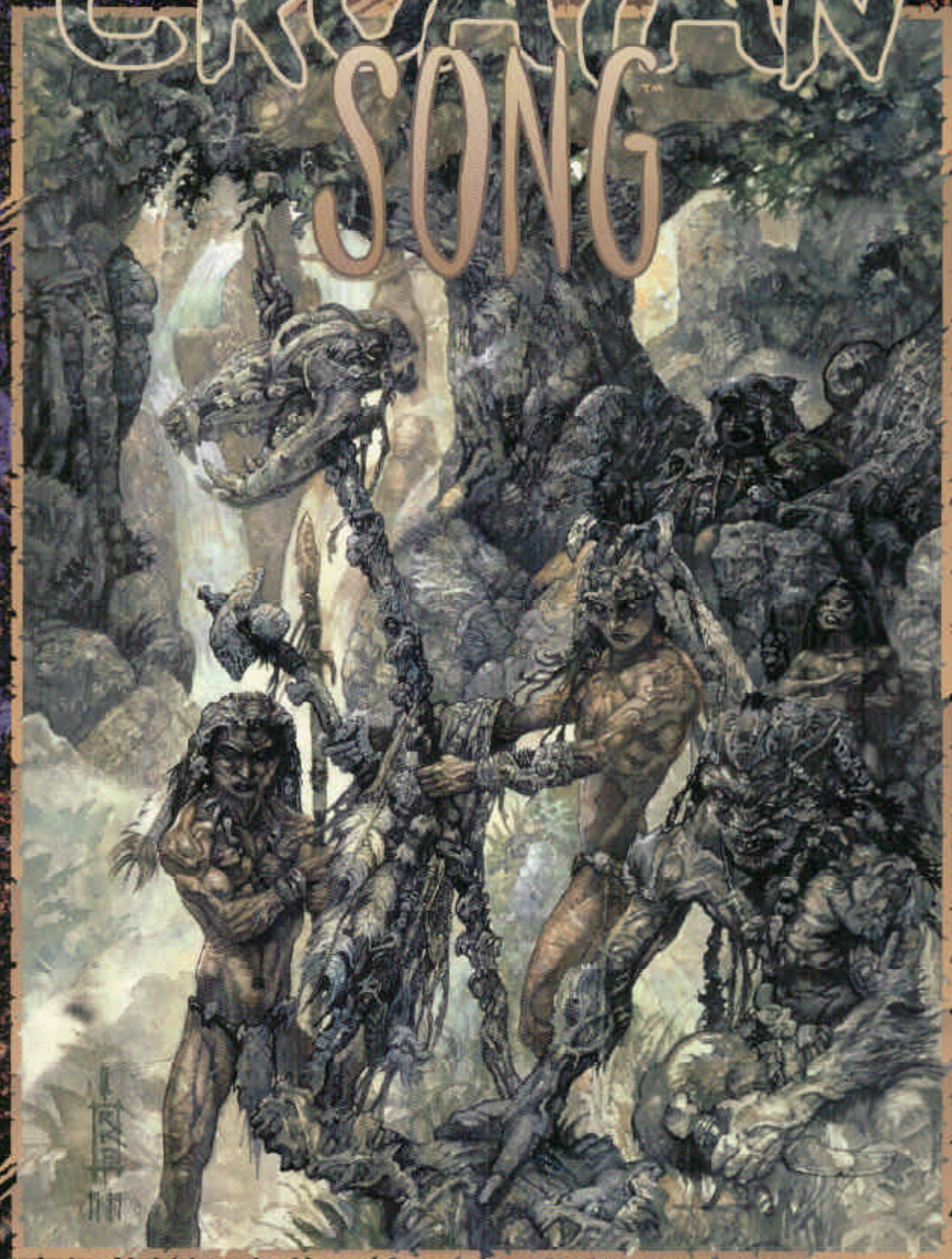


# CROATAN SONG



*A Historical Sourcebook for Werewolf: The Apocalypse™*



# CROATAN SONG<sup>TM</sup>



*By Bill Bridges, Jackie Cassada and Nicky Rea*



# LEGENDS OF THE GAROU

## *Renown*

This tale comes from the bright beginnings of the world, when Gaia's beauty still shone unchanged by the ravages of the Wyrn and the constructions of the Weaver. In those earliest times, Gaia exulted in the exuberance of Her children as they explored Her rivers and valleys, climbed Her mountains and wandered through Her deserts. Her newest children, the humans, had not yet fully fallen to the seductions of the Weaver or the deceitfulness of the Wyrn. Oh, now and again, some of the furless ones would slay each other in petty squabbles that they called wars or would succumb to spurts of building, erecting stone circles, enormous mounds and elaborate stepped constructions. For the most part, however, little troubled the peace that held sway over creation.

Gaia slept serenely, hearing in Her dreams the voices of Her dearest children — the Garou — as they went about their business of guardianship. Occasionally, the sounds of quarrels among the Garou disturbed Gaia's rest and She shifted restlessly, feeling the stirrings of darker times to come. Usually, these disturbances passed quickly, for Gaia's shapechanging children moved swiftly from anger to amity in those times before they had reason to learn true hatred and invoke the fury of their rage.

Once such quarrel, however, raged for many days and nights and left its mark on three of Gaia's children forever. This is the story of that quarrel.

It happened on one of the first evenings of the world, when Luna's light shone full upon the face of Gaia, illuminating the tops of the highest mountains and spreading her

light into the darkest valleys. On that night, the three Garou brothers known as Uktena, Croatan and Wendigo met on the highest mountain of the new-made world to pay their respects to Luna. Proud in wolf form they stood and stared upward at the moon, bathing in her light. As one, the three brothers lifted their heads and gave a howl of praise to the daughter of the sky. Their song flew high and far, carried on the wind until it reached the ears of the other Garou. Soon the world rang with the cries of longing and respect.

When the three had finished their song, they began, as usual, to speak among themselves, comparing their exploits and boasting of their discoveries. To do this more easily, the three brothers shifted into human form, for that shape seemed made for speech and gesture.

Uktena, as the eldest of the three, spoke first.

"I have spent the day swimming the river depths, searching out the hidden caves that lie beneath the surface of the waters. I uncovered many secrets placed there by Gaia for me to find."

The middle brother, Croatan, nodded as his elder brother finished speaking, then took his turn. "I have wandered the deep forests and valleys and I have watched the humans as they tend their herds and plant their fields. I have listened to the calling of the birds and the soft songs of the turtles and have heard the Great Mother's words in the voices of her lesser creatures."

Croatan had barely finished his recital when Wendigo, youngest and most impulsive of the three, rose to his feet. "I have bested both of you!" he cried. "I have raced the icy



northern wind and stalked the great deer of the tundra. I have tasted the sweet blood of the kill and heard the desolate howling of the whirling snows. I have battled the dark spirits that have tried to take hold of the Mother's heart and feasted on their death cries. My deeds hold more greatness than either of yours."

At this, the three brothers fell to arguing as to whose deeds deserved the most praise. Their harsh words filled the air and soon gave way to harsher actions. Wendigo's anger soon got the better of him and he dropped his human form in favor of the man-wolf form that embodied his rage. Uktena and Croatan reluctantly followed suit and soon the mountain shook with the sounds of battle as the three brothers wrestled one another until Luna's light disappeared and the sky grew pale with the approach of dawn.

Finally Croatan broke off from the battle and called out to his brothers.

"This has gone far enough!" he cried, settling back into human form. "Let us stop wasting our time with shows of anger and ask the spirits to settle our quarrel."

Uktena heard his brother and felt the rightness of his speech. He, too, separated himself from the fight. Left alone, with no one to battle him, Wendigo released his anger and slumped sullenly to the ground.

Uktena bowed to Croatan. "You have spoken well, peacemaker," he said. "We should each undertake a journey into the spirit world and search there for the answer to which deeds deserve the greatest praise."

Wendigo's eyes glinted at the mention of a spirit journey and he nodded his agreement. "We will go together and ask the spirits to judge which of us is the most worthy of renown."

And so the brothers made their preparations to enter the spirit world. In those days, crossing back and forth from one world to the other did not contain as many hardships as it would later on, when the Gauntlet grew strong and many ways were barred from Gaia's shapeshifting children. Nevertheless, out of respect for the Great Mother and Her spirit cousins, the brothers spent many days and nights purifying themselves for their journey.

Uktena, the Eldest Brother, found a stream of cold clear water and bathed himself in it, washing away any trace of impurity that might deter him from achieving his purpose. He thought about how sometimes he grew impatient with his brother Croatan's gentle ways and his brother Wendigo's rash behavior and, as he let the water flow over him, he gave his impatience to the river to carry it away.

Croatan, the Middle Brother, found a valley where the earth was rich and soft and where, if he stretched his body out along the ground and placed his ear to the earth, he could hear the steady beating of Turtle's heart. He thought of his envy of his brother Uktena's vast storehouse of knowledge and his brother Wendigo's excellence in battle. With each heartbeat of the earth, Croatan let his envy drain from his heart and sink into the ground.

Wendigo, the Youngest Brother, raced as swiftly as he could until he came to an icy land where a great snowstorm raged, turning the air around him white with fury. He thought about how he often grew angry at his brother Uktena's superior ways and his brother Croatan's insistence on reason rather than action. As the storm pelted him with its fury and as the icy winds blew across his face, Wendigo — after much struggle with himself — released his anger into the storm and cast it from him.

When they had done all this, the three came together once more and greeted each other as long-lost brothers — for so they were. Knowing that humans often fasted in order to purify their minds and bodies, the three brothers decided that they would try denying themselves food. Together, they fasted for ten days and nights, watching their bodies grow lean and hard and feeling their senses become open to the stirrings of the spirit world. Their hearts began to beat in time with one another and they remembered that the Great Mother had brought them forth with the same birth pang so that they were closer to each other than to all their other siblings.

Next, the brothers made offerings to the spirits to guide them on their journey. They did this not only because they wanted to gain the help of the spirits, but also because it was the polite and respectful thing to do when traveling in someone else's homeland. They burned tobacco and sage and cedar, breathing in the smoke and letting it escape from their bodies into the spirit world, bearing words of greeting and friendship. They sang songs and made many dances in honor of their spirit brothers and sisters and cousins, praising them with the movements of their bodies and the sounds of their voices.

This lasted for another ten days and nights, and during this time, the three brothers created many of the rites that their children and grandchildren would use to commune with the spirit world.

Finally, the three brothers decided they were ready to undertake their spirit journey. They stood up as one being and stretched out their arms to the sky. Luna was large and bright in their vision as they did so and her pure white light seemed to bless their journey. As the brothers stared upward at the face of Luna, they saw a ray of moonlight burst forth and arc toward them. In those days, crossing between worlds was merely a matter of walking far enough with the intention of going to the spirit world, so the brothers did not expect such a gift from the moon spirits. They did not know that in later times, such a bridge would become necessary to cross between the worlds.

"Luna smiles on us," Uktena said. "She sends us a special pathway to the spirit world!"

"I will be the first to travel her," Wendigo cried out, ready to leap onto the bridge of moonlight as soon as it crossed the distance from the sky to the earth.

Uktena started to open his mouth to claim precedence as Oldest Brother, but Croatan stepped forward and placed

his hands on his brothers' shoulders. "The path is wide enough for all three of us to travel it side by side. Let us begin our journey as we hope to end it — together, as our Great Mother meant us to be."

Both Uktena and Wendigo felt ashamed for their haste and pride. "As always, Middle Brother, you see the way that costs none of us our honor," Uktena said. Wendigo was too busy remembering that he had given up his anger to reply but he nodded his head to signify that he agreed with his elder brothers. Shoulder to shoulder, the three brothers stepped upon the path sent for them by the moon and began their journey into the spirit world.

As they traveled, they felt the air change around them. In those days, the Umbra was not so different from the world of flesh. Colors shone more brightly in the spirit world, because they did not have to attach themselves to objects to be seen. Sounds were sharper and clearer, as well. For a while, the three brothers contented themselves with feasting on the sights and sounds and smells of the spirit world, glorying in the feel of the smooth path under their feet and the caress of the wind spirits that nudged them as they trod the road of moonlight.

Then the brothers became aware of eyes watching them — many eyes. They looked around and saw a host of spirits gathered along the path and lining the road. News travels quickly in the spirit world and spirits love to convey messages to one another. Word of the three brothers' quest had brought many creatures of the Umbra to the place where the brothers traveled. Now they whispered among themselves, trying to guess which of the three brothers would acquire the greatest success on their journey.

Uktena heard the ripple of water to his left and turned his head to look. Next to the path, a great lake spread out, so wide that Uktena could not see the other shore. A huge, scaly head emerged from the lake's surface, its all-knowing eyes regarding the three brothers. Uktena recognized the totem spirit from whom he had taken his name and bowed his head in respect. "I will find the knowledge to help me with this journey and then I will give you that knowledge as a gift for your watchfulness," he said. He felt confident that his totem would guide him to success and stood straighter than before, a secret smile breaking the corners of his mouth.

Beneath his feet, Croatan felt the slightest movement in the earth. He looked down and saw that the path had changed where he stepped, becoming mottled and patterned like the markings of a huge turtle. Croatan felt a surge of joy flow through him as he recognized the presence of Turtle, his totem. "You, who bear the earth on your mighty back, must know that everything I do brings honor to you," Croatan said. "Thank you for your blessing." His step became firmer and surer as he walked onward with his brothers.

Wendigo smelled the tang of a winter storm in the air above him and he looked upward, where he saw an icy swirl of snow take shape. Inside the snowy cloud, Wendigo could see the hungry, angry form of the totem whose name he bore. He felt the fierceness of his totem spirit's patronage, a love so

harsh that it seemed perpetually angry. "For you, I will do great deeds and win out over both my brothers," Wendigo promised. He threw back his head and howled to match the sound of the wind and his step quickened, reflecting his eagerness.

The brothers walked for many days and nights. They did not have to stop for food or drink or sleep, since the spirits that watched the three travelers tended to their need for nourishment and replenishment out of respect for their journey. Just when Wendigo was beginning to wonder aloud when something would happen, the three brothers came across a gigantic wall of thorns and briars that stretched across their path.

"We need to find a way through this barrier," Uktena said. "Let me study it for awhile and I will learn its secrets."

"That is a weakling's way," Wendigo cried out. "This is a test of our courage and strength. I will show you how to cross it." Before Croatan could say anything, Wendigo changed into his wolf-form and gave a mighty leap forward. Although he was powerful and graceful as he cleared the wall, he did not escape unscathed. Huge thorns raked his belly and slashed his legs so that he landed, wounded and bloody, on the other side. "Do as I did, brothers!" Wendigo called. "I will carry the scars from my mighty leap with pride for I have won this challenge."

Uktena stepped back from his study of the barrier. "I am glad that you have reached the other side, impetuous one," he spoke, his voice carrying across the wall of brambles. "I will cross it after my own fashion," he said. "I see no need to wound myself just so I can claim a few more scars." Uktena had noticed a trickle of water seeping underneath the barrier. He knelt down and dug at the earth on either side of the trickle, widening it until there was an opening wide enough for him to crawl into. "This is my path," he said, and disappeared into the watery hole. After a long swim in the dark, he emerged on the other side of the barrier, soaked through by his passage. He shook himself dry and grinned at his younger brother. "I found the hidden way through the barrier by going under it," he said, "and with less cost to my flesh than you paid for your crossing." Wendigo snorted, but had to admit that he admired his oldest brother's cunning. Together, the two brothers waited for Croatan to show himself.

Croatan regarded the barrier. "There is only one way for me to get across," he said for the benefit of anyone who was listening. "The honorable way to meet this challenge is by accepting that the brambles and thorns will take their toll from my skin as I pass." He squared his shoulders and plunged straight into the wall, pushing his way past the choking growth that surrounded him. His ordeal took most of the rest of the day. As he neared the end of the barrier, the spirits of the brambles moved aside to show their respect for his decision to take the difficult path, allowing him at last to join his brothers on the other side. All over his skin, thousands of tiny cuts wept beads of blood. "Here I am," he announced to his brothers. "Shall we continue our journey?"

In this fashion, the three brothers traveled through the spirit world, marveling at the beauty that surrounded them



and coming, every now and then, upon some test or challenge placed in their path.

Once a mountain of fire towered before them, blocking their way. Wendigo called upon the powers given to him by his totem spirit and surrounded himself in a cloak of ice so that the mountain's heat did not harm him. In a great cloud of hissing steam, Wendigo crossed up and over the mountain. Uktena found a narrow crevice that led him through the mountain, bypassing the great flows of liquid fire and emerging on the other side with a greater knowledge of the inside of the mountain. Croatan bowed to the earth and to Turtle, who carried the mountain, along with the rest of the earth, on his back. Then he walked fearlessly up the mountain, trusting in his totem to protect him.

Another time, they had to cross a great canyon that divided their path. At the bottom of the canyon flowed a mighty river. Wendigo gathered his strength and cleared the distance with a mighty leap. Uktena dove into the river and followed the stream until he found a stairway of rock hidden behind a waterfall that led him up the other side of the canyon wall. Croatan made his way laboriously down one side of the canyon, forded the river at its shallowest point, and then climbed up the other side of the canyon.

Finally, after it seemed that their quest would never end, the three brothers came face to face with three spirit creatures that looked not unlike themselves. "You must defeat us in combat," the creatures told them, "in order to complete your journey and find the answer to your question. All that you have experienced so far has been but a preparation for this meeting. If you best us, you will receive a vision that will tell you what you want to know."

Wendigo spoke first. "Let us begin," he growled, assuming his half-man, half-wolf fighting form and leapt upon his opponent. The two creatures blurred into one great mass of teeth and talons, ripping and tearing at one another while the air filled with the sounds of their snarls and screams of fury.

Uktena spoke for a few minutes to his opponent, praising his challenger's prowess and asserting his own worthiness to do battle. As he did so, he studied his rival for weaknesses and vulnerable spots. Then, when he had spoken his last word, he, too, assumed his battle form and circled his opponent, looking for the right moment to launch his attack. He found it and dove for the spirit's throat.

Croatan bowed before his opponent. "I am honored that you have chosen me as your battle-mate," he said. "I will give you the first blow." His spirit-rival bowed as well and launched himself at Croatan, who accepted the mighty crush of the creature's body, absorbing the impact as if his body were made of solid rock. Then Croatan took on his man-wolf form and returned the attack.

The three brothers struggled with their opponents through the rest of the day and into the evening. Even though in the spirit world, day and night did not differ from one another to as great a degree as they did in the world of flesh, their battles were still very tiring. Finally, the three

brothers stood victorious over the vanquished spirits. Their opponents bowed before the brothers and spoke again.

"Here is your vision," they said and vanished into the air.

The brothers saw a great land of endless forests, tall mountains, broad plains split by mighty rivers and icy tundra that disappeared into a snowy wilderness. Many creatures lived in this splendid land — humans, shapeshifters, wolves and other sons and daughters of the Great Mother's loins. The vision changed and new creatures appeared on the shores of this peaceful land, pale-skinned creatures that spoke friendship and walked under a vast dark shadow filled with menace and danger and death. As the brothers watched in growing alarm, the shadow spread over the entirety of the land, devouring the souls of every creature in its path until nothing was left but misshapen, hideous beings and a landscape of tortured trees, broken mountains and stinking waters. The vision ended thus, and the brothers turned to one another in great distress.

"I will fight this shadow and bury it beneath the fury of my teeth and talons!" Wendigo cried. "It cannot be allowed to destroy this beautiful land."

"I will study it first," Uktena said. "Everything has a weakness and even such a terrible thing as this shadow must harbor a secret about itself that I can discover and use against it. When I have done this, I will destroy it with guile and craft and make certain that it can never bring forth such horrible events."

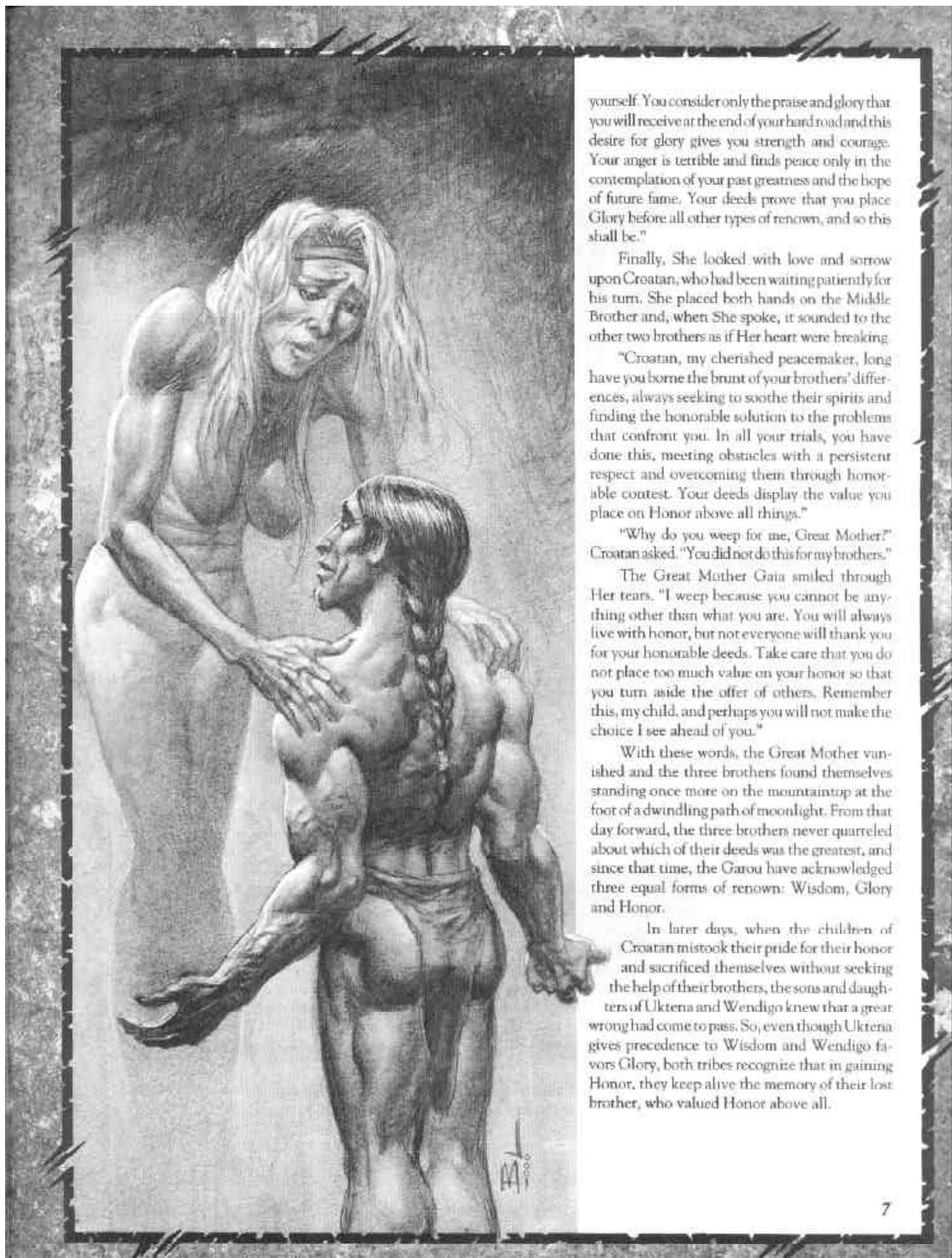
Croatan was silent, lost in the enormity of the horror that he had witnessed. "It has no honor, this shadow," he said, finally. "Yet I must do everything I can to fight it." His brothers nodded, but they did not hear Croatan's final pronouncement, whispered to himself. "...even if I have to do it alone."

"I have heard your words and watched you struggle bravely through my tests," a gentle voice said, startling the three brothers from their contemplation. They looked up and beheld a woman, strong in body with a face lined with the cares only a mother knows. The brothers recognized this as one of the many forms of the Great Mother. They bowed to Her and stretched out their hands to ask for Her blessing.

The woman smiled upon them. "You came to the spirit world to discover which of your deeds deserved the most renown. I have watched you overcome obstacles, battle creatures who were your match in every way and, finally, I have listened to your responses to a vision that I have allowed you to witness."

The Great Mother placed Her hand on Uktena's head. "Uktena, in all your tests you have sought the wisest solution, even at the expense of honor and glory. You have found the secret ways, the hidden meanings and the most cunning approaches to every obstacle. Even in battle, you fight with guile and trickery to best your opponent. Your deeds show that you value Wisdom over any other form of renown, and so this shall be."

Next, She turned to Wendigo and touched his head with Her hand. "Wendigo, youngest and boldest brother, you have ever met the world headlong, without thought of risk to



yourself. You consider only the praise and glory that you will receive at the end of your hard road and this desire for glory gives you strength and courage. Your anger is terrible and finds peace only in the contemplation of your past greatness and the hope of future fame. Your deeds prove that you place Glory before all other types of renown, and so this shall be."

Finally, She looked with love and sorrow upon Croatan, who had been waiting patiently for his turn. She placed both hands on the Middle Brother and, when She spoke, it sounded to the other two brothers as if Her heart were breaking.

"Croatan, my cherished peacemaker, long have you borne the brunt of your brothers' differences, always seeking to soothe their spirits and finding the honorable solution to the problems that confront you. In all your trials, you have done this, meeting obstacles with a persistent respect and overcoming them through honorable contest. Your deeds display the value you place on Honor above all things."

"Why do you weep for me, Great Mother?" Croatan asked. "You did not do this for my brothers."

The Great Mother Gaia smiled through Her tears. "I weep because you cannot be anything other than what you are. You will always live with honor, but not everyone will thank you for your honorable deeds. Take care that you do not place too much value on your honor so that you turn aside the offer of others. Remember this, my child, and perhaps you will not make the choice I see ahead of you."

With these words, the Great Mother vanished and the three brothers found themselves standing once more on the mountaintop at the foot of a dwindling path of moonlight. From that day forward, the three brothers never quarreled about which of their deeds was the greatest, and since that time, the Garou have acknowledged three equal forms of renown: Wisdom, Glory and Honor.

In later days, when the children of Croatan mistook their pride for their honor and sacrificed themselves without seeking the help of their brothers, the sons and daughters of Uktena and Wendigo knew that a great wrong had come to pass. So, even though Uktena gives precedence to Wisdom and Wendigo favors Glory, both tribes recognize that in gaining Honor, they keep alive the memory of their lost brother, who valued Honor above all.



## Credits

Authors: Bill Bridges (Croatan), Jackie Cassada (Uktena) and Nicky Rea (Wendigo)

Additional Material by: Carla Hollar

Developer: Ethan Skemp

Editor: Aileen E. Miles

Art: Joe Corroney, Richard Kane Ferguson, Jeff Holt, Brian LeBlanc, Chuck Regan

Art Director: Aileen E. Miles

Cover Arts: Richard Kane Ferguson

Cover Design, Layout & Typesetting: Aileen E. Miles

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735 PARK NORTH BLVD.  
SUITE 128  
CLARKSTON, GA 30021  
USA

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# CROATAN SONG™

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# Introduction: Song of the Middle Times

*Some day the earth will weep, she will beg for her life, she will cry with tears of blood. You will make a choice, if you will help her or let her die, and when she dies, you too will die.*

— John Hollow Horn, Oglala Lakota

Hear the words of Greenwoman Threepaws, elder of the Sept and Wisdom Keeper of the Cherokee:

*Sing with me now the songs of our ancestors. Sing for those whose lives are long past and sing for the yet unborn. All exist together within Gaia's heart. By our song, we bring all places, all times, all peoples together within the sacred circle of our lives.*

*Once our nations straddled the land, living and working, singing and dancing, making peace with the spirits, the plants and the animals of their chosen places. We, their wolfspirit-brothers roamed among them, guiding and learning, protecting and defending.*

*Then we sang songs of bright glory, songs of deep wisdom and songs of stalwart honor. Our tongues spoke words of fire and our voices held within them the wildness of the night itself. That fire has faded now, swept aside with the ashes of our betrayed and belittled Kinfolk. Once we were three and our people were many. Now we are two and our Kin lie scattered and bleeding far from their homes. The fire struggles, its flames almost quenched. Yet, the embers still glow.*

*Hear now the tales of the past. Sing of the ancient times and the bright morning and golden afternoon of our lives. For in the time before the Wyrncomers, we did not yet fear the coming of the night. Our voices lit the darkness then as we sang of our triumphs and sorrows. My song tonight holds within it the tales of those times, of*

*little brother Wendigo and elder brother Uktena. These tales may show our power and our pride and our love for our lands and Kin. Yet, it is the one who is absent of whom I truly sing, for if we heed not the tale I tell, there will be none of us left to sing the greatest song of sorrow, known to us as the Croatan Song.*

## Setting

Unlike the modern **Werewolf** setting, in which the wilderness and Gaia's sacred places languish, the Pure Lands before the coming of Europeans is a place of vast forests, mountains, plains and deserts. Unbroken by highways and pollution-covered cities, this tale is set against pristine wilderlands only lightly touched by the Weaver's creations. Everything is bigger, greener, with dense forests, blazes of color and overwhelming aromas. The land abounds with huge herds of antelope, elk and bison whose passing shakes the ground like thunder. Birdsong echoes and fish leap from sparkling, rushing rivers. Woods are dark, mysterious places, lakes delve to unknown depths and predators may be met in field or forest. Against this backdrop stories become epics. Mountains, trees, rocks, rivers, all are sacred, all contain spirits who speak to those who listen and who expect those who live among them to recognize their rights and make them offerings.



Those who live in these surroundings have few of the difficulties encountered by the European invaders who fear the darkling woods and stay upon known paths lest they never find their way home again. The native nations occupy lands they consider as much a part of themselves as their fingers or toes.

Still, strange things lurk in the night and some ground is known to be sour, breeding monsters and bringing ill luck to any who walk its paths. Though many horrors have been bound, wickedness remains. And those who battle it must often do so on its home territory. Violence is an all too common currency between nations, and a great doom is destined to fall on all the people of these lands. This is a world of firelight, starlight and moonlight, and beyond the range of the campfire, the darkness breathes.

And that doesn't even cover the Umbra....

## Mood

Several moods are appropriate for a story set in the Pure Lands. Joy in work well done and in the simple pleasures found among one's nation or tribe could well be the reason why the Garou battle Gaia's enemies. Preservation of their Kinfolk and their way of life can be powerful motivations. Excitement and anticipation when battle looms, grief at the falling of a noble friend, fear of a Bane that is seemingly too powerful for their strength, all have their place. So, too, desolation and desperation are appropriate when the true extent of the damage the Wyrmbrothers cause becomes clear.

While most stories will be set in the pre-Columbian era, it might be possible to invoke some nuance of the sadness and anger yet to come.

## Theme

As with mood, appropriate themes range across the spectrum of possibilities: Learning one's place in the tribe and nation, making the transition from youthful foolishness to wisdom, finding the meaning of honor, coping with the aftermath of war, discovering love, choosing between hate and forgiveness, any of these might serve to power several stories.

## How to Use This Book

The material in this book may be used to run a campaign set in the Pure Lands before the European influx. It may also serve as background for a *Werewolf: The Wild West* campaign. Finally, details revealed here may be used as "memories" accessible to those with Past Life while special items or rites might become the objects of quests of rediscovery in modern games.

**Legends of the Garou:** *Renown* sets the stage with a "myth" of the three brothers—Uktena, Wendigo and Croatan.

**Chapter One: The Long Walk (History)** This chapter offers a look at the histories of the Garou tribes and select nations of the Pure Lands, from earliest times to just after the coming of the Wyrmbrothers.

## A Word About Terminology

When European settlers first came to North America and established governments, various so-called Indian groups were referred to as "nations," giving them their due as sovereign powers established on certain territories. It is only later, after those nations were forcibly removed from their lands and decimated by disease that each began to be called "tribes"—with that word's connotation of a more savage, less sophisticated society. For this reason (and to be honest, for clarity's sake as well), we usually choose to use the word *nation* to refer to discrete groups such as the Cherokee, Powhatan or Apache. We reserve the use of the word *tribe* to speak of the three Pure Lands Garou—Uktena, Croatan and Wendigo—and their European counterparts. Thus someone might be of the Cherokee nation and also be of the Uktena tribe. Further, though each nation called itself by different names than those known to modern readers, for ease of understanding, we call them by their better-known names such as Navajo and Cherokee rather than the Dineh and the Principal People. No disrespect to members of these groups is intended thereby.

**Chapter Two: Whose Hunting Grounds?** The tribes are defined by their lands and their Kin as much as by their totem. This chapter focuses on the territories held by the tribes, and the various nations of their Kinfolk.

**Chapter Three: Storytelling:** This chapter shows how to use the material given here and offers some chronicle ideas. It also delineates a few foes, some possible allies and gives some ideas for creating others.

