal enough might to send the elder into Final Death, they must work together.

• **Deus Vult:** Although the Inquisition proper has yet to be born, the Church can still rally its followers against any perceived enemies. A single charismatic local priest can transform a normally placid and sullen town into a blood-thirsty mob. These peasant armies can't necessarily be fought with fang and claw. What if the mob is endangering Garou Kinfolk and vampiric retainers alike? What if the rabble-rouser knows one or three of the characters for what they are — is he just lucky and insightful, or the pawn of something greater? And for a truly epic twist, there's always putting the players in the path of one of the Crusades, as a hungry, xenophobic army arrives to put their territory to the torch. Cooperation may well be the only option for survival.

Rules Crossover Guidelines

Blood Pool

Werewolves are considered to have a blood pool of 20 or so (25 in Crinos). This does not reflect a greater volume of fluid, but rather the extreme potency of Garou blood. Vampires who sup from this fountain of savagery find themselves exceptionally susceptible to frenzy (as detailed in *Vampire: The Dark Ages*, pg. 247).

Rage and Gnosis

In many cases, when making Rage vs. Rage or Gnosis vs. Gnosis rolls, anyone without Rage or Gnosis is out of luck. However, if the Storyteller deems that a Cainite should have some resistance to a power that requires a Rage or Gnosis roll to resist, she can substitute Courage for Rage or Self-Control/Instinct for Gnosis. Be advised, however, that this doesn't work in all cases — some things can only be done with Gnosis (attuning a fetish to oneself, for instance).

Fetishes

Vampires cannot use fetishes, except for the rare Bane fetish that was designed for mortal use. Of course, a vampire can still pick up a klaive or Fang Dagger and stab a Garou with it — but in the hands of a wielder without a living spirit and Gnosis to match, a klaive is just a big silver knife and a Fang Dagger is a not-so-efficient bone knife. Neither will cause aggravated damage in its own right.

A Note

Right about now, some of you might be thinking, "Aha! The long-awaited Official Rules on How To Cross Over Werewolf and Vampire!"

Well... sorta.

You see, **Werewolf** makes a lot of assumptions about the universe's truths. It's written from the perspective that there is a spirit world, that there is a Gaia-style worldsoul, that shapeshifters were created and not evolved — the list goes on and on. **Vampire** is not written with these precepts in mind. As such, when a conflict arises between one game system and the next, ultimately this is a **Werewolf** book — so we're presuming that the **Werewolf** side of things is the correct one, happy mediums be damned.

The following are simply *guidelines* — that's all. They might not be appropriate for **Vampire**-themed games. You're encouraged to use these as you like, but not to feel shackled by them.


Virtues

The **Vampire** games rely heavily on a rule system of Virtues to emphasize the game's focus on internal struggle. **Werewolf's** focus is on external struggles, both political and violent (although internal struggle is hardly alien to creatures of dual nature such as the Garou); besides, werewolves simply aren't at as great a risk of degeneration. Where a vampire feels an empty, starved void where his living spirit once was, a Garou feels a surge of life twice as powerful as that of any human. As a result, you can probably assume that they have an easier time making "Virtue rolls" than do the undead. When a **Vampire: The Dark Ages** rule calls for a Virtue roll, you can usually substitute Willpower or Rage for Courage, Willpower, Gnosis or Primal-Urge for Self-Control/Instinct, and Gnosis for Conscience/Conviction.

Resisting the Kiss

Most creatures are powerless against the pleasure bestowed by the Kiss. It works very much in the vampires' favor to have their prey stand complacently while their blood flows out of them, like a milkmaid's prize cow. It is, however, possible to resist the paralyzing effect of the Kiss. A victim may make a Willpower roll, difficulty 8, in order to act while being drunk from; Storytellers may choose to have Garou roll Rage instead.

The more common form of resisting the Kiss is rather easier, and usually much more effective: Travel with your pack. It's hard for a Leech to immobilize you with the Kiss while your packmates are pulling the atrophied entrails from his torso.



Disciplines and Lupines

The Disciplines of **Vampire: The Dark Ages** were written to be used against vampires, mortals or Lupines — not Garou. (Yes, there's a difference.) As such, there are a few blurry areas where the rulebooks conflict. These guidelines (and we emphasize this — *guidelines*, not holy writ) are meant to address potential trouble spots, and how to resolve them while remaining true to the spirit of **Werewolf**.

There are no guidelines for Disciplines of the sixth dot or higher — the scarcity of such power, and their tendency to be unique to the Cainite at hand, make it impossible to adjudicate every situation in these pages. Storytellers should use their best judgment.

Abombwe

Werewolves have their own Beast, although it is of an alien, white-hot nature to even a vampire's senses. As such, they are vulnerable to certain uses of this Discipline.

Since Garou have no Courage virtue, they may resist the power of *Whistling up the Beast* by rolling Rage.

Taking the Skin can allow a Laibon to take a Lupine's form, but this has its own difficulties. Dead Garou revert to their breed form upon death. Thus, a Laibon could only take a wolf or human form, unless lucky enough to slay one of the thrice-rare metis — or strong enough to flay a Garou alive while keeping him in Crinos.

Animalism

Werewolves are not animals, as much as Cainites might like to think otherwise. As a result, Animalism has little effect on Garou. The exception is *Feral Speech* — a vampire with this power may communicate with a werewolf in Lupus form, as he is effectively "speaking the tongue of wolves" just as Garou do. However, powers such as *Noah's Call*, *Cowing the Beast* and *Ride the Wild Mind* are useless against supernatural wolves such as Garou, just as they would be against transformed vampires or shapeshifting witches.

Auspex

Auspex is not an automatic counter for Gifts of stealth, just as Gifts of perception do not automatically counter Obfuscate. The vampire generally has as much chance of piercing a Gift's veil of illusion as does another supernatural being. Apart from this caveat, most Auspex powers are straightforward and require little adjustment to work in **Werewolf** games.

Anima Walk poses a particular problem, however, especially for Storytellers who believe that dead things have no business in the Penumbra. Presume that the vampire's *anima* travels through the Dark Umbral reflection of the material world instead of the Penumbra. This makes it more likely that the vampire will encounter ghosts, but less likely that she will cross paths with a shapeshifter or spirit. If you rule



that the *anima* enters into the Penumbra proper, bear in mind that it appears colorless and ephemeral, standing out as a dead thing in the living Umbra. Werewolves may fight Penumbra *anima* as if they were the vampire in question, although with the substitution of Mental for Physical Attributes as described. Certain Disciplines are likely to function poorly or not at all in the spirit world, although it's left to the Storyteller to decide which ones (Vicissitude might be one example) are viable only in the world of the flesh.

Celerity

Celerity is, thankfully, quite straightforward. No changes are necessary when bringing it into a **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** game.

Chimerstry

Needless to say, a Ravnos' illusions are not quite as useful against the wolf-senses of the Garou. However, when paired with Heightened Senses, this power can be used to create subtleties capable of deceiving even the wild ones. Essentially, if a vampire only knows what armor smells like to the human nose, he cannot create an armored knight which will fool a Lupine in wolf-form — but if he can perceive the world with the keen senses of a beast, he can craft illusions to fool beasts. Apart from this consideration, Chimerstry works against werewolves in much the same way that it works against all others.

Daimoinon

The Hell-spawned power of the Baali stinks of the Wyrms in terrible fashion; any use of Daimoinon makes a Baali much easier to detect with Sense Wyrms for hours afterward. But the direct effects on a Garou are fairly straightforward (although they can leave a lingering touch of Wyrms-taint on their victim — Garou who strike first and repent afterward might not notice that the taint on their fellows is not intrinsic, but fleeting and caused by proximity rather than actual corruption).