**Chapter Four: Children of the Middle Times:** Here are found new rules to enrich the chronicle—period Gifts, rites, fetishes, totems, Merits and Flaws, as well as character creation rules for the three tribes and their Kin.

Naturally, the *Uktena Tribebook* and *Wendigo Tribebook* (reprinted in *Litany of the Tribes, Volume 4*) would also be of inestimable value for a Pure Lands game, although they're not strictly necessary.

## Lexicon

**Angalkuk:** Wendigo term for Theurge.

**Angatkok:** Inuit name for powerful shamans who deal with good and evil spirits.

**Angoaks:** Ivory or woodcarvings used by arctic hunters.

**Dachaudjimoot:** The auspice among the Wendigo that corresponds to Galliard, or lorekeeper.

**Heyoka:** Wendigo name for the Ragabash auspice.

**Hunkayapi:** The ceremony whereby an older Sioux warrior adopts a younger warrior as his son.

**Law Giver:** Uktena and Croatan term for Philodox.

**Makuk:** A container made from birch-bark used by nomadic nations to hold stored food.

**Manitou:** Name given to the spirits that inhabit the physical and the spirit world.

**Mediwiwin:** Wendigo term for Philodox.

**Nawalak:** Kwakiutl name for the spirit of a tree used in house-building.

**Nobugidaban:** Flat-bottomed sleds used by the lake people for winter travel overland.

**Numaym:** The Kwakiutl term for a clan-like group descended from an animal spirit.

**Okis:** Huron word for spirits.

**Pemmican:** Preserved food made from dried meat and fat packed into the intestines of caribou or another large game animal, used by nomadic people as trail food or winter food.

**Sachem:** Term for chief among the Algonquians of New England.

**Shaman:** Also called a medicine worker; the Uktena and Croatan name for Theurge.

**Songkeeper:** Name given to Galliards by the Uktena and Croatan.

**Toyon:** Aleutian name for a village leader or wealthy chief.

**Trickster:** Uktena and Croatan word for Ragabash.

**Wabenot:** Name given to shamans in the lake region who specialize in herbal healing.

**Warrior:** Name given to Ahroun by the Uktena and Croatan.

**Ya'pah:** The Wendigo term for the Ahroun auspice.

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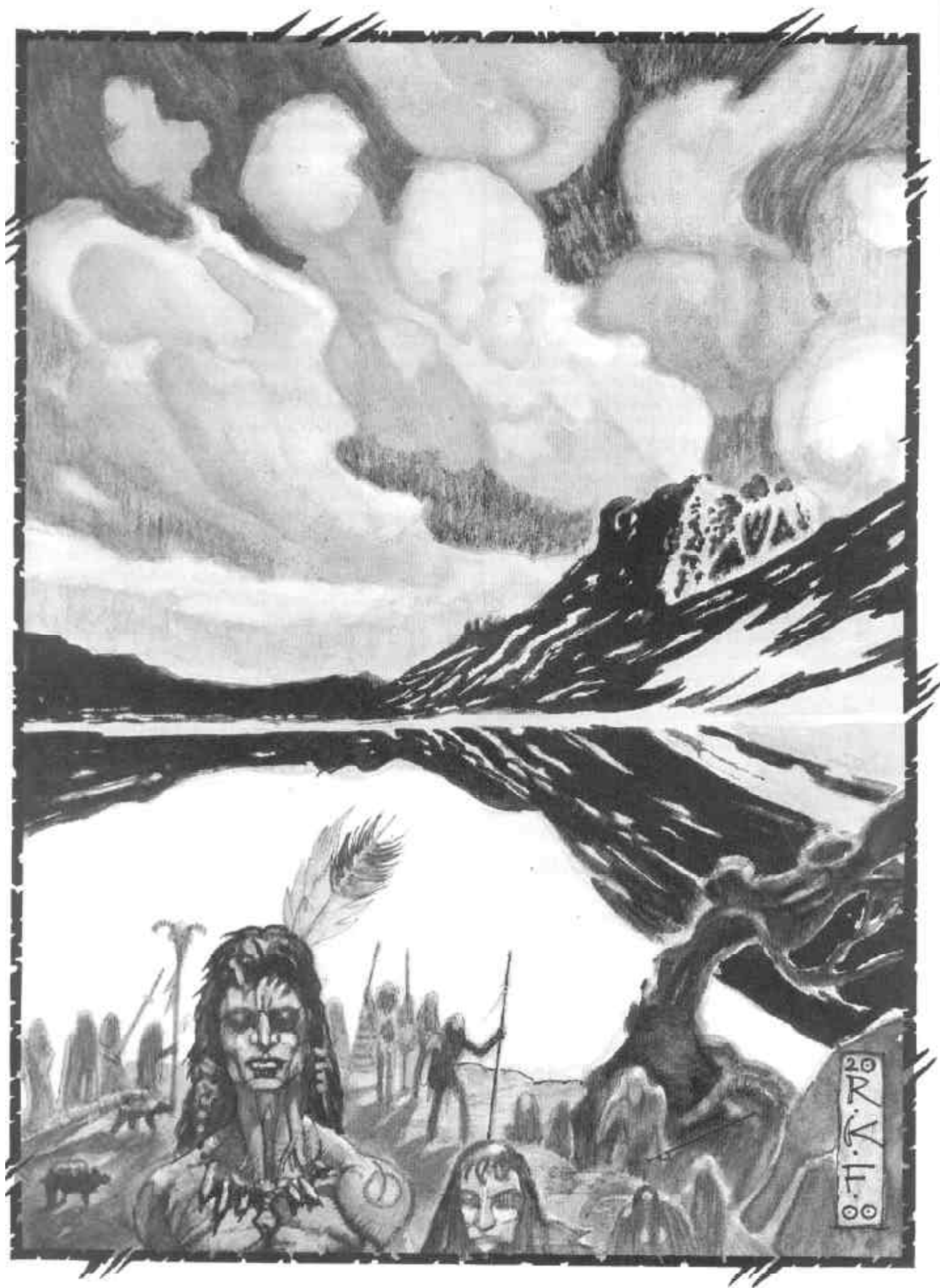
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# Chapter One: The Long Walk (History)

*A hundred thousand years have passed  
Yet, I hear the distant beat of my  
Father's drums*

— Shirley Daniels, Ojibwa

Hey, shut that flap! That's a damn cold draft, and I don't want to freeze to death out here. C'mon over and sit down already; all that moving around and fumbling about, you're likely to knock something over.

More wood for the fire. There, that's a good little blaze now. Smoke's rising up to the hole, drifting out over the land, telling anyone else who's out there that there's a good, warm fire over here if they want it. Let 'em come. I'll tell them the story, too.

Yeah, settle down and get comfortable, cause I'm ready to start. You're about to get your wish, the reason you came all the way out here. The whole story, uncensored and complete, like you folks ain't heard before. We tend to keep this sort of stuff to ourselves, and don't tell it too often, except to those who deserve it. I figure you've earned it, though.

All right, then. Excuse me while I chant a while. It may get a bit weird in here. If you see things moving out of the corner of your eye, don't get spooked or nothing—and don't go shifting into battle-form! It's just my allies, those that'll help me tell the tale. You'll hear them soon

enough. It won't always be me talking, even though it's my mouth that'll be moving. Other voices gotta get a chance to sing now and then, eh?

Okay. Here we go...

Hey ya

Hey ya

Hey ya hey

*Ancestors speak through me*

*Of times long gone*

*Of people who once lived*

*Of deeds mighty and gone*

Hey ya...

Each year when your birthday comes around, you say to yourself, "Hell, I'm old!" And you compliment yourself on another year lived, and figure you're that much wiser. Congratulations. That creaking in your bones and chill in your fur does mean you're getting old. Nothing lasts but for so long; to each its allotted time (at least, those things that aren't tainted and all).

But you don't know real age. You think you do, but none of us really does. Not when we consider how long our history is. Humans get real proud of themselves when they can trace their ancestry back a few generations. They get even prouder if they knew who their blood kin was before they came here, to America, or Turtle Island as I prefer to call it. Heck, they get right worked up about it if they can trace their many-time great-grandpappies and grandmammies way back to the Middle Ages! Only a very few of them can go back farther than that, and they're probably full of buffalo turd.

But the Changing Breed? Oh, yeah, we go way, way back. And we know it, too. It's not just a matter of counting who begat who on our fingers and toes. Too many Kinfolk in between to keep that thread straight. No, we know it cause we don't count such things by direct family. We do it by tribe. The tribe is one, no matter how many wolves are in it. That's something branded into our spirits, something nobody can take away easily.

So how do we know it? Cause the spirits tell us. Not just the animal spirits around us who watch and remember, but our own ancestors, those really old ones who lived in times before us and hang around in the spirit world to help us young ones get along. It's because of them, and the pull they have on our blood, on our memories, that we know things far older than the wisest human can know. Even the mages get confused about the past. Not us. We remember, 'cause it's still alive today, just not in physical form.

I'm going to tell you now some of what the old ones among us knew, what they saw back then when it first happened, or what their elders who were there told them about it. I'm not going to talk about the Silver Fangs or the Fianna; they've got storytellers enough to bark on about their famous deeds and such, at least the way they like to remember them, regardless of whether they're true or not. I'm going to tell a real story instead, an important story about a whole people and what they did for Gaia and against the Wyrms. If I talk proud about an individual, it's 'cause he or she did right for her people, not to exalt themselves.

I'm going to sing about the Three Brothers and their tribes. This is a song about the Uktena and the Wendigo. But most of all, it's a Croatan song.

## *The Old Country*

Long long ago this happened. It was in a time that no one remembers through his own eyes anymore. It is only told in stories, from elder to cub, and on and on down the generations. Even the spirits

know this only by gossip; no one who was there still speaks. No one can call them.

It is said that in the Old Country, the place where all Garou once lived, where they had first taken the shape of humans and wolves together, there were three special brothers. Unlike other Wolf Changers, they knew that family was more important than personal pride. While other Garou sought to look good in the eyes of others, or wanted power, these three quietly honored their Grandmother and each other.

Were they perfect? Of course not. They fought at times, and were stingy at others. But one brother was always there to remind the others that what they did was wrong, and thus they would always come back to the right ways. Whenever Little Brother got angry, Older Brother and Middle Brother would scold or shame him into behaving right again. Likewise, whenever Middle Brother went too long on his own, ignoring others, Older Brother and Little Brother would come around and stay until he got so used to them he realized it was lonely to be without them. If Older Brother became too caught up in his meditations and questions, Middle Brother and Little Brother would come and challenge him to footraces and wrestling until he got to appreciate his body and vigor again. They each kept the other in line.

Some today say that these brothers did not really exist as people, that they're just symbols of their tribe's own unity. Mythical leaders of sorts. Maybe this is true. Does it matter? I think they were real. Sure, they lived long lives, but maybe they weren't always the same Three Brothers always spoken of. Perhaps when each died, one of their cubs took their place, so that there were always Three Brothers to lead the three tribes, back in the old days, before they spread out too far from each another.

Well, in those time the other Wolf Changers began to fear humans because they had too many Weaver allies and fetishes — what we call tools. They started the Impergium and hunted down humans they didn't like, to scare them away from the Weaver. This only made things worse. The other spirits were now afraid to ally with humans; only the Weaver's spirits still spoke to them.

Not all the Wolf Changers did these things. The Children of Gaia had great hearts, and wept for what was done. The Stargazers had great minds, and thought hard about how to undo what had been done. But the Three Brothers just shook their heads in disgust and would have none of it. They lived far from the other Changers anyway, so it was not hard at first for them to ignore the hunts.

Eventually, however, the other Wolf Changers came to the Three Brothers' lands to continue the culling, and saw that the Kinfolk there had Weaver tools: flint knives and wood-and-sinew sleds and such. While they did not live in cities, this still angered the Wolf Changers, who began hunting these people like they did all the others. When the Three Brothers realized what was happening, they took on battle form and ran to meet these strangers who had come from afar to cull their people. They met them not with words but with claws, and carved scars into their hides as lessons. No one would kill their Kin, especially no other Wolf Changers.

So the other Wolf Changers stayed away for a time, grumbling about the corruption that was sure to overtake the Three Brothers and their Kin, but none dared try anything again.

## The Call

One day, Older Brother woke in the middle of the night, and thought he heard a maiden crying from far off. He padded out onto the tundra to find the source of the weeping, and came upon an old human woman alone, huddled up and sobbing.

"Why do you weep, woman?" he asked her. "What cause for sorrow?"

"A terrible monster is destroying my home. He eats my people and does not thank them for their flesh. He breaks their homes and does not build better things with the pieces. Soon, my home will be as bad as this country here."

"How can there be a place better than this? Is there not ample game? Does not Helios shine in the day and Luna at night? Are there not Wolf Changers to chase away evil? Where is this place you cry for?"

"Oh, mighty wolf, strong in wisdom, it is far, far away across the great waters. There the lands are wide and green, the trees as tall as mountains, and the light ever abundant as day, for the moon and stars at night rival the sun. The waters are clear and cold, and the game plentiful and tasty. But there are now monsters, which threaten the beauty so that it is already marred in many places beyond healing. There are no Wolf Changers to fight the monsters. Thus am I sad."

Before Older Brother could reply, he woke up, and realized it had been a dream. He went to the huts of his other brothers, and gathered them together.

"I have had a strange dream," he said. "A beautiful and sad woman, huddled alone on the tundra, told me of a beautiful place of pure waters and land, where game is plentiful for all. But monsters have come to ruin it, and there are no Garou to oppose them."

The other brothers both looked surprised, and looked wondrously at each other. Middle Brother spoke: "I, too, have had the same dream." And Little Brother said, "As have I. Who was this woman?"

Older Brother nodded wisely. "It can be none other than Gaia, our Grandmother. I will seek the same dream again tonight, and tell Her that my people will travel to this land across the waves, and there defend it from evil."

"Tell her that we, too, shall go for Her," said the other two brothers. "No one can deny his Grandmother such a thing."

And the next night, Older Brother dreamed again, and sought once more the crying maiden. As he paced across the cold ground, he heard something following him, its breathing heavy and its claws clacking across the stones. He turned to look behind, but saw nothing there. Curious but unafraid, he moved on, following the faint sound of weeping as he had the night before.

Again, the sound of something following him came to his ears. This time he did not stop but quickened his pace. As he had expected, so too did whatever followed him speed up. He darted behind a rock and shifted his form into that of the two-legged wolf, the battle-form. He waited in silence until he saw something flit past, following his trail. He leapt upon it and brought it to the ground. It squealed in anger and fear, and struggled to get free.

Older Brother held it tight and looked at it. He finally saw what it was, but could not believe his eyes. It was like nothing he had seen before; it was something that should not be. Its was a large reptile that ran on two legs but had massive jaws and sharp teeth; its hide was mottled and infected with fungus and festering wounds, and its eyes glowed with madness. It looked like something that had been dead but refused to believe it, like one of the old lizards that used to walk the earth but were now all gone and buried.

In his shock, Older Brother lost his hold on the thing, and it burst free of his claws, sinking its teeth into his arm before running off into the night. The pain was incredible, but Older Brother sang a song to soothe the hurt, a secret he had learned from the spirits. While this eased the pain, it did not heal the wound. Older Brother then knew that this was a Wyrn-creature of some sort, and that his wound was tainted.

From nearby, he heard Grandmother's sobbing, and remembered his purpose. He shifted to all fours and limped onward, coming once again upon the sad woman. She had not moved from the night before, and ice grew as a wall around Her, as Her tears fell and froze.

"Dry your tears, Grandmother," Older Brother said. "I have come to aid you."





Gaia looked at Her child and saw his wound. She halted Her crying and set to healing him, licking his wound as a she-wolf cleans the fur of her cubs. Soon, the taint had gone out of the wound, and Gaia spat it on the ground, where it had transformed and become clear, pure water. Only She is powerful enough to turn Wurm bile into crystal-clear water.

"Oh, my poor cub," she said. "Something has followed me from the Pure Lands and tried to stop you from heeding my call. I should never have come."

"I know now that this land you speak of is truly in danger. It must be a great place indeed for the enemy to travel so far to prevent allies from coming against it. My brothers and I shall travel to reach this home of yours. There we will battle your enemies and make things right again."

And the woman smiled, and said: "Of all my children, only you three have answered my cries. To all the Wolf Changers I gave this dream, but only you have made this promise to me. Prepare your people. I will send to you spirits and totems to guide you on the march. It will be long and hard, and many will wish to turn back and curse my name. But those who persevere will gain happiness unknown to any in this land, already almost lost to the Wurm."

Older Brother woke, and rose to gather his brothers and their people together. The people were excited, for this seemed a grand adventure. They rarely stayed in one place anyway, and were well used to moving to new hunting lands. No one really knew how far this new place was.

As promised, spirits came to the brothers, and showed them the way. They had spent the days before now clearing a path through the land, fighting away evil spirits, and marking the trail for the Theurges to see and follow. But they could not chase away every bad thing that haunted their path, and some had been destroyed in the fight. The brothers chose the mightiest and wisest among their Wolf-Changer children to join as a pack and take to the spirit world, to march with the spirits and clear the way. With Luna's blessing, they would know where to go.

Totems also came to them, but they were more discerning than the other spirits. The Wolf Changers had to prove their goodwill to them before they would help. Each brother underwent a test to win his totem, and each is a tale unto itself. Three long nights would be taken in the telling of these stories in full, of how Older Brother wrestled Uktena, or how Middle Brother found Turtle and coaxed him from his shell, or how Little Brother befriended mighty Sasquatch after a hurling match. Know for now that they did these

things, and so won the friendship of these spirits, and thus ensured the safety of their tribes even to this day.

## *The Journey*

And so the migration began, and the Three Brothers took their people from the old lands to new ones, away from the other Wolf-Changer tribes, grown angry and distant from them over time. The other tribes barely noticed their leaving, and cared only so far that it meant they had new lands to move into, new territories to claim.

Only one from all the other tribes came forth to join the great journey, a single Stargazer called Crescent Vision. He had thought deeply on the dreams that all Garou had received from Gaia, and had sought the wisdom of his tribe's totem, Chimera, who reigns over dreams. From this mysterious being, he received a vision wherein a land of plenty awaited him — but the vision warned that his journey would cost him his life. He believed this was a small price to pay for a glimpse of paradise, and had gathered what belongings he owned and trekked far on his own before joining the Three Brothers.

At first, the brothers were wary of him, unsure of his true intent. They put him through tests to prove his resolve. In one test, he had to bear all the people's sleds by himself for a day without complaint. This he did, for well trained was he in mental discipline. He took the Dire Wolf form for strength, and pulled all the sleds the entire day, even though it cost him greatly in aches and pains by the time the moon had risen.

The brothers nodded and gave him a new test the next day. He had to find the path they were traveling by himself, with no aid from the spirits. He stepped into the spirit world and looked carefully for signs. He was a Theurge himself, and knew much of the spirit ways. But the spirits had been careful, leaving no sign of their passing lest the Enemy discover it. After long hours of careful search, Crescent Vision was close to failure. Luna looked down upon him and knew of his secret resolve. She shone a sliver of her light forth so that the Stargazer finally glimpsed the faint trail through the airts that the spirits had left for the Three Brothers to follow. He thanked the moon for her aid, and returned to the brothers to tell them the proper way to travel.

They nodded and knew that he had proven himself. From there on, he required no more tests, and showed many a time how he was vital to their journey, for without his now-keen eyes, they would have lost the way themselves, even though they knew the songs the spirits had taught them to find it.

The journey was longer than even the Three Brothers had imagined. It took many years to complete, and even then not all the people could make it. Some stayed behind in certain places, tired of the long walk. Some died of exhaustion or hardship, and some were taken by the Wyrms' creatures that always haunted their trail, waiting for some to fall behind.

It was not only spirits like Gafflings and Jagglings that aided them against the Wyrms; the totems themselves would often come when they could and help. Sometimes, some of the people who had gone hunting got lost, and the Wyrms' creatures would close in on them. Then, if these hunters were lucky, the earth would shake around them, throwing the enemies to the ground, as Turtle defended them. Or the Wyrms' creatures that stalked them would disappear one by one, until the creatures themselves grew afraid and knew that they were hunted themselves; they would find their fellows' carcasses, frozen in pain from Uktena's poison. Or the creatures would attack the people only to be snatched from above by mighty Sasquatch, who walked as a giant on the earth, and reached through the trees to grab the evil things, and squish them between his huge hands. He would wipe their stinking juices into the snow, which would purify the remains.

In this way was the journey made easier, and the people made less afraid. But even with the aid of the great totems, and the guile and might of the Three Brothers, much pain and loss was suffered, as heroes fell in battle or died alone against greater odds.

And many ways did they travel, in many different groups, each led by Garou heroes. Most of the people walked, but some built boats and traveled ahead across the waters, skirting the islands. The lands they traveled through were not always frozen, and some bore great amounts of animal life, for the Animal Elders of many birds, fish and small mammals loved these marshy places, and bid their children be born there in abundance. In these places, the people always ate well, and stocked up for the harder times ahead, when only ice and snow waited beneath them.

Finally the day came when Older and Middle Brother first set foot on the new lands to which Gaia had summoned them. Little Brother stayed behind, to guard the last of their people, those who were the slowest. They were the worst harried by the Wyrms, and Little Brother's vitality was most needed there. As the two older brothers arrived, they saw a land that was indeed as Gaia had promised. So clear was the air, and so sweet with the smell of flowers, that Older Brother took to all fours and capered about as a spring pup newly come from his den.

He ran forth into the woods and there met wolves, larger and harder than any he had before seen. At first, they stayed away from him, for his smell was strange to them and he was not of their pack. But he persisted and had the grace to give in to their alpha, to show respect for him. From then, he was accepted, and ran with the wolves on their next kill. After a while, he returned to his people and told his brother about his time among the pure wolves. There were so many more wolves here than from where they had come, and they were strong and healthy, and respected the ancient pacts between animals that their Elder spirits had made long ago.

While he had been gone, Middle Brother had met new humans, people already living in the Pure Lands. They were a happy people, and welcomed the newcomers without suspicion or fear, freely offering food and shelter. The Wyrms-creatures that ruined the land were farther south, and had not yet done much damage here. Middle Brother grew happy living among them.

The story of the final battle to reach the new lands has been told many times before. It is a painful one. So great was the loss and sorrow that Sasquatch's heart froze and he became the Wendigo, a spirit of wind and rage. It is not easy for a totem spirit to change its ways so. Such pain, such rage, is unimaginable. After this, the migration was unstoppable. No more could the Wyrms-creatures hope to press the

brothers and their people back from where they had come. Now, they had to fight them in the Pure Lands. Their conquest was no longer assured.

Once the Three Brothers reunited, they consulted with one another on what to do. The land bridge was closed, but there were still people on the far side, mostly those who had rested for too long and had to be left behind. How could they now come over? It was decided that a caern would be dedicated, a place where the spirits who aided them could rest and regain their spent power, and converse more easily with the Theurges. Here, a Moon Bridge could be opened that would allow others to come through.

The location of this first caern is now unknown. Some say it was not in the Pure Lands as we know them today, but was part of the land now sunk beneath the ocean. Once the Caern of Triumph and Sorrow was opened, many Garou volunteered to go back, to the old caerns, and find their lost Kin once more. With sadness and sorrow, the Three Brothers let them go, fearful that they would not see them again, for even by Moon Bridge, the journey was long.

Many moons passed with no word of the sojourners, until one day a crow spirit appeared at the caern, cawing loudly for all to come and hear. It said that the people were returning and would soon arrive. They traveled Moon Paths in the Umbra, but





were being chased by Wyrms-creatures. At this news, Ahroun clamored to gather a war party, and all others joined in, for they would need the guile of the New Moons, the lore of the Crescent Moons, the wisdom of the Half Moons and the witness of the Gibbous Moons with them.

The crow led them down crooked paths that even the Theurges could not retrace, and they feared that if the spirit led them wrong, they would become lost. But from a distance they soon heard growls and roars — the sound of Garou combat. Hurrying now, they searched everywhere for the source of the cries, but could not find them. The crow spirit circled restlessly, and cried out that someone had hidden the Garou from them, to bar their rescue.

All despaired that their friends would be killed before they could arrive, for already howls of pain could be heard. And then Crescent Vision, the Stargazer who had won his way among the brother's tribes, quietly shifted to wolf form and sniffed about, looking with his keen eyes for any sign or track of the sojourners. Finally, he caught a glimmer of moonlight as reflected in water, and knew the secret. Their fellows were near, in a glade, one whose entrance was hidden by some dark Bane power.

Crescent Vision felt a chill, and knew that the time so long ago prophesied had come. He shifted to battle-form and threw himself at the place where he had seen the glimmer of light, Luna's way of alerting him to the glade. He burst through into the glade, but only by shattering the mysterious mirror that had been placed there to reflect back the image of the Moon Path, hiding the true glade. A mirror of silver. Its shards sliced through him, and he fell to the ground, bleeding his life into the soil of the glade.

The others charged after him and came upon the swarm of Wyrms creatures that beset the lost Garou, who fought against the greater numbers, trying to protect the huddled Kinfolk they had traveled so far to rescue. The fresh Garou forces leapt upon the startled Wyrms things and soon made quick work of them, tearing the very fabric of their beings to shreds so fine that not even the Banes among them could later reform.

The Theurges bent over the dying body of Crescent Vision and tried everything they knew to save him, but what Chimera prophesied long ago had to be. It was his time to die. He whispered to them one final wisdom: "I have stood upon the grass of the Pure Lands, and am whole. Do this one thing for me, as my final wish: close the Moon Bridge behind me so that none may follow you again into this land. For the thing that wrought this clever trap is a creature of guile and

defilement, far more cunning than any aspect of the Wyrms you have known. Close the gate, so that it cannot come to the new lands."

They solemnly howled a dirge for their dead friend, who had proved himself so many times on their long journey, and they bore his body back with them. The sojourners, glad to see their friends again, but saddened by the loss of the Stargazer hero, were relieved to bring their Kin home safe. All their wounds were tended to, and the packs went home, once again led by the crow.

When they came again to their new caern, the crow spoke once more: "Follow the final wisdom of Crescent Vision. The Enemy knows you are here, and will send reinforcements through this place, to bring new corruption to this land even as you have brought new hope." The spirit then disappeared, and was seen no more in the Pure Lands.

After long council, the Three Brothers agreed that it was so. They removed the Pathstone from the caern, but renewed the rites of purity there, so that it would always be a place of succor for spirits. They then moved their people further east and south, beginning once again the migration.

Crescent Vision was buried at the caern, and it is said that his spirit haunted that place for a long time, glad it was to be so near the land he had fought so hard to achieve. But now the caern is gone, and so is the memory of Crescent Vision. Too few sing his songs now.

## *Settling the New Lands*

Now that there was no common threat to bind them, the Three Brothers took their own peoples in different directions, each drawn to his own interests, each with the desire to explore and find his own thing, for the years of travel had been hard on them, and they often bickered and fought. Time apart would strengthen their bond, drawing them once again back to those they loved but could not now be near without conflict. Is this not the way with all brothers? They will fight one another and leave in anger, but eventually come back, remembering only the good things and forgetting the bad.

So the three tribes, each named after the great totem spirit who guided it, traveled deeper into the Pure Lands. At first, Older Brother and Middle Brother traveled together, but Little Brother stayed behind. His tribe had suffered the worst of all, and their rage only made the hurt worse for them. Even with the bridge to the old country now gone, Wyrms-creatures still climbed from the sea to harass the Pure Lands, and Little Brother stayed to defend against them. Also, the

angry Wendigo spirit refused to leave the northern lands now covered in icy snow and beset with fierce winds from his roars. Only Little Brother could calm him, and the Uktena and Croatan tribes could not withstand the harsh weather for long.

As they spread south, they would stay in certain places for a time, and there they would dedicate new caerns. It was easier to do in those times, in those lands then, for they were still pure, and even where monsters had wounded places, they healed quickly. At each caern, some of the Wolf Changers would stay and travel forward no more. They had earned their new home, and sought to defend it for many generations to come. Others, however, would still move on.

In this way, the Kinfolk of the three tribes spread far and wide. While the humans developed their own nations, the tribes stayed near their caerns. In this way, no one tribe could easily claim a whole human nation for its Kin. As the humans moved through a caern's lands, the Garou there would breed with them, even those that later moved on. In this way, many new Wolf Changers were born far from their parents, in many human nations, and often after many generations. The same was so with wolves, for packs roamed far and wide in those days, when there were no boundaries of concrete and asphalt to stop them.

Sometimes, young Garou — both human and wolf — had no one to tutor them after their Change, and they would have to travel far and wide in search of their true family, members of the Wolf Changer tribe they had been born to. Such quests became Rites of Passage in themselves, and often earned the young Garou her name.

As Older Brother and Middle Brother traveled further south, even they fell to bickering. Older Brother was fascinated with the mountains and deserts the Uktena scouts had seen further south, and he wanted to travel there. Middle Brother, however, yearned for the plains and woodlands the Croatan scouts spoke of, and knew that it was to these places he had to go.

And so the two eldest brothers parted from one another, each taking their tribes with them. But with each brother, some members of the other's tribe also went, so that some Croatan Garou went to the southwest and later flourished on the west coast, while some Uktena went east, and came to love the deep mountains of coves of the southeast.

Things were not always peaceful for the nomads. The Garou had been summoned to the Pure Lands for a reason, to protect them from the Wyrn before it could corrupt the land's purity. And this they did, with a vengeance. For every loss they had sustained on their long journey, for every slight the Wyrn's forces had

delivered upon them, for every scar they had received, they now gave back tenfold.

The Wyrn-things that lived in the Pure Lands were not always smart. Most of them were creatures of might and terror, not cunning magicians; the clever enemies came later, as the Wyrn learned to more cleverly deal with the new warriors. But for now, the Beast of War was the strongest aspect of the Wyrn in these lands, and it knew only how to rage in angry destruction against things.

The Garou fought many a battle against its monsters, most often killing them or chasing them far away. But some were too powerful to kill, and had to be chained to a place, bound with mystical rites. Older Brother was best at these, and taught some of the secrets of binding to the others, but he never revealed the deepest secrets. Not because he was stingy or prideful, but because he knew the knowing of them was painful, and could hurt the others. Older Brother sought to protect the others from the horrible visions he had seen in the dark, dank places where he had stolen his powerful secrets.

As the Wolf Changers spread throughout the lands, they chased the monsters to the far regions, to the places their Kinfolk did not or could not live. Some of these places were already inhabited by other shapechangers, such as the Pumonca werewolves or the Gurahl werebears. These shapeshifters killed whatever creatures neared their dens, and thus the Wyrn-beasts had fewer and fewer places to hide.

The other shapechangers did not like the Wolf Changers at first. The werewolves were selfish, and wanted to be the ones to save the Pure Lands themselves. They were jealous that Gaia had called upon the Wolves to save her. But while they had performed well against the creatures before the arrival of the Garou, they were too few, and would not work with others.

The Gurahl were even fewer. But they did what they could, for they were strong and steadfast, but they were also slow to respond to a problem, and arrived too late many times. In addition, their rites kept them busy, and if they faltered in these rites, even greater trouble would beset the Pure Lands. If it weren't for their diligence, things would have been much worse for the Garou when they arrived.

## *Croatan Lands*

The Croatan followed their totem, the Turtle, and their element is thus Earth. He gave them their renowned qualities of sturdiness, stoicism, wholeness, fulfillment and balance. While the Uktena are known for their secrets and bindings, and the Wendigo for their rage and prowess, the Croatan's mystical

legacy was purification. They knew ways to purify the earth of the Wyrms' taint, and their caerns are still the purest to this day even though no Croatan has tended them in centuries.

Their Gifts were of the earth, and its power ran strong through them. They could move the earth at will, or become one with it. These powers aided them when fighting Wyrms-creatures, and they often used them together with the Uktena to build holes in which to bind Banes, or with the Wendigo to harry their foes on the ground or in the sky.

As time passed, the human Kin of the tribes discovered their own ways, and became quite different from one another. Each place changed them, and gave them new ideas and ways to live with the land. While the Garou who lived among them could guide them, they could not always control them. The Three Brothers always preferred to let their Kin do what they wanted, as long as it did not anger Gaia or the spirits. Besides, they were too few and their Kin too many to fully watch over.

Thus, sometimes the humans would get into trouble. What's more, since there were humans in the Pure Lands before the Garou tribes brought more, the tribal Kin bred with these human nations, and became more like them. They grew apart from the ways that the Wolf Changers had given them. While they still cherished the traditions of their Wolf-brethren, new ways came to them.

## *The Mound Builders*

With the coming of the Garou in the north, Wyrms-creatures fled further south as the Wolf Changers advanced. The humans living there suffered badly before the Garou came and lived among them. Those humans furthest south, where no Garou had yet come, had it the worst.

The Gauntlet was not very strong in the Pure Lands. Sometimes, even a human could wander into the spirit world without knowing it, or spirits could come into the physical world disguised as people or animals. Most of the time, this was a wonderful thing, and most humans paid great respect to the spirits because of it. But in some places, where the Wyrms-spirits were most numerous, it could be very bad for the humans.

Of all the Garou tribes, only a few members of the Uktena went farthest south, into Mexico and beyond, but this was only after a long while, too late to help some of the humans there.

Of course, humans are not always completely helpless. Some among them were powerful shamans,

whose powers rivaled those of the greatest Garou and whom even the spirits respected or feared. Many such shamans also helped in the battle against evil, although not a few of them thought that the Garou were evil and battled them, too.

This was the way of things especially in the place today called Mexico. There, the shamans had tired of the power spirits had over them, and they worked to prevent it. Without Garou to defend them from the Wyrms, they had to come up with their own ways. Of course, they chose the Weaver as their ally, as most humans do, for she is ever ready to aid them even though other beings know better than to seek her aid.

After a long time and much work, the shamans got the people around them to believe as they did, which greatly helped to empower their spells. They sought to bring order to the chaos of the spirit world, to prevent it from spilling into their lives. Their secret to this was an ingenious Weaver device of the mind: a calendar. They did their best to shape time itself, so that the world behaved as they wanted it to. Only on certain days could the spirit world affect the lives of humans, and even then only in specific ways or through specific spirits. They had strengthened the Gauntlet with their own willpower, and by inviting the Weaver into the hearts of their people.

They also built huts of stone, and from there learned to build pyramids to remove themselves from the ground and come closer to the heavens, which they revered. Their calendar was not completely of their making, for it was heavily influenced by the stars, and thus by the spirits who fueled those stars, who are ever jealous of the nearness earth-spirits have to humans. With the human shamans' aid, they exalted themselves above spirits who were the humans' neighbors. In this way did foreign spirits who lived far away and whose influence was weak overcome the local spirits of the place.

Their greatest spirit, though, was mighty indeed, for it was Helios, the Sun. They revered him above all other celestial lights, and dedicated their prayers to him. They believed it was he who gave them life, and sustained it. Typical humans. Yes, Helios does sustain our lives and enlivens the plants that feed us, but he does not give life. That is Grandmother's gift. Only the Earth Mother can do such a thing. These humans had forgotten all about Her.

The people who followed these ways were not always happy. They believed life was cruel. Who could blame them? The Wyrms-spirits had made things tough for them. But no more. Now, their



magic protected them by ordering the days of their lives and telling them what to do.

They warred upon one another eventually, and some of them moved northwards, coming into the lands of the Croatan Kinfolk, along the Gulf Coast and up the Mississippi River. There they built new pyramids and brought some of their ways to the humans living there, including the Croatan's Kin.

These people from the south highly valued commerce, and built strong trade friendships with the locals, giving them beautiful crafts in return for hides and meat. Things were good between the two peoples. So good that some imitated the ways of the newcomers, and began to build their own human-made mountains, mounds of all shapes and sizes farther north. The Weaver had its webs in them now.

How seductive she is! Today we can look back and see what went wrong, but things weren't so clear then, not even for the Croatan. All this Weaver stuff seemed pretty good, for it improved their lives and didn't really hurt the land much, at least not so others could see the damage within their lifetimes.

And there was another thing they brought with them — perhaps the greatest Weaver power of all, but one that had been blessed by Gaia: A totem spirit came with their gifts: corn. When the newcomers brought corn and the ways to plant it with them, they changed many of the lifeways of those around them. While they saw the corn as a good food, the Croatan also saw the good spirit who brought it: Corn Woman.

Curious about this oddly abundant crop, a few Garou went into the spirit world to seek the truth of it, and there met Corn Woman, a beautiful maiden of golden light and sweet smell. She was both a daughter of Gaia and a Weaver-spirit, and she came from the green earth, but had given to humans the rites by which they could bring forth her children. Like an Animal Elder who oversaw the population of its children in the physical world, Corn Woman became concerned that the humans had forgotten how to honor her children as the gift they were; they took the growing for granted.

The Croatan, greatly impressed by the spirit, swore that they would teach their Kin to remember to thank the spirits for each yield, and to always honor Corn Woman as long as they ate her children. If not, droughts would haunt their lands.

And so the Croatan were among those who spread the ways of planting to their Kin. Perhaps no other festival was so beloved by them as the potlatch, the harvest ceremony whereby a great chief gives all his food to others, along with other goods. You see, trading was not about money and power back then. A chief

collected goods so that he could give them away, and rise highly in the estimation of his people. They were obligated to him not by fear of power, but honor and respect for what he did for them. Leadership was earned. Trading was another way to gain good things to give to others. Where was the evil in this?

It was there all right, but hidden deep. It took a long time before the Croatan finally found it, and by then it had spread. Not even Helios had seen it, for it had learned to hide from his light.

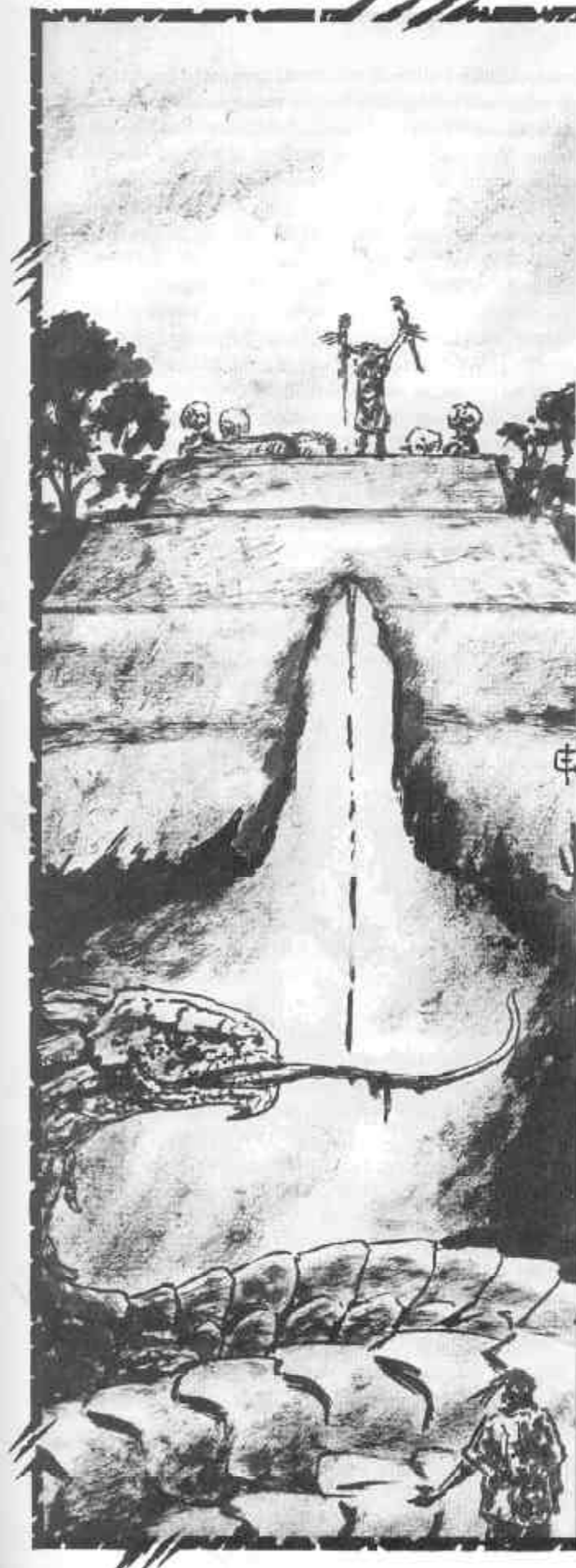
How it came to be was thus: One of the great shamans among the humans who maintained the rites that kept the people safe from the spirit world had a vision from his gods one day. These gods wanted blood to drink. Ever fearful of the gods, and knowing that they must be appeased, the shaman gathered slaves together and gave their blood in sacrifice to the god. After that, the sun shone brighter and the crops grew better. Or so it seemed.

The practice of spilling blood continued for years, but it was not enough. Blood made the gods hunger for more, for there is much power in blood but also much yearning, and once the taste of it gets in you, never will it go away. They wanted hearts now, for these organs pumped the blood, and had the most of it in them. And so the shamans cut out the hearts of their sacrifices and gave them to the gods in great rites.

What they did not know was that it was all a trick. They served the Weaver, the creator of order against the Wyld chaos. What they did not know was that she was already corrupt, for the Wyrms lay wrapped in a cocoon in her heart, and whispered thoughts to her that she believed to be her own. So when the Wyrms demanded blood, so too did she. And all her servants wanted the same, from Jagglings to Cafflings and even totems that followed her. Only Corn Woman resisted, but not all her spirits did, for some places still demand blood for their corn to grow.

It got so bad that one of the Leeches came to live among them, and they believed him a god among men, for blood was his power, as it was for their gods. But that is another story. This evil one did not come north, and was not seen by the three tribes of Garou.

The practice of blood sacrifice traveled north to the pyramid people who lived near the Croatan, and they tried to capture the people of the nearby hunting nations for their sacrifices. No longer could the Croatan ignore the corruption, no matter how many good things came of friendship with these peoples. But it was hard, for some Croatan had been born among these people, for they had married Kinfolk, and had become Kinfolk themselves.



The Croatan wondered how to prevent the evil without killing their own Kin. Unlike Garou in the old country, they did not like to punish their Kin too harshly; they preferred instead to teach lessons by which the Kin would learn on their own, and choose the right ways of their own will. What's more, they feared to bring war, for that would only spill blood. This would surely give even more power to the evil growing among them.

So they sent a cunning Theurge to spy out this blood sacrifice and discover how it might be ended through wisdom rather than war. It was Three Scars who went, and he was already known to the humans, although they did not know his secret, which was that he was one of the Wolf Changers. They thought him a shaman from the north, and respected him for his power and wisdom. Eager to show him their new ways, they invited him to the great sacrifice, where they would kill captured people not of their nation, and give blood to the gods so that the crops would grow greater.

He went with them to the top of their pyramid on the proper day ordained for the rite, and waited with them as people were brought and tied to the slab of stone they had erected for that purpose. Everyone watched the sacrifices eagerly, hungry now for the sight of blood; it had already corrupted them. No one saw as Three Scars disappeared from the pyramid, gone as if he was never there. He had stepped into the spirit world, to sery the truth of what really happened.

And there he saw the creature, the black snake that coiled beneath the rock, venom dripping from its fangs, waiting for its new meal. Wisely, Three Scars knew that to attack it would only chase it away; he was no Ahroun, and could not easily kill it. Instead, he spoke to it:

"Oh, mighty snake, your meal is soon coming. I have helped to bring it to you. Will you help me serve you better?"

The snake slide from under the rock to look at Three Scars suspiciously, staring intently at him. The Theurge was in his human form, and were none of his fetishes, so nobody could recognize him as Garou. The snake then looked about, seeking the promised meal.

"Where iss it?" the snake asked.

"It is coming. It must first be prepared through the proper rites. Tell me, oh snake, how did you learn the power of blood? I would never have thought of such a cunning way to power myself."

"Yess," the snake smiled. "Humanss are stupid. You do not even know what I am, yet you feed me."

"But I wish to know you better," Three Scars says. "Is it not proper to first feed a guest before asking him to tell his story?"

The snake smiled again. "Your wayss are sso innocent. Eassy to corrupt. Ssee how I hide my purposse in your ssimple hossipitality?"

"Ah," said Three Scars. "You are wise. Tell me your purpose, since I am the only one here. I can help you achieve it better if I know it."

The snake narrowed its eyes. "Ignorance. That iss my shadow. You wissh to ssee passt it. Why?"

"I have seen your cunning. You hide in plain sight. No one suspects you. This is a great power. How can I learn it?"

"Sselfish," the snake said, satisfied. "You lusst for power, even if it cosstss your people their ssoulss. I like you."

The snake slid over to Three Scars and climbed up his leg, wrapping himself around his torso. All the while Three Scars stood still, pretending to like the snake. He was secretly preparing his own trick.

"You ssee," said the snake. "My masster is unseen. While hiss brotherss stomp and sscream, he ssstayss ssilent, sso that none know he iss there. While the ssupid Wolvess fight hiss brotherss, he defiless their Kin."

"Who is your master?" Three Scars asked.

"The Great Wyrn," the snake replied, its head now coiling around Three Scar's neck.

"I did not know the Wyrn had brothers."

"Yess. It iss three. Little Brother, Beast of War. Middle Brother, Eater of Soulss. And Older Brother, my masster, Defiler."

Three Scars froze in fear. This was something he had not heard before, that no one in the Pure Lands knew of. To them, the Wyrn was an evil beast of corruption, but one that knew rage more than cunning. But now the Wyrn mocked them — it had become three shadows of the Three Brothers. What did this mean?

"I... I have only heard of your master's little brother before. I have not heard of the others."

"Of course not. The Eater of Soulss is yet to come. He will eat the Wolvess' Middle Brother, and then devour the Pure Lands. My masster will rule over what iss left."

Three Scars could take no more. He was more afraid now than he had ever been, for no one had been so close to such a cunning evil as he had. The snake sensed his fear and smiled, and tightened his coils to strangle the inquisitive human. But Three Scars was

ready, and he shifted into wolf form. As his body dropped and changed shape, the snake could not wrap its coils quickly enough around this new, lithe body. Three Scars burst free and ran into the spirit world, calling for his allies and any spirit who would aid him.

The snake was quick, though. Its slow movements before had been a ruse. It now slid across the Umbral ground like a sled across snow, and he bit at the heels of the fleeing wolf. But in its anger to slay the Garou, it forgot where its true power lay: in hiding. Now in plain sight, and following upon a howling wolf, all the nearby spirits could hear it, and came to see what was happening.

A Corax, one of the Raven-brothers, flew by and shot downward to nip at the snake. Its beak pierced the scales and the snake leapt back, coiling in a spiral, ready to spring at the Raven on its next dive.

Three Scars cried out to the Raven: "Stay away from it! Go and seek my packmates! This thing will be hard to kill!"

The Raven Changer flew to the north, where he knew the Croatan lived, for they had always been good to his people, often leaving them part of their hunts.

Three Scars was wary, circling the snake, ready to run again if the thing moved, but the snake curled up and sat there, staring, unmoving. Time passed like this for a long while, until howls could be heard across the Umbrascap. Three Scars brightened, and replied. His pack was on its way.

The snake scowled, and dug its head between its coils, where it could not be seen. In moments, it coils withdrew inward, disappearing as if they were being drawn someplace else. Three Scars did not know what was happening until the snake was gone. All that was left was a hole in the ground. It had dug its way into the earth to escape.

As his packmates came running up, Three Scars explained what had happened, and pointed to the hole, which was already sealing up with earth from below. It was too late; the enemy had escaped.

The pack returned to home and called a Grand Moot, inviting Croatan from all over, and they even called upon the Uktena and Wendigo tribes, for this dark prophecy of the Wyrn concerned them all. The three tribes were disturbed that the Wyrn had imitated the legendary brothers; this was a mockery that had greater purpose than insult alone. What did it mean?

The time had come where fear for their own Kin could no longer prevent the Croatan from acting. They had to destroy this evil influence and send it out of their lands.



Sorely this hurt them, for they had come to love many of the humans' ways themselves. The leader of the humans was a powerful shaman, called the Brother of the Sun, and he had taught the Croatan many secrets of Helios' power, so that many in the tribe now revered the Sun over the Moon. Members of the Uktena and Wendigo had been visited by Luna and warned that no good could come of this, for Wolf Changers had to hunt by night, where the sun could not shine. Older Brother and Little Brother remembered their duty to Middle Brother, and now warned the Croatan to thank the Sun but to ally with him no longer, and to return to Luna.

Shamed, the Croatan now saw the wisdom of this, and knew they had done wrong. If they had not been so concerned with the day, perhaps the night would not have become so dark. Still, though, they wanted to save their Kin from too much hardship. And they feared the anger of the Brother of the Sun, for he would surely never believe that all the ways he had brought to his people were tainted. They began to wonder if he were tainted himself.

It was because of him, the Brother of the Sun, that so many people had come from so far to live near the mounds. Thousands of campfires could be seen in all directions from the main pyramid every evening. It was his spiritual ways that brought them, for they

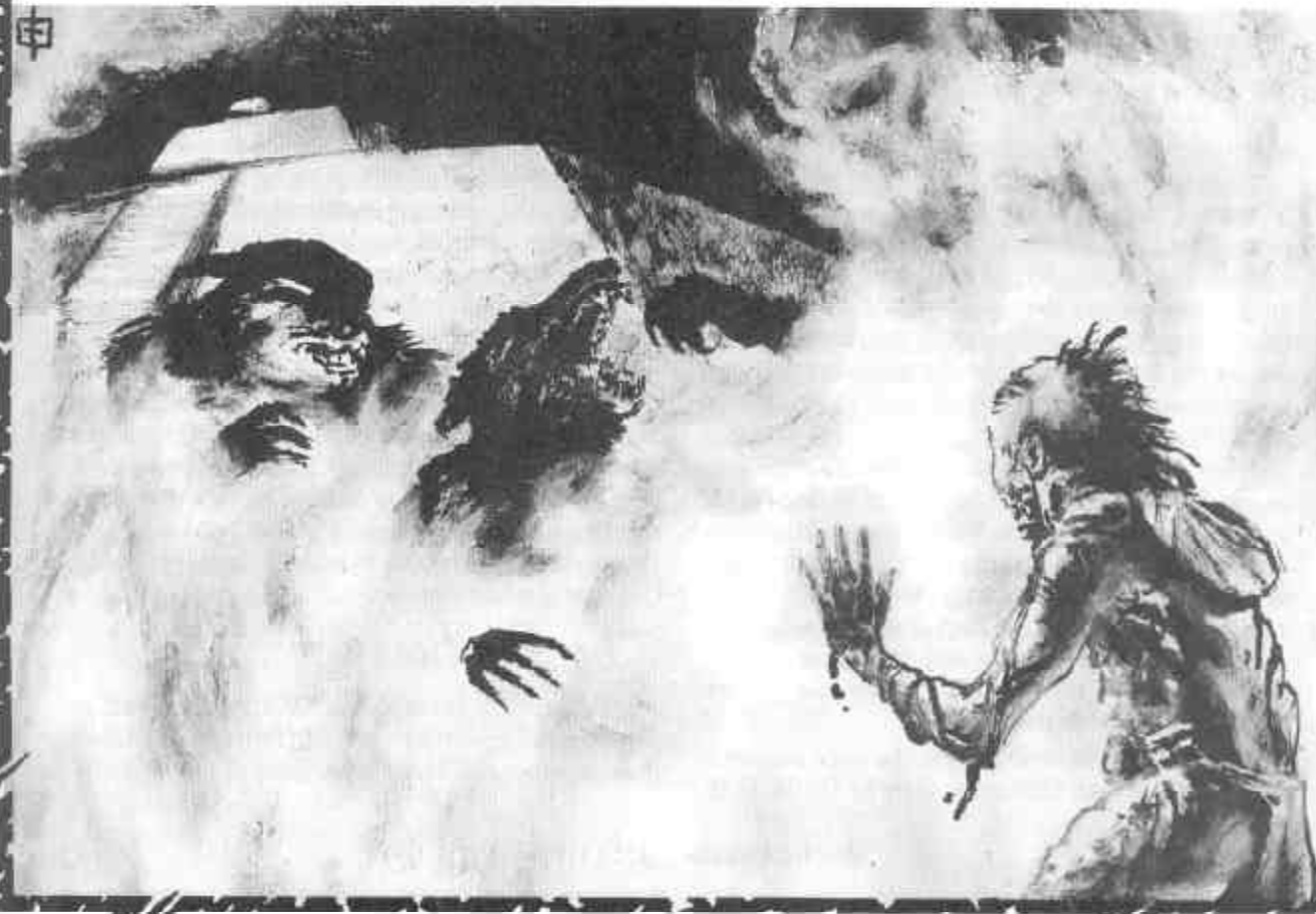
considered him holy, and wanted to be near his blessed dwelling.

Before bringing spirit powers of their own against the Brother of the Sun, they decided to tell their most important Kin, those that knew the secret of their wolf-blood, to leave these lands, to travel to where its corruption was unknown. In the following days, many of the families packed their things and left.

This did indeed anger the Brother of the Sun, for he knew that they were related to the Croatan Wolf Changers, and wondered why the tribe now sent their Kin away. He commanded that one of the Croatan come before him and explain. Three Scars was chosen, and he went with his pack to the great pyramid, near the wooden star circle that told the people the days of their calendar.

He told the Brother of the Sun of his encounter with the Wyrn, and the evil the shaman had unknowingly unleashed. The shaman was enraged. How dare the Wolf Changers tell him that his ways, that he had discovered himself, were evil! In his anger, he struck Three Scars, knocking him down. The Croatan pack took the Glabro form and circled about him, warning him to withdraw and allow them to leave. No more would the Croatan take part in his ways.

The Brother of the Sun, now supremely angry, for his pride was strong, called to Helios and told them



that the Croatan now forsook him, running to his sister instead. He then summoned down a spear of fire, and threw it into Three Scars. Flames consumed the brave Garou. His pack leapt to him and rolled him over the earth, trying to put out the fire, but it could not be smothered. Finally, as the Garou was nearly dead, the Brother of the Sun withdrew his fire, leaving Three Scars weak and unable to move from the pain.

Well, the shaman was wise in many things, and powerful. But he had lived in peace with the Croatan for too long, and never even seen the Croatan's brothers, especially Little Brother of the north. If he had, perhaps then he would not have done so a terrible thing to Three Scars. Perhaps then he would have known of the rage of the Garou, and have known to fear it.

Three Scars' pack could not control their own anger, and this insult was too much. In the time it takes for a hummingbird to flap its wings but thrice, the Garou were upon the shaman, in full battleform, their claws and teeth tearing his flesh as a wolf devours a deer.

But he was powerful, as had been said before. Bloody, his throat torn out and his ribcage bared, he made a wall of fire to surround him, burning the frothing pack. The intense pain brought the pack to their senses, quenching their rage. They gathered the sorely wounded Three Scars and slipped into the spirit world before the shaman could pursue them. To hide their escape, they called to Luna to cover their trail, and this she did. The shaman's power was in the sun, and was weaker in the Umbra, where only the moon shone.

It was over. The Croatan had to destroy the Brother of the Sun before he could destroy the humans. War raged all throughout the shaman's lands. Kinfolk fought their former neighbors, and Croatan fought the shaman's aides, the priests to whom he had taught some of his power. And the human tribes from outside the lands with whom the mound people had traded, now turned against them; no more would their people be sacrificed.

Working with their brother tribes, the Croatan planned over many nights what was to be done next, and they carefully chose the packs that would achieve their aim. Many packs spread throughout all the lands nearby, to the north and south, everywhere there was a pyramid or even a mound. Unknown to the humans they crept there, at the edge of the woods and in the Umbra, preparing themselves for the moment when the moon rose above the horizon.

At that time, from all over, at the same moment, the Garou used their Gifts given them by Turtle. They

shook their fetish rattles and banged their spirit drums. It was a great noise they made, and much power did they unleash. Turtle himself stirred at the racket and aided their own Gifts by shaking his back.

The very earth rocked and quaked throughout the region. The pyramids shook and crumbled. The mounds opened and fell into chasms. Water rose out of the earth and flooded the plains. The people ran and screamed, for never before had they seen or heard such a nightmare. The very ground beneath them rebelled against them, and swallowed many of them up, or the raging water swept them away. So chaotic was it, that even a few Garou were crushed, for they had gotten too close to the earthshaking in their reckless rage.

The Brother of the Sun was not seen again, although no one knew for sure what had become of him. Was he taken into the earth like so many others? Or did he flee to the south, whence his people had first come? Perhaps he crept into the spirit world and there got lost, for Luna would not shine for him. I think it was the Wurm that took him, and ate his heart.

When the great earthshaking was over, the region was never the same. Old landmarks were gone, replaced by new. Someone who had been born here and traveled away would not know it if he came back. Even the caerns were shuffled, their powers strange for a while.

But the desired effect had been gained: the humans fled back into the woods and became hunters once again. It was many years before they once more settled to plant corn and honor Corn Woman. But never again did they build pyramids or live near the old mounds. Such places as were left standing were abandoned, considered ghost places by those that had survived. Some sour influence must have remained, because the earthshaking would come again, during the 19th century; perhaps there was a Bane bound during the struggles that most of us have forgotten, something that will try to break free again.

But that was a long way off. The Croatan Kinfolk adjusted again to a more proper way of living, one less beholden to the Weaver. Few human nations still remember these times, for so great was the turmoil that much lore was lost. Some stories remained, though, such as among the Natchez, who still bore the seed of the Croatan secretly in the blood, until the time the Croatan died.

## *The Sacrifice*

This world is full of sorrow. While there are many wonders and joys, they are made bitter by the losses that we withstand. None know more of loss than the

Uktena and Wendigo, for they have lost their beloved brothers among the Croatan, and can never be whole again until their spirit returns.

This story has been told of late, for the Wendigo once more sing it in their moots after years of bitter silence. The story of Wanchese's great army and their battle against the Eater-of-Souls. Their victory cost them their lives, though, and the lives of all the Croatan who did not fight.

You see, the Croatan had long worried over the prophecy of the dark snake, that the Eater-of-Souls would one day come and devour them. They thought that if they fought it first, they could win out over the prophecy. But it was not too be. The Eater did not eat them, though. They died, but not in its maw. The Wyrn lied.

Or did it? Some whisper that the Eater is here among us now, feeding our rage. I think that is a lie. We can do that well enough on our own without it.

What has not yet been told is the tale of those Croatan who could not make it to the great battle on the eastern shore. There were many Croatan, especially on the west coast, who could not come so far, and some that even did not hear the tidings until much later.

But they did not escape their brothers' fate. When the great Croatan hero, Wanchese, died in battle, so to did the tribe's connection to the spirit world. They were as the walking dead from then on. The spirits shunned them, as if a doom hung over them that they feared to touch. No more would the spirits teach them Gifts, and as the days passed, no longer could the Croatan walk the Umbra. They died without power, shadows of their former glory. Their Kinfolk bore no more young Croatan, no matter how many generations passed. Their legacy was death.

Only their brothers remembered them, but even they feared to speak too loudly of them, keeping their songs close to their heart but far from their mouths. Only at special moots was their story told, and even then, too many tears and sorrows usually prevented the whole tale from being sung.

The Uktena and Wendigo tribes slowly took over what Croatan caerns they could, to maintain them and keep them from taint, but they could not take them all. Some were left abandoned, and were eventually forgotten. Even today, not all are known. Do they still exist?

European Garou, who to this day know little of those that consecrated their sacred places for them, later claimed some caerns. It is time they knew. It is time they also sing the Croatan Song.

Hey ya

Hey ya

Thank you, ancestors

Your song was strong

And has made well my heart

Hey ya

Hey ya

It's time for other stories. Stories about the other tribes, the Uktena and Wendigo. It is their time now. Middle Brother is gone, and they must bear the burden of defending the Pure Lands. But against so many!

I'm tired now, and will no longer sing. Let other voices take my place.

## *The Middle Times*

Pass the pipe and let my words ascend with the sacred smoke so they are seen to be true. Spirits of earth and fire, spirits of air and water, hear me! Spirits of the mountains and plains, guardians of the forests and hills, witness my tale!

We are an ancient and a complex people, we Garou of the Pure Lands. You have heard of our beginnings, the creations and the journeys, the mingling with those already here. I will speak of the middle times, when we settled in and around towns and villages of our Kinfolk or roamed at will across the lands. In this time, game was plentiful, the land was rich and our powers were strong. We and our Kin fought terrible monsters and bound great horrors. Stories of those days will live forever among our people. I tell some of them to you now.

Here within my story bag live many voices. They tell many interrelated tales. Some of them speak of our Kinfolk, some of our brothers and some tell of Uktena triumphs and sorrows. These are the tales told in winter, when the snows and ice make outside work difficult, for our Kin never told stories in summer. Then there was too much to do, too many tasks that needed finishing. Stories told in summer were foolish things, jokes and silly tales useful only for entertaining small children. Those told in winter spoke of heroes, of our people's coming to new places, of great battles or alliances, of feasts we hosted and trophies we took. They spoke of our lives and our friends and families and of the monsters we fought or bound. Respected elders told such tales and all knew that true telling was in them. The stories in my bag are true winter tales. Heed them if you will.

It was in this way, then:



## The Southeast

Some of the People who were Kinfolk to the Uktena traveled a long way over the years, stopping here and there for some to settle while the rest moved onward. We Uktena and a few Croatan who lodged with us traveled alongside them to keep them safe on their journeys. Unlike the whites that came later, we did not travel from sunrise to sunset, but from the west. We crossed the Father of Waters, which you call the Mississippi River, and traveled east.

A white dog and a leaning staff led us. This was not just any staff, but one of great, sacred power. It belonged to our great shaman who was called Chacta. He had seen in a dream that we would follow the white dog and the staff would tell us when we reached the place that was to be ours. Each night Chacta would thrust the staff into the ground. Each morning the staff would be found leaning as though pointing toward the East. The dog would arise and move eastward. We would follow. And then one morning, we awoke to find that the staff remained upright and the dog was dead. Now some say that this was no dog, but a white wolf, one of the spirit brothers sent to lead us. None now can say what the truth of that is, for none remain of that group and the Ancestor-spirits do not say.

Our people, to celebrate our new home, first built a sacred mound as we had been taught to do in the west. It was called *nanih waiya* or "leaning mound" and it stood where the staff finally rested. Here we came to meet together for council and for giving thanks and speaking to the spirits.

It has been told of the cleansing of the mound builder folk, how they fled back into the woods when the Garou frightened them from their tainted mounds. The leaning mound was not affected in such a way. Our Kinfolk continued to use it in their rituals and meetings until long after the coming of the white man had despoiled the lands and brought the sickness to our people.

Near to the leaning mound, but hidden within woods, we discovered one of Gaia's holy places. Many fine wolf packs lived nearby and we joyfully merged with them as new and vital Kinfolk. Guarded by spirits of the woodlands, the Mother's sacred spot held within it an ancient spreading oak, a split rock the size of a council house and a spring of pure water that fell over a series of tiny ledges to form a stepping stone waterfall. There we bargained with the spirits for their help and opened our caern. The Sept of the Council Rock became a great force in our Kinfolk's lives as we cleansed the area of bad influences and kept monsters from attacking our nation's people. Thus they were left

to attend to their daily lives, planting crops and building homes, meeting in council, holding festivals and playing the game you now call lacrosse. Those who won the games achieved much honor for themselves and their town. Despite rivalries, especially with the Chickasaw who thought they should control the river, our people led peaceful lives of work and trade.

Not all Wolf Changers were so fortunate as we were. Our Choctaw Kin numbered in the thousands and spread throughout southern Mississippi, western Alabama and eastern Louisiana. Of course, the lands were not known by those names then, nor did we acknowledge boundaries except those formed by the hunting and croplands claimed by each encampment.

Many other nations also traveled to the southeast, though some claimed that their people had always been there. Chickasaw, Cherokee and many smaller nations who became known as the Creek all founded towns and trading settlements in Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. Later, those Creeks who lived in more southern areas would form a separate nation called the Seminole. Many Seminole ultimately built their lives in Florida. English settlers would someday call these nations the Five Civilized Tribes; for they lived in settled communities, had their own governments and indulged in trade with one another.

Of the caerns that were opened near the settlements of these Kinfolk, four were of major significance. Known as the Web of Sacred Stone, they formed a network of power and purity that held the great Bane Poisoner-of-Rivers captive. Four great heroes, one from each sept, forced the Bane into a limestone cave and bound it there with great and terrible rites. The Sept of the Green Stone, a sept founded by kin of the Chickasaw, sent a famous Warrior. From the Sept of the Crystal, a caern in Creek lands, came a powerful Shaman. We of the Sept of the Council Rock contributed our most puissant Law Giver and the Sept of the Heart's Blood, a garnet-filled cavern claimed by the Cherokee, offered their most notorious Trickster. Together, these four defeated the Poisoner. The Trickster taunted the Bane, making it follow him to the site they had chosen. The Warrior held it at bay until it entered its tomb. The Shaman bound it with mighty medicine and the Law Giver pronounced its doom over it and secured the final bindings. Finally, four Songkeepers, each from one of the septs, made a great song about the binding so none would forget our glory and responsibility.

For long and weary years the four septs kept guard over Poisoner-of-Rivers, renewing the bindings and

working together even when their Kinfolk were at war with one another. That changed only with the coming of the Wyrmbearers to our lands. We sing a lament for what was lost when Middle Brother was slain battling Eater-of-Souls and we howl a mournful song for the loss of our lands and our Kinfolk who were forced from their homes and sent away to die.