The difficulty number to use *Sense the Sin* against a Garou is the target's Gnosis + 2. *Fear of the Void Below* can inspire a fox frenzy in its Garou victims; the Garou resists with Willpower + 2 (maximum 10). *Flames of the Netherworld* are of course aggravated damage, but a werewolf can soak it. And when touched by *Psychomachia*, a werewolf makes a frenzy check as if the moon were full.

Finally, the power of *Curse* is too strong to be removed by a Rite of Cleansing; generally, a Theurge must search out an Incarna to lift the curse, and such mighty spirits never do such favors without exacting a price in return.

Dark Thaumaturgy

This power taints. Cainites who possess knowledge of Dark Thaumaturgy cannot hide their Wyrms-taint from the supernatural senses of the Garou; the difficulty to detect a

diabolical thaumaturgist is reduced by one. If the Storyteller prefers to use Banes instead of more traditional demons, then this Discipline can be presumed to call, compel and protect against Wyrmspirits.

Rego Venalis: Without a Road score to speak of, Garou roll Gnosis to resist this path's effects.

Rego Dolor: Use of this path against werewolves is a dangerous affair. Supernatural pains or tortures will almost certainly goad a Garou into a frenzy, and may well allow her to regain spent Rage with great speed. A Rite of Cleansing can drive away the vermin visited by *Feed the Corruption*. Werewolves may soak damage inflicted by *Eternal Torment* as usual.

Rego Manes: Of the denizens of the Middle Umbra, only Banes answer a vampire's call. The older version of this path cannot summon spirits loyal to Gaia, although fallen versions of the requested nature spirits may well answer.

Rituals: Needless to say, Garou with the Gift: Heightened Senses can easily find the bones necessary for *Bloody Bones* — with some clever tracking, Lupus-form Garou without the Gift can even discover the hidden bones. Werewolves are not easily lulled into sleep, and may make a Rage roll (difficulty 8) to throw off the effects of the Hand of Glory.

Deimos

The various effects of *Ichor* can be undone by a Garou's regenerative powers; it only takes a Garou three turns of swift healing to undo the effects of one of the humors (save Bilious, which may be regenerated as normal damage).

The power of *Black Breath* induces Harano in Garou unlucky enough to be caught in the breath. Although the affliction is not as powerful as a total death-wish (although it might end up as such anyway), the victim's dice pools are halved until he is cured of the sadness. (This may prove difficult — Harano is a relatively unknown thing in the Dark Ages, when the Apocalypse is not so visible. Few Garou know the secrets of curing Harano; only elders are likely to recognize it at all.)

Dementation

The powers of this Discipline are effective on Garou, just as they are on other vampires or mortals. *Incubus Passion* uses a target Garou's Gnosis as the target number, while the difficulty of *Haunt the Soul* and *Confusion* is the Garou's Perception + Primal-Urge.

The Silver Fang Gift: Lordly Will is effective against Dementation as it is against other psychic Disciplines; all effects to use these powers against a protected Fang are at difficulty 10.

Dominate

Dominate has no particular weakness against Garou in general; it can be used to command any werewolf who meets

the vampire's eyes. However, werewolves may spend Willpower to resist Dominate just as vampires do; one point per success scored on the Dominate roll. The Silver Fang Gift: Lordly Will is also effective against Dominate; all effects to Dominate a Garou thus shielded are at difficulty 10.

The power of Vessel is not as effective against werewolves, although it is more potent than against other vampires. Treat the struggle as an opposed roll; if the werewolf victim gains five successes, he breaks the power of Vessel, and cannot be subjected to that power again for the remainder of the story. Also, bear in mind that a vampire who controls a werewolf's body cannot use any of the Garou's powers that rely on Rage, Gnosis or the spirit world — the vampire cannot use any of its host's Gifts, step sideways, shapeshift or anything of the sort.

Fortitude

Without this Discipline, a Cainite cannot soak damage from a werewolf's claws and teeth. At the Storyteller's discretion, it may also be used to soak other werewolf-specific sources of aggravated damage (such as damage from klaives or balefire).

Maleficia

This Discipline works on Garou in much the same way as it does on mortals; however, most of these curses can be removed through a particularly successful Rite of Cleansing.

Mortis

The Cappadocians' powers over death are potent indeed, but not always invincible against the preternaturally sanguine Garou. *Blight* affects Garou as it would ordinary mortals, although they are not subject to heart failure while under the effects of the power. *Black Death* is not so effective, however; the Garou's powerful resistance to disease allows them to stave off the Discipline's fatal effects. Although the Garou becomes powerfully ill until her body shakes off the plague (-2 to all dice pools until the equivalent of seven Health Levels have been regenerated), disease cannot kill one of the Changing Breed.

Obfuscate

Although werewolves have no access to Auspex, they still have some chance of penetrating the layers of Obfuscate — even as a guard dog might sense some unnatural, unseen presence, so do the animal senses of the Garou give some warning. Heightened Senses, Sense Wyrms, and similar sensory Gifts all have a chance of detecting that something isn't quite right with the area. However, they cannot be used as a kind of supernatural radar — they do not detect the Cainite outright, nor do they even tell where he might be in any given room. The werewolf simply knows that something is amiss; he cannot say what it is, or where it is, only that something is not quite right.

Obfuscate powers do not, however, reach into the Penumbra. A Garou in the spirit world who peeks into the physical world sees the Cainite as he is, not as he wishes to be seen. (Storytellers take note: Now that we've said this, your sneaky little players will start doing routine Penumbral scans whether they have any justification to do so or not. Flog them most unmercifully if they use this out-of-character knowledge unfairly. We encourage it.)

The Level Four Silver Fang Gift: Lordly Will affects Obfuscate attempts, as it is harder to send illusions into a protected mind. Obfuscate attempts made against a Garou so defended are made at difficulty 10.

Obtenebration

The Garou recognize this power as nothing less than conjuring the stuff of the Abyss, the Umbral realm of darkness and emptiness. A Garou is at -1 difficulty to frenzy when Obtenebration powers are active nearby; the eldritch blackness sets their souls on edge.

Shadow Play is handled much as usual, although the effects boil away under the light of a Sun Crystal or the Children of Gaia Gift: Halo of the Sun. Similarly, *Nocturne* cannot extinguish a Halo of the Sun, although it can temporarily smother a Sun Crystal's light. Contact with *Nightshades* or the *Tenebrous Form* are calls for an immediate frenzy check.

Ogham

The Lhiannan's mastery over spirits is not quite so friendly to the Earth Mother as they might otherwise claim. Only one breed of spirits will answer the call of an undead thing — Banes. Ogham powers which summon spirits to empower the Discipline's effects will only summon the wicked spirits of the Wyrms, although the Lhiannan remains unaware of the distinction.

Needless to say, this power fans the flames of Garou hatred like a smithy's bellows. When the Lhiannan are finally exterminated to the last vampire, it is no doubt partly due to the Fianna's aid.

Potence

This power is fairly self-explanatory when dealing with werewolves. The Garou must take their chances against the supernaturally strong, just like everyone else.

Presence

The powers of Presence can stir the lupine breast as easily as any other. Werewolves dread the hypnotic powers of Cainites, for they know they can be entranced by the undead creatures' supernatural charms. Werewolves have a lot of passion, however, and stirring it can be a dangerous thing.

Presence, like Dominate, is difficult to use on frenzied werewolves or vampires. Generally speaking, attempts to

use Presence on a frenzied victim — except when encouraging the victim's frenzy — are at +2 difficulty.

Werewolves roll Willpower rather than Courage to resist Majesty, and may spend Willpower as vampires do to fend off the effects. The Silver Fang Gift: Lordly Will is also effective against Presence.

Protean

Garou can soak damage inflicted by *Talons of the Beast*. Cainites who are *Interred in the Earth* can be excavated, although this is a difficult affair; after all, the vampire need not sink straight down from his point of entry into the earth. Generally, anyone trying to exhume an interred vampire must excavate the general area, something only really practical with the use of supernatural power such as the metis Gift: Burrow. In any event, a buried vampire does not register to Sense Wyrms; only the vilest Cainite will leave a whiff of his taint on the surface, and even then it's a faint scent that only the most perceptive Garou can detect, and does not indicate a general direction of the source.

When taking a wolf's form with *Form of the Beast*, the Cainite still smells dead! Without the musk generated by living wolves, a vampire has a poor chance of passing for a Lupine or as a simple wolf.

Quietus

Not even Heightened Senses can perceive any sound generated within an *Aura of Silence*, although the absence of particular sounds (like one's heartbeat) can be noticed at extreme difficulty and the Storyteller's discretion. A werewolf reduced to zero Stamina by means of *Weakness* loses her regenerative powers until the affliction passes or is cured (by powerful rites or Incarna intervention). A vampire is at +1 difficulty to inflict *Disease* on a werewolf, due to the shapechangers' innate resistance to disease.

Serpentis

The powers of Serpentis may be disturbing and horrific, but they are also very straightforward. The only one requiring a ruling for Werewolf concerns is *Cheat Thoth's Scale*; werewolves who witness a Setite pull her heart from her breast may roll Willpower instead of Courage to maintain their facade. And, of course, Silent Striders may find the sight oddly inspirational....

Striga

If it must be said, the power *Masca* cannot allow a vampire to take Garou form.

Thaumaturgy

Rego Vitae: *Theft of Vitae* affects Garou normally; a werewolf victim takes one health level of damage for every two blood points stolen. This damage is soakable. Due to the potency of Garou blood, a werewolf also suffers only one

health level of damage for every two blood points boiled by Cauldron of Blood. This damage is aggravated.

Creo Ignem: According to Garou Theurges, the fires summoned by this path are the product of fire-Banes in service to Kerne, Lord of Hellfire.

Rego Tempestas: Damage delivered by lightning is aggravated, though Garou can soak it naturally. The long-term effects of this path can be countered by appropriate weather-controlling Gifts, or by summoning and appeasing a flock of Stormcrow spirits. However, you can't compel a Stormcrow to take a lightning bolt for you....

Rego Aquam: Although a warlock with this path can command the water itself, he is guaranteed no allies among Water-spirits. In **Werewolf** cosmology, a Cainite with this power likely has *enemies* among the elemental courts of water — for the spirits of water do not care to be forced into obedience, particularly by unliving, spiritless things.

Rego Elementum: Elemental spirits do not care for the undead, and must be compelled to obey. However, some warlocks have been known to summon uncharacteristically friendly elementals, ones that gladly assist them in their endeavors. More than likely, these spirits are creatures of the Elemental Wyrms (Hoga, Furmas, H'rugg and Wakshaa) that have yet to assume the truly toxic forms they bear in the latter part of the millennium.

Rituals: Werewolves are not counted as mortals for the sake of the *Devil's Touch* — although most Garou don't need this ritual's help to unnerve humans. *Donning the Mask of*

Shadows is of limited use against Lupines, who may sense the warlock automatically if in Crinos, Hispo or Lupus. The *Ward Versus Lupines* inflicts non-aggravated, soakable damage — although a werewolf must still make a Willpower roll to willingly touch a warded object a second time. *Binding the Beast* does not affect Lupines. *Ward Versus Spirits* does indeed keep out Gaian and other spirits.

Valeren

In most cases, werewolves are treated as mortals where this Discipline is concerned — although the healing aspects of Valeren can do little that a Garou's natural healing powers cannot accomplish.

Burning Touch is almost certain to drive a werewolf into frenzy, and restore her Rage as well.

The power of *The Ailing Spirit* could theoretically lift a Garou from Harano, although it has certainly never been tried.

Vicissitude

When used on Garou, the powers of *Transmogrify the Mortal Clay* and *Rend the Osseous Frame* are not all that effective. Just as vampires may heal such transformations as if they were mere wounds, a werewolf's recuperative powers regenerate these alterations as nonaggravated damage. However, Mother's Touch is not sufficient to reverse this sort of damage on humans or animals — it may heal wounds inflicted by Vicissitude, but cannot undo the actual transformations.







A p p e n d i x

Horses

There's a reason that most Garou, even the loftiest Silver Fang or most urbane Warder, prefer running on their own legs to riding a horse. Horses do *not* like Garou — they can sense the pure predator that lurks underneath the human skin. A werewolf is going to have trouble riding a horse, because the animal is well aware that it's carrying a wolf on its back. If in the presence of an angry Garou, even if the anger is directed elsewhere, even a trained warhorse feels the need to bolt.

In practical terms, this antipathy causes a Garou to have a +2 difficulty to any Ride or Animal Ken roll involving a horse, as the animal is constantly distracted and frightened by the Garou's presence. Accumulating ten successes on an extended Charisma + Animal Ken roll (difficulty 8, counting modifiers) will sufficiently convince the animal that the Garou means it no harm — of course, this can be rather hard to do if you're trying to steal the baron's prize destrier to escape the burning castle.

However, if the Garou in question's Rage exceeds his Willpower, then he has no chance of calming the animal in such a manner; only the use of Gifts (such as the Warder Gift: Mask the Predator) or the aid of spirits will put the horse at ease.

And always remember that even a calm horse is still an animal — a fairly skittish animal at that, and one that might have some very bad habits. They have minds of their own, and they aren't very good at decisions (the famous example is that of a horse running *into* a burning barn, as it associates its stable with safety). If you're looking for a means of transport that will respond to your every command, stay where you leave it and generally act with machinelike obedience, you might as well wait around for the automobile.



Mounted Combat

Even non-Garou find that mounted combat isn't as easy as it might seem. Some weapons are absolutely wretched when wielded from horseback (polearms, greatswords and longbows in particular — the Japanese had to invent a special kind of bow in order to fire a longbow while mounted).

In any event, you're only as good a mounted combatant as you are an equestrian. When rolling dice to attack, you may only use as many of your Melee dice pool as you have in Ride — if you have Melee 5, Ride 1, and a Dexterity of 4, then you roll *five* dice to hit, not nine. Only when your Ride trait is equal to or greater than your Melee trait can you use your full Melee dice pool in mounted combat.

Using Brawl while mounted is even trickier. For one, Brawl is treated like Melee for purposes of whether a character can use his full dice pool or not. Furthermore, the Storyteller is well within her rights to disallow any particular Brawl maneuver from horseback. For instance, a rider might well be able to kick away a guardsman trying to take his horse's reins, but could not aim a kick at another mounted character. Smashing a gauntleted fist down on a footman's helm is one thing — punching that same footman in the face is entirely different. As always, discretion should be your guide.

One more thing: A horse cannot carry a Crinos Garou. The concentrated bulk of the war form, as well as its terrifying aspect, ensure that the horse will collapse one way or the other. Nice try, though.

Combat Complications

We actually don't mean "complications" in a bad way. These rules are meant to add a little more diversity to the combat scene, making it easier to accurately represent the nuances of medieval combat without bogging down the game. If you find that you spend too much time flipping through books or rolling too many dice, then ignore these rules.

Weapons

It's sometimes said that anyone who's ever played a roleplaying game knows their medieval weapons backwards and forwards. Well, that may be. But just in case it isn't, here are some descriptions of weapons of the time (and just a little later), just so you know what we mean when we say "broadsword."