### *The Southwest*

I heard most of this story from my mother's mother who claims she was a girl when it happened. I am not certain I believe her, but her story tells much nonetheless. She tells her tale thus: The people were out in the fields and before their dwellings when they saw and heard the approach of many people. The strangers were oddly dressed with gleaming metal coats and they rode upon beasts like none we had ever seen, tall, fierce creatures with long legs and barrel bodies. They held weapons — long knives and spears — and carried strangely shaped sticks as well. Later, we would come to know the odd sticks as guns.

I looked up from grinding the corn and saw the men coming into the village. The strangers came down to speak to them. Some in the village spoke the tongue of the southern lands and could understand what they were saying. We were told they were the Spanish, the same evil men who had killed so many in other areas looking for gold in seven cities called Cibola. We had never heard of these places, for we were a peaceful people.

The elders of the village, among whom were those of the Wolf Changers who were our blood kin, met and decided that the path of wisdom was to study the invaders and learn what drove them. They told us we would have to move from our homes so that the new people could take them for their own. Though my family had lived in our part of the village for generations, we packed our belongings and went to live with my father's sister's family. Once we were away from the ones who smelled so badly, the priests came and told us that we were being wise. We would not fight the metal coats and so we would not die. I did not believe them. Many years before traders from a village where the Spanish had been came to our village. While here, they sickened and died and the priests could do nothing. Soon, half our village swelled and died from the spots that brought fever. We were very afraid for we thought they would loose their Sickness-spirits at us again.

This did not happen, but they built an ugly shrine to their evil dead god and changed our old homes so they could "defend" themselves. At least that is what they said. Why would they need to defend themselves

from us when we offered them no harm? Still, they were very bad men, for they took our food and gave us nothing in return. They did not work the fields or make pots or help in other ways. They said instead that they were protecting us, though always before we had protected ourselves from raiders or else left out enough that they would take it and go.

Their priests told us of their white god and how his own people had killed him. His sacrifice saved them, so they said, which they thought made him a great god. We could not understand. Had the god's death brought rain for crops? Did it make a river flow that had dried up? We had heard before of the sacrifices the Mexicans made, tearing our men's hearts to make themselves stronger and more prosperous and to appease their blood-hungry gods. We did not understand, but we sought the wise and peaceful way and agreed to learn about their god since they thought him so important. We did not know then what a mistake that would be.

Always we sought the even way, smoothing the land before planting and clearing the ground before our dances. Accepting the Spanish god was like that. We were forced to have them as our neighbors, even though they smelled so bad to me I could not be in their presence without wanting to bring up my food, and so we tried to accept their god and think of him as one more like our own gods. That was not enough for them.

The Spanish insisted that we give up our own gods and stop our rituals. How foolish they were! Our observances gave us strength as a people and pleased our gods so that they sent us rain and preserved us. Our rituals thanked the Mother for her generosity. We would not agree to their foolishness and then we learned how vicious the metal coats were. We had realized they were evil men with only greed in their hearts, but we had hoped they would learn from us. Now we saw that the Wyrms lay coiled within them and they would not cast it from them.

They tortured and killed our people, trying to force us to love their dead god. They took our people for slaves and destroyed our fields. They took our food and left none for us.

We had had enough. Though our people had never tried to assert themselves over our neighbors, now we all joined together to fight the bad Wyrmsmelling men. Now I found why it was I had always smelled the foulness in them, for I went through my First Change. We fought from atop one of our holy places, a mesa they did not know well. Many villages and their Wolf-brothers came together to fight the Wyrmsmen. And we won. We made them leave our place, the place given to us to live in and care for, and go back to the south. It would be many years before

they returned in greater force and by then, we had moved to another place. They would not again find us as easy to overtake, for we had indeed learned something from them. We would never again live so openly as we had; now we built our homes in a way that we could defend ourselves from our so-called neighbors.

## *The Western Coast*

The story of our Kinfolk, the Miwok, has been told by my father and his father and grandfather before him. It is a tale of a strong people scattered and how they danced to become one again.

In the beginning times we hunted for the Mother's bounty along the many streams and rivers. We were prosperous and traded among our many settlements. When the Spanish Wym-carriers came they brought their sharp swords, loud guns and many diseases with them. Those of my people that they didn't kill, they tried to enslave.

Later, when the Spanish of the southlands came, our Kinfolk tried to ally with them, helping to drive away the Mexican. When the war was finished and our people victorious, the white men betrayed us, murdering us and scattering us from our homes.

We would have lost our names then except for the words of the great prophet Chiplichu. He came to our lands and spoke of a great dance, the Ghost Dance, which would give us strength again and power over our enemies. His song called us together again as a people. Although we are diminished, we still sing and dance as we once did before the coming of the white man.

Others would find sorrow in the Ghost Dance later, for our brothers the Wendigo heard of this dance from a shaman named Wovoka. The Paiute danced Chiplichu's dance of renewal as a means to drive the Wym-bringers away. Instead of healing, their steps led only to bloodshed and despair for the whites did fear them and sought to kill them lest they raise the spirits to drive the invaders from their lands.

For now my storybag is empty. Go and listen to another and learn what they can teach you. I will be here tomorrow and perhaps I will have another tale to tell.

## *Tales of the Story Knife*

See this? Look at it carefully and then tell me that you have never seen a finer knife. Yes, it's carved entirely from ivory and is more than a hundred years old. It has been in my family for many generations. My Kinfolk mother gave it to me when I was a child, and it came to her from her mother who got it from her mother. You get the idea, I'm sure. The etchings on the blade and hilt depict an arctic wolf — for obvious reasons. My family knew they were Kinfolk almost

from the beginning, and never made any attempt to hide it from their children.

This is called a storyknife. Children of the Inuit use it in their storytelling games. The one who tells the story draws pictures as she speaks, setting the stage for the story and making figures to represent the characters, who can't "speak" until they are completely drawn. When their part in the story is done, the characters disappear, erased by the blade of the storyknife to make room for new characters.

This particular storyknife is a family heirloom, but some of my tribemates know how to make storyknives that hold spirits to aid them in their storytelling. I'll just make do with the knife I have — and my memory.

The stories I have to tell you come from many traditions and stretch through many centuries. These are tales of the Wendigo and our Kinfolk, of the things that happened to us in the Pure Lands and the evil that tracked us down and ruined a way of life that preserved us and the land we lived in. Pardon my anger now and again, for many of the tales are not happy ones. I'll try to mix the good with the bad, though, because I want you to stay and listen to it all.

## *The Ways of Peace and War*

Now I take the storyknife in hand and draw a land of forests with two Great Lakes in their midst. This is the homeland of the Mohawk, the Cayuga, the Oneida, the Seneca and the Onondaga. My knife makes many slashes across the land, to symbolize the warriors of these nations. They fight one another almost constantly, bringing great sorrow to the women and children of all the nations and sowing death wherever they go. The causes of these battles are many: jealousy over hunting grounds, feuds between families or clans, grudges between nations.

The Wendigo guardians of these nations called a council to see what they could do to make an end to the useless fighting, but even we could not come to an agreement. A few of my tribemates, so our stories tell us, approved of the fighting, saying that it strengthened our Kinfolk and culled out the weakest of the warriors. Others argued that war should not break out among those who should be allies, but should be reserved for the Horned Serpent's brood and other enemies of the land and people.

Some backed one group of Kinfolk over another, saying that this war or that feud was justified for some reason or other. Like our quarreling Kin, we nearly came to blows several times.

Finally, one of our elders, a venerable Mediwiwin named Thunder Voice, spoke up in council. Watch as





the storyknife draws a large wolf-figure to represent one of our legendary peacemakers and problem solvers.

"There will come a time when our Kinfolk will need to stand together or they will be destroyed," Thunder Voice growled. "We must take action and see that they learn to live with bonds of friendship so that they can join with one another in times of war."

The blade of the storyknife wipes away these figures and begins again, with a drawing of a tall, muscular warrior of the Huron nation and of a young woman who is his mother. The warrior is Deganawida, whose mother received a vision that her child would one day destroy her people. Some say this vision came to her from the spirit world, brought to her by one of the Wendigo guardians of the Hurons. Deganawida's mother waited until the child was born and then tried three times to drown him to prevent the vision from coming to pass. Three times she tried and failed. Another version of the story says that the spirits brought Deganawida's mother a different message, telling her that her child would grow to become a great peacemaker. I don't know which version is the true one, but I think that both may be true at once. Great peacemakers can cause as much destruction as great makers of war.

The child lived and grew, and the spirits blessed him with many powers. He was almost certainly one of

the Kinfolk. When he reached his manhood, he built a canoe of white stone and set forth on his mission. Now the storyknife erases Deganawida's mother, for her part in the story has come to an end. Instead, I draw a canoe underneath the warrior to show his journey down the waterways from the lands of the Hurons to the lands of the warring nations of the Iroquois.

The storyknife places a woman in the path of our messenger of peace. This woman had a reputation for evil-doing, making it a practice to deceive and poison hunters who came to her house looking for food or shelter. Deganawida spoke with her and the purity of his message touched her heart. She vowed to turn aside from her wrongdoing and to work with Deganawida for peace among the nations of the Iroquois. Because of this, Deganawida made a promise to her.

"Your actions have brushed aside your past. From this day on, when my council becomes a thing of truth, the women will have the power to proclaim which men will be chiefs of the council nations."

I will scrape away the figure of the converted poisoner now and draw another figure. You may have heard of this one from a bad poem by a white verse-maker and you may have a lot of silly notions about the one called Ayonhwathah — or Hiawatha.

When Deganawida met Ayonhwathah, he recognized that this chief of the Onondaga was possessed by a cannibal spirit and was headed down a river of evil deeds. Deganawida, who had just changed the heart of a poisoner, decided that he could do no less for Ayonhwathah. After speaking to Deganawida, whose power shone from his face like the moon's blessings, Ayonhwathah repudiated the cannibal spirit. Some say that Deganawida called upon his Wendigo friends to help cleanse the spirit of Ayonhwathah, and I believe that this is probably true.

Deganawida traveled with Ayonhwathah for a while, taking his message of peace from one village to another and winning many to his cause. Most of the people were tired of the constant warfare and the constant disruption and unease caused by fear and death. They were only too glad to hear the words of peace and the promise of strength in numbers.

At Deganawida's request, Ayonhwathah returned to his own people, the Onondaga, and asked them to join the new council of nations. An evil sorcerer named Thadodaho — although some stories call him Atotarho — refused the offer and showed his displeasure by sending Disease-spirits to kill Ayonhwathah's entire family. Here is a picture of the sorcerer standing over the bodies of Ayonhwathah's wife and children. Disconsolate, Ayonhwathah left the village, vowing never to return until he had his vengeance.

Although my story moves on, I will not yet scratch out the figure of the sorcerer, though I will let the storyknife return the bodies of the sorcerer's victims to the earth.

Deganawida, who was returning from successfully converting the Mohawk nation to his cause, came across Ayonhwathah wandering in the forest, his dreams of peace broken by the evil deeds of a malicious sorcerer. Deganawida saw that Ayonhwathah wore about his neck a string of shell beads, to symbolize his grief. He read the tale depicted in the pattern of beads and knew what had happened to his friend. He took more beads and made different strings with patterns of sorrow and healing. Then, remembering lessons he learned from his wolf-spirit brothers, he recited formal words of cleansing and release. Ayonhwathah's grief disappeared and the pure fire of his vision rekindled in his heart once again.

Soon four of the five Iroquois nations had agreed to come together and end their incessant warring. Only the Onondaga refused to join the compact, led by the sorcerer Thadodaho. Ayonhwathah knew what he had to do.

"He will not listen to anyone but me," Ayonhwathah said. "I must do this to heal both of us." Ayonhwathah returned to the man who had killed his family and spoke to him again. This time, however, Deganawida came with him along with representatives of the other council

nations. Although they did not threaten Thadodaho, the sorcerer realized that he was beaten. He accepted the new way of peace from his former enemy Ayonhwathah and, in the spirit of peace, Ayonhwathah gave Thadodaho an important position on the council, symbolizing his belief that anyone — even a cannibal or an evil sorcerer — can change.

Now I erase all the figures from the earth, for my story is almost done. The League of Five Nations grew strong in the years before the arrival of the Wymcomers. Those who use the European calendar say that the League was formed around 1450. What matters is that we learned that our strength lies in standing together.

But there is another end to my story, and it is why I believe both versions of the tale of Deganawida's birth. After the Five Nations of the Iroquois joined together, they did not give up the way of war. They simply looked around for other enemies to fight. They found an enemy in their neighbors, the Huron nation. Their wars lasted even after the arrival of the French missionaries and traders, whose actions only fueled the fires even higher. Eventually, the Iroquois nations drove the Hurons from their homelands and destroyed their way of life.

The Wendigo guardians of the Hurons grew angry at their tribesmates who favored the Iroquois. This enmity prevented us from acting together at a time when we could have prevented the Europeans from infecting our Kinfolk with their customs and their religions and their diseases.

Now my storyknife wipes the earth clean and moves on to tell another tale.

## *Strangers Forever*

With the blade of my storyknife, I now carve a long coastline to represent the north Atlantic shore. The tale I am about to tell has many lessons, but the first lesson is this: do not trust anyone until you understand the customs of his people. Do not believe that your customs mean the same to a stranger as they do to you.

Before the Europeans who called themselves Pilgrims came to our shores, our Abenaki Kinfolk had already met traders and fishermen who plied the waters of the Atlantic to harvest the cod along our shores and to barter with the people that marveled at their ships. Some of these meetings seemed friendly enough. The Europeans offered our Kinfolk goods they had never seen before in return for the bounty of our waters. Other meetings led to hostilities, for the newcomers simply took what they wanted and sometimes made off with our people, taking them back to their homes as prizes.

When the English came to the land of our Algonquian Kinfolk, the Wendigo guardians of the

Abenaki sent messages to their tribesmates who watched over the Algonquians. The storyknife draws a wolf sitting on a high hill, howling a message to another wolf — now drawn by my blade — who receives the warning and feels dread in his heart.

"Do not trust these pale-faced liars," the message said. "They mean you only harm, though their voices do not tell you so."

Our Kinfolk chose not to listen to the warnings, and did what they could to make the newcomers welcome. The Pilgrims knew very little about the ways of their new home and they nearly died during their first winter. Only the generosity of Massasoit, who brought many people of his tribe and held a great potlatch to feast the Pilgrims, kept the small colony alive during their early years. Our Kinfolk taught the Pilgrims how to live in the forest, showing them how and what to hunt, what foods to plant and when to find the best fish and shellfish. Alliances came into being between the two groups, and even the Wendigo who watched these doings from afar were fooled.

"Perhaps these newcomers will respect our Kinfolk and the land," they howled back to their brothers among the Abenaki.

Then the wars began. As more Europeans came to the shores of the Fure Land and made treaties with our Kinfolk, outbreaks of violence between rival Europeans brought us into conflict with the newcomers as we tried to honor our treaties. Unfortunately, the Europeans did not understand our ways and believed that any violence on our part threatened all of them. Some of us sensed the presence of the Horned Serpent in the hearts of some of the European leaders. A few of these leaders even followed orders from the walking dead, whose Wyrmen, unbeating hearts provoked their white-skinned servants to even greater deeds of bloodshed and shame.

It is not so important to me to tell you which of our people fought which group of Europeans and how our wars became mixed up with their wars. My storyknife's blade would grow dull and refuse to scratch any more pictures into the ground if I tried to name every battle and draw every death.

All I need to say is that by the time the wars had come to an end our Kinfolk lay decimated — by the weapons of the newcomers and by the diseases that they brought.

Let me draw another part to this story, a hidden part that you will not find in any of the history books written by the Wyrmen or even in the legends of our surviving Kinfolk.

This is a story of how we Wendigo tried to come to some agreements with the European Garou who arrived on the ships and moved into our lands. My

storyknife now draws a picture of Howls-with-the-Storm, a great angalkuk who risked much renown to try to deal fairly with his distant brother Garou. I will also draw three other figures, representing the Fianna, the Get of Fenris and the Silver Fang speakers who met with Howls-with-the-Storm.

When he realized that his Kinfolk would not repel the newcomers but would instead try to make peace with them, Howls-with-the-Storm decided that he, too, would see if the European Garou could likewise make an alliance with the Wendigo. In the midst of the fighting among the English and the Dutch and our Kinfolk allied to both of these groups, Howls-with-the-Storm invited representatives of the European Garou to a council fire.

The three strangers came to a clearing in the forest where Howls-with-the-Storm awaited them with a feast laid out before him. A freshly killed deer lay ready for eating, its spirit properly thanked for giving its life in an important cause. Howls-with-the-Storm also brought gifts — fine belts of wampum depicting symbols of friendship and peace. He offered the deer and these gifts to his guests and greeted them in the tongue of the Garou so that they could understand his speech.

"My Kinfolk wish to live in peace with yours and share this bountiful land," Howls-with-the-Storm said. "Let us eat together and find a way to accomplish this so that we may join with one another in our common battle against the enemies of the Grandmother."

The three newcomers ate the deer and took the wampum belts, although they did not seem to place a great value on the belts; they stuffed them hastily into pouches they carried. "It is like this," one of the three said. "Our Kinfolk are numerous and strong. They are wise in the ways of the world and have fine weapons. They are only the first of many who will come here. This land seems large and your people are puny and ill suited to act as caretakers of it. We thank you for keeping the Wyrmen at bay until we could get here to take over. Now it is our turn. We ask you to show us your caerns, for one day they will fall into our keeping."

Howls-with-the-Storm cried out in anger at this display of rudeness and arrogance. "I came to you in peace, but you respond with words of hatred and violence. My tribe is not known for its easy temper, but I have tried to be generous to you, as my Kinfolk have been generous to yours. Now I see the truth behind your lies of treaties and alliances. You and your Kinfolk will take this land for your own and we will be left with nothing unless we fight you for it."

With that, Howls-with-the-Storm gave way to his rage and took his most fearsome battle form. He leapt upon his former guests, knowing as he did so that he was





breaking his own sacred peace by fighting with those he had so recently feasted. The three European Garou also took on their fiercest shapes and set upon Howls-with-the-Storm. The Fianna and the Silver Fang died before the Get of Fenris finally claimed the killing blow.

After the battle had ended, the pack mates of Howls-with-the-Storm, who had sworn not to intervene although they watched from a distance, took their revenge upon the Get, ripping his body into many pieces and commending his spirit to our own cannibal spirit Wendigo. They took Howls-with-the-Storm's body back to their caern and sang the tale of his doomed attempt at making peace. They took comfort in the fact that even though Howls-with-the-Storm was not born under a warrior's moon, he still proved hard to kill. The word spread from caern to caern that the Europeans were not to be trusted, and most of our tribe made oaths never to reveal the locations of their caerns to any Garou from over the great waters.

Now my storyknife is done with this tale.

## *The Price of a Skin*

Wait while I take the time to sharpen the blade of my storyknife, for it has a lot of work to do in my next story. This is a tale about the fur trade and how the

Europeans' greed for the skins of animals brought nothing but sorrow and destruction to the people and creatures of the Pure Lands. Prepare yourselves to weep or howl with anger, for this is not a pretty story — but then, not many of my tales are these days.

Now my storyknife is ready, and I hope you are, too. I draw a large picture, which represents most of the northern half of North America from one ocean to the other. My story starts here, with the same cod fishers who visited our Abenaki Kinfolk a couple of stories ago. It is the middle of the 1500s and the Europeans have not yet invented the Pilgrims.

Fishermen travel long distances and arrive on our shores, where they trade with our Kinfolk for fish — and furs. The Europeans had exhausted most of their own wildlife to provide skins and fine furs to clothe their nobles. They saw that our lands overflowed with fur-bearing animals of many kinds. I will let my storyknife draw pictures of mink and otter, sable, marten and beaver. These animals have no voice in this story except for their screams as they die at the hands of the trappers, but I draw them anyway to atone to their spirits for the wrongs that have been done to them.

At first, our Kinfolk traded the fur pelts to the European fishermen in return for metal goods and fine cloth. Because they did not believe in wasting any part of

an animal, they kept the meat and carcasses for themselves, thus keeping their pact with the Grandmother and with us, the guardians of our Kinfolk and of the Earth.

Then a spirit of greed entered into them, sent, I believe, by the Horned Serpent. The Frenchman Jacques Cartier, one of the many "discoverers" of our land, found the land around the St. Lawrence River to be a paradise for beavers and knew that he could make a fortune selling beaver furs to European hatmakers.

Trade alliances formed between European entrepreneurs and our Kinfolk, while the animals had no say in what happened to them. For a time, the agreements between traders and native trappers held. In the meantime, we did what we could to protect the animals that were dying in numbers that upset the balance. On our spirit journeys into the Umbra, we found ourselves beset by angry spirits of beaver and many other animals, crying for vengeance. We made promises to do what we could to stop the fur trade from claiming the lives of our Grandmother's smaller children.

We made some hard decisions at that time, since we had to go against our own human Kin, whom we considered part of our greater family, in order to stop the slaughter and waste.

Now I will draw a picture of Winter Silence, a Heyoka with a warrior's heart and a trickster's ways. Winter Silence, who was anything but quiet when she had something to say, had an idea which she put forth at a great moot attended by all the Wendigo whose Kinfolk were involved in the taking of furs.

The storyknife now draws a gathering of Wendigo and a few Uktena brothers who were experiencing the same trouble in their southeastern forests. Winter Silence steps up to the campfire and addresses her tribemates and tribal cousins:

"Our Kinfolk have forgotten the lessons we have tried so hard to place in their hearts. I believe that evil spirits are at work here and that the Horned Serpent has sent its servants of greed and jealousy to corrupt the spirits of our people. The only thing that will take their minds away from profit is war, so we should work to cause them to fight the Europeans — or even each other if we must."

The elders of our tribe argued long and hard. The Uktena delegates were just as divided about whether or not this was a good idea, for it would mean the death of many of our human Kin.

Finally, Winter Silence's suggestion gained support, and we went about our task with a vengeance. We started by attacking the greatest of our Kinfolk trappers along with the European middlemen who took their furs and gave them trade goods, including guns and, sometimes, horses. The deaths, of course, were blamed on the wrong

people and wars broke out. Our Kinfolk fought each other and the Europeans fought our Kinfolk. The Huron nation was nearly destroyed as the Iroquois League and their European trading partners attacked them in force.

Soon we did not have to do anything. The spirits of war and greed seized not only our Kinfolk but also the Europeans, who decided to bypass the native trappers and take the furs themselves. All the treaties were ignored, traditional alliances between Kinfolk disintegrated, and the world of our Kinfolk changed forever.

Now, my storyknife sweeps away the figures from the stage, leaving only the map and the ghosts of millions of dead fur-bearers. Did we do the right thing in encouraging our Kinfolk to go to war and in egging on the rivalries between native and European fur traders? There are at least two answers to my question.

We did much harm to our human Kinfolk through our actions. The weakening of alliances made it harder for the native nations to resist the onslaught of the Europeans, who were not satisfied until they had driven our Kinfolk out of their homes and taken the land for themselves. But we did manage to save a few animals in the process and we exacted vengeance for the spirits of the many creatures who died to put hats on French and English heads and line the cloaks of Dutch noblemen and women. Some of Grandmother's children died so that others could rest easy.

Sometimes, there is no right thing to do.

## *Tales of Vengeance*

The storyknife now turns to the western lands, where the Pacific Ocean gives way to shore and forest. Our Kinfolk of the Tlingit and the Haida and the other nations that dwell in those cold lands did not encounter the white-skinned people in great numbers until much later than other nations. A few traders from Russia sailed over the western sea and Spanish ships sailed up the coast in the late 1700s. I draw the Spanish ship, now, as it approaches the island of the Haida, who sent messengers out to the ship by canoe to bargain for trade goods in exchange for fur from the sea otter as well as beautiful items made by their women. The Spanish offered cloth and knives made of metal, which the Haida had seen upon occasion and valued greatly.

The Spaniards did not go ashore, however, because they were hesitant to risk their lives among strangers with odd customs. They sailed away, leaving the Haida in peace.

Others came, however. The English and the French soon recognized that the northern forests held a wealth of valuable furs. Here the storyknife draws more and

more figures of pale-skinned stick people eager to strip the forests of their animal brothers and sisters.

Once again, we warned our Kinfolk to stay away from the traders, and once again, as in the eastern lands, they did not listen to us. They were seduced by the lure of strange items, particularly ones made of iron. They also enjoyed the look and feel of copper coins.

As we watched our Kinfolk grow more and more greedy and begin to compete with one another for the most favorable trade, as we mourned the loss of our animal cousins, our hearts grew hard toward the humans we once cherished. Some Wendigo decided to take matters in their own hands.

One of our tricksters, who I do not name because even I question the rightness of his deed, took one of these copper coins and traveled with it into the spirit world. I draw him, however, because this is his story. There he pled his case before the spirits and begged them to help him create a very special fetish. When he explained what he wanted to do with the copper coin, he received a warning from our totem spirit. This large picture depicts the great cannibal spirit who gave us our totem and nourishes our anger. Wendigo told this trickster that he would lose the favor of the Grandmother if he pursued his course of action. The trickster replied that if it cost him his life in all the worlds, he would still do this deed to pay back all those who traded away their freedom and honor in return for useless trinkets. He said that knowing that he was gaining vengeance for the spirits of the animals slain for their pelts was enough.

So Wendigo granted the trickster's request and commanded one of his lesser cannibal spirits to enter the copper coin. The trickster thanked his totem spirit and returned to the world of men and money.

Soon afterwards, the copper coin found its way into the hands of an English trader. The cannibal spirit living inside the coin began to infect the trader's mind with strange and unnatural thoughts. That night, one of the men on the trader's ship disappeared. When no one could find him, his shipmates decided that the man had fallen overboard during the night. A second man disappeared soon after. The trader's ways grew stranger and stranger, and a feverish light burned in his eyes. He stopped eating meals with his companions, saying that he preferred to eat alone in his cabin. Soon he locked himself away inside his cabin, turning away anyone who tried to enter. The ship's crew began to hear strange sounds coming from behind the trader's door—sobbing and gibbering noises. Horrible smells came from the cabin, odors of dead meat and sickness. The crew grew frightened but did nothing until one day they heard nothing but silence. Finally the ship's captain took an axe and hacked at the door until he burst it into

splinters. He found the trader lying dead on the floor of his cabin, amid pieces of the missing crewmen.

The trader and his victims were given a hasty burial at sea and the captain sailed away from shore, never to return to trade for furs.

The copper coin, however, made its way into other pockets. Sometimes those who possessed the coin murdered their families. Another died when someone robbed him of his money. The thief later hanged himself. The coin continued to pass from hand to hand and, now and then, stories were heard of men and women who suddenly turned cannibal—as if possessed by some evil spirit.

My storyknife quickly erases the figures I have drawn, for their presence in this place makes me uneasy. Of the fate of the trickster who conceived of the cursed coin, I know nothing. His name has disappeared from the mind of the Grandmother and of our totem spirit, but his vengeance may still live on.

Now I turn to my second tale of vengeance—a cleaner and braver one than the one I just told, but one that has no happy ending.

My storyknife wipes clean the earth and draws a picture of the ocean off the coast of Alaska. A Russian ship appears on the waters and puts in to shore. A group of hunters land near a village of Inuit Kinfolk and come out to trade for furs. The blade of my knife now draws the hunting party as they greet the villagers. It is not the first time they have made this journey, and the villagers have sealskins for the hunters. This time, however, the hunters tell the villagers that they wish to go into the wilderness to test their own hunting prowess. They make arrangements for loading the skins on board their ship and then they set off with sled dogs borrowed from the village and with an Inuit hunter for their guide.

Although it is not yet winter, a thick layer of snow lies on the frozen ground and the nights have grown much longer than the days. The Russian hunters travel until they encounter a pack of arctic wolves. These wolves take note of the people and the dogs, but they do not run from them. They have seen our Kinfolk and their dogsleds before and they know that they pose no danger.

The Russians aim their hunting rifles and one by one, they slaughter the entire pack of wolves—including the females and their young, half-grown cubs. Seven wolves in all lay dead in the snow blood staining their white fur and coloring the snow a dull red. The hunters skin the wolves and load their pelts onto the sled, leaving the carcasses to the mercy of the freezing wind. The Inuit guide shakes his head, but says nothing. The Russians have promised him many hard-



to get tools and one of their rifles along with a case of bullets in return for his guidance.

Twice more, the hunters encounter wolf packs and the wolves die from the rifles of the strangers who do not understand the laws of the Grandmother. Twenty wolves in all fall to the hunters before they return to the village.

What the hunters do not realize is that a Wendigo Ya'pahe, a brave warrior called Lonely Runner, has seen them make their final kill. Lonely Runner feels the rage build inside him, for this last pack of wolves is his Kin. He sees the body of his mate, a slender female he calls Snowfall, lying on the ground, her eyes dull with death and blood leaking from a hole in her throat. I have drawn him as a wolf, howling the death song of his mate and her pack, but in this story he first appears as a man of the Inuit.

Lonely Runner swallows his rage and pushes back his desire to change into his man-wolf form and savage the hunters where they stand gloating over their kill. He knows that he can take a greater vengeance if he waits and follows them to their ship.

This he does, using the snow and the night as cover and feeding the pain of his anger and sorrow with the knowledge that soon he will have his revenge. When the hunters reach the village, they pay their guide and unload the wolf pelts from the dogsled. Then they go into the home of their guide to warm themselves and partake of a meal. While they are inside, Lonely Runner enters the village in wolf form and hides himself among the dead pelts, lying next to the skin that once belonged to his mate. A few hours later, he feels himself hoisted up along with the skins of the dead wolves and thrown in the hold of the ship. As he feels the ship cast off, he crawls out from under the wolfskins and begins a prayer to the Grandmother. Knowing that no one can hear him over the noise of the ship and its crew, he sings a deathsong for the wolves he has loved as his family. Then, because he knows he will not survive the journey, he sings his own death song.

Two nights after the ship has put out to sea, Lonely Runner feels that the time of his vengeance has come. He fuels his rage, which has been building steadily for two days and nights. His body expands into his battle-form and he bursts out of the hold, claws and fangs bared.

His snarls of fury as he moves quickly among the crew on watch mingle with the screams of the dying men. Again and again his claws rake great gashes in the throats of the crew. Then he moves through the ship and finds the hunting party and slaughters them, biting holes in their throats and laughing as their life blood flows onto the deck of the ship.

Finally, Lonely Runner is done. Everyone on the ship lies dead and the ship sails without direction into the arctic night, never to be heard from again.

Some who tell this story say that Lonely Runner steers the ship into a great iceberg and sinks with it to the bottom of the sea. Others say that he runs the ship aground on a large ice floe and then uses the moon's reflection on the ice as a path into the spirit world, returning to his home with a heavy heart, his revenge tasting sweet on his tongue. Still others say that his spirit still lives in the cold northern lands, waiting to attack any who defy the laws of the Grandmother and kill without need or hunt wolves for sport.

My storyknife wipes clean the pictures from this tale and lets you decide which ending to believe.

## *The Hidden Caern*

I am tired of telling stories that bring tears of rage or sadness to those who hear it. Here is a story that has a happier end. It begins in the northern forests, where the Europeans have started to move about on their own, claiming and discovering everything they see and killing much of it.

My storyknife draws a European with his beaver hat on his head and his coat made of furs and his rifle in his hand. Don't worry, though, he will not have a big part in the story. He is only here long enough for me to explain to you how the Europeans failed to understand how to live in our Pure Land.

Once our lands held enough game animals to support our Kinfolk and to feed the other predators that shared the land with us. When the Europeans came, many things happened to upset the balance of the living world. They hunted the fur-bearing animals for their skins and killed far more than they could use. This made game scarce for other predators, who began to grow bold as their food source diminished. When the Europeans first saw wolves and mountain lions, they considered them rivals. So they hunted the predators as well as the game animals, testing their skill with their rifles against the cleverness of the wolf and the speed of the big cats. By preying on these animals, they broke the Grandmother's law.

Soon the predators' numbers began to grow smaller as well. In a few short decades, the wolf population of the Pure Lands shrank to almost nothing, and we Wendigo were in danger of losing half of our Kinfolk.

Another problem came in the form of the European Garou known as the Red Talons. Here my storyknife draws two wolves, one to represent the Red Talons and one to represent the Wendigo. A few Red Talons forced themselves to take on human form in order to make the

voyage across the sea to the Pure Lands because in Europe, the humans had almost completely destroyed their wolf Kinfolk. Unlike the other European Garou, the Red Talons did not want our caerns or our lands; they wanted our wolf Kin. They thought that we were not fit protectors for wolves because we also cared for our human Kin and spent time walking on two legs.

The battles between the Wendigo and the Red Talons, when they occurred, were fierce and often deadly. Finally, one of our lupus Daebaudjimoot, an elder female called Singer, convinced a pack of Red Talons that we needed to work together. They had the will to preserve our disappearing wolf Kin but they did not know the lands as we did.

By the time we had come to this agreement, it was nearly too late. Already the Umbra of the western Pure Lands shook with the presence of the Storm Eater and travel through it became more and more difficult and dangerous.

But we did make a treaty with the Red Talons, one that they have honored to this day. We located a valley in the far northwest, in the high western mountains of Canada. Here we and the Red Talons searched until we found a sacred spot — one that had not been discovered in all the centuries that our people had dwelled in the Pure Lands. We opened a caern and called upon the totem of Wolf himself to bless and guard it. To this caern and to the valley surrounding it, we brought wolf packs from all over the Pure Lands. We also made certain that herds of game animals came to the valley, for our wolf Kin needed food.

This place of refuge, called simply the Hidden Caern, still exists undiscovered by the eyes or machines of the Wyrncomers. Here our wolf Kin run free, although they know that they cannot leave the confines of the valley. The Wendigo and Red Talons, descendants of the original openers of the caern, guard the valley and its precious inhabitants from any threat. Most Garou do not know of its existence and no one who does not live there knows the way to the caern.

I tell you this now, even though my storyknife does not make a picture of the caern, so that if you ever feel a dire need to strengthen your Garou blood, you may enter the Umbra and petition Wolf to show you the way to the Hidden Caern. If Wolf approves your plea and decides you are worthy, spirits will show you the way to the caern where you may stay long enough to breed with your wolf Kin. Before you leave, you must take an oath never to reveal the location of the caern and never to try to find it by traveling overland. Anyone who does not enter the caern through the Umbra or who comes to the caern without permission dies beneath the fangs and claws of the sept members.

This story comes to you because you need some hope in these dark times. Now my storyknife erases the pictures and prepares itself for one last tale.

## *The Great Parting of the Tribe*

This is the final tale from my storyknife. With trembling hands I draw a map that represents the northeastern quarter of North America. I place a deep slash along the line that symbolizes the man-made border between Canada and the United States. My story starts here, in the portion of the map that depicts the northern United States east of the Mississippi.

Now I draw a number of figures, representing the Wendigo tribe members who gathered together for a great meeting to decide the fate of our Kinfolk and of ourselves. Great-Heart-of-Winter, an outspoken angalkuk, was the first to speak.

"This land is no longer pure. The newcomers are no longer new but have lived here for generations and produced more generations just like them, if not worse. The air reeks with their factories and their cars choke the roads. Their flying machines fill the skies with angry noises and nowhere is there peace. The face of the Grandmother is forever marred by their presence."

Voice-of-Rage, an elder Yupa'he, was the next to speak.

"Our Kinfolk have been forced to leave their homelands for lands that are strange to them. Those few that remain must live in prisons called reservations or else must abandon the ways of their ancestors and become like the white-faces. They do not remember who they are or whose blood runs through them and blesses them above other humans."

The third speaker was Mocks-the-Serpent's-Horns, a young but wise Heyoka.

"Our Kinfolk have abandoned us. We should return the favor and leave them alone."

Knows-the-Winter, a thoughtful Mediwiwin, stood up to speak.

"We may leave our Kinfolk, but can we leave the caerns we still guard and protect?"

Song's Truth, a Daebaudjimoot of great renown, added her words to the discussion.

"We are not the only keepers of the Pure Lands. The children of Elder Brother still remain with their eastern Kinfolk. Perhaps we could give our caerns to them to guard."

Mocks-the-Serpent's-Horns laughed scornfully. "We could certainly do that. Elder Brother is already corrupt from dealing too closely with the Horned

Serpent. It would be a good match to offer him our corrupt Kinfolk and our compromised caerns."

Great-Heart-of-Winter held up a hand and walked to the speaker's circle. "If Elder Brother's children would move into these lands, perhaps that would serve as a partial atonement for allowing Middle Brother to die alone so long ago."

Voice-of-Rage snarled. "Elder Brother can never atone for what he failed to do."

Song's Truth spoke quickly, sensing the anger building. "It is clear to me that we must leave this place of sorrow and corruption, but it is also clear that we must ask our Elder Brother's children to take over our guardianship of the places and Kinfolk that remain."

For many days the Wendigo argued and sometimes fought to settle the question of the fate of our tribe.

Finally, after long and heated disputes, we came to an agreement. We would divide the tribe. Those of us who did not wish to remain any longer in the Impure Lands of the American Northeast would leave. Those who preferred to remain behind would stay. Further, we would send a message to Elder Brother and ask him to come and take our place.

And so the great division of the tribe began. Most of the Wendigo who once guarded the Kinfolk of the Iroquois, Algonquian and Ahenaki nations and their less numerous cousins moved into Canada. They traveled as far as they could away from the structures and garbage heaps of the Wyrncomers' children, seeking out the few wild places still left in the Canadian north.

A few elected to stay behind, to maintain our caerns if we could and to watch the progress of the Wyrncomers. The Uktena, as expected, came up from the southeast and the southwest, moving into our lands and taking over some of our caerns. Whether they did this out of greed or out of a sense of responsibility or out of a desire to discover if we had kept any secrets from them, I do not know. I only know that they became the primary guardians of our remaining Kinfolk and that they fill this purpose to this day.

The rift that opened up between those who stayed and those who left is a large one and often comes between tribe members when they gather together for important moots. It is a great sorrow to many of us that we, who need to remain one in spirit, must forever stand on two sides of the great chasm that separates us. Whenever we meet together, we must begin with a period of name-calling and angry words — sometimes battles and song-duels — before we can finally remember that we are one tribe and that we have a common goal. Always we think of one another as either the Wendigo-who-stayed-behind or the Wendigo-who-

left-their-homes. This does not make it easier for us to close ranks against our true enemies.

I did not tell you whether or not this story has a happy ending. I still cannot tell you this, for the story has not ended yet.

Today, the Wendigo still roam the lands of Alaska and Canada and parts of the Pacific Northwest. Some of us travel further to see what goes on in the rest of the lands we once called pure, but rarely do we stay for long in the places claimed by Elder Brother or by the European Garou. Most of us believe that the corruption of the Horned Serpent has gone too far and that when the final days are upon us, we can do one thing only — fight the Grandmother's enemy until we die.

A few of us feel differently. We feel a stirring of hope within the heart of the Grandmother. We see our Kinfolk battling to reclaim their homes and gain restitution from the governments that stole their lands and destroyed their ways. We try to remember the old ways ourselves and honor the times when this place was the Pure Land. We sing the Song of the Croatan whenever we gather together to remind ourselves that Middle Brother made a great sacrifice so that we could remain to guard these beautiful lands for the Grandmother. We sense a change in the wind, as if the spirits are gathering together to intervene on behalf of the earth and its creatures.

Even some of the newcomers, whose faces are no longer only white but reflect the many colors of the earth, feel the Grandmother's pain and wish to come to her aid. Some of these former strangers have come to love this land. Others now work hard to try to save our wolf Kin from extinction and to return wolf populations to places where they once roamed and hunted.

Perhaps one day our Kinfolk will return from their exile and settle once more on the lands held by their ancestors. Perhaps our tribemates who left here in anger and despair will return to resume their guardianship of the sacred places and join their blood with that of their ancient Kinfolk.

The storyknife now wipes clean the earth of all but one single figure. This is a picture of me, for I am one of the descendants of the Wendigo who remained behind after the great division. I still have hope that one day our Kinfolk will return in force to take back the lands they once honored and respected. My name is Keeper of the Fire of Hope and here I stand, wedded to the land given to us by the Grandmother. My heart is heavy but it sings with hope. The people move, the Garou do not. I am here and my story is finished. Now, and only now, will I scrape the earth clean with the blade of my storyknife. My tales are done. Remember them.





# Chapter Two: Whose Hunting Grounds?

*You cannot discover an inhabited land. Otherwise  
I could cross the Atlantic and "discover" England.*

— Dehatkadons, traditional chief of the  
Onondaga Iroquois

## The Pure Lands

The geography of the Pure Lands is a patchwork quilt of many nations and the Garou tribes who lived among and around them. In the times before the coming of the Europeans (and the Industrial Revolution that followed them in particular) the land was more pure, the rivers more clear and game more plentiful. Great nations already existed, with some cities holding more inhabitants than the largest European city. Much of the land was planted with maize, squash and other food crops. Fishing, hunting and gathering supplemented agricultural products. Yet despite their planted fields and constructed towns, the geography of Mother Earth was little disturbed in most areas. Many nations and their Garou cousins dwelt in harmony with nature rather than in competition with it.

What the Europeans later saw as signs of their primitive nature (the lack of plows and wheels), came not from a dearth of imagination and expertise, but a lack of any need for such items. In a land that lacked large domesticated animals such as horses and mules,

there was no need for plows. Furrows and holes for planting seeds could be made with a pointed stick. Burdens could be carried on one's back or pulled on a travois (sled). That this also meant the natives could plant a field for a few years, then leave it to recover and move elsewhere, that their methods of farming did less damage to the Mother's flesh and their lack of wheels meant they had no need to cut roads through the wilderness. They could preserve the Mother and still gather her bounty.

Danger and hardship were just as much in evidence as in later times, but the Garou could still call upon Mother Earth and the spirits for greater intervention than the Wolf Changers of Europe. The most terrible Banes had been bound long ago, leaving the lesser evils to be fought by Changers and their Kinfolk alike. Septs of the Croatan, Uktena and Wendigo criss-crossed the continent, linking Gaia's children together and providing a network of power that kept evil spirits at bay.

And yet the Wyrmbearers came, and in an instant all was changed.

The septs described here exist in a moment in time — a long moment lasting hundreds of years, to be sure, yet still caught in a moment of holding their breaths just before their whole world splintered. Nations might settle and move, gradually making their way to new lands or they might be uprooted and flee to farther lands, but the Garou remained with their caerns, protecting their sacred places of power. Thus the Pure Lands tribes bred with different Kinfolk over time as one group passed and another took their place. What they could not have foreseen was the greed, callousness and self-righteousness of the Europeans and their Garou allies that overwhelmed them and took their caerns and their nations' lands "so that they might be better protected by those of greater learning and civilization."

In the modern age, these caerns still stand — some of them. Yet strangers walk their bawns. Some lie abandoned, the spirits within them crying for those who once sang to them with respect and joy.

## *Lands of the Croatan*

While human nations tended to be nomadic (at least at first) and spread all over, the Garou would eventually cluster about their caerns, places which could not move with them and which needed protection from the Wyrmbearers harrying the Pure Lands. Thus, the tribes of the Three Brothers can be associated with certain regions at certain times throughout history.

The Croatan's greatest territory was in the Mississippi River valley, all along the mighty river. Their great caerns were among some of the now-bulldozed and missing earthmounds that once populated this region before the coming of Europeans.

The Cahokia mound (near modern-day St. Louis), while not a Croatan caern, was an important site for their Kinfolk for years, overseen by a series of holy men, usually shamans following a particular tradition of fealty to celestial spirits, especially the Sun. They lived in peace and prosperity with the Croatan for years, trading their knowledge of celestial ways for the Croatan's earth lore, complementing one another.

However, the culture became unbalanced. Overpopulation and building led to a shortage of trees in the regions immediately surrounding Cahokia and other similar pyramid sites. Over-farming led to increased erosion (caused by lack of trees), which in turn led to flooding and other disasters that the Garou saw as highly unnatural.

Increasing hostilities with human nations not directly associated with them led the Mound Builders to build larger and larger barricades around their core cities. The populations grew so large that even modern people would recognize such a site as a city. And, as mentioned previously, the Wyrmbearers gained influence there, as it does in so many other places where humans gather in great numbers.

Once direct evidence of Wyrmbearer involvement was thrown in their faces, the Croatan turned against the Mound Builder cultures and aided in their downfall, bringing on spiritual disasters and earthquakes to drive people from the cities. Retaliation by some of the tainted shamans may have led to the loss of more Croatan territory.

Other tribes have since speculated something the Croatan refused to consider: was the Wyrmbearer truly a part of the Mound Builder culture, or did it show itself to the Croatan in just such a manner that they would react badly to it, so that they would destroy a culture it despised? Did it push all their buttons to get them to destroy their Kinfolk's greatest achievement?

It would be helpful to gain answers from the shamans, but like most native human nations, they have lost all records of the Mound Builder culture — not even legends are told of these nations, except for a few tales among the Natchez that may hint at the Mound Builders. What caused so many people to forget so much? Was it a form of the Delirium delivered when Croatan Garou assaulted the lands in Grinos form? Was it the doing of a coalition of shamans? None can say....

## *The Umbra*

The smell of wet earth, the soft music sung by living rock as it grows and flourishes, the hushed murmur of mist after a rainfall — all these things are vital parts of the Croatan's spirit lands. The Croatan and their totem are intimately tied to the element of earth, and this spiritual connection influences the landscape of their Penumbral territories. Nature of all sorts are protected by the energy flowing through the land, although the spirits of burrowing animals flourish, and bird-spirits are slightly less common. The earth underfoot rumbles and shakes from time to time — Turtle scratching himself, or so the Croatan say — but it is a gentle tremor, more pleasant mutter than angry growl.

Helios is often more visible in the Croatan's Umbra lands, as their reverence of the Sun has given him added strength to shine on them. In the summer months, Helios (or Katanka-Sonnak) can be seen in the Penumbral sky by day, even though he seems





obscured by cloud. The sun and moon shine at once from time to time, dividing the Umbral sky into warm, soft gold and cool silver. This means that the Banes that still roam free in the Croatan's protectorate are by necessity a stealthy lot; by day they must avoid the sun's angry glare, even though the humans they would influence are active at this time — by night it's little safer, as the moon sheds her own light. And the Croatan walk the Penumbra fearlessly in night and day alike, making it difficult for a Bane to feel safe.

## ***Notable Caerns***

The records of most Croatan caerns have been lost long ago. Some were passed to the Uktena and Wendigo, but became more attuned to their new keepers over time, so that the oldest connections to Turtle eventually vanished. Some lie completely forgotten, perhaps subject to whatever curse of silence long kept the Croatan Song from being sung and still veils the secret of the Mound Builders. And some were conquered by European invaders, both Garou and sorcerers, who had no knowledge of the Croatan, but who appreciated the pure caerns that they saw waiting for them.

Croatan caerns are among the most pure — at least those that were well maintained by the tribe before its demise. The tribe's earth-oriented powers allowed them to create deep wellsprings to Gaia's heart that ties these caerns strongly to Her. The following list is woefully short, but those septs mentioned here are some of the rare few that can be definitively remembered as Croatan.

### ***Sept of the Bat People***

Nestled in the mountains of what will one day be Virginia lies a remarkably deep cavern. At the heart of this cavern lies the caern of the White Bat, guarded over by the spirit of the same name. The werewolves in residence here call themselves the Bat People in their caern totem's honor, and a few packs have taken Bat as a totem. The cave itself is home to clouds of bats, which the Bat People are careful to tend.

The sept's Kinfolk are mostly lupus, although a few human Kin families of mixed nations have made a tiny village not far from the bawn. Insect-spirits are rather hard to find in the local Penumbra, as they fear being devoured by the White Bat.

The caern eventually loses its power in the 16th century when the death cry of the last Camazotz bat-shifter echoes through the Umbra. The caern's totem is driven mad, and flees the caern itself; its shrieking causes the cavern to collapse. Uktena legend has it that the caern itself could be excavated and reclaimed with the help of the proper Earth-spirits, and perhaps

White Bar could be sought out and cured — but so far, their divinations have not been able to reveal the collapsed cave's location to them.

### *Sept of the House of Teeth*

A large, strong longhouse stands on a mighty hill not far from the Ohio River, a longhouse that is unusual in many ways. It gleams brightly in the sunlight and in the moonlight — because interwoven with the timbers and beams of the house are great strips of ivory. This ivory was taken from the tusks of a great monster, a disembodied flying head the size of a small hill, slain by the warriors of the Croatan. The longhouse is thus a home of warriors, and when the caern is opened, its blessing makes each sept member's bite as strong and sharp as metal.

The sept here claims Kin from a nearby settlement of Lenni Lenape (or Delaware), who make their living from farming and hunting alike. When the Croatan sacrifice themselves to fend off the Eater-of-Souls, their Kinfolk mournfully burn the longhouse to the ground, so that the ivory isn't a temptation to the white man. Their efforts are in vain, however, as they are driven from their lands and the caern is retaken by invaders. It still exists today, although with an entirely different totem and name.

### *Sept of Still Waters*

In one of the many coves sheltered by the Outer Banks of the future North Carolina, the Sept of Still Waters tends and guards their caern. Although their wolf Kin are few, the sept quietly looks after a nearby village of humans from where they draw some of their Kinfolk. The caern's totem is one of Turtle's many faces, in this case Sea Turtle — it is her power that shelters the sept and the human village nearby when the great storms come.

This is the sept that will one day produce the mighty warrior Wanchese, who is destined not only to travel across the ocean to England, but to lead the Croatan tribe in their last and greatest sacrifice. The Uktena do their best to guard it after the Croatan's passage, but are ultimately forced to leave it behind. Today the caern is inert, buried by the tides of tourism that wash over the Outer Banks.

### *Sept of the Sun on the River*

Along the east bank of the Mississippi, in the northern part of what will be Louisiana, the Caern of the Sun on the River stands on a hill overlooking the river itself. Although the sept has renounced their beliefs of Sun's supremacy over Moon, they remain deferent to the Incarna of Katanka-Sonnak, believing

that to ignore the sun in the moon's favor would be as great a mistake as ignoring the moon for the sun. The sept is notable for producing many great Ahroun; local lore says that cubs born here try to wait for the full moon until being born, because the caern is beautiful when it is full of light.

The sept members draw Kin from the wolf packs in the area and from the Natchez village nearby, a village that has retained something of the hierarchy and solar fixation of its Mound Builder neighbors. The village lives well on corn, melons and squash, as well as venison and fish from the river. Regrettably, after the Croatan's sacrifice, their human Kin's fortunes enter a drastic downward spiral; the local humans are eventually driven from their lands by the French along with the rest of the Natchez.

## *Lands of the Uktena*

*This land is ours, as much a part of us as our hands or eyes. It was given into our keeping by the Mother Herself. To believe that others may come into these lands and know them as we do, feel them as we do, is foolish. Ours are the secret voices you hear in the earth whispering at night. You will always tread the surface here. The soil will never sing with the passing of your feet; the water will not caress you with its joy. You are temporary in a place that is eternal. Though you live upon this land for a thousand years, it shall never be yours. It will not listen to your songs or thrill to your heartbeat. You may protect it, but to the land, you are not-kin and the spirits feel offended in your presence.*

— Nashoba White Oak speaking to the Wyrmbearers as his nation leaves their home

The territory of the Uktena encompasses a land of towering primeval forests, game-filled marshlands, open prairie and harsh multicolored deserts. Covering an expanse including a reach of ancient rolling mountains to the east, across long, lazy river bottoms in its central portions and high, soaring austere cliffs and canyons, Grandmother Earth gave the gift of near infinite variety to Her children of the south and southwest. Her voice is softer here, yet still Her rage burns bright with the heat of fiery sands and settles deep and dark within the caverns and crevices that burrow near Her heart in this rich and bountiful land of secrets.

## *Land of the Misty Waters: The Southeastern Woodlands*

*Sumac whispers words of wisdom and I hear the call deep within my soul. Shadows creep across the face of the mountains that shelter us, promising rain to come.*

*Here lies an entry into the Mother's breast. We will enter the darkness within and find what lies hidden in the Mother's heart.*

—Onacoma (White Owl) Shadowhunter, Uktena Theurge

Deep forests breathe in the mists of the sparkling streams that pour forth from rocky cataracts, sending high their white, ethereal plumes before rushing down to fill near-bottomless pools. This is the land of the Misty Waters, land of the so-called Five Civilized Tribes and their Wolf-brothers, the Uktena. Croatan also make their homes among these nations, sharing Kinfolk with their elder brothers and learning their ways.

Water, Uktena's element, clean yet opaque, finds its way by runnels and streams into crevices, dripping into hidden limestone caverns and creating pathways of crystal flutes and rippling curtains of rock within the fulgent earth. Uktena revels here, coiling in the water that pours from the sky, drips from the towering chestnut trees and flows through rushing rivers. A tracery of his vital spirit nourishes the rolling grasslands of what will later be called Kentucky, slipping along the spine of the smoky mountains where Grandfather Oldest Mountain dwells. From his peaks, the waters tumble down into the land of tall pines and peaceful lakes, gradually stretching its limbs out to join the waters of the still marshes, where the Seminole dwell in the Land of the Sky-Hunter.

### *The Umbra*

Spirits flow and dance within the Umbra here. All things seem hidden for a moment, skillfully and somewhat playfully hiding their true nature, then appearing in sparkling splendor. Spirits of streams, lakes and rivers dart between ponderous and dignified lords of the mountains. Trees tower and marshes invite exploration, beckoning travelers into their shadowy depths. Birds and animals fill the fields and forests, unafraid of passersby. All seems in harmony with itself.

Still, travel can be dangerous, for not all is exactly as it seems, but rather a reflection under water, wavering and changeable. Deep places beneath the indigo waters of silent bottomless lakes may hold unquiet spirits, while lazy streams may suddenly swell into treacherous currents, sweeping forth into whitewater rapids. And under all lie the hollow hills, unlit echoing caverns whose secrets await those brave or foolish enough to penetrate their inky depths. Still, shafts of bright moonlight penetrate the interwoven tree branches, illuminating tempting paths for the Wolf Changers to follow to the spirits' homes.

### *Sept of the Deep Waters*

A wide low cave mouth reflects within a pool of water to form the image of a half-lidded eye. Uktena bring their canoes upstream against a slow current, slipping among the green and forested hills of Kentucky to reach this entrance to the caern that serves the Sept of the Deep Waters. Within lies a passageway leading deep beneath the skin of the Mother and into a small section of what will later be called the Mammoth Caves. Blind white fish flicker through the deep pools. Light brings the brilliant flash of purple, gold and clear crystal formations that cover the walls and ceiling with secret beauty. Patterns within the crystals form the shape of a coiling water snake, totem spirit of the sept.

### *Sept of the Sheltering Laurel*

To the west of what will come to be known as Grandfather Mountain, rising as the crowning glory of a shaggy mist-covered peak, lies the Sept of the Sheltering Laurel. This vast jungle of tall branches, thick leathery evergreen leaves and swollen flower buds bursts forth in a riotous tangle of creamy white and pink flowers each spring. Trails twist and turn within, leading those with the power to see to their center, where an ancient, massive laurel covered in rich, velvety moss rises in statuesque glory. This is the heart of the caern, where rests the spirit of the laurel. Beneath the great tree, tangled roots form a twisting path into lightless depths where a great Wyrmspawn lies enwrapped in slumber. The sept elders bound this dreadful spirit long ago. All members of the sept know that as long as the great laurel's leaves remain green, the Wyrmspawn will continue to sleep, yet they prepare for the day when the leaves curl and brown, knowing their long guardianship must end in glory or utter defeat.

### *Sept of the Sacred Smoke*

Along the rich, fertile banks of the river called the Oconee, in a wide and sunny valley lies the caern of the Sept of the Sacred Smoke. Here wild tobacco grows lush and tall, its broad leaves waiting to be harvested, hung and dried. The nations and their Wolf-brothers speak with the spirits and bless their endeavors by using it in ceremonies. The tobacco growing here is especially blessed by Grandmother Earth and its mellow smoke coils into the air, rising into the Umbra and attracting helpful spirits with its sweet, subtle aroma. The sept trades its tobacco to other septs throughout the south, who use it in their most important ceremonies and celebrations.



## Sept of Heart's Blood

Lodged within a cavern in the mountains of western North Carolina lies a garnet the size of a chair. This scarlet gemstone is the focal point of the caern used by the Sept of the Heart's Blood. Settled by Uktena and Croatan Wolf Changers that claim the Cherokee as their Kinfolk, it is one of the largest caerns in the area. Those of the Sept of Heart's Blood are noted for their intelligence and quick wits as well as their unorthodox approach to solving disputes and resolving problems. A trickle of red liquid that resembles blood wells forth from the garnet and falls in slow drops to a pool that abuts it on one side. Deserving Ragabash who drink of the garnet heart's blood and who spend a night in meditation receive an advantage that helps them in provoking laughter and quick wits.

(This advantage is somewhat similar to those received by opening a caern, and might take the form of an extra dot in Wits or a special ability to deflate those who take themselves too seriously. Storytellers are encouraged to grant deserving Ragabash some social advantage of their choice as long as it doesn't unbalance the character).

## Sept of the Moon Cast Down

In the land of the Chickasaw, deep in the tall pine forests and nestled in the yellow soil that sparkles with shards of bright rock, rests a pool which forms the center of the caern of the Moon Cast Down. The pool forms a near-perfect circle, its floor awash with flakes of mica that glint and flash in the dappled light that forms golden shafts between the trees. Fat-bellied fish swim amidst the flickering shadows. Here too lives an enormous gray-and-green-shelled Turtle-spirit who provides wise counsel to those who bring her gifts of corn and pleasant company.

## Sept of the Nurturing Mother

In a sheltered crack in the bones of the Mother, high amid the foggy mountain ridges near Hot Springs rests a granite formation whose shape resembles that of a mother, her abdomen made large with her as-yet unborn child. She sits, facing east, her head bowed as though in reverence or reverie. Wind blows softly around her, as though caressing even in the harshest gale. Wild berries grow, weaving around her, showing brightly against grass or snow regardless of the season. This is the heart of the Sept of the Nurturing Mother. Those of this sept are noted healers. Many of the shamans of the Five Civilized Tribes make their way to this area to speak with the healers here and leave gifts for the mother's spirit. The Garou allow shamans to gather

herbs that grow nearby, herbs that always linger even when elsewhere they have disappeared for the winter.

## Sept of the Green Stone

Hidden within a tangled forest near the western part of Tennessee, the caern that serves the Sept of the Green Stone has at its heart an enormous moss-covered boulder. Rounded at the sides, yet flat on top, it is sometimes used as a table for offerings made to Gaia and the protective spirits of the caern. Caern members breed with the nearby Chickasaw, producing some of the fiercest Ahroun to be found in the southeast. Those who swear to defend Gaia at all costs spend a night in meditation seated atop the green stone, weapons cradled in their arms. When they come down from the rock the next morning, their eyes have taken on a green tint when in wolf form and they each gain advantages in battle. Some move more quickly without having to expend Rage, others may smell enemies attempting to attack them from behind. (Storytellers are encouraged to grant deserving Ahroun some battle advantage of their choice as long as it doesn't unbalance the character).

## Land of the Sky Hunters: The Deep South

*In this sacred place, the blood of our Mother runs close to the surface. The Father of Rivers stretches in his might, a reflection of the great spirit of Uktena. We merge ourselves with Father Sky's children, who shelter and soar in these lands. Those who do not speak to the Mother, who do not hear Father's roar shall find themselves amazed, caught and sunk beneath the quick earth — we shall see to it.*

— Holata Step-Lightly, Uktena Warrior of the Sept of Cypress Heart

The eye can see far in the Land of the Sky Hunters. Tall pines stretch their limbs high into the blazing sun of Father Sky. The hot, heavy air breathes forth rich scents and redolent aromas — the exhalation of the Mother. Water is plentiful here too, as it is in all the lands of the Uktena but one. Long, lazy channels twist and curve in echo of Uktena's form. Water lies in shallow pools, concealing secrets in the marsh grasses and tangled reeds of bayou and swamp. Lines of breakers bathe the pale sands, their blue echoing the glory of the sky and frond-crowned trees stir in the warm winds. Fierce sky hunters swoop on feathered wings, their smaller cousins darting in iridescent insect glory while jeweled lizards watch them with hungry eyes, tongues furled and ready. Brother alligator lives here as well, his wide smile hiding a ravenous heart. His Changing brothers find their own places of power

within the deep, still waters. The Chickasaw and Seminole know that the beauty of the great crane's flight is balanced within Sky Hunter lands by a multitude of dangers. Grandmother's teachings are harsh here, yet hidden beneath a warmth and fertile gentle image as deceptive as alligator's smile.

### *The Umbra*

Spirits hide their nature in this part of the spirit world. Water-spirits shift and swirl in dizzying patterns only to reform and look like spirits of the earth or sky. All moves slowly until sudden storms heavy with hurricane winds and lightning rush through, leaving chaos in their wake. Frenzy moves to calm and solemnity gives way to hurry, then falls again to sleepy quiet. Only the proud and gigantic spirit of the great river known as the Father of Waters, whose voice and form bring calmness and permanency, provides a point of consistency and timelessness. Banes too small to have been bound as yet remain in hidden places. There they struggle beneath the spirit waters of the bayous and shriek out their anger deep beneath the dark surface of the wetlands.

### *Sept of the Father of Waters*

Where the Mississippi River meets the Arkansas, in the lands claimed by the Chickasaw, stands the Sept of the Father of Waters. On a rise overlooking Father River the shadowed face of an old man marks the caern. The old man keeps his eyes ever vigilant, for the coiling Wyrn spirit bound within the rich soil of the riverbank below rests uneasily next to the ebb and flow of the mighty river. All through the night, its voice cries out in time with the sounds of the current flowing by. Members of the sept honor the Father of Waters by holding swimming and canoeing contests. Each assumes the duty of guarding the Wyrn spirit for one day each month; each hopes the Wyrmspawn will not break free while he is on duty.

### *Sept of the Crystal*

Near a crystal clear creek running among the foothills in what is now Georgia rests the leaf and water hidden caern of the Sept of the Crystal. Where the stream tumbles down a high embankment to form a wide ribbon of waterfall and the leafy trees and shrubs conspire to hide it lies a cave entrance. Low ceilings cause all who enter to do so on hands and knees making them perfect targets for those left guarding the caern. Once inside, the walls slope outward and the ceiling rises, though Garou in Crinos still must stoop. Within the cool, shadowy interior, sparkles of crystal catch whatever illumination is available as if a starry night

sky has been transported within the chamber. Toward the rear of the cavern rests a large (about 10 inches across), unevenly shaped crystal atop a natural rock formation reminiscent of a shelf. This crystal is reputed to have both healing powers and the ability to send worthy petitioners prophetic dreams. (Storytellers who wish to incorporate the crystal's powers into their chronicles may allow the rumors to be true, while those who prefer more low key stories may have the reputed powers be a false tale.)

### *Sept of the Council Rock*

Near to the leaning mound of the Choctaw in Mississippi is a stand of woods. Within them lies the caern of the Sept of the Council Rock located near an ancient spreading oak, a split rock the size of a council house and a spring of pure water that falls over a series of tiny ledges to form a stepping stone waterfall. Noted for their hosting of many important councils and gatherings, the sept is also famous for producing Law Givers of great renown. The Song Keepers who reside at Council Rock memorize tales of former councils and decisions affecting the Wolf Changer tribes and their native Kinfolk.

### *Sept of Cypress Heart*

In the bayou lands along the shores of what will be called Louisiana lies the caern claimed by the Sept of Cypress Heart. Hidden among the swollen roots of a huge grove of cypress trees, the caern remains shadowed by thickly hanging moss. Members of the sept learn the secrets of the bayou and keep a close eye on the Mokole who slither amid the nearby reeds. They have learned to listen to the slow heartbeat of the region and delve for hidden Banes who lurk beneath the inky waters.

### *Sept of the Sunrise Birds*

Channels of water through the Everglades serve as pathways for the people of the Sept of the Sunrise Birds. Flocks of graceful birds the colors of the insides of pearly shells fill the sky and nest nearby. Their shadows swirl across the waters, momentarily darkening the pools where catfish dwell, some large and ancient enough to swallow a person whole. Garou of the sept speak with the spirit of Catfish to learn of the days before their time. They place a ban on hunting these grandfathers of the waters, a ban that the Seminole nation also follows.

### *Sept of the Blackwaters*

Along the northern part of what will be Florida runs the swiftly flowing Okalus River. Creek,

Choctaw and Yundi fish and canoe along the swirling dark waters of this sandy-bottomed river whose purity is disguised by its inky darkness. Hidden on a small island lying at the center of the black-sand river where the depths cause a slight slowing of the waters, the caern of Blackwaters is known for its fierce guardianship of Uktena's waters. Despite its apparent color, water taken from the river is crystal clear and tastes of refreshing purity. Some Garou claim that the river's waters can cure Wyrmtaint if given to those affected by such or poured in sufficient quantity over tainted ground.