The sword is the most familiar and celebrated weapon of medieval times. A number of varieties exist in the Dark Medieval setting. The **broadsword** is a one-

handed sword used more for hacking than stabbing; prime examples are the swords of the Teutons and Norse, although you can find broadswords just about everywhere else. **Scimitars** are curved weapons of Araby, designed for slashing alone; they work well from horseback. The **hand-and-a-half sword** is distinctly longer (about three to three and a half feet), and is designed to be used with one or both hands as necessary (although Strength of 3 or higher is usually necessary to use it one-handed at full efficiency). The **greatsword** can range up to six feet in length, and is distinctly a two-handed weapon; not even a Crinos Garou can effectively use a greatsword in one hand. The greatsword has yet to come into popularity at this point (it arises with the heavier plate armor of later centuries); but stats are included here, just in case Storytellers are interested in running chronicles in later time periods or having a particularly innovative smith in the game.

Much more common are **knives** and **daggers**; these are not only used for self-defense, but are often the only table utensil that medieval folk use. The major difference between the two is that a knife is usually more tool than weapon, designed for cutting where a dagger is meant for stabbing.

Spears are common, cheap and easy to use. The stats here represent a five to eight-foot spear with a metal head; however, long, sharpened and fire-hardened stakes can fit this description as well (and are most useful when hunting vampires). **Lances** are designed for mounted charges; the statistics represent an actual war lance, not a jousting lance. And although not really meant to be a weapon, a **pitchfork** is often the closest thing to a weapon of war that a peasant owns.

Axes see plenty of use in battle, mainly in areas like Scandinavia. The **battle axe** is the heaviest practical variant; it requires both hands to wield. **Hand axes** are smaller, and can be used in melee or hurled, as the need arises; the Vikings in particular were quite fond of these, and often gave their axes names like "battle-witch" or "earth-troll." It takes a lot of skill to hurl a hand axe accurately, but few missile weapons are better for cleaving flesh and bone.

A **mace** is a technological club, an iron-headed smashing weapon that's often flanged, ribbed or spiked. Peasants often use **grain flails** when hard pressed; these resemble a short length of wood attached to a longer pole by a chain. (As a historical side note, the nunchaku of the East were derived from rather smaller grain flails — hence the resemblance.) A more militant version of the flail is the **ball and chain**, which usually consists of a metal ball (sometimes spiked) attached to the haft by a chain; although an unwieldy weapon, this arrangement allows the head to achieve greater crushing power.

The humble **club** and **quarterstaff** can be assumed to use much the same statistics; the difference is really one of how long and heavy the weapon is. Staves are often bal-

anced for maneuverability, but require two hands; clubs are very easy to use, but sacrifice the staff's reach.

The **short bow** is the more common form of bow; it can be used for hunting and fired from horseback, making it quite versatile. **Long bows** are as tall as their wielders, and cannot be fired from horseback; still, many peasants know how to use one, and their arrows can penetrate armor, so they see more use in times of war. Werewolves use a particularly taut bow of their own, often in conjunction with Bane Arrows. The **Garou bow** is impossible for most people (and even most Garou in Homid) to even draw, but its stopping power is very potent. It is quite large, and rather clumsy to human-sized archers; the bow is designed to be fired by Glabro, or even Crinos if necessary. If an archer manages to score two botches before a bow can be given proper maintenance, the bow will snap.

The major advantage of the **crossbow** (which looks like a small bow laid crosswise across a modern rifle stock) is that it's remarkably easy to teach; anyone can learn to use one rather quickly, while most medieval archers were drawn from the peasant class because peasants already knew how to use bows. The crossbow can be cocked by hand if the wielder is strong (or if the crossbow's pull strength is weak); more often, they're winched into place.

Can a Human Soak a Sword?

There are two sides to the argument of mortals and soak rolls. One side holds that not every single wound should be fatal, or else there'd be no stories of the heroic knight bleeding from half a dozen wounds, yet persevering on. Another side maintains that mortal flesh just isn't resilient enough to shrug off a sword blade, and that a high death toll among mortals is appropriate for a horror game, anyway. (This latter viewpoint, by the by, is the one taken by **Vampire: The Dark Ages**.)

In the **Werewolf: The Dark Ages** setting, both viewpoints are equally valid — horror and heroics go hand in hand in any **Werewolf** game. Ergo, we recommend that you allow humans to soak most bludgeoning attacks as normal (although some weapons, such as flanged maces, might count as more lethal devices), but raise the difficulty for soaking more lethal attacks, such as swords and arrows, to 8. Armor can augment these soak rolls, and armor always soaks at difficulty 6.

However, without the benefit of armor, humans should not be allowed to soak aggravated damage. No amount of physical conditioning will allow a person to stand in a bonfire and "suck it up." If you want to be lenient, then let the humans try to dodge or avoid such sources of damage — but if Garou claws can tear through a chain hauberk, they won't have much trouble with soft mortal flesh.

Melee Weapons

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	Concealment	Strength Required
Broadsword	6	Strength + 4	L	2
Scimitar	6	Strength + 4	L	2
Hand-and-a-half sword	6	Strength + 5	L	3
Greatsword	5	Strength + 6	N	4
Knife	5	Strength + 1	P	1
Dagger	4	Strength + 1	C	1
Spear, one hand	7	Strength + 1	N	2
Spear, both hands	6	Strength + 3	N	1
Lance*	8	Strength + 6	N	2
Pitchfork (2 hands)	6	Strength + 1	N	1
Hand axe	7	Strength + 4	L	2
Battle axe	7	Strength + 6	N	3
Mace	6	Strength + 4	L	1
Grain flail†	7	Strength + 4	N	1
Ball and chain†	7	Strength + 6	L	3
Club/Quarterstaff	4	Strength + 1 to + 3	L (club), N (staff)	1

* Lances are cavalry weapons; the damage listed applies to using the lance from horseback at a full gallop. If used from the back of a horse moving at a slower rate, the lance does less damage (Strength + 3 or so); if used on foot, it inflicts only Strength damage.

† Botching an attack with a flail or ball and chain is always a serious affair. The chain may become entangled somewhere inconvenient, or the weapon might fly out of control and strike its own wielder.

Ranged Weapons

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	Rate	Concealment	Strength Required	Range
Short bow	8	3	1/2	L	2	60 yards
Long bow	8	5	1/2	N	3	120 yards
Garou bow	8	6	1/2	N	4	120 yards
Crossbow	7	4	1/4	N	2	90 yards
Spear (thrown)	Variable	Strength + 2	N/A	N	2	15 yards
Knife (thrown)	Variable	Strength + 1	N/A	P	1	10 yards
Rocks (thrown)	Variable	Strength - 1	N/A	P	1	10 yards
Hatchets (thrown)	+1	Strength + 1	N/A	C	2	12 yards

Concealment: P = may be hidden in a sizable belt pouch; C = can be hidden in the folds of clothing such as a tunic or short cloak; L = can be hidden in a long cloak, coat or monk's robes; N = may not be concealed on the person at all.

Rate: 1/2 means one attack every other turn, while 1/4 means one attack every four turns; a crossbow takes three full actions to reload. Proper archery requires one action to load and draw, and the other to sight properly and loose. An archer can take a quick shot with a long or short bow in one action, but may only use half his usual dice pool for the roll.

Range: You may fire up to double the range listed, but it will be considered a long-range shot with a higher difficulty.

(The Storyteller may want to allow specialized arrowheads in the chronicle; although these aren't exceptionally common in actual history, they can add an extra element to dramatic use of archery. Aside from the standard arrowheads, fletchers can devise **target** arrowheads, which aren't meant for war — their lighter heads add one to attack dice pools, but subtract one from damage. Conversely, a **broadhead** arrow is heavier and more damaging; it subtracts a die from attack pools, but adds one die to the damage pool.)

Bows

Missile combat with bows is easy enough to resolve; the archer rolls Dexterity + Archery to hit, and the damage pool of the bow in question. Many of the firefight complications listed in *Werewolf* (pg. 230) can be used to modify the difficulty, but these aren't mandatory.

(Storytellers who are interested in having archery be more lethal in the game are encouraged to allow extra successes on an archery attack roll add to the damage pool, just as with firearms. This both rewards mastery of a tricky weapon and allows for more tense, lethal drama in combat situations.)

Thrown Weapons

Although most armies don't try to rely on hurled weapons, the practice is rather more popular among small groups of combatants. Given range to do so, it's often prudent to soften a foe up by hurling a spear or hand axe into him before he closes to sword range.

A character can throw an average weapon (by this we mean something that's made to be thrown, such as a Viking hand axe/hatchet or a spear) up to his Strength x 10 in yards. The object must weigh no more than two pounds per point of the thrower's Strength.

(At the Storyteller's discretion, a character can make one-for-one trade-offs between range and weight. Thus, a Garou with a Crinos Strength of 7 could throw a ten-pound rock as if he were Strength 9, or a 20-pound rock as if his Strength were 4. This does get a little more complicated, but it avoids the problem of characters hurling one-pound and ten-pound rocks the same distance, no matter what.)

To strike an opponent with a hurled weapon, the character must roll Dexterity + Athletics. The difficulty is determined by dividing the range in yards to the target by the character's Strength; thus, a Fianna with a Strength of 5 hurling a spear at a soldier 40 yards distant strikes at difficulty 8. Extra successes on the attack roll do not increase damage.

A thrown knife is always treated as one pound heavier than it actually is; this represents the control necessary to strike the target blade-first. Hatchets (including many hand axes) are natural levers for multiplying force, and add an additional die to the damage pool if the thrower has an appropriate specialty. However,



Staking Vampires

The vampires of the World of Darkness can't be slain by a stake through the heart, contrary to some myths. However, they are immobilized by staking — and a vampire that's been staked by a Garou is as good as dead anyway. So how do you do it?

Most Garou prefer spears — good wooden shafts with sharpened, fire-hardened points rather than metal spearheads. The spear is driven into the vampire as usual, but the wielder must score at least five successes on the attack roll (after the vampire dodges, if she does — and why wouldn't she?) to hit the heart dead center.

Furthermore, the staking attempt must inflict at least three health levels of damage (after soak) in a single strike. Fewer than that, and the spear doesn't manage to penetrate the heart fully.

Shooting an arrow or quarrel through a vampire's heart is also possible, and a good ash shaft serves just as well as any other stake. The difficulty of the shot in question is raised by two; apart from that, it's treated as any other staking attempt.

the difficulty of throwing a hatchet is always one higher; they're harder to control than knives.

(Also at the Storyteller's discretion, if a hurled knife or hatchet attack misses by only one success, the weapon would strike with the hilt or haft instead of the blade. Reduce the damage dice pool by five dice; it's most likely that the attack would do no damage at all, although a powerful throw could still badly bruise — and in the case of some Garou, maybe even kill — a target.)

Armor

When there's a good possibility that someone might want to run three feet of sharp metal through one's soft innards, the concept of armor suddenly seems more attractive. Although armor in the Dark Medieval world is usually only found in the hands of soldiers or nobles, it's a fair bet that sooner or later a werewolf will either run into a foe who insists on guarding his vitals with leather or metal, or don a suit of mail herself.

Needless to say, armor can greatly restrict a Garou's shapechanging abilities, and many werewolves disdain armor entirely. As a tool of the Weaver and a crutch to humans, it doesn't tend to reflect well on its wearer; a Garou who consistently refuses to enter battle without donning mail may lose Glory Renown. Worse, unless dedicated (and many werewolves look poorly on dedicating mail), it can injure an overzealous shapeshifter. The heavier the armor, the more likely it is to inflict damage on a shapeshifting Garou before its straps and weak links burst. Most forms of

Combat Maneuvers and Klaive Dueling

There's more to armed combat than an endless succession of wild swings at the body. Trained warriors are able to parry blows, choose their strikes carefully, and disarm their foes. Although medieval European weapon styles never advanced to the status of art form, it's not unreasonable to assume that expert combatants were able to use certain combat maneuvers with great facility.

The easiest way to simulate enhanced skill with a weapon is by allowing characters with expert Melee scores to use certain combat maneuvers. For simplicity's sake, Storytellers with access to the **Werewolf Players Guide** may use certain Klaive Dueling maneuvers to represent the maneuvers open to a given weapon. These maneuvers should all be available to any combatant with a specialty in the given weapon; less-skilled fighters should be allowed to at least use Great Blow, Parry, Disarm and Thrust (if available).

Swords: Caught Steel, Disarm, Feint, Great Blow, Jab, Parry, Riposte, Thrust, Throw

Clubs/Maces/Flails: Caught Steel (flail only), Disarm, Great Blow, Parry, Thrust

Axes: Caught Steel, Disarm, Great Blow, Parry, Thrust, Throw

Spears: Disarm, Feint, Jab, Parry, Thrust, Throw

[Note that certain maneuvers, such as Silver Wall and Head Wound, do not appear here. Those maneuvers are specific to *klaivaskar*, and do not have equivalents taught to European men-at-arms.]

armor do some damage to a wearer who shifts to Glabro, and more to a wearer who takes the Crinos form (and remember that shifting to Hispo or Lupus requires a Garou to shapeshift into Crinos "along the way"). A chainmail hauberk was simply never meant to contain nine feet of solid muscle. The damage inflicted is given in health levels rather than dice; however, it is fully soakable and doesn't count as aggravated damage. (And in case it needs to be said, no, you do *not* add the armor's soak dice to the soak roll when you're splitting the seams of your mail.)

It is theoretically possible to craft armor fitted to the Glabro or Crinos form — but remember that Garou will not offer to do so (on account of the poor Renown), and human smiths are not generally approachable for such a task. Garou are advised to trust in their Gaia-granted abilities, and not on trinkets.

There's no substitute for a quality text on medieval armor; and since it's a subject people love to write about, you can often find good books on the subject in the bargain area

of your local bookstore. However, in lieu of a full lecture on various armor types, the following rules offer guidelines on keeping it simple yet accurate.

Light Armor can represent most forms of leather armors, whether cuirasses boiled in oil (*cuir boili*) to stiffen them, quilted, or simply thick layers of heavy pelts. It can also represent the thick pads worn under metal armor. It's a common enough form of protection, particularly during peacetime. A Garou who shapeshifts into Crinos while wearing undedicated light armor takes no particular damage; the armor will certainly give before the hundred-stone mass of muscle and sinew does.

Composite armor represents most forms of piecemeal armor; usually it's composed of various pieces of leather reinforced with studs and rings, augmented by a few scraps of chainmail or metal plates, and perhaps a battered helmet. It's not a form of armor that armorers craft; rather, it's generally scavenged from corpses on the battlefield. It's a favorite of many Garou, who don't care for the problems of heavier armor and don't have the means to keep replacing suits of chain. If a Garou shifts to Glabro while wearing composite armor, he must soak one health level of damage from the constriction before the straps break; shifting to Crinos will cause two health levels of damage.

More thorough chainmail protection falls under the category of **heavy armor**. This category covers chainmail, heavily reinforced leathers, or brigandine (layers of cloth or leather with metal plates between). All forms require some form of quilted padding underneath. Even with a helm, the face (and sometimes the hands or neck) remains exposed. This is the armor of men-at-arms and poorer nobles; it weighs around 50 pounds, and so isn't worn all the time. Heavy armor is not very forgiving to shapeshifters; even taking Glabro form will inflict three health levels of damage, while shifting fully into Crinos inflicts six health levels.

The most advanced armor of the time is generally called **knight's armor**. This consists of chainmail over the whole body, bulky gauntlets, and a large full-head helmet. It can weigh upwards of 100 pounds, and only wealthy nobles can afford to buy and maintain such suits. Knight's armor is particularly unforgiving to werebeasts — taking Glabro means suffering four health levels of damage, while going into Crinos will inflict eight health levels of damage. It is in fact possible that your body will give before the armor does — one of the reasons that Garou shun armor.