## ***Land of the Sacred Earth: The Southwest***

*You look at this land and see its emptiness. I see its fullness, the red rock formations, the striations in the stones, the yucca and cacti, tiny lizards and scuttling spiders. I hear its songs in wind and blowing sand. I feel the spirits, which here in your so-called emptiness, more than any other place, can be seen and heard for what they truly are. Listen!*

—Tiva Clearwater, Hopi Uktena

In this land of ancient grandeur, the bones of Gaia rise from the earth in ribbons the color of the sunrise or of blood. It is a land of extremes. Tall cliffs soar high above deep gorges. Long stretches of sand marked only by cacti and the occasional tumbleweed end abruptly in scarlet mesas and fantastic stone archways carved in high relief against a blazing, unrelenting sun that pulses in a cloudless bright blue sky.

Though the land may appear barren, Gaia has provided plenty for those who know Her secrets and honor the ways of the spirits. Cliffs hide cool caves that riddle the soaring multicolored walls. Beneath wide ledges, clear streams bubble up from the rocks or snake their way along canyon bottoms. Thunderbird brings life-giving rain that washes the valleys with dangerous flash floods, while the delicate pinks and corals of the prickly pear and cholla, hardy manzanita, sagebrush, yucca and scrub oak give shelter to jackrabbits, skinks and rock squirrels. Hunters abound as well, including the puma, bobcat, gray fox, coyote, wolf spider and rattlesnake. Little surprise that the Uktena feel the gaze of Punonca and Nuwisha upon them as they move through their daily tasks.

## ***The Umbra***

All the deepest, most eternal colors of Gaia flow within the Umbra here. Spirits of the desert take on a solid presence as though echoing the strength of cliff and mesa. Garou come to the Umbral desert in the

spring, to find a burst of vitality as the Mother's bounty crosses with Uktena's watery kiss to bring forth a true paradise. Still, at other times, spirits of the desolate places and lonely clifftops gather here, making it almost as deserted as parts of the lands on earth.

## ***The Sept of the Story Rock***

Hidden in the shadow of a high canyon rim, following the path of multicolored ribbons of rock, runs a pattern depicting warriors and shamans, deer and bighorn sheep, Mother Spider and Father River chipped deep into the towering walls of stone. This is the caern of the Sept of the Story Rock, set in the place later to be known as the Grand Canyon, along the southern rim near Tusayan. Here the sept members sing great stories of the Hasat Sinom, the honorable people, family to the Hopi, enemies of the Navaho. Spirits wander here, drawn by tales of great deeds and brave men. Each year one new story is added to the Story Rock in petroglyph form. Garou come from far and near to tell their tales in the hope of having the honor of adding their story to the long memory of the canyon.

## ***Sept of the Rippling Flame***

Nowhere in these painted lands are the Mother's colors so brilliant as in the Valley of Rippling Flame. Surrounded by soft, gray hills (later to be called the Muddy Mountains of southern Nevada), the area is a panorama of beautiful rock formations ranging from luminous white to blood red to midnight black. Amid their glory stands an archway known as the Voice of the Grandmother. Of flame-red stone, the archway soars several hundred feet into the sky. The rock is fluted and shaped by the wind that constantly blows here and by the water that laps around its feet. The soft singing of the Grandmother whispers down into the valley and sends Her breath across the waters. Paiute Kinfolk come here to bathe and enjoy the coolness of the valley. The Grandmother's voice sings a lullaby to them, yet the Wolf Changers hear a different song, which tells them to make ready for hard times yet to come.

## ***Sept of the Spider's Wisdom***

Jutting high into the windswept sky, the lair of Grandmother Spider is an angular stone spire in the area later to be called Canyon de Chelly in Arizona. The Sept of the Spider's Wisdom takes its name from her presence and its caern rests within the shadow cast by her home. Hopi Kinfolk honor Grandmother Spider as a link between the human world and Gaia, but Navajo Kinfolk speak of her only in whispers and use her name to frighten unruly children.





The Uktena know her. They see her walking along the river that reflects the face of her home. Sometimes she imparts wisdom to them. Other times the visions she brings make Theurges shudder in darkness while standing in the warm light of day. The sept and many of the Kinfolk honor Grandmother Spider with their weaving and their rites, seeking always to remain in her favor.

### *Sept of the Fallen Ones*

High above the Canyon of the Fallen Ones, which later is called Chaco Canyon in New Mexico, a mesa rises. Of forbidding sandstone the color of dried blood, it glows on moonless nights. Within its shadow lies the caern of the Sept of the Fallen Ones. According to legend, this is the place of the last stand made in the time of the coming of the Life Killers, three great Banes who rose from deep within the earth to swallow the Anasazi people. The Uktena came to defend their Kinfolk, and died howling their defiance to the last. Qaletaga, guardian of the people, a great warrior of the Uktena, stood on the edge of the mesa. Strong arms, sharp teeth and great Gifts at his command, he drove the three Banes off the crimson knife-edge of the mesa to fall broken-backed to the earth far below. At the foot of the mesa, shamans danced, creating a web of spirit to bind the three forever in a giant kiva on the canyon floor. Two were destroyed in the binding, but the third cries out vengeance to the winds that circle to the top of the mesa. It is a holy place, a place of victory and sacrifice, for Qaletaga died even as he triumphed over the Banes and the Anasazi live only in the songs of the Uktena and the Hopi who remember their names.

### *Land of the Sun's Crossing: California*

*We are not what you think us to be. We are something different than all others. We are the last in the Pure Lands to see Helios' crossing each day and the last to bid goodbye to Luna each night. Gaia gave us this gift, for She knew our tasks would be hard.*

— Suleta Falling Rain speaking to fellow Uktena at a tribal gathering

From the cool misty forests of the giant redwoods to the craggy windswept mountains with their ancient bristlecone pines, from the snow-covered heights and beautiful beaches with white-capped waves to the sun-struck valleys where water is an elusive dream, the Land of the Sun's Crossing presents a smorgasbord of delicious variation. Bison move with stately grace as antelope leap from rock to spire. Puma and

great grizzlies share the Mother's bounty with the gray wolf and the bobcat while brothers condor and eagle soar above. Yet for all the land's grandeur, the Changing Ones must remain ever vigilant for fumeroles send forth scalding breaths from Banes beneath the earth and mountains shake with the movements of angry Wyrn spirits roiling in lava streams below to stir the bones of the Mother.

### *The Umbra*

Spirits of fire and water clash within the Umbra. Great spirits of the Bay of the Day's End struggle with the molten spirits of lava as swirling fog spirits rise to meet the sky. Still the spirits of the eldest of trees and the enduring mountains stand, challenging the others' constant vying for dominance. Sly changeable spirits act as messengers to the Wolf Changers, warning them of changes in the restless evils that fight below the fire and water, seeking to break their bindings and erupt once again into the world.

### *Sept of the Towering Giants*

Deep within the area later to be called the Sierra Nevada lies the caern of the Sept of the Towering Giants. Here the Uktena and their Miwok Kinfolk hunt through fern-filled groves beneath the great columns of the giant redwood trees. Among the giants who give shelter to white-tailed deer and red squirrels rises one who is greater than all the rest, father to many who stand within his shadow — Grandfather Redwood. His highest limbs lost in the mists above, Grandfather Redwood calls out with sighing song to his towering stone brother in the distance — Old Man Mountain, whose white peak reaches almost to brush the sun in his passing. These two brother giants look down upon their smaller brothers, making certain that the proper respect is paid to Mother Gaia. Uktena live in the shadowed ways near Grandfather Redwood's roots. They have promised him that as long as the sun lives and the water flows he will survive to sing to his brother.

### *Sept of the Sheltering Spirit*

In a time long ago a great Storm-spirit came upon the Uktena and their Chumash Kinfolk, overturning their canoes as they tried to make their way to safety. One by one the skins of their boats tore and many drowned. Finally a shaman called out to the Mother, asking shelter for Her children amid the white-tossed spume and dark green waves. They saw a large opening set into the high, rocky cliffs of an island, later called Santa Cruz. With the Mother's blessing, they made their way inside the sea cave where all was

calm. Today this is the caern serving the Sept of the Sheltering Spirit. A huge sea cave, it rests in sight of (on sunlit days) the shores of the home of the Chumash, another island called San Miguel. The opening can only be seen at certain times of the day when the shadows of the cliff don't conceal it in darkness. The channel into the cavern is deep and many fish find shelter there when the waves are restless. Further inside, a sandy beach slopes down into the water and sandpipers, gulls and black oystercatchers peck at the rich treasures the sea leaves in the sand. Above, in the swirling grottoes along the arching ceiling, tiny red bats flutter and watch the members of the sept give thanks to the Mother.

### *Sept of the Pointing Stars*

Eerie spires knot and twist as they reach toward the clear night sky, their bases lost in the waters below. Stars reflect on the jet-black surface of the salty waters that fill a hollow centered in a towering desert plateau east of the Sierra Nevadas. Here rests the Sept of the Pointing Stars, named for the twisted spires some claim are the remnants of stars fallen to earth, yet reaching again for the heavens. Many springs pour into this lake, which stretches more than 60 miles across. Numerous birds feed from its rich waters. Legends of the Yokut people tell of a time when the stars above saw their reflections in the clear water and were drawn down to quench themselves in its cool depths. Now the Yokut fish and hunt here under the watchful gaze of their Uktenakin, though none — Garou included — disturb the surface of the lake at night.

### *Sept of the Proud Warrior*

Surrounded by a profusion of desert plants and wildflowers, the Proud Warrior, called the Joshua Tree by later white explorers, spreads his arms to the powerful spirit of the sun. He is a giant among his kind and his mighty limbs give shelter to many birds, lizards and insects. Nearby rests the caern of the Sept of the Proud Warrior in the land that will someday be called the Mojave. The Uktena here subsist on the bounty of the Warrior as they guard a blasted stretch of salt flats nearby — where a restless Wyrn-spirit rattles and rustles beneath the sands.

## *Lands of the Wendigo*

Stretching across the northern half of North America, the territory claimed by the Wendigo contains some of the Pure Land's most dramatic and dangerous landscapes — glacial expanses, ancient forests, towering mountains, barren tundra and vast plains. Grandmother Earth has poured Her passion

into the winds that scour the high places and sweep across the plains. Her songs etch patterns of sorrow and anger into the surface of frozen lakes and glacial ridges. Those who respect the Grandmother's harsh wisdom find abundance here; those too weak or lazy to search for Her hidden bounty find only their deaths.

## ***Land of the Singing Snow: the Arctic World***

*Listen. Above the stillness of the frozen night, the spirits of the ice howl with furious glory. Their cries crack the skies, ripping apart the silence at the top of the world. Beneath the ice, bound spirits snarl in outrage, shaking the earth with their voices. Keeping their lonely vigil, the children of Wendigo join their voices to the winds and sing a song of praise to Grandmother Earth.*

— Akiak Sings-to-the-Ice, Daebaudjmoot of the Running Ice Sept

For much of the year, the Arctic world lies wrapped in frozen stillness. Long midwinter nights extend their darkness into the daylight hours as Helios' light shines only faintly in the mid-day twilight. Briefly, during high summer, the land sings with warmth, bearing fruit and displaying broad splashes of color. Despite the harshness, life abounds here. Seal and walrus, polar bears, arctic foxes and hares, caribou and wolves make their homes in this unforgiving wilderness, barely touched by the hands of humans.

The makers of maps give these realms of ice and snow names that define them in terms of ownership: Alaska, Northern Canada, Greenland, Newfoundland, Baffin and Victoria Islands, the Aleutian chain. The Wendigo have little use for such limiting names. These lands are their home and their responsibility.

## ***The Umbra***

The spirit world shines with an eerie brightness in this near-pristine land. Luna's light pours forth upon alabaster sheets of unbroken snow and luminescent ice-plains. Spirits of ice and snow hold unquestioned sway over the Arctic Umbra. Close to the heart of this realm, Wendigo and his spirit brood keep watch over their territory, eager to lash out against any of the Horned Serpent's minions that try to exert their corrupting influence over this part of the spirit lands.

## ***Notable Caerns***

A network of caerns, many of them surrounding ancient or holy places, allow the Wendigo of the arctic to maintain their contact with one another. With the caern's energies, the tribe can protect their icy lands from

incursions by unbound minions of the Horned Serpent as well as other monstrous creatures born from the spirits of ice, snow and abiding hunger.

## ***Sept of the Running Ice***

A large glacial outcropping on the coast of north-west Greenland marks the center of the caern guarded by the Sept of the Running Ice. Beyond it stretches a vast icy sea, frozen for most of the year. Sept members honor the place where the Grandmother rested in her task of forming islands out of the icy northern land.

## ***Sept of Grandmother's Tear***

Centered around a large, tear-shaped rock near Nersilik Lake in northern Canada, the Sept of Grandmother's Tear keeps guard over their human Kinfolk and a small population of arctic wolves. The unusual warmth that radiates from this rock provides healing and sustenance for the sept members.

## ***Sept of the Howling Winds***

An ice cave system near Bristol Bay, Alaska, serves as the center of the caern protected by the Sept of the Howling Winds. The cave's walls contains many holes that funnel the icy winds from the surface into the central cavern, where they "sing" an eerie song that induces visions in those who come there to meditate and touch the Grandmother's womb.

## ***Sept of the Stone Watchers***

Great stone pillars mark the horizon near Coronation Gulf in the Canadian Arctic. One of these pillars forms the heart of the caern of the Sept of the Stone Watchers. The Wendigo who dwell here protect their Inuit Kinfolk as well as the herds of caribou that provide sustenance for them.

## ***Sept of the Laughing Seal***

A small Aleutian island off the tip of the Alaskan peninsula provides a home for the few Wendigo who guard the Sept of the Laughing Seal, one of the oldest Wendigo caerns in the Pure Lands. Created because of a promise made to Seal himself in return for permission to hunt his children for food, the caern centers around a rock that juts out from the island and serves as a basking place for arctic seals in the short summer months.

## ***Across the Top of the World: Kinfolk Migrations***

From their emergence in the Pure Lands in the earliest beginnings of the world, the humans that inhabit the arctic climes of North America have made a



slow but steady movement from the westernmost region near the Bering Sea to the eastern island of Greenland. The Inupiat, Yupik and Inuit people, collectively known as Eskimos, spread out slowly across the northernmost portions of the continent, until some of them reached Greenland around 1000 AD. Earlier, a branch of the Inuit settled among the Aleutian Islands off the tip of Alaska, becoming a nation distinct from their cousins. The extreme harshness of the climate discouraged typical migratory patterns and the territories of the arctic peoples remained relatively stable until the coming of the Europeans. Even then, European arrival, with one extraordinary exception — the arrival in the 11th century of a Norse expedition — did not impinge upon the ice dwellers until the 19th century.

## *Land of the Towering Trees: the Pacific Northwest*

*Far to the north, the spirits of the winds screech with fury, but here, where the forests shelter life and the ocean receives the bounty of many rivers, the wind sings a different message to the children of Wendigo. "Remember me in all you do and I will show you the blessings of the Grandmother. Forget me and you will know my wrath. Reap my harvest with respect."*

— Seegay Heart-of-the-Forest, Wendigo Mediwiwin of the Sept of the Hidden River

The rocky, forested coastline of the northern Pacific stretches for 1,500 miles, forming a corridor of swift-running rivers and dense woodlands. High mountain ridges that run parallel to the shore separate this verdant land from the interior of the continent. The mountains do more than act as a barrier, though, for they trap the moisture that comes from the ocean, forcing it from the air as abundant rainfall and lingering mists and fog.

The thick forests supply the region with an abundance of game animals such as elk and deer, beaver and otter, mountain goats and bears. For their part, the rivers and inlets provide a richness of salmon, cod, candlefish, halibut and other fish as well as shellfish and sea urchins. In the deeper waters, whales, sea lions and porpoises add yet another source of food and vital resources. Berries, roots and wild celery grow here, too, but the ground does not yield well to planted crops.

In later years, these regions become known to the Europeans as the northern Pacific coast and include the southern coast of Alaska as well as the shores of British Columbia and Washington State.

### *The Umbra*

Shadowy forests and rushing waters backed by high, craggy, tree-covered mountains give the spirit

world a majestic eeriness. The Umbral air is redolent with moisture as fog and mist spirits glide through the realm, obscuring vision and imparting a sense of heaviness to those who travel in this other world. Animal spirits dwell among the woodlands and in the waters of the Umbra, keeping watch over their flesh-bound children in the physical world. The Horned Serpent's spawn — those who escaped the bindings of the Uktrena in the ancient times — lurk in dark places, waiting for victims to wander into their clutches.

## *Notable Caerns*

The places considered most sacred to the Grandmother in this coastal land also act as sentinel posts for the Wendigo who guard them. Messengers from the spirit world frequently seek entry to the caerns, where they deliver messages of warning or pass along pieces of information about distant places.

### *Sept of the Hidden River*

A branch of the Sheena River, in the homeland of the Tsimshian, takes a sudden turn and disappears underground for several miles, emerging, finally, in the heart of the omnipresent forest. The place of its emergence forms the heart of the caern guarded by the Sept of the Hidden River. The water that rushes through the caern possesses an uncanny purity and clearness, imparting strength and healing to the animals that feed from it. Animals wounded but not killed by hunters sometimes find their way into the heart of the caern, where they receive healing for their wounds — either from the waters of the river or at the hands of the sept members.

### *Sept of the Shrouded Rock*

A massive rock crowned by a stand of evergreens lies off the shore of Rialto Beach in the land of the Chinook. Mist from the ocean surrounds the island, cloaking it from view for most of the year. The top of the rock serves as the heart of the caern belonging to the Sept of the Shrouded Rock. From this high, secluded place, the Wendigo who dwell here keep guard over their Kinfolk on the shore as well as the sea creatures that come to shelter at the island's base.

### *Sept of the Seam of Heaven*

Situated on the side of a forested mountain in the Tlingit homeland, off the Alaskan shore, the caern protected by the Sept of the Seam of Heaven offers a spectacular vista of the far horizon. On clear nights, sept members gather to pay homage to the spirits of the sky and sing to the Star-spirits that dance overhead,

forming the milky sheet of stars known to the Europeans as the Milky Way.

### ***Separate Lives: Kinfolk Migrations***

From the time of their arrival in the distant past, the people of the Pacific Northwest have dwelt in isolated enclaves, maintaining distinct cultures (though sharing some common traits). Occasional wars between peoples resulted in some cross-cultural contact, but wholesale migrations remained relatively rare until the coming of the European explorers and settlers. The diseases brought by these strangers caused the loss of many whole towns and villages, particularly among the Haida, who were forced to leave their homelands to save themselves from utter extinction. Later, as more and more lands were claimed by the emerging American nation, large-scale forced movements of the Pacific tribes separated these people from their homes and from their Wendigo kin.

### ***Land of Many Faces: Alaska and Canada***

*When I look at this vast and splendid land, I see the Grandmother in Her youth and vigor. The songs of the wind tell stories of open spaces and lofty heights, of ice and melting, of swiftness and wild glory. Life and death partner in this place of many colors, many shapes and many creatures.*

—Namida Night Dancer, Wendigo Angalluk of the Sept of the Mountain Mirror

Across the breadth of the North American continent these lands stretch southward from the edge of the Arctic Circle to the plains of southern Canada and span the land from the northern Rockies to the North Atlantic coast. The territory encompassed by the forests and plains of the subarctic lands covers more than two million square miles. The landscape wears a variegated cloak of towering mountain peaks, crystal clear lakes, frozen tundra, glacier-carved river valleys, fertile boglands, endless plains and thick primeval forests. Long, bitter winters give way to short, warm summers in this realm of ever-changing beauty and challenge. Caribou and moose roam the open spaces and the frozen lakes; in the forests, beaver, muskrat, hare and porcupine make their homes. Here, too, dwell the wolf and the bear. Waterfowl dwell along the edges of the rivers and lakes, feasting on the plentiful harvest of fish that swim in the waters.

Later times would assign foreign names to this magnificent realm: Alaska, the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Québec, Newfoundland and Labrador.

### ***The Umbra***

Just as the earth shows many aspects in the physical world, the Umbra of this realm reflects the varied landscape in shadowy images. Great mountains loom impossibly high in the spirit world, while tundra and taiga seem to stretch endlessly across the Umbral horizon. Rivers crash and tumble through spirit valleys, where the ghosts of glaciers form a hazy pattern barely visible to the journeyer. The spirits of caribou, moose and other animals roam the vast open spaces, wary of predator spirits as they re-enact the endless cycle of the hunt. The air resounds with the cries of the wind and cold spirits that claim this realm for their own, while the songs of the water spirits mingle with their earth-bound brothers to create a wild and rhythmic chorus. Darker spirits move with care through these realms, knowing that others of their kind languish in captivity, bound by powerful rituals.

### ***Notable Caerns***

The caerns that cover this broad expanse of territory serve a vital purpose in connecting the various Wendigo septs with one another. Moon bridges provide quick transportation and allow for the passage of messengers between septs. In addition, these caerns form a protective ward that holds in place the seals of bound Wyrms-creatures set in place by the Uktena in the early centuries after the Garou arrived in the Pure Lands.

### ***Sept of the Mountain Mirror***

Located in the shadow of Mt. McKinley, the highest mountain in the North American continent, an upthrust rock near the edge of a pristine lake forms the heart of the caern of the Sept of the Mountain Mirror. The Wendigo who guard this caern keep a distant watch over their Tanana Kinfolk and scour the land for evidence of escaped minions of the Horned Serpent.

### ***Sept of the Northern Winds***

A lonely stand of wind-scoured conifers thrusts upward from the icy tundra where the Northern Ojibwa make their home. Here, the Sept of the Northern Winds guards a caern in the midst of the trees, secluded from the worst of the winds. The sept's members range over a large territory of windswept ice-plains and frozen rivers in the long winters, searching for angry spirits to appease or banish from the land.

### ***Sept of the Lowland Spirits***

The low-lying lands near the mouth of the La Grande River in the homeland of the Cree contain a

tidal pool that serves as the heart of the caern of the Sept of the Lowland Spirits. The Wendigo that guard this caern speak with the spirits of the tides and the river itself to learn of approaching dangers and provide them with knowledge of faraway places.

### *A Slow Progression: Kinfolk Migrations*

For many centuries, the people of the northern lands remained in relatively stable territorial groupings. Contact with European fur traders, however, began to change the pattern of land divisions as some nations proved more willing to deal with the newcomers. In general, many of the tribes gradually moved southward, while the increasing population of the land by European traders and, later, armies and settlers forced many of the tribes away from their ancestral lands.

### *Land of Bountiful Waters: The Great Lakes*

The winds of this place sing of ancient ice now departed, leaving behind deep cracks in the land that filled with the Grandmother's tears. The spirits of the lakes give strength and beauty to the Earth, filling Her with abundant harvests and nurturing the hearts of those who dwell here. This is the land of the hunter and the home of the prey.

— Ogama Finds-the-Prey, Wendigo Ya'pape of the Sept of the Winding Tree

Sculpted by the departing glaciers, the five linked waterways known as the Great Lakes support an abundance of plant and animal life. In the rugged northern reaches, above Lake Superior, the cold climate and harsh terrain provide little in the way of cultivated crops but supply a cautious bounty of game animals and fish. Maple trees in the northern regions yield their sap during the early spring. Further south, along the shores of Lake Michigan, the land yields food in the form of wild rice in addition to abundant game and wildfowl. The birch forests along the shores of Lake Huron provide hunters with a wide variety of animals such as moose, mink and beaver, while the nearby lands support rice and other staple crops. The land cradled by Lakes Huron, Erie and Ontario provide both arable land and hunting grounds. Though winter brings a six-month period of snow and bitter cold, the rest of the year knows a more hospitable climate suitable for planting, fishing and the pursuit of game.

### *The Umbra*

The spirit world of the lake region vibrates with the energy of swift moving whitewater and crashing falls. Turbulent Storm-spirits howl across the surface of the lakes, roiling the spirits that dwell within the waters.

More placid spirits of wild rice and birch trees spread their anchors throughout the Umbra, bringing balance to a realm of constant fluctuation. The spirits of Moose and Bear and smaller creatures populate this portion of the otherworld. Past ages exist here as well; great walls of ice, marshlands and tundra linger in the Umbral memory, casting shadows that crowd the spirit landscape and whisper warnings of more change yet to come.

### *Notable Caerns*

Despite the conflicts that sometimes raged among Kinfolk nations in this region of lakes and valleys, the series of caerns that dot this area keep the Wendigo aware of the activities of their far-spread tribemates. The lines of power that radiate outward from these caerns form a net that guards the land and keeps the wards against the Wyrn from weakening.

#### *Sept of the Winding Tree*

A magnificent cedar, twisted by the winds of time, rests on a rocky slope overlooking Lake Superior in the homeland of the Ojibwa nation. The heart of the caern claimed by the Sept of the Winding Tree, this sacred spot brings good fortune to the Wendigo who guard it, lending them strength and swiftness in the hunt and in their ceaseless battles against the enemies of the Grandmother.

#### *Sept of the Shining Island*

One of the many islands that line the shores of Lake Huron contains a flat rock that serves as the heart of the caern of the Sept of the Shining Island. On nights when Luna's light shines at its peak, the rock gleams with an unearthly glow. The Wendigo, who keep watch over the caern and serve as protectors for their Ottawa Kinfolk that dwell nearby, gather at the shining rock to bask in its glow and receive visions from the spirit world.

#### *Sept of the Frozen Star*

Hidden within a stand of maple trees in the northern forests above Lake Superior in the Cree homeland, an unusual dark-colored rock lies perpetually encased in a film of ice. Even in the hottest part of the year, the glistening ice that covers the rock only becomes moist, never melting fully. Legends of the Wendigo tell how a fragment of a broken star plummeted to earth during the time of the great ice and buried itself in the Grandmother's breast for shelter from a great war in the heavens. The Angalkuk of the Sept of the Frozen Star spend much of their time studying the mysterious stone, which seems to impart a pungent sweetness to



the sap from the surrounding maples and accelerates any healing that takes place within bowshot.

### ***Ancient Journeys: Kinfolk Migrations***

Legends from the earliest days speak of the long journey of the Anishinabe, ancestors of the Algonquian tribes that settled near the Great Lakes. Warned in a vision to leave their eastern homelands, these early people traveled down the waterways of the St. Lawrence and found a new place to dwell along the shores of Lakes Superior, Michigan and Huron. Many of the nations in this area moved continually within a limited sphere. Eventually, however, the coming of the Europeans would result in the abandonment of much of the territory as whole nations were forced to move to the "unpopulated" plains west of the Mississippi.

### ***Land of Swift Waters: the Hudson Valley, Lake Ontario and Lake Erie***

*So much peace in the land, so much war in the hearts of our Kinfolk. Truly the anger of the Wendigo shouts louder than the storm winds and crashing waters in this place of Grandmother's plenty. How She must laugh with bitterness at the folly of Her children who war upon each other instead of upon their enemies.*

— Demothi Never-Looks-Backward, Wendigo  
Heyoka of the Sept of the Great Hill

Stretching eastward from the western shore of Lake Erie to the Hudson River and southward from the St. Lawrence River and Georgian Bay to the waters of the Susquehanna, the fertile land around the two eastern Great Lakes provides a rich variety of life-sustaining bounty. Marked by great courses of rivers and lakes, adorned by mountains molded by the passing of the glaciers, the landscape of this region displays the Grandmother's ever-changing temperament. Evergreen forests of hemlock and pine cast lingering shadows over the northern regions, while mixed growths of maple, birch, oak and beech lend variety to the forests of the southern portions of the land. Deer, beaver, bear and other wildlife supply ample prey for hunters, while the forests and valleys yield a bounty of berries, herbs, leafy greens as well as crops such as squash, beans and corn. Cold winters and warm, pleasant summers define the cycle of activity and rest for the people and creatures that call this land their home.

### ***The Umbra***

Breathtaking beauty and stark contrasts mark the spirit world of this region. The horde of Water-spirits

that cluster around the area of Niagara Falls clouds the Umbra with heavy mist and glistening pinpoints of light that brighten the spirit realm's eternal twilight. Old Mountain-spirits lend a feeling of peacefulness to their part of the spirit world, while River-spirits and quick-moving animal spirits convey an air of excitement and vitality to the lands they touch upon. Darker spirits dwell here, too. Spirits of war and rivalry proliferate in this portion of the Umbra. Their cries filter across the border between the worlds and inflame the hearts of the nations that inhabit the physical realm. Bound minions of the Horned Serpent stir restlessly in their spirit prisons, eager to break free, sensing the imminence of a turning in the cycle that may lead to the end of their long captivity.

### ***Notable Caerns***

The frequent conflicts between Kinfolk nations make the network of caerns a critical means for Wendigo septs to keep in touch with one another despite their warring Kin. An abundance of places of power have established a strong web of protection that holds back incursions of Wyrn-creatures and maintains the wards of monsters already bound.

### ***Sept of the Great Hill***

An ancient hill that overlooks the glacier-carved valley of the Seneca River forms the heart of the caern protected by the Sept of the Great Hill. Ancient legends tell how the first of the Seneca crawled from this hill as if climbing out of a mother's womb. The land around the caern is unusually fertile and animals come here during mating season, drawn by the pull of the sacred hill.

### ***Sept of the Thundering Water***

Massive and overpowering, Niagara Falls dominates the landscape for miles around. At the base of the falls, hidden in a cave behind the thick curtain of roaring water, a small rock pool forms the heart of the caern of the Sept of the Thundering Water. The water from this pool cleanses those who drink from it at the crescent moon, banishing Harano and purifying anyone exposed to the corruption of the Horned Serpent. During the full moon, the waters of the pool increase warlike abilities, giving sept members a burst of righteous rage to use against their enemies.

### ***Sept of the Wild Geese***

A circle of dry ground in the marshlands near Cayuga Lake serves as the heart of the caern of the Sept of the Wild Geese. Waterfowl of all kinds dwell within



the marshlands, but the geese that come to rest upon this spot differ from normal birds. These creatures carry messages to and from the various septs in the area and, occasionally, function as spirit messengers whose cries warn of danger in the Umbra or announce the arrival of strangers. The Wendigo who protect the caern have noticed that the earth always stays dry and warm around the caern's heart.

### ***Wars and Pacts: Kinfolk Migrations***

The legends of the people of the Hudson Valley and the eastern Great Lakes proclaim their origins in their ancestral lands. While some of the nations may have come south from colder climes, once they reached the rich lands of the eastern Great Lakes, they remained relatively settled, except for seasonal travels and changing territorial claims caused by frequent outbreaks of war. With the coming of the Europeans, however, the native homelands were doomed. Forced migrations westward separated the human peoples from their Wendigo protectors. In some cases, groups moved southward along the Ohio valley and expanded into lands vacated by the fall of the Mississippian culture. Eventually, most of the Wendigo themselves abandon their territory in this region and join with their more northern tribesmates.

### ***Land of the Dawn: The North Atlantic Coast***

*The song carried on the cold winds warns of danger. Buffeted by the ocean's cries, the rushing winds sing of a troubled past and of a coming darkness. Even in the quiet between the storms, my heart grows weary of the waiting. Surrounded by plenty, I feel the pulse of the Grandmother's heart — and She is fearful for Her children.*

— Mahika Wolf's Daughter, Wendigo  
Daebaudjimoot of the Sept of the Greatest Mountain

A rugged and harsh land lies where the waters of the North Atlantic meet the shores of the North American continent. Craggy cliffs along the coast bear witness to the scouring of the ocean's tides. Great forests cover granite hills and winding rivers make their relentless seaward journey through rocky valleys, passing through quiet lakes along their path. Cold winters bring deep snows and unforgiving winds, but summers carry gentler breezes to coax the land into bearing a multitude of edible plants — fruits, berries, corn and roots. Marshlands shelter wildfowl and produce a variety of succulent grasses and tubers. Fish abound in the rivers and the ocean provides a bounty of seafood, including oysters, lobsters and other shellfish. The drama of the seasons takes place amid the

ever-changing climate, proof of the year's journey from new beginnings to bitter endings.

### *The Umbra*

The eternal struggle between water and earth makes the spirit world in this region a dynamic vortex of howling spirits. Fog-spirits mass together, giving the Umbra a brooding languidness. Storm-spirits vie with River-spirits for right of precedence during the Umbral winter. At other times, the spirits of the forests and hills exert a calming influence upon the realm. Disquieting voices from the ocean-born winds tell of troubled times, however, and now and then, some Wyrn-spirit breaks free of its bindings and screams its vengeance across the spirit world.

### *Notable Caerns*

Warring Kinfolk in the northeastern woodlands often bring rivalries to the Wendigo septs in the region. Nevertheless, the caerns serve as places of peace where Garou settle their disputes before attempting to convince their Kinfolk to do the same. The connective lines of power that spread out from caern to caern grow increasingly fragile as conflict accelerates in the early years of the European invasions.

#### *Sept of the Greatest Mountain*

Atop Mount Katahdin, in a place revered by the Penobscot people of the Eastern Abenaki, a lofty oak serves as the heart of the caern of the Sept of the Greatest Mountain. Sept members honor the mountain's spirit through rituals that celebrate the changing weather throughout the year.