The other effects of wearing armor, benefit and hindrance alike, are given on the chart below. The Protection

rating describes the number of dice the armor adds to your soak rolls; this is effective against aggravated damage, and can even give werewolves the chance to soak silver damage (although they only get the Protection rating in their soak pool, not their Stamina). Dexterity and Perception modifiers apply for as long as the armor is worn, although neither Attribute may be reduced below 1. And Minimum Strength simply describes the minimum Strength required to wear armor and still be able to move.

Shields

Shields don't count as armor proper; the point of the shield is not to absorb blows, but to deflect them. As a result, a shield adds to an opponent's difficulty to strike the character rather than adding soak dice. Werewolves are generally contemptuous of shields, as they don't offer enough to justify the bother of dragging them around. (Then again, this contempt might also have something to do with the fact that even the sturdiest metal shield can be torn in half by an angry Garou.)

Footman's shields are generally round or triangular, and from one to three feet across. Anyone fighting a character who is using a footman's shield has the difficulties of his Brawl or Melee rolls increased by one. **Cavalry shields**, on the other hand, are large, metal, thin, and typically kite-shaped. If used by a dismounted character, the cavalry shield increases opponents' Brawl or Melee difficulties by two. A mounted character gains the same bonuses, but only on his protected side; a cavalry shield cannot be moved across the horse's back to deflect blows.

In all cases, keep in mind that a shield is only effective if your opponent has no real option for attacking around it. Shields don't protect against attacks from the rear, and certain supernatural attacks (such as a Lasombra's myriad tendrils of pure darkness) can easily twine around a shield, halving the defensive bonus or negating it entirely. In some cases, a shield might not even be effective against the long arms of a nine-foot Crinos — however, the Storyteller should adjudicate this by situation, rather than giving all Garou one more combat advantage just for being Garou.

The Art of War

Mass warfare, although certainly one of the more dramatic scenes in any medieval story, wasn't something to be entered into lightly. It cost money, and quite a bit of it, to raise, equip and maintain an army even over a short cam-

Armor	Protection	Dexterity Adjustment	Perception Adjustment	Minimum Strength
Light Armor	1	—	—	1
Composite Armor	2	-1	—	1
Heavy Armor	3	-1	-1	2
Knight's Armor	4	-2	-2	3



paign — as a result, war was almost a “nobles’ sport.” A king would often have to virtually beg funding from his various nobles in order to start a war — and the barons, dukes and what-have-you often took advantage of such a request to wrangle a little more power for themselves.

Keeping a standing army in the Dark Medieval world was an outright impossibility. For one, almost no noble could afford to pay the soldiers’ salaries without a constant source of plunder. For another, an army must travel on its stomach — and the often meager food resources available to any given area are in no way adequate to support an army and the people who raise the food alike.

For the most part, wars had to be waged for the purposes of extermination or for turning a profit (by seizing valuable land) — often both at once. Blood feuds may have contributed excuses, but generally a noble would only go to war if he felt there was a good chance he could expand his borders somewhat. Even in wars of extermination, nobles wouldn’t raze the lands of their enemies — land was just too valuable. (Sacking cities was another matter, however; letting an army run amok through the streets of your enemy’s city was generally how you paid the soldiery.)

And, as always, not everyone was considered equal on the field of battle. Armored knights would sometimes spur their horses over their own foot troops in order to engage the enemy. Casualty records typically named each fallen noble, each fallen knight or squire — and then made an

off-handed guess at any other losses. This mentality, coupled with the very real economic demands of a campaign, meant that fallen knights or nobles had a good way of ensuring their survival. Once toppled from his horse, an armored knight was helpless — but would be kept alive to see what sort of ransom he could pay. Many craven knights would start shouting their own ransom prices the moment they left the saddle! And although the ransoms were usually affordable, there were some exceptions; King Richard the Lion-Hearted virtually bankrupted England when he was himself captured in battle.

Werewolves on the Battlefield

There are many glorious tales of Garou fighting alongside their Kin in battle after battle. Even so, the medieval battlefield was hardly the ideal place for a werewolf to prove himself. Without blatantly revealing himself for what he was, a werewolf had very little chance of ever facing anyone of note. Most Garou are unable to maintain lives of nobility, and those few who did usually had to use potent supernatural powers just to keep their horses steady on the battlefield. Your average Fenrir or Fianna brawler could expect to meet a horde of other footsoldiers, or perhaps a charging knight — but that was about it. He’d have to actively seek out the champions of the other side — and even then, there’d be no way of fighting them honorably while retaining his secret.

Most important of all is the consideration of Rage. It's far too easy for a Garou to fall prey to frenzy in the middle of a battle, when the smell of blood chokes the air and howling men are attacking from all sides. It's not inconceivable for a berserk werewolf to change an otherwise inevitable defeat into victory — but it's doubtful that his elders would approve. All too often, men are driven to war at the behest of their hidden vampire masters. Revealing a Garou presence to those men — and thereby to their masters — is the act of a fool.

That said, the Storyteller might want to consider using battles of a smaller scale to spice up the chronicle. True, you'd be hard-pressed to maintain the epic scale of your average *Braveheart* battle with werewolves involved on either side — but why not smaller skirmishes and ambushes? Could crafty players lead a division of armored knights into a dirty trap that wouldn't necessarily scream "werewolf" to the skies? And what about using large battles as a backdrop for whatever errand the players need to run? After all, there are sometimes more important things to accomplish than keeping a motley pikeman regiment together — particularly if the lives of Kin depend on it.

Sieges

When the technology to build castles proper was brought back from the East, Europe was changed almost overnight. Where formerly simple log palisades on earthen mounds were the height of defensive sophistication, the continent

was now studded with massive stone structures that seemed impregnable. Of course, they weren't — but it was quite a feat to bring a keep to its knees.

To out-and-out take a castle, the attacker usually had to outnumber the defender's forces by *ten to one*. Clever (and lucky) generals could sometimes pull the feat off with only three-to-one odds; and a twenty-to-one ratio was held to be the closest to a "sure thing." Even then, the attackers rarely stormed the castle in force; it was simply uneconomical. More often, the attackers would simply besiege the castle, cutting off its supply lines and waiting to starve the defenders out. To bring down the walls, invaders would usually resort less on siege engines and more on sappers — workers who'd tunnel under the walls at an angle to bring them crashing down. (As an interesting side note, a moat's first purpose was usually to prevent sappers from trying this tactic, as their tunnels would quickly flood, drowning everyone inside. Keeping attackers from strolling up to the walls was almost a secondary aim.)

For those who are besieged, though, it can be a horrifying time. Attackers would often launch rotten animals or other filth over the enemy walls, sapping their opponents' strength through pestilence. Although Garou themselves are immune to such warfare, these techniques work all too well on humans. As the enemy cuts off the food supplies to a castle, those within might be driven to cannibalism.

So what could werewolves do to harry and divide attackers? For one, a siege would typically die down at



night — a perfect time for angry werebeasts to attack, or for clever packs to work some sabotage. (Of course, there's always one potential problem — once the besiegers deem the target sufficiently weakened, they might make their final attack at night, and the characters could find themselves on the battlefield.) Certainly, scouting out the nobles in charge could prove interesting — as well as any rivals, Cainite or Garou, that might be quietly running the affair. It would also behoove the characters to keep a close eye on their own — desperation might drive a starving defender to turn traitor, planning to open the gates for the attackers or poison the main wells in exchange for his life. And if need be, the siege could always end in one desperate battle, with a horde of well-armored, well-fed men on one side, and a weary, skeleton force of defenders on the other — who have the advantages of stone walls, and the help of werewolves.

And, of course, this is only presuming that the players are on the side of the besieged. Assailing a Transylvanian castle defended by grotesque, undead gargoyles, hideously sculpted hellhounds and even vampires would be the stuff that true Glory is made of...

Siege Engines

For the impatient, there are numerous ways to try and whittle down the defenses of a castle in order to force entry. Certainly the most famous of these was the battering ram, which could take the form of a simple sharpened log, or even a huge device with an intricately wrought head. Battering rams usually took a couple of dozen people to use effectively, although this number could be reduced by supporting the ram in a cart. A small group of Crinos-form werewolves could, needless to say, do at least as much damage with a ram as could a band of humans twice their numbers.

To protect battering rams and other besiegers, special armored carts called turtles were the norm; these usually had a layer of shields, so to speak, for a roof. Turtles were plenty of protection against boiling oil and the like, although a well-placed catapult stone of sufficient size could break one's spine. (They are also particularly useful for concealing their crew; a Garou in Crinos could push a turtle up to the gates of a castle, and those above would probably be none the wiser.)

Siege engines such as ballista bolts and catapult stones are almost impossible to aim at specific characters; those who are in fact hit are usually just unlucky. Those unfortunate enough to be struck by a ballista bolt or catapult stone will take anywhere from ten to fifteen dice of damage, soakable as usual.

(Two quick notes: Aiming at a specific horse-sized target with a siege engine should count as difficulty 9 even if the character possesses a secondary Skill in siege weaponry; if the character is just using her Archery Skill to make

do, she must have three successes even after the defender's dodged in order to hit. Secondly, ballistae fired bolts of such size that forging a metal head would have proved uneconomical. Therefore, their points were typically sharpened, fire-hardened wood. One of these massive bolts, fired through the ribcage of a vampire, would almost certainly force the beast into torpor. Although the inaccuracy of siege weaponry is such that a deliberate "heart-shot" at range is all but impossible, even on an unsuspecting target, but stranger things have been known to happen.)

Incendiaries

Most medieval armies aren't in the habit of using fire against their foes; not only does fire ruin valuable cropland, but there's no reassurance that the wind won't carry the blaze right back to them. In a siege, however, it's a different story; high atop their stone walls, the defenders can drop several hideously damaging substances on their attackers without worrying about backlash. The following weapons were used with variable frequency in sieges of the time — brutally destructive and horribly demoralizing, they are a perfect representation of the violence common to the Dark Medieval world. Each of these burning agents causes aggravated damage, and is soaked as fire (*Werewolf*, page 197); needless to say, any Battle Scars that result in such an attack will be most terrible. In most cases, these forms of attack are also sufficient cause for an immediate frenzy test — the animal side of most shapechangers is a powerful thing, and something even more potent than fire is sure to drive a werebeast mad.

• Boiling Oil

The very cliché of the siege defender's arsenal (although not necessarily the most effective) is the cauldron of boiling oil. Oil holds its temperature better than water, takes a goodly longer time to cool down, and is much more practical than dumping limited water supplies on one's enemies. Damage from boiling oil is usually difficulty 7 to soak — even if the oil isn't lit subsequently (and God have mercy on the wretch who suffers both). Even if one manages to survive such an attack, he'll bear the scars for life — and such scars will likely drive superstitious townsfolk to treat him like a leper or worse.

• Boiling Tar/Pitch

Even worse than boiling oil, tar and pitch stick to their targets, continuing to do damage until washed off or cooled down. Injuries from boiling tar or pitch are difficulty 6 to soak; like fire, the wound levels depend on how much of the character is covered. This attack can scar victims even more horribly than boiling oil.

• Heated Sand

When dealing with armored besiegers, defenders would sometimes heat cauldrons of sand rather than oil or pitch. Although it took some time to get the sand hot enough to injure, the results were gruesome. Once dumped on an

armored individual, heated sand easily runs through all the chinks in a suit of armor, although it doesn't seep out quite as readily. This tactic could roast knights alive in their armor like shellfish. A victim usually has to strip away his armor to get free of the sand, endangering him even further — archers often wait to loose on any survivors. Heated sand is difficulty 6 or 7 to soak; obviously, armor cannot add to this roll.

• Greek Fire

Although the tales of Greek fire seem to be based more in rumor than fact in our own world, in the Dark Medieval world, this vicious chemical concoction is all too real. Once set alight, Greek fire cannot be doused with water — which is as demoralizing as it is lethal. Although the secret of its manufacture has fallen from mortal knowledge, it's certain that a few vampires have retained that secret for their own use. Against vampires, Greek fire is an almost unparalleled weapon — as terrified as the Leeches are of fire, fire that won't be doused with water is far, far worse. Of course, vampires shrewd enough to happen across its secret will only use it in the direst circumstances; the possibility of a backfire worries even the most malicious of Cainites.

Greek fire adheres to whatever surface it strikes, and is exceedingly difficult to wash away. Targets may only extinguish it by fully immersing themselves in water or otherwise completely smothering the flames. It is difficulty 6 to soak, and is most certainly considered aggravated damage.

Tribal Weaknesses

The concept of tribal weaknesses is a strictly optional one, first introduced in the **Werewolf Storytellers Handbook**. They should only be used if the Storyteller and players are willing, and shouldn't always be enforced — for instance, a Black Fury needn't feel angry towards a man who has treated her with utmost respect and consideration.

The following list summarizes those tribal weaknesses which remain to the modern day, and denotes a few which have been replaced in modern times. For instance, the Silver Fangs haven't yet fallen to the rampant inbreeding that will one day claim the collective sanity of the tribe; but in these days, they are very unused to others questioning their authority.

Black Furies

Anger: -1 difficulty on frenzy rolls triggered by men.

The Furies have no tolerance for man's cruelty to woman. Their absolute hatred of sexism and sexual domination feeds their Rage, but makes them unsuited to dealing well with male humans. In these times, this susceptibility to frenzy is sometimes triggered by the patriarchal dictates of the Church as well as by more personal instances of sexism.

Bone Gnawers

Scorned: +1 difficulty on all Social rolls involving other tribes

The Bone Gnawers are the lowest among Garou, scorned by their fellows for living among the least and most wretched of humans.

Children of Gaia

Weak Veil: Witnesses at +5 on the Delirium chart

Due to the touch of spiritual beatitude on the tribe, the Children of Gaia do not cause as severe a Delirium reaction in humans who see them in Crinos form. This is sometimes a blessing, but more often a curse; when the Inquisition rears its head, the Children are destined to lose more of their Kin than any other tribe, simply because other humans remember them best.

Fenrir

Intolerance

The Fenrir are raised on one lesson: Never compromise. Never surrender. As a result, each Fenrir has at least one object of hatred, something he cannot stomach. In situations where this thing comes into play, the Fenrir will try to rid himself of its presence at all costs.

Common objects of intolerance in this time period include cowardice, avarice, weakness, Christians and their "whey-blooded Church," Normans, Saracens (including many Silent Striders), or even humans in general. Players should avoid choosing a prejudice that is patently offensive; an intolerance of Jews, for example may have historical precedent, but is hardly suitable fare for an evening's entertainment. (Storyteller-controlled Fenrir, on the other hand, might well have such prejudices, particularly if this would create interesting conflicts with the pack.)

It's up to the Storyteller to decide if vampires are a possible object of contempt. If the chronicle focuses largely on warring against vampires, then this is obviously not much of a weakness. If, on the other hand, the chronicle may frequently ask the players to make temporary truces with the undead in the name of a greater goal, this intolerance is obviously detrimental enough to be considered a weakness.

As always, Wyrms-creatures cannot be chosen — all Fenrir are expected to hate such creatures as a matter of course.