#### *Sept of the Guardian Beast*

A moss covered cliff-top on the island now known as Martha's Vineyard, home of the Wampanoag nation, serves as the heart of the caern belonging to the Sept of the Guardian Beast. From the vantagepoint presented by the cliff, sept members can view great whales swimming in the ocean depths. The moss that grows over the caern's heart possesses many nutrients and can provide complete sustenance in times of famine.

#### *Sept of the Earthshaper*

An elbow of forested land that juts out into Lake Champlain, in the homeland of the Western Abenaki nation, forms the heart of the caern claimed by the Sept of the Earthshaper. Legends tell of a powerful servant of the Horned Serpent that lies chained deep in the earth not far from the caern and sept members keep constant vigil for evidence that

the bindings are loosening. The winds that blow from the lake sometimes carry angry moans from the imprisoned Wyrn-spawn.

### *Sept of the Ocean's Gifts*

A piece of shoreline near the cold waters of the coast of the Micmac homeland (now New Brunswick) serves as the heart of the caern guarded by the Sept of the Ocean's Gifts. Sept members keep a careful watch over their Kinfolk, who risk their lives to harvest the shellfish and other sea-life of the North Atlantic. Appeasing Storm-spirits and battling with monsters that lurk in the strong tides keep the Wendigo who dwell here fit for battle.

### *Away from the Sun: Kinfolk Migrations*

The native nations of the northeastern coast did not remain exclusively in their ancestral lands. Though many remained near the coastal waters and eastern forests, others traveled westward, eventually settling in the great plains region and mixing with the other nations already in residence. The coming of the Europeans, however, marked these people as among the first to suffer the loss of numbers and, more devastatingly, the forced removal from their homelands. Those who did not leave died from disease or from the muskets and guns of the invading armies of the white settlers. Like their cousins to the west, the Wendigo who once protected these lands departed for other places not yet tainted by the corruption of the Europeans.

### *Land of the Endless Grasses: The Great Plains*

Hear them, the wind spirits, as they travel across the vast open spaces of this land. Nothing impedes their passing or stops their songs from giving voice to their exultation. Only the gathering of the storms can trap these winds, sending them into a twisting, howling vortex of black destruction. Only the raging fires can heat the winds into incandescent fury. These are the lands of no restrictions and no boundaries.

—Mahkah Races-the-Fire, Wendigo Mediwiwin,  
Sept of the Rock Plains

The central part of the North American continent consists of vast plains that extend westward from the Mississippi Valley to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and northward from the Red River Valley to the Saskatchewan River. A few hills and rock formations interrupt the almost endless procession of grassland, bad-



lands and prairies, but the overall mood of this far-reaching land is one of spacious grandeur — and vulnerability. With few high places to act as windbreaks and fewer dense forests to further buffer the land from the ravages of wind and weather, this region knows the full savagery of heat and cold. Icy winds from the subarctic lands plummet down through the plains in the winter, carrying their burden of snow and hail. In summer, hot winds scour the face of the earth, bringing drought to the prairies and fields. Storms lose all sense of limitations in this place, gathering themselves into violent displays of thunder and lightning or forming roiling masses of clouds that swoop down upon the helpless land in twisting spirals of death. Still, the land bears gifts for those who dwell here. Great herds of bison roam the prairies, along with deer and other game animals. Bears come down from the mountains in some seasons, seeking food for the coming cold times. The long growing season allows the cultivation of corn, beans and other food staples.

### *The Umbra*

The spirit world shares the same sense of limitless space as its physical counterpart. Here, the spirits of the wind find their greatest strength as they race from one end of the Umbral plains to the other. Shrouded in the constant twilight, storm-spirits growl and bluster, defying the winds' dominance of the spirit world of the plains. Monster spirits abound here, as well, strange creatures that haunt the savage wild places and visit chaos on the physical world. Bison-spirits move in great herds across the spirit plains, unaware that before long, their earthly children will become the victims of the spirits of greed and gluttony.

### *Notable Caerns*

Though separated by great distances, the many caerns of the plains region provide a sense of continuity and cohesiveness for the far-spread Wendigo caretakers of the land. The lines of power, though thinly spread, hold back many bound creatures and serve to protect Kinfolk from many of the local monsters and evil spirits.

### *Sept of the Rock Plains*

A deep vertical fissure near the rocky formation of Snake Butte, in the homeland of the Assiniboin and Gros Ventre nations, contains a passage to a cavern pitted with wind-carved holes. This place is the heart of the caern protected by the Sept of the Rock Plains. The Wendigo guardians of this caern seek visions in the darkness of this cavern, where the winds that find their way from the outer world carry dreams of times to

come and remind those who hear their songs of past battles against the creatures of the Horned Serpent. Occasionally, one of the sept's members acts as a mentor to young Kinfolk warriors who come to this place on a vision quest.

### *Sept of the Seven Stars*

Halfway up the slope crowned by the massive rock pillar later known as Devil's Tower, in the lands of the Kiowa, a rock shelf serves as the heart of the caern of the Sept of the Seven Stars. The Wendigo who watch over this caern hold vigil during the nights of no moon in honor of the cluster of stars called the Pleiades by the Europeans. During times of great storms, sept members can hear the angry growls of one of the Horned Serpent's bound children, locked away in a spirit cage beneath the ground not far from the heart of the caern.

### *Sept of the Dry Waters*

Atop one of the rocky hills in the mountain range known as the Badlands, in the territory of the Lakota Sioux, the Sept of the Dry Waters guards a shallow depression in the earth, which serves as the heart of their caern. In ancient times, water from this depression spilled up out of the ground and flooded the land. When the Grandmother petitioned Father Sky to save Her drowning children, the storm winds blew away all the water, leaving behind the sculpted forms of rocky hills. In times of drought, the Wendigo perform ceremonies around the caern's heart to bring rain for the relief of their Kinfolk.

### *Into a Vast and Empty Land: Kinfolk Migrations*

The earliest people to settle the Great Plains came from the far north, attracted by the warmer climate and abundant game. In the first century AD, people from the eastern woodlands migrated into the region, bringing a slightly more settled culture to the strictly nomadic way of life that existed here previously. By the 13th century, many population groups began moving into the area, seeking better lands for cultivation or else as a result of the movement of still other tribes. From the north came the Apache and the Kiowa, while the Crow and Mandan moved in from the east. The Wichita and Pawnee moved up from the south, filling the plains with a variety of semi-nomadic cultures. The European settlement of the lands east of the Mississippi forced other tribes westward beginning in the late 1600s. Members of the Sioux and Algonquian nations fled westward, while groups of Shoshonean people moved eastward into the plains. In many cases,

the Wendigo who guarded these tribes accompanied their Kinfolk, while in other cases, the newcomers were adopted by the Wendigo already in residence.

## Other Shapeshifters

The Three Brothers may be the most prolific and apparent supernatural inhabitants of the Pure Lands, but they are not alone. Some members of the other Changing Breeds crossed the land bridge along with — or before — the three Garou tribes did. Some shapeshifters have been in the Pure Lands all along. These shapeshifting cousins often share human Kin with the native Garou, although this is usually circumstantial.

Although relations between the various races of shapeshifters here are not as hospitable as they could be, there is a remarkable peace between the Breeds. The Second War of Rage has yet to strike the Pure Lands. When Garou does fight Baster (or whomever) in these lands, it's no more common than Garou fighting Garou. The Changing Breeds might not be ready to share one another's caerns and secrets, but for now, there's nothing preventing them from being civil when they do cross paths.

There are, of course, other shapeshifters in the Pure Lands than those listed below. The occasional werespider scurries across the baked plateaus of the Southwest, or settles in a den in some shady corner of the Appalachians. There are Rokea among the sharks of Atlantic and Pacific alike, and the rare Mokole has been known to swim north from South America and settle in the Everglades. However, these people are remarkably rare, and are more inclined to avoid the native people than to breed with them. They are virtual nonentities in the woven blanket of Pure Lands shapeshifter society — and they prefer it that way. The shapeshifters listed below, on the other hand, hold the lands and the peoples of the Pure Lands very dear. They are ready to fight and die in the defense of the Pure Lands — and many are destined to do just that.

### Corax

The raven-shifters aren't the most populous of shapeshifters — it's a hard thing to make another Corax — but they manage to hold on to what's theirs easily enough. The Corax of the Pure Lands are a sociable bunch, at least as far as others are concerned. They have no real social structure of their own apart from recognition of each other's rank and the occasional Parliament, but they enjoy spending time with their "grounded" cousins whenever they can. Their reputation has spread through the three tribes and thus

through their Kin, ensuring that Raven is spoken well of in most places where he is spoken of at all.

If anything, the Corax have become somewhat lazy in the latter part of the Middle Times. With most of the Wyrn's forces accounted for, there's considerably less for them to spy out and less riding on their vigilance. When the Europeans arrive, it's certainly the most remarkable thing that the Corax can remember happening for centuries. But with the old networks somewhat eroded, the Raven Changers are regrettably slow to spread the word across the Pure Lands — denying many septs the warnings that could have saved their lands.

Although the Corax keep no territory or caerns of their own, they are naturally much more prevalent in the lands where their raven Kin can be found. For the most part, this means Wendigo territory — the Corax don't care much for the warmer southern lands where the crows rule. One of the few places they consider truly their own is a massive tree in the midst of the Pacific Northwest forests — the Parliaments held here every fifth winter draw Corax from across the continent.

### Gurahl

Even before the Second War of Rage struck, the Gurahl of the Pure Lands were not great in number. They had suffered brutally during the first War of Rage, and when the Gurahl crossed the land bridge during the Great Migration, only a very few made it. Since then, their numbers have grown very, very slowly. The lands here do not ail as badly as they might, and so the Gurahl bide their time and wait for when they are truly needed.

Most Pure Lands shapeshifters know the Gurahl only by reputation, although that reputation is good. A few septs, mostly in the Rocky Mountains and the northern forests, enjoy the presence of a nearby Gurahl elder. In these cases, the werewolf usually spends most of its time slumbering, rousing only if the need is desperate.

### Nuwisha

The Nuwisha have always been in the Pure Lands, even though they lay no real claim to the place. The werewolves keep no territory of their own — much to the consternation of their werewolf relatives, the Nuwisha treat the entire Pure Lands as their territory. Although they are less numerous than their Garou brethren, the Nuwisha are nonetheless very prevalent across the continent; although the Great Plains and the future western United States are where they're most common, they travel up into the northwoods and down

into Mesoamerica as it strikes their fancy. The average Nuwisha has better things to do than waste all his time pestering Garou (and their Kin), but they nonetheless make such mischief that Coyote's reputation becomes remarkably widespread.

Nuwisha Kinfolk are widely scattered, and are much less tightly knit than are Garou Kin. Many werecoyotes go their entire lives without ever knowingly breeding with a Kinfolk mate. However, the Nuwisha tend to make up for this by mating enthusiastically with almost any willing partner they can find; if this means adultery or seduction, so be it. Some Nuwisha are even bold enough to seduce Garou Kin—or the werewolves themselves! This can lead to some highly embarrassing scandals when the youngsters who turn out to be werecoyotes come of age. The werewolves are usually sufficiently good sports to look after the young Nuwisha until another werecoyote wanders along to pick up the youngster, but tragedies have been known to happen when a werewolf's pride is too great.

### *Pumonca*

Nobody can say for certain exactly when the werecougars came to the Pure Lands. It's possible that they traveled with their Qualmi brethren during the Great Migration, refusing to reveal themselves to the werewolves who shared their road. But given the cougar-children's fierce dedication to the land, some wonder if it isn't true that the Pumonca were in the Pure Lands before the humans and other shapeshifters ever arrived. It's certainly possible that the Pumonca were the Pure Lands' first guardians, more puma than human. If this is true, though, it would be impossible to get a Pumonca to admit to it—because, after all, if Gaia did indeed ask the Three Brothers to come and clean the Pure Lands, that would mean that the werecougars weren't enough to defend their land.

The werepumas are a solitary people, and they do not keep caerns. They rove across their protectorates singly, guarding all areas with equal fervor. Their numbers are strong—at least as much so as one could expect from so reclusive a Changing Breed. While their Qualmi cousins occupy the northwoods, the Pumonca range across most of the land that will one day be the United States; they are also said to range into Mesoamerica and even the Andes. Their human Kin tend to be hardy and fierce, given more to hunting than agriculture. They are on speaking terms with the tribes of the Three Brothers, but these laconic folk are not exactly what one would call friendly. They can be quite slow to trust others—but this reticence does them little good when the Europeans arrive, and the Pumonca taste the Second War of Rage in full.

### *Qualmi*

The werelynxes have always been a curious people, and it's this trait that may have saved them from extinction. As the Garou tribes were drawing farther and farther apart during the War of Rage, the Qualmi—who were being massacred in their European homelands—took careful note of the departure of the Three Brothers. When the Great Migration began, most of the surviving werelynxes followed the Three Brothers' peoples to the Pure Lands. Those that remained in Europe died out, but those that reached the Pure Lands began to flourish once more.

## *Spirits in Flesh (People)*

*We are the stars which sing.*

*We sing with our light.*

*We are the birds of fire.*

*We fly in the sky.*

*Our light is a star.*

*We sing on the road of the spirits.*

— Brian Swann, adapted from John Dyneley Prince, *We Are the Stars Which Sing*

## *The People and the Land*

Unlike Europeans and other folks who follow the Judeo-Christian faiths, all of whom believe they were exiled from the Garden of Eden and sent out into an inhospitable land, Native Americans regard themselves as being put in the places they were meant to be. Their stories tell that either they came up out of the ground in their homeland or won through to it after a long journey and search for the place that was spiritually and physically right for them—their own promised land. So each is uniquely tied to his land, a part of it. He belongs there, understands it and cherishes it like no one else ever could. This is the true tragedy behind the dislocations caused by the coming of the white man to the Pure Lands.

If the nations felt such dislocations, the Pure Lands Garou felt it even more keenly. Tied even more strongly to the land, to specific caerns and the spirits inhabiting those places, most Garou remained to protect their sacred places even when their Kinfolk moved on. When forced out and their caerns stolen, such Garou were bereft of support. Their Kin were scattered, their pacts with the spirits broken. Many turned vengeful, remaining nearby and striking out against the interlopers. Others fell to despair. Some tried to tell the newcomers of the intricate web of Bane prisons held in place by the power of their



caems; others coldly turned their backs, knowing the Banes would break free to ravage the new overlords.

Despite their differences in geographic location and customs and their conflicts with one another, most human inhabitants of the Pure Lands existed within common bounds and harbored certain similar beliefs. Whatever gulf separated one nation from another, certain threads were common to all. Two of these were conceptual: the idea of the sacred hoop and maintaining the balance through custom and ritual. The others were physical realities: the dearth of written languages, metal tools and weapons and large domesticated animals. Finally, the native people had almost no resistance to the diseases brought by the European explorers and settlers, the main factor in leaving the Native American nations a diminished and broken people.

### *The Sacred Hoop*

The native nations believed that all life was interconnected. From birth to death and beyond, all things possessed a spirit that could affect and be affected by everything else. This was known by many names, but the most well known term for the circular pattern of life was the sacred hoop. So dependent were all things on one another that the dead and their treatment after death, the respect shown to them, could have a profound effect on the living. Thus the nations held great respect for burial grounds and consulted their ancestors on matters of import. Many things in life echoed the idea of an interconnected circle, from the shape of tepees and the formation of encampments to the patterns followed in many dances and rituals.

Gaining the help of powerful spirit beings meant a person could look forward to success in all his undertakings, whether farming, hunting or warfare. Family life was likewise affected. Friendly spirits could ensure healthy children and a harmonious household. In like manner, if someone offended the spirits through negligence, disrespect or wrong actions, not only he might suffer, but all around him. Thus one person could bring disaster on all through his actions.

To be certain they weren't neglecting or offending the spirits, the people lived their everyday lives within the bounds of a great number of ceremonies and rituals all designed to instruct them in the practices needed to gain and keep the spirits' favor. Agricultural endeavors called for their own rituals, as did hunting, the preparation of food and even the making of tools, weapons and clothing. If, for example, a hunter killed an animal in the correct manner, this released its spirit to return to the otherworld the spirits called home. If such an animal were slain without the proper rituals and obser-

vances, such as asking its forgiveness, or if its meat were not correctly prepared or went to waste or wasn't offered to others in a generous manner, the animal's master (known as a totem animal) would be offended. The totem might remove all that type of animal from the area, causing hunger and hardship on those who showed no respect for the gift of food. Warfare demanded its ritual practices too, such as painting signs of power on the body, participating in the dances and eating the correct foods before engaging in battle.

Thus even the spirits were a part of the sacred hoop. The spirits depended on those of the middle world (living beings on the earth) to make the proper observances and in turn granted them help from the upper world (that of the spirits) while protecting them from the spirits of the lower world (the land of evil).

### *Maintaining the Balance*

Though it might be considered an aspect of the sacred hoop, the idea of maintaining a balance is such a central concept that it deserves separate mention. Native Americans lived in balance with nature and other beings — be they of the spirit or the flesh. Trying to maintain a balance obviously meant that they usually took only what they could use, so that the land, herds and fish could recover their own balance and remain fertile and bountiful. Likewise, they balanced their requests to the spirits with gifts to them that were intended to equalize the relationship.

In daily life, they were generous to one another, realizing that at some future time, they or their families might need such generosity themselves. The exchange of gifts held great significance for native people, especially in dealing with potential enemies. Maintaining one's allies through generous displays was also crucial to their survival. When two nations came together to speak, the way for each to show its good intentions and its wealth lay in giving the other many fine gifts. The value and beauty or the meaning of the gift also showed the giver's respect for the recipient. Such customs included the bride price, giving a prospective wife's family many gifts to gain their approval of the marriage and to show that the man could provide well for the woman. Other gifts would later come to the suitor as part of his wife's dowry or inheritance, thus making certain that she would have what she needed for a balanced and good marriage.

In trade each side sought to gain a fair deal. Each knew what his goods were worth and expected the other to offer a price that matched or slightly exceeded the worth, thereby showing good sense, a respect for balance and generosity of spirit all at the same time. Many items held religious significance or were used in

ritual observances rather than having a great value in and of themselves, while some were representative of promises or agreements made between the two rather than being an actual trade of value for value. This system enabled the nations to gain things they lacked while also meeting on neutral ground to exchange ideas and news without fear of betrayal by the other side. Thus the nations were wholly unprepared for dealing with the white man, whose practices were based on attaining the most for the least expenditure.

Balance even affected disputes and warfare. Making war on an enemy rarely occurred because one nation wanted to kill those of a different nation. More often, it involved balancing relations between them. Often one group sought only to prove their martial skill to drive away those who encroached on their hunting grounds. Thus, counting coup (getting close enough to touch the enemy with a stick, proving one's skill and bravery) was more often employed than actual battle meant to harm. This does not mean that the Indians never killed or inflicted pain, for they did — particularly to those whom they captured in battle.

When a nation's warriors took captives, they often turned them over to the women of the nation. The women were most affected if fathers, husbands, brothers or sons were killed in battle. It was only fair that they should decide the fate of captives since they had not had the outlet of the battle itself — again, an attempt to balance rights and privileges. The women would then decide if the captives should be enslaved, adopted into the nation or killed. If death was decreed, excruciating tortures were used. Torture inflicted on a captive was a symbolic means of punishing all their enemies. It also served to test the captive's bravery and stamina to see if he were a suitable representative of his people. Those who died well were thought to go to a reward as great as heroes who died in battle.

Such concerns also dictated the Indian concept of vengeance. If someone killed a member of another person's family, the entire family (and perhaps the whole tribal group) would seek vengeance until the guilty person was dead. Meanwhile, if they caught someone from the guilty party's family, they would kill that person to balance things. Then they might return home, the balance satisfied. Of course, the original murderer would then seek vengeance for his loss. Often, chiefs and medicine folk had to intervene and call a stop to the violence once each side had suffered the same number of losses. In some nations rather than exacting a death for a death, the balance was maintained through making the killer responsible for the well being and upkeep of the murdered person's family. This was most often used in cases where the death was

unintentionally caused or an accident in which someone else could be held at least partly to blame.

The Europeans never understood the concept of balance as applied to disputes between the two societies. If a white man killed a native, this created an imbalance. The murdered person's spirit could not find rest until punishment was meted out to those held accountable. Further, the natives could not allow the whites to gain an advantage over them by killing one of their people without evening the balance. Thus an entire encampment or village might rise against a nearby white settlement seeking to redress the problem. For their part, Europeans held the view that only the actual murderer should be held accountable for his actions. They had no concept of holding the murderer's neighbors responsible for the actions of one man. Thus, they could not understand why the Indians would fall upon innocent people and slay them — apparently for no reason. This would later change as the Europeans held entire nations responsible for the actions of a few hotheads who were often not even of that nation.

### *Dearth of Written Language*

Until Sequoyah's invention of the Cherokee syllabary in 1821, no North American nation had a written language. Though the native people maintained a rich oral tradition, Europeans dismissed them as savages who lacked culture and literacy. Despite the opinions of the Europeans, who didn't even arrive on the scene until several thousand years after the Native Americans, the nations found several advantages to their oral traditions.

Most natives had no concept of breaking agreements or telling lies because their word was literally their bond. They had no written contracts with ambiguous wording. Lying and breaking one's word led to a reputation for being untrustworthy. Men who did so were seen as being unsuitable for marriage or for hunting parties or warfare, for no one could trust them to keep their word and be where they were supposed to be. Things they made to trade became suspect; someone who would lie might try to use shoddy materials and claim their product was better made than it was. Women who lied or broke their word weren't trusted to teach children the nation's traditions and ways of doing things. As with the men, what they grew or made also became suspect. Further, they might be suspected of being unfaithful to their husbands or of doing any number of other harmful actions such as carelessly preparing food that might become poisonous or making clothing that fell apart when used.

Both men and women who lied found that their voices were not welcome in council meetings or to sing the songs. They were not allowed to relate any stories, for they might be fabrications rather than true tales. Finally, they could not be trusted to interact with the spirits, for their false tongues offended the higher beings. Every aspect of the natives' culture was passed on to their children through stories, legends and myths, from herbal knowledge to animal lore to spiritual beliefs. Thus those who spoke truly ensured the continuation of right thinking and tradition, while those who lied offended all.

Again, white Europeans, accustomed to telling lies in their daily lives to escape punishment, gain prestige or ensure a pleasant social situation, were at a loss to understand the natives. For their part, the nations believed the white men when they said they came as brothers or to help them, lies which made it seem all the more a betrayal each time the Europeans reneged on a treaty or failed to keep their word.

Though the creation of the syllabary convinced many whites that the Cherokee might indeed be "civilized" by their standards, it did not keep them from being removed from their lands when they became an inconvenience. Nor did the reams of protests and proof of treaties presented in writing in defense of the Cherokee's right to remain help them either. Ironically, their newfound literacy did allow the Cherokee an outlet for chronicling their removal along the Trail of Tears.

### *Lack of Large Domesticated Animals*

Most modern people's concept of Native Americans is of a Plains Indian atop his painted war pony in full pursuit of a buffalo. In actuality, this picture, while true in the 1800s and for about a hundred years, is grossly inaccurate at other times and places. Before the coming of the Spaniards to Mexico and the southwest, no horses existed in America. Nor did the natives possess oxen or other draft animals. They kept no cows and had no mules. Thus, they had no larger animals to serve as beasts of burden or for riding. They also had none to help them till the fields. This being so, they also had no use for the wheel or the plow. Fields were cleared by hand and planted by dropping seeds into holes made with sharpened sticks. In most areas, native nations planted their crops for a few years, then moved on or switched to different fields, letting the land lie fallow and recover its nutrients. This method of planting (and harvesting) meant that if large areas were to be planted, it required a group effort to do so. Shared labor led to shared produce as well and the idea of parceling off and fencing in a piece of land to call one's own was thus a completely alien concept.

Without riding animals, those who moved around did so on foot or via waterways in canoes (or other craft) or on rafts. Most villages and towns were founded along riverbanks to facilitate travel and trade. Since travel on foot and via water played such an important role, roads to accommodate horses and wagons were not built. Instead, time and the passage of many feet wore small trails through forests or over grasslands. Eventually those would become the landmarks by which white settlers built their roads, but the Indians themselves saw no need for such blatant disturbances to the Mother's skin.

### *Lack of Metal Tools and Weapons*

With very few exceptions, most native tribes had little access to metals used for tools and weaponry. Though there was some mining, it was of the surface type where clear veins of gold or copper could be easily worked without affecting Mother Earth in so profound a fashion as pit mining. There was no large-scale forging of weapons as in Europe, nor any method of shaping metal beyond beating it or heating it, then beating it.

Many nations, especially those in the south that fell under Mexican influence used gold, silver and copper for decorations. Only a very few had metal tools or weapons. Most used the same materials so widely available elsewhere — stone, bone, wood, flint and obsidian. All were worked into arrowheads, knives, scrapers, spear points or war clubs. Rather than firearms, some nations used blowguns with elongated darts. In everyday life bone was used for needles, utensils and digging tools.

Tools used for farming or for hunting also employed wood, stone and bone. Natives used pointed sticks to make holes for planting seeds. They made canoes and other useful items with stone pointed tools or else by burning. The Cherokee made canoes by chopping a log down, then setting slow fires to burn within the place intended for the open part. Nations also used fire to clear forest and drive prey before them. This created large, open areas that then became grassland that attracted deer and other game.

While most nations made do with flint, some used the far superior obsidian. When chipped into shape, it fractured clean and straight, making a tool or weapon with a keener edge. Though such weapons had to be continually resharpened, they proved more effective than cruder stone. Oddly, though the Europeans thought obsidian a primitive material, the cuts made by the volcanic glass are so straight and so free of additional tearing around a wound, that properly shaped



obsidian knives are superior even to the best steel or diamond-edged scalpels used in modern surgery.

Though some claim that the native nations lost the battle for America because their weaponry was too crude to compete with European guns and swords, the truth is they lost to another enemy altogether, the great slayer known as disease.

### *No Resistance to Disease*

Some 21 million natives lived in North America before the coming of the Europeans. They populated the land from west to east and north to south living in a variety of climates and geographic locations. Adapted to their local environments, they nevertheless had large trade networks that stretched across vast areas of the continent. Though in earlier times this network served to disseminate ideas as well as allowing those lacking a resource to acquire it from somewhere else, these contacts were to prove fatal to the Native Americans. We need not even recount the tale of how the United States government later handed out the blankets of smallpox victims to native tribes they wished to remove, for the real damage was done before most European settlers set foot on the land.

Because they had lived in virtual isolation from any contact with continents from across the seas, the natives had no immunity to diseases Europeans commonly endured. Smallpox, yellow fever, measles, influenza and even bubonic plague — all arrived in the New World along with the Spanish explorers. In Mexico and Mesoamerica, millions of natives succumbed to the ravages. From there and from the expeditions of de Soto ranging from Florida through Alabama and the southeast and down the Mississippi, epidemics of untold proportions swept through native towns and villages, among war parties and trade groups, slaying more than half the population wherever they went. Where Europe had suffered the loss of a quarter of its people a century before, now the Native Americans reeled from a succession of twenty separate epidemics that destroyed great civilizations, killed three quarters of the population and left towns and fields standing empty. The remaining people, shocked and bereft, were incapable of making any real defense against invaders. Scholars who claim that only about a million Indians lived in North America in 1492 might well have been correct, for millions had already died, victims of invaders they never met or saw. The demoralized remains of the nations that greeted the first settlers were shadows of what they had once been.

## *Croatan Kinfolk*

The present grouping of Kinfolk among the Uktena and Wendigo is definitively post-conquest, representing a shrinking not only of territory but also of human nations who once roamed across the whole continent and are now confined to secluded reservations, mainly west of the Mississippi.

Before the loss of the Croatan tribe, the three brother tribes spread out across the land, interbreeding with many tribes. Thus, while the tribes would often be focused into certain regions (Uktena = southwest, Croatan = central and east, Wendigo = northwest and Canada), their Kin could be spread far and wide.

Newly-Changed Garou who were far from their own tribe's lands would often be fostered by members of a local tribe, until it was feasible to turn them over to their proper tribal leaders. Such fostering became commonplace even among tribes widely separated, for it was a way to keep the original Three Brothers unified across vast spaces.

Unfortunately, many of the Croatan's Kin nations suffered badly with the loss of their Garou tribe, and either vanished outright or were absorbed into the other tribes. In many cases, the Uktena or Wendigo would take over breeding rights with some of these nations, but not all of them. There are many tribes (especially in places with low wolf populations) that have almost no Garou blood in them.

The haze of prehistory prevents exact identification of many of the nations who bred with the Croatan; their names and even lifeways have often been lost to time. Some of their descendants made it into European contact history, but greatly changed since the Croatan had known them. They changed even more after contact. As a result, only a few nations can be definitively identified as Croatan Kinfolk; the Storyteller is encouraged to make decisions on individual tribes as the chronicle might demand.

The people now known collectively as the Mississippians were among the Croatan's greatest concentration of Kinfolk. None of the other brother tribes bred with these people, unlike elsewhere in North America. The Mississippians were most populous throughout the river valleys of the Southeast, such as the valleys of the Mississippi, Cumberland, Savannah, Tennessee and Arkansas rivers.

The people from whom the Powhatan Confederacy grew were the Croatan's most populous Kin in the East, along with other coastal people along Chesapeake Bay down to North Carolina's Outer Banks,



including Roanoke Island — the place of the great sacrifice of the Croatan tribe.

Some of the nations of the Iroquois Confederacy were Croatan Kinfolk, such as the Tuscarora (later Kin to the Uktena). They also had Kin among the Lenne Lenape (Delaware). Finally, many of the peaceful nations of the West Coast had Croatan Kinfolk among them; most of their names are lost, although it's said that the Pomo were among the Croatan's relatives.

## ***Uktena Kinfolk***

Uktena Kinfolk comprise a wide range of cultures, most formed in response to their geographic location and available resources. Most of the tribe's Kin are settled people, more given to farming and fishing than to raiding or nomadic pursuits. A few break the pattern, but often as a result of being pushed out of their former territories by stronger or more determined groups. The Uktena are surprisingly accepting of this, deciding that they are where the Mother intended them to be.

### ***Voice of the Ancestors***

*Listen to me. All time is one in a vision. From where you sit, you look out on all the tales of the Pure Lands and you see them in the past. I see the stories as they happen; without a body that grows old and weak, there is no need to say "this was before my time" or "this is yet to come." Look back from where you are and see our people as I see them, when they were still young and vital, before the sickness and hatred and murder came on them. Look and see.*

## ***People of the Southeast***

The Kinfolk of this land are a very subtle people. Many strong nations — the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Catawba, Creek and Seminole all call themselves "the people." The names outsiders know them by were given to them by enemies and are often uncomplimentary; it is poor manners to speak to them in such a way.

### ***Cherokee***

The Grandmother has been kind to this band of our Kinfolk, the *aniyunwiya* ("principal people") who are also known as the Cherokee. They live among the bounty of the mountains and valleys in towns surrounded by fertile fields. Many animals — black bear, deer, bobcat and squirrel — share territory with this nation. With over sixty towns linked by trail or waterway, they are a prosperous people.

The first of our Kinfolk to turn their spoken tongue into a written language, they learn much from the white settlers. Unlike many others of our Kin, they

accord women high status. Women are a part of their councils and may be warriors if they choose.

We at first watch to see if the influence of the Europeans will be bad for our Kinfolk. We wonder sometimes if they are not a little too civilized and too ready to adopt others' customs. If we had known that contact would bring on the Trail of Tears and the removal of the other tribes, we would have fought harder than Middle Brother to keep the Wymbringers from ever finding these mountain lands.

### **Chickasaw and Choctaw**

Our Chickasaw Kinfolk share common roots with the Choctaw, who came across the Mississippi from the west. The Chickasaw claim that two brothers, Chiksa and Chakta led the people, though the Choctaw version differs. The land they chose is fertile floodplain along the Mississippi, though they placed their villages on patches of higher ground to avoid floods and fortified them against raids. They claimed fertile soil for planting corn, beans, squash, melons and sunflowers and formed their houses on pole frames with plant materials (grasses, thatch and bark) for coverings.

The Chickasaw, though less numerous than the Choctaw, spread further and gained control of trade and traffic along the Mississippi. They reckoned kinship through the mother's line and organized themselves by clan. They also observed a law of hospitality by which they shared with those who needed what they had and considered the ungenerous to be criminals. Disputes and warfare might both be settled by playing a game of stickball, a game similar to what you will know as lacrosse.