Fianna

Low Self-Control: +1 difficulty on Willpower rolls

The greatest Fianna heroes are lauded for their extreme passions, whether becoming giddy with joy, flying into rages or falling into melancholy. They are not in the practice of resisting temptation, and can only change their moods with intense concentration.

Red Talons

Mark of the Beast: +2 difficulty on all Social rolls involving humans

The Red Talons exude the air of the predator like any other Garou, but without a practice of breeding with humans, they have no reason to damp this aura down. Indeed, they wouldn't even know how. This is exceptionally potent in the very superstitious time of the Dark Ages, when anyone who seems different might be possessed, a witch, or even worse.

Shadow Lords

Failure's Dagger: -1 Renown for failure

The Shadow Lords praise only winners, and damn losers of every stripe. Whenever a Shadow Lord fails in an endeavor that would ordinarily earn her Renown, she loses one point of temporary Renown in the appropriate category. (If success would have brought her Renown in multiple categories, she still only loses one point from the category that would have reaped the most benefit.) This is in addition to any other Renown losses that failure might normally incur. However, she gains full Renown for any appropriate success. Only failure is punished.

Silent Striders

Haunted

An ancient curse levied on the Striders' ancestors has not only driven them from their homeland, but set the restless dead at their heels. Whenever a Strider botches a stepping sideways roll, he is not only caught in the Gauntlet, but attracts the attention of a ghost as well. When the Strider finally escapes from the Gauntlet, the wraith follows invisibly. The ghost is not necessarily benevolent or malign, but has a clear motive, and requires the Strider to assist. (A book of old ghost legends can provide plenty of inspirations for mournful spirits and the tasks they must fulfill.)

The only way the Strider can be rid of the ghost is to leave the area (the wraith cannot follow beyond a certain range determined by the Storyteller), or to fulfill the wraith's request. If he flees, he must evade the spirit for a full month — then the ghost loses his trail, and cannot find him again. Unless the Strider is caught sideways again, of course....

Silver Fangs

Lordly Arrogance: Must make frenzy checks when authority is questioned

The Silver Fangs have been the leaders of the Garou Nation since time immemorial. They know with every fiber of their being that this is their inborn right. If anyone is brazen enough to question this, it is nothing less than blasphemy against Gaia's plan in their eyes.

Storytellers who feel that this is a bit steep may allow Silver Fangs to go without a frenzy check if their authority is challenged in a manner appropriate to the Litany. Ques-



tioning a Fang's right to lead during wartime, however, is always call for a frenzy check.

Warders

Known to Vampires

The cities of the Dark Medieval setting are choked with vampires, and are places where few people can travel anonymously. The Warders of Men, in the pursuit of their sacred duties, run a very great risk of attracting a vampire's attention. After all, they move in the same circles — and being Garou is a difficult thing to conceal entirely.

In game terms, each game month in which the Warder spends at least ten days (total) in a city, the Storyteller should secretly roll the Warder's Wits + Subterfuge. Failure indicates that the Warder has somehow drawn the attention

of one of the local vampires to herself. The vampire will not necessarily immediately move to kill the Warder — or even guess all the particulars of the werewolf's nature — but it will at the very least watch the Warder carefully in order to determine the best course of action.

This disadvantage is in addition to any vampiric attention the Warder might attract during gameplay; the only way to avoid the roll is either to cleanse the Warder's territory of vampires completely (almost impossible), or to be known already to every vampire in the area (which is worse than making the check). However, it can also be the jumping-off point for story after story — as long as the Storyteller doesn't ignore the other players in order to deal with the Warder's problems, this can lead to many evenings of intense play.



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WEREWOLF

THE DARK AGES™

Name:
Player:
Chronicle:

Breed:
Auspice:
Tribe:

Pack Name:
Pack Totem:
Concept:

Attributes

Physical

Strength ●○○○○
Dexterity ●○○○○
Stamina ●○○○○

Social

Charisma ●○○○○
Manipulation ●○○○○
Appearance ●○○○○

Mental

Perception ●○○○○
Intelligence ●○○○○
Wits ●○○○○

Abilities

Talents

Alertness ○○○○○
Athletics ○○○○○
Brawl ○○○○○
Dodge ○○○○○
Empathy ○○○○○
Expression ○○○○○
Intimidation ○○○○○
Larceny ○○○○○
Primal-Urge ○○○○○
Subterfuge ○○○○○

Skills

Animal Ken ○○○○○
Archery ○○○○○
Crafts ○○○○○
Etiquette ○○○○○
Leadership ○○○○○
Melee ○○○○○
Performance ○○○○○
Ride ○○○○○
Stealth ○○○○○
Survival ○○○○○

Knowledges

Academics ○○○○○
Enigmas ○○○○○
Investigation ○○○○○
Law ○○○○○
Linguistics ○○○○○
Medicine ○○○○○
Occult ○○○○○
Politics ○○○○○
Rituals ○○○○○
Science ○○○○○

Advantages

Backgrounds

○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○

Gifts

Gifts

Renown Glory

○○○○○○○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

Honor

○○○○○○○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

Wisdom

○○○○○○○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

Rank

Rage

○○○○○○○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

Gnosis

○○○○○○○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

Willpower

○○○○○○○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

Health

Bruised ☐
Hurt -1 ☐
Injured -1 ☐
Wounded -2 ☐
Mauled -2 ☐
Crippled -5 ☐
Incapacitated ☐

Tribal Weakness



Lupus—4

Strength (+1) _____
Dexterity (+2) _____
Stamina (+2) _____
Manipulation (-3) _____

Difficulty: 6

Fetishes

Item: _____ Level ____ Gnosis ____
Power: _____

Item: _____ Level ____ Gnosis ____
Power: _____

Item: _____ Level ____ Gnosis ____
Power: _____

Languages Spoken

Rites

Combat

Brawling Chart

†These maneuvers do aggravated damage.

Armor: _____



WEREWOLF

THE DARK AGES



Nature:

Demeanor:

Merits & Flaws

Merit	Type	Cost	Flaw	Type	Bonus

Expanded Background

Contacts

Pack Totem

Contacts

Past Life

Kinfolk

Pure Breed

Mentor

Resources

Possessions

Gear (Carried):

Equipment (Owned):

Sept

Name:

Caern Location:

Level: Type:

Totem:

Leader:

Experience

TOTAL: _____

Gained From: _____

TOTAL SPENT: _____

Spent On: _____



Character Sketch

WEREWOLF

THE DARK AGES

WOLVES AT THE DOOR

The vampiric lords of the Long Night claim supremacy over medieval Europe — and yet they keep to their castles and cathedrals, worriedly watching the forests between. For great wolves hunt the wild places and pace the roads, and howls of anger echo across the moors. By day they walk as humans — and when the moon rises, their hunt begins. They are the werewolves of the Dark Ages.

RAGE ACROSS THE LONG NIGHT?

Werewolf: The Dark Ages is a supplement allowing **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** players to explore the medieval World of Darkness from the Garou's point of view. This book contains just about anything you could want for adapting werewolves to the Dark Ages setting, from information on the tribes of the time to guidelines for crossing over with **Vampire: The Dark Ages**. Whether you want to try a completely different spin on medieval horror fantasy, recreate the deeds of your modern-day Garou's ancestors, or even give the Lupines in your **Vampire: The Dark Ages** game some real teeth, this is the book for you.

Werewolf: The Dark Ages includes:

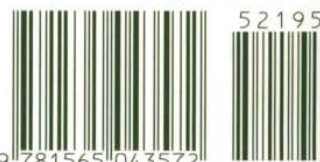
- The Dark Medieval setting from the Garou's viewpoint, including details on the Umbra and a close look at the British Isles
- Full character creation guidelines for medieval werewolves, including tons of new Gifts, rites and fetishes
- Crossover guidelines for bringing **Vampire: The Dark Ages** characters into your **Werewolf** game, lists of medieval equipment, and more

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