The Choctaw, while similar to the Chickasaw, organized themselves according to two major divisions called *iksas*. Children belonged to the *iksa* of their mother and people were required to marry into the *iksa* opposite to the one they belonged to. As there were so many different languages in use, Choctaw traders developed a trade language. Combined with sign language, it allowed nations who spoke widely differing dialects or tongues to communicate. Rather than engage in warfare, the Choctaw played stickball to determine who won a dispute. This was good for both the Choctaw and the Chickasaw, as the two were bitter rivals, ever ready to war on one another despite their common origins. We warned them against the whites as we warned others, but they dealt with the Spanish who came with de Soto, allied with the French and finally helped fight the American Revolution against the British. Despite this, and despite fighting under Andrew Jackson in the Creek

War, they were the first of the Five Civilized Tribes to be relocated west of the Mississippi.

### **Creek**

These Kinfolk are also known as the Muskogee. They are made up of a number of tribes who came to the area from further west. Each town or *tahwa* is considered autonomous and has sole control over local affairs. Each town selects at least one headman, called a *micco*, who presides over town councils and acts as diplomat to other towns.

The Creeks was not their name for themselves; they got it from the Europeans because they all live along riverbanks. They are farmers and traders. Though initially not so tightly knit, the continual encroachment of white settlers eventually leads them into a confederation to fight against their lands being taken. Eventually "red sticks" (so called because runners carrying the red sticks of war carry the news of the uprising from town to town) among the Upper Towns call for war when treaties failed to stop the settlers. A force of Lower Towns moderates and an American command crush their small force. Eventually, they too suffer removal and we lose yet another of our Kinfolk tribes to the greed and ruthlessness of the Wymbringers.

### **Seminole**

The Seminole are an offshoot of the Creeks, mostly from their Lower Towns. They emigrate to northern Florida in the 1700s. They establish towns like those of the Creeks and use their matriarchal lineage and clan structure. Our Seminole Kinfolk farm, but supplement their crops with fishing and hunting as well as gathering wild plants. They and the red-stick Creek become continuously hostile toward American settlers moving into their territories; they side with the Red Sticks, though they don't actively participate in the war. They provide refuge for their Red Stick brethren, as well as for runaway slaves.

The Europeans answer their hostility with dozens of treaties that they tried to use to repair relations, though they always aim to remove the Seminole. After invasions and unending pressures, many finally agree to move to Oklahoma. Once there, they become mostly assimilated into the Wymbringers and lose most of their land and culture. We help some of our Kin hide out in the cypress swamps and the Everglades, and they rebuild themselves into a nation. They hide within their enclaves, avoiding the whites, never agreeing to a peace with the United States government until in 1911, when it creates three reservations for them in Florida.



## People of the Southern Plains

From the Rio Grande in the west to the Red River basin in the east, the people who dwell in the great open grasslands and prairies depend on the abundance of game and herd animals for their food. Much of the land suffers from too little rainfall for sustainable farming except among the easternmost areas. The violent weather affects the lives of the nations who roam the plains and reminds them of the changeable nature of their Grandmother.

### Apache

Related to the Athapaskan people, the Apache

migrate into the plains in the time of the arrival of the Spanish in the southwest, making their homes in the lands that stretch from the Colorado River northward to the Cimarron River. Divided into many semi-independent bands, the Apache Kinfolk rely primarily on hunting and foraging, although they also raise some crops where they can find arable soil. During times of planting, the Apache live in small villages dotted with domed, brush-covered huts that they call *wickups*. These wandering Kinfolk spend most of their time pursuing the buffalo herds, living in small camps. Apache hunters take only those animals they need for food, culling the old and crippled beasts as well as extra males from the herds. They excel at the use of bow and arrows, making their bows from mulberry and their arrows from the hard-

wood trees that grow in their homelands. In later times, the Apaches learn to trade with their neighbors and sometimes rivals, the Pueblos. Frequently, however, the Pueblos serve as objects for raids that bring out Kinfolk wealth and captives. Like many of the people of this region, the Apaches either ritually torture their prisoners or else adopt them into the nation, a decision that usually rests with the women. The practice of running the gauntlet is used among the Kinfolk as a means of testing the worth of a captive. The coming of the horse, which the Apache called "Mystery Dog," enables the Apache to more easily follow the buffalo and increases their success in war.

### Comanche

The Comanche arrive in the plains in the early 1700s, splitting off from their Shoshone relatives of the Rocky Mountains. Many small bands come together in larger groups known as divisions, though they recognize no overall leadership. Each division takes its name from a favored food group, such as the Honey, Buffalo or Root eaters. Their homes consist of

### Hasinai

Also known as the Caddos, the Hasinai nation dwells in the land between the Neches and Angelina Rivers, where they live by farming, hunting and foraging. While they catch or trap small animals such as rabbits and quail, they also gather fish, frog and turtles from the nearby rivers. Herd animals, including bison and deer furnish the Hasinai with meat and hides. Farming provides the majority of food for our Kinfolk of this region, and both the men and women who plant the seeds share in the harvest of melons, squash, gourds, corn and tobacco. Hasinai families share communal lodges, round buildings made of layers of grass over a pole frame. Temples for ceremonies to honor the spirits rest on flat earthen mounds, similar to those of the ancient mound builders.

Clans usually share lodges and form a cohesive group within the nation. Leadership falls to a paramount chief, known as *xinesi*, a title that usually passes from father to son. The *xinesi*'s power comes from his ability to speak with the spirits through the use of a pair of spirit messengers who dwell in small huts near the temple and communicate only with the chief. *Caddi*, or local chiefs, keep order within the village, while women enjoy respect as advisers and counselors. The Hasinai also produce fierce warriors, who practice the taking of scalps and the ritual torture of captives to demonstrate the bravery of their fallen enemies. Both

tips covered in buffalo hides, making it easy for them to carry their dwellings with them as they move from place to place following the herds.

The coming of the horse to the plains provides the

Comanche with both a powerful means of movement

and a useful commodity for trading, for they excel at

capturing, breeding and taming the wild mustangs that

soon roam the plains. As mounted warriors, few can

equal the ferocity and cunning of these Kinfolk.

Both men and women learn to ride, allowing

family groups to travel quickly together in pursuit of

the buffalo. Women perform most of the work that

does not involve hunting and warfare. Women wear

their hair short, while men grow their hair long,

wearing braids decorated with feathers, beads and

other objects. Both men and women adorn themselves

with tattoos and body paint. Warriors wear head-

addresses made from buffalo scalps, presenting a fierce

visage to their enemies. Bands have both a war and a

peace chief, who share the leadership along with a

band council. Respect for other Comanche bands

demonstrates their belief in unity of their people

despite their many divisions.

Hasinai men and women adorn their bodies and faces with intricate tattoos and painted designs.

## Kiowa

The Kiowa arrive in the southern plains from their original homelands to the north and soon form alliances with their former enemies, the Comanche. They adopt many customs of the Comanche, living in similar dwellings consisting of buffalo-hide tipis and surviving by a combination of hunting and foraging, with minimal farming to supplement their diet. Unlike the Comanche, however, the Kiowa have an elaborate social structure. Each male youth joins the Rabbit Society that oversees his education in warfare, hunting and horsemanship. Older youths join the Herders and learn more skills to prepare them for adulthood. Upon reaching manhood, young men join warrior societies such as the Black Legs. These groups preserve their own ritual dances and songs.

Warriors who prove their skill may join more prestigious societies, and truly great warriors become members of the Koisenko, or Crazy Dogs — the elite fighters of the Kiowa nation. Kiowa men also divide into four ranks — the elite, the second best, men without property and hangers-on.

## Osage

Uprooted by the Iroquois nations as they move westward, the Osage arrive in the southern plains in the early years of the European invasion of the eastern lands. Dwelling along the Osage River and in the regions south and west of that waterway, these Kinfolk farm and hunt, living in villages that sometimes hold more than 1,000 people. Family groups reside in rectangular houses made of sod and covered with grass or hides.

The people move to smaller camps in the winter, making their temporary homes near the forests where game and firewood are plentiful. In spring they return to their villages to plant their crops before taking to the plains to hunt the bison and other large herd animals in the early summer. In late summer, they move once more to their villages to harvest their fields and prepare food for the cold season.

Osage society recognizes many clans, each of which consists of a peace faction known as the Tsi-zhu and a war faction called the Hon-gu. Each faction provides assistance for the other, and marriages usually take place within clans but between factions.

A council of Little Old Men, each of whom has achieved seven degrees of knowledge within their clan, act as elders for each village, conducting ceremonies to prepare for war as well as settling civil disputes

and keeping order. Two chiefs, one from the peace faction and one from the war faction, share the leadership of the village. Fierce warriors and raiders, the Osage participate in mourning raids in honor of deceased family members. Our Osage Kinfolk frequently adopt war captives into the nation, thus bringing new blood and strength into their community.

Both men and women mark their bodies with elaborate tattoos. Women paint their hair with a red streak that represents the passage of the sun through the sky.

## The World of the Spirits

The people of the southern plains remain close to the world of the spirits that dwell within the creatures they hunt, the food they grow and the earth and sky that nurture them. Songs and dances commemorate the relationship of the plains people with the world of their ancestors and of the spirits. The Kiowa Gourd Dance celebrates the gift of a being they call Red Wolf and honors both bravery and beauty with songs, howls and dances. Among the Hasinai, spiritual power resides in their chief and he passes along his knowledge of the spirit world to his people. The Osage recognize Wa-ken-da as their Supreme Being, honoring him at dawn with prayers and ceremonies. The Apache honor beings they call mountain spirit dancers who came to them from Guadalupe Peak, in the land now known as Texas. These spirits, called *gaa*, are responsible for teaching ritual dances of healing and banishing evil. They also instruct our Kinfolk in the ways of reverent living. Masked dancers celebrate these spirit teachers, summoning their presence in elaborate ritual dances. Our Comanche Kinfolk seek *puha*, or "medicine" power in their rituals. Visions quests form an important part of Comanche life and those who receive visions also undertake strict taboos that mark them as blessed by their guardian spirit. Monsters such as the Cannibal Owl and ghosts of their enemies lurk in the spirit world and must be avoided or placated. The Kiowa have an elaborate system of shield or medicine societies for both men and women. Each society takes on the responsibility for certain spiritual practices. Sacred bundles, called the Ten Grandmothers, embody the spiritual power to cleanse the soul. Like the tribes of the northern plains, these Kinfolk also demonstrate their devotion to the spirit world through the rigorous practice of the Sun Dance.

## People of the Pueblos

Our Kinfolk from the Pueblos include the Anasazi — before the time when they went away — Hopi, Navajo and a number of nations known as the Pueblo Indians. Though they share several characteristics

such as farming, residing in pueblo-style homes and living in harmony with the earth, they differ in several important ways. Their social organizations, spiritual beliefs and customs radically diverge one from the other and they have never been unified, instead living within autonomous communities. Each nation once claimed many more people. Though now diminished in number, the population supported by our Kinfolk in this desert environment is a testament to their genius at irrigation. The Spanish Wymbringers introduce domesticated animals — cattle, horses, burros and sheep — to the pueblo dwellers. Sheep become particularly popular as the nations choose wool to be their newly preferred material for weaving. They rely on time tested materials for other useful items. Our clever Kin learned both culinary and medicinal uses for everything from prickly pear cacti to yucca. They use willow and sumac stems in making baskets, chokeberry wood for bows and mountain mahogany for clubs. Hunters bring in meat animals and again, hides are made into clothing, tools constructed from bone, rattles made from hoofs and bowstrings made of sinew. We taught our Kinfolk well and they know better than any other the necessity of using everything the Grandmother gave them to survive and prosper.

### *Anasazi*

Our Anasazi Kinfolk settled the region in what is now known as the Four Corners area where Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah intersect. They lived here from about A. D. 200 to A. D. 1300. The region is a place of harsh arid lands, most atop plateau land some 4500 to 8500 feet high. The flat-topped mesas support some pinon and juniper trees as well as yellow pine. Wind-sculpted sandstone, shale and limestone spires jut forth, creating windows, bridges and caves. A second region within Anasazi territory consists of basin and range country, with deer grasses and shrubs adapted to dry conditions and several surprisingly large rivers cutting through desert land. The third area enfolds high mountains (12,000 feet) covered with evergreen forests and meadowlands. Here in the heady upper reaches are the sources of the rivers and snowmelt the Anasazi depended on for their agricultural livelihood.

Known for their clever basket making and pottery, the Anasazi had to supplement their crops of beans, squash and corn with hunting and gathering due to the lack of rainfall in the region. They lived in round pit houses covered by a framework of four main timbers supporting a wood and mud roof. The inner pit was reached by climbing in through a hole in the roof and down a ladder, much like the modern kiva. Later

structures were either Great Houses, contiguous four or five story buildings built into the sides of cliffs, or village style, single dwellings of one story grouped together with several others in a village type arrangement near a central plaza and great kiva.


Around 1300 the Anasazi disappeared. Though the Pueblo culture shows obvious signs of Anasazi custom and influence, the number of pueblo dwellers indicates that several thousand Anasazi apparently vanished rather than moving elsewhere. Though others might wonder at this, we Uktena know old tales. It is said that three great Banes, later termed Drought, Decay and Devastation, came upon our Kinfolk and slew many before we were made aware of them. Though Wolf Changer heroes dispatched the Banes, their influence had corrupted the Anasazi to such an extent that they had to disperse, leaving their homes and goods behind. Then again, it is also said that the Nuwisha bred strong with the Anasazi as we did, and that the disappearance was the doing of Coyote's children as a prank. We do not know for certain, for none of our tribe who remained with the Anasazi at that time have entered the lodges of the Ancestor-spirits. We cannot be sure.

### *Hopi*

Like the Anasazi before them, our Hopi Kinfolk live in pueblo houses. Though some are one story, others consist of several stories, reached by ladders between levels. The name Hopi is a shorter version of their word *Hopituh* meaning "peaceful ones," for that is the nature of our wise Kin. They believe that their long-ago ancestors climbed up from three cave worlds and emerged into this, the Fourth World from a hole in the floor of the Grand Canyon, which is sacred to them. In their kivas, which are used for ceremonial and gathering purposes, there is always a hole in the floor called the *sipapu*, symbolizing the hole they came through on entering the world. Thus they link their religious observances to the sacred origin of their people.

Westernmost of the Pueblo peoples, these intellectual and peaceful Kinfolk practice a philosophy called the Hopi Way. It includes every aspect of existence: their beliefs, their behavior to one another and to outsiders, their relationship with nature, and even their craftsmanship. All of these are seen as part of the whole and all deserve their best attention. Despite their sharing, peaceful nature, our Kinfolk eventually go to war with the Spanish who attempted to force them to practice the Christian religion to the exclusion of their own.





The Hopi are renowned for their agricultural knowledge, especially the growing of corn. Their blankets are justly praised for their rich colors and patterns. Most noticeable on first seeing the Hopi are the young women of marriageable age, who wear a traditional hairstyle called the "squash blossom," which rests on either side of the head in large coils. The Hopi say they are protected and guided by kachinas, spirits dwelling in their own world high atop mountains to the west. The kachinas would come down at the Winter Solstice, enter people's bodies and stay to be guiding forces until the Summer Solstice.

### Navajo

Originally, these Kinfolk were associated with our brothers, the Wendigo. They traveled southward with others of their people who would later be called Apache. From their beginnings as hunters and gatherers, the Navajo adapted to their new desert homes, first becoming raiders, then settling and becoming farmers, weavers and silversmiths (though we maintain our distrust of this last). Living in wood and mud houses called hogans, our Navajo Kinfolk developed a way of life, a state of ideal harmony, known as *hozho*. From this come their ceremonies intended to cure illness and relieve pain called the Shootingway and the Beautyway. Best known is the Blessingway that defines rituals for important events in life and calls for good health and good fortune. One of their chief means of achieving their healing and blessings is through the singing of ritual songs accompanied by the creation of elaborate sand paintings. When they become a settled people, they become friends with the Hopi and Pueblo nations.

With the coming of the Spanish Wyrncomers, these Kin acquire horses, goats, sheep and cattle, as our other Kinfolk do. Wanting more, they raid to get it. We warned them that their love of such things would be their undoing, and later, they are punished for it by being rounded up and herded away like the animals they took. Only through the intervention of a great Galliard and a sympathetic spirit were they saved in the end and allowed to return from the wastelands to the place where they had built their homes and found peace.

### People of California

#### Miwok

Our Miwok Kinfolk are numerous, though they call themselves the Kola. They are a handsome and friendly people with long, braided hair, facial tattoos, naming beads around their necks and pierced ears.

Living all across the middle of what the Spanish will call California, they flourish among the chaparral and live oak woodlands along streams and lakes.

Powerful shamans give advice to the *hoypu* (chief) and his strong warrior females, the *mayen*. Guardian animal spirits, ourselves included, speak to the shamans and give them healing and curing songs and dances. They are a playful people, beloved of the Ragabash, enjoying games of chance and *hapomti*, a form of handball.

Still, they are suspicious of strangers and do not easily give their names, for poisoners and witches hide among them and names give power to those who would cause them to sicken and die.

### Chumash

Our Kinfolk, the Chumash are the only natives who built their boats from planks, splitting cedar logs, lashing them with sinew or vine and caulking them. Four oarsmen could handle them in ocean waters. Organized into villages, they occupied lands on the mainland and on Channel Islands near what was later known as Santa Barbara. Though they used their boats for passage between villages, their main use was for fishing and hunting sea mammals.

The Chumash live in domed houses covered with plant materials. Though they hunt small game and prepare numerous foods from acorns, they depend on the sea for most of their sustenance. One of our few far western caerns lies on one of the islands near their largest island town.

## Kinfolk of the Wendigo

### Voice of the Ancestors

*You have heard Older Brother speak, and Middle Brother no longer has a voice; now listen to me. So many ills have been done to our people; so many dead! But it was not always so. There were winters when we were numerous and strong and happy; our lives were hard, but there was still joy in them. I see those days like pictures on a wall. They are all around us, although you cannot touch them. They live as I tell of them; as I speak, the past is now. The time before the wasichu is now.*

## People of the Arctic World

Our northernmost Kinfolk come from many nations — the Yupik, Inupiat, Inuit, Netsilik, Igulik, Aleuts and Avanersuarmit. Strangers would call them all by one name — Eskimo — but we know them by the names they call themselves.

### Igloos

The Inuit did not use igloos as permanent homes. These domed snow houses functioned as temporary shelters for hunters when they needed to spend the night far from home. A hunter desiring to build an igloo had to find solid, hard-packed snow to cut into blocks using saws with ivory blades. Fitting the blocks together required skill and precision as well as speed, since the builder often worked against time to erect his shelter against the harsh winter weather. Practiced builders could put together an igloo in as little as three hours, if working alone. When others helped — either a small hunting party or a hunter and his family — an igloo could be made in even less time. Hunters carried oil lamps on their hunting trips to provide light and, together with body heat from the hunter and sometimes his dogs, warmth.

Permanent homes for the Inuit were typically sod or stone houses, sometimes built underground.

### Life in a Frozen World: The Inuit, Yupik and Inupiat

The constant battle for survival in a harsh climate has shaped and tempered our Kinfolk, teaching them how to make use of every part of their environment. Hunting provides nearly all of the food and other resources necessary for life. Animals such as the whale, caribou, arctic fox, seal and polar bear along with fish and birds supply not only meat but also fuel, tools, clothing and materials for constructing shelters and boats. Snow and ice provide the building blocks for igloos and serve to preserve food from spoilage. Snowshoes and dogsleds enable hunters to travel long distances overland, while kayaks and umiaks, their skin-covered boats, allow rapid transportation through the icy waters.

Communal life revolves around the family unit, and several families gather in small villages or in nomadic groups. Men and women divide the many tasks necessary for survival between them. The men and boys spend their time hunting or fishing, while women and girls have the responsibility for preparing food, sewing together the seal-skin hides for boats, and making clothing, shelter and tools. Leaders are usually the greatest hunters, and those who can call upon the spirits of the ice and snow to aid them earn much respect among their people.

## *The Islanders: The Aleuts*

Our Kinfolk of the Aleutian Islands have grown away from their ancestral cousins of the Inuit nations, but many of their ways remain the same. They, too, rely on the bounty of the oceans and the land for their sustenance, hunting sea birds, halibut, whale, seals and otters. Unlike their cousins, however, they rely on a highly developed social structure within their villages. *Toyons*, men of wealth and power, serve as chiefs and make up a "noble class" which governs the lives of the lower or less prosperous villagers. Family clans preserve their own rituals and taboos.

## *The World of the Spirits*

Belief in and respect for the spirits lies at the heart of the life of the people of the coldest lands. Shamans provide the link between the spirit and human worlds, interpreting omens, enforcing the system of taboos, making offerings and appeasing both destructive and beneficial spirits. Shamans serve as healers, priests and leaders of the hunt. *Angakok*, or shamans who communicate with good and evil spirits on behalf of their people, receive both respect and fear for their ability to either help or harm those under their care. Hunters carry *angoaks*, or sacred charms carved from wood or ivory to aid them in the hunt or to protect them from danger.

## *People of the North Pacific Coast*

The nations that live along the forested coast of the North Pacific have many names. They are the Chinook, the Coast Salish, the Haida, the Kwakiutl, the Nootka, the Tlingit and the Tsimshian, to name but a few of the most populous groups. Here our Kinfolk dwell close to the spirits of water and wood. They hunt and forage, for they have no need to plant and reap from the ground. Their ceremonies express their reverence for the bounty of the Grandmother, and their men and women of power honor the spirits of those they hunt.

## *Chinook*

Hunting and fishing provide the major source of livelihood for our Chinook brothers. Salmon and other sea creatures serve as food, while fur-bearing animals provide fur for clothing and blankets against the harsh winters. Although they base their lives around ritual and structure, the Chinook do not adhere to as many rules as their northern neighbors, the Kwakiutl, do. Talented individuals rise high in Chi-

nook society, regardless of the circumstances of their birth, while young men and women enjoy a greater freedom to court one another and choose life partners. Married couples choose whether to reside with the wife or husband's parents and sometimes move from one household to another. Like the other nations dwelling in this area, the Chinook take war captives as slaves, regarding them as signs of status.

## *Coast Salish*

Our Kinfolk among the Coast Salish people also rely on the bounty of the nearby ocean and swift-flowing rivers for their food. Dwelling in villages along the coast, the people construct their houses from wood, building sweat lodges, special houses for men and women's rites, storage buildings and smokehouses. In summer, whole villages make foraging journeys, often taking their homes with them by stripping the outer planks and transporting them by canoe to their summer camps. Each household has its own distinct name and house crest. Household heads serve as leaders or chiefs of the village. Among the Coast Salish, women often occupy this prestigious position.

## *Haida*

The island of Haida Gwaii, which the Europeans would rename Queen Charlotte's Island, serves as the homeland for our Haida Kinfolk. Their lives revolve around the hunt for the rich harvest of salmon. Living in villages comprised of wooden houses, each family displays its clan crest atop a totem pole outside the house. Clan affiliation passes through the mother's line to her children, and boys of noble lineage study the sacred stories of his mother's clan in order to preserve the lore of his family.

The Haida emerged from the waters in the ancient times, drawn to their island by the call of Raven, who wanted companions to end his loneliness in the new-made world. Because of their origins, these sea-born people find themselves drawn to the rough ocean waters around their island. They travel fearlessly in their canoes, often leaving sight of land altogether. Their skill with watercraft enables them to carry on a profitable trade with their neighbors along the continental coast.

## *Kwakiutl*

The Kwakiutl, or Kwakwaka'wakw, as they call themselves, dwell along the coast of Canada near the island now known as Vancouver as well as on the island itself. Among these people, our Kinfolk learn to excel in the art of war, for the Kwakiutl do not hesitate to join battle with other nations. Their prosperity and



power comes from their success in warfare and from their understanding of the cycles of life and the ways of nature. Young boys train for combat through a series of war-like games and contests that involve fighting. Captives taken in war become slaves or are held until their families ransom them, thus bringing wealth to their captors. Each member of a village belongs to a particular social class, and there are many degrees of status that separate the lowest commoner from the wealthiest noble. Skilled members of the lower classes may gain rewards in status and even claim a higher rank by proving their ability to increase their wealth.

Instead of clans, the Kwakiutl belong to different *numaym* — families descended from a spirit ancestor. Unsurprisingly, many of our Kinfolk come from the *numaym* of the wolf. Titles usually go from father to son. If there are no male heirs, a daughter receives her father's title and bestows it upon her husband, who has the responsibility of passing the title to his son. Sons and daughters are free to choose whether to follow the mother's or father's *numaym*.

### *Nootka*

Sharing Vancouver Island with the Kwakiutl, the Nootka inhabit the western shores. Like the Haida, our Nootka Kinfolk excel in ocean-going travel and build canoes that are the envy of many of their neighbors, who journey long distances to trade for them. The Nootka use hook and line or trawling nets to harvest the salmon that provide them with food, going out into the water in canoes to bring in their catch.

Like the Coast Salish, the Nootka also go on foraging expeditions during the summer, taking their houses along with them. Furnishings are easily portable, consisting of boxes and vats, trays and baskets for holding food, clothing, blubber and bedding. Many families share a large communal house, with each family occupying a private space according to their social rank. Those with high rank sleep furthest from the door, while the lowliest members of a household have their places close to the door.

Wars among families often result in raids of one house upon another, although occasionally an entire village may become engulfed in kinship wars. Like most of the people of the northern coast, the Nootka have a society divided into clans. Sons and daughters may choose to follow either the mother's or the father's clan.

### *Tlingit*

Our Kinfolk who inhabit the southern coast of the Alaskan peninsula take their bounty from the woods

### *Totem Poles*

To the people of the Pacific Northwest, the fantastically carved totem poles served as visible reminders of their connections with the spirit world. The elaborately carved figures stacked one on top of another represented spirits associated with a family or an individual. Memorial totems honored deceased chiefs or other honored people, while family poles often framed the entry of a household. These family poles depicted the family crest — or totem spirit protector — along with other symbols of spirits especially honored by the family. Inside a house, a central pole not only served as a support for the framework of the house but also bore carvings that proclaimed the lineage of the head of the household.

Carving and raising a totem pole involved a great deal of time and many ceremonies. These included rituals to banish any malicious or jealous spirits that might linger near the pole, dances in honor of the spirits depicted on the pole and a potlatch or feast to express the generosity of the person or household responsible for the pole.

and mountains as well as from the waters. Mountain goats, bears, seals and other meat and fur-bearing animals provide them with food and clothing, while the ocean and rivers teem with halibut, herring and salmon. In the autumn, they gather tubers and roots from the forests to store against the long, dark winter months. Tlingit society partakes of the elaborate division between classes common to the people of the northern coast. Nobles or "good" people refrain from most manual chores and dress themselves according to their rank. The "poor children," or lower classes perform useful but menial work for the village. Only those of noble rank may perform important ceremonial dances and rituals or call their children by certain names. The ancient custom of potlatch also belongs to the nobles, who alone have the wealth to expend in this ceremony of feasting and gift giving.

### *Tsimshian*

South of their Tlingit neighbors, our Tsimshian Kinfolk have long been known as traders, offering inland tribes catches of fish in return for furs and other useful items. Sometimes warring with and sometimes trading with the Haida, the Tsimshian skill themselves in the arts of warfare and negotiation. The Tsimshian subsist largely on fish products. The euchalon, which

swarms up the nearby rivers in the early spring, provides not only food but also precious oil — a valuable commodity for seasoning as well as for trade. Like other nearby tribes, the Tsimshian practice the custom of potlatch and place great emphasis on personal wealth as a symbol of leadership.

### *The World of the Spirit*

The people of the North Pacific know that they live in a world populated by spirits of all kinds — benevolent nature spirits and malicious spirit creatures. Tracing their descent from ancestral animal spirits, the coastal nations use many ceremonies to honor and placate their ancestors. Hunting rituals and salmon ceremonies commemorate the giving of life to sustain life while ceremonies performed at the felling of trees for the purpose of building houses thank the forest for its bounty. Stories of shapeshifters abound in the legends, so our Kinfolk have little trouble in understanding our occasional presence among them. Carved pillars — totem poles — honor the spirits of the many clans of this region and provide visible reminders of the presence of the spirit world. Vision quests for both boys and girls provide them with the chance to receive a guardian spirit, while a chosen few seek the way of the shaman. Shamans act as channels between the spirit world and the physical world, acting as go-betweens to ensure success in war or hunting or to heal sickness or petition for favorable weather.

### *Potlatch*

The festivals known as potlatches commemorate important events in the lives of the people of the northwest. Only individuals of wealth and substance could afford to give potlatches and, among some of the nations of the region, potlatches were a privilege accorded only to those of "noble" or ruling status. Potlatches involved elaborate rituals and entertainment, including songs, dances and storytelling as well as a grand feast. The highlight of a potlatch came when the host presented gifts to everyone who attended. This demonstration of wealth and generosity served many purposes. It emphasized the wealth and prosperity of the giver, gave thanks to the spirits for their favor, atoned for past wrongdoings and commemorated special events, such as a rise in rank or the birth of a child. Many nations also held potlatches as part of their funerary rites.

## *People of the Great Northern Forests*

The great expanse of land that covers the north of Canada provides a homeland for many nations. Barren tundra covers much of the land, and the people who live there must follow the herds in order to survive. Further south, where great forests cover the earth, life is still hard, but those who live beneath the forest canopy enjoy a greater diversity and do not need to wander as far or as often to find food. This is the land of the Chipewyan people and the Cree, the Gwich'in, the Montagnais and the Ojibwa — although those names came much later and from the mouths of strangers. The people who call this land their home call themselves "the people." We call many of them Kinfolk.

### *Chipewyan*

Members of the Athapaskan language group, the Chipewyan people dwell in the northern tundra, between the bodies of water now known as the Hudson Bay and the Great Slave Lake. These Kinfolk live a life of wandering, traveling in small family groups in pursuit of caribou, which serve as their principle source of food and clothing. They carry their homes with them when they travel, living in pointed tents made of hide supported by slender wooden poles. Men and women fill different places in Chipewyan society. Men spend most of their time hunting, traveling in small hunting parties over barren, often snow-covered ground. After the hunt, women prepare the meat, skinning the carcass and using every portion of the kill for some purpose. The Chipewyan women grow strong in body and will and act as counselors and advisors for the family groups, but the men, as hunters, act as leaders. Men and women marry according to the wishes of their elders, but frequently both men and women will take other mates, sometimes trading partners as a result of wrestling matches and other competitions. Because they spend so much time moving from place to place, Chipewyans do not bury their dead, but leave them on the trail, where their bodies return to the earth in the course of time.

Copper taken from deposits along the Coppermine River serves as the chief source of tools and weapons. Our Kinfolk pound cold or sometimes heated copper into knives, arrowheads, axes, scraping tools and other useful items. Women sew clothes and hides for tents with copper or bone awls and sinew from the caribou. Other nations trade with the Chipewyans for copper, providing our Kinfolk with items that are otherwise

hard to come by. The women prepare food in containers made from birchbark or skin, using water heated with hot stones. In the winter, the people survive on pemmican, stuffed caribou intestines filled with dried meat and fat. Mosses provide one of the few plant sources of food for these wandering Kinfolk. When the Chipewyans go to war, they most often battle their rivals to the north — the arctic peoples — or their Cree neighbors to the south.

## **Cree**

Our Kinfolk among the Cree consider hunger a way of life. The search for food occupies most of their time. Like the Chipewyans to the north, the Cree hunt the caribou, but they also pursue moose, beaver, bear and other animals native to the forests of central Canada, in the lands now known as Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Hunting bands consisting of several families follow the game animals during the winter. In summer, they gather into larger groups of related families or kinship lines. Like their neighbors to the east, the Cree belong to the group now designated as Algonquian speakers.

The forest provides sustenance and tools for survival. The Cree make tools from stone, canoes from birch bark, toboggans from wood and snowshoes from wood and caribou or moose hide. Like most wanderers, they carry their homes wherever they go, cone-shaped lodges made of light poles and skins. Sometimes they erect domed houses with wooden frames and walls and roofs of mud, moss, brush and snow. Cree chiefs come from among those men who are the best hunters and who show the most wisdom in finding enough food to feed their families. Ceremonies surrounding the hunt show reverence for the spirits of the animals who give their lives to the hunters. No boasting or bragging is allowed at the end of the hunt, and the people do not celebrate excessively lest they offend the spirits.

## **Gwich'in**

These Kinfolk live in the southeastern portion of Alaska, not far from the Beaufort Sea. They share many customs with other Athapaskan speakers. In their harsh surroundings, the caribou represents their most important source of food. Many taboos restrict the Gwich'in and reflect their understanding of the sacredness of the hunt. They do not eat the meat of dogs or wolves, foxes or wolverines, ravens or eagles. Because the Gwich'in believe that animals can understand human speech, they refuse to speak badly of animals, since doing so offends the animals' spirits and

makes them harder to kill. They do not count the number of animals killed in a hunt so that they do not offend the spirits through boastfulness.

The Gwich'in show great respect for their elders, keeping their old relatives with them until they die instead of killing them when they can no longer aid the tribe.

## **Montagnais**

The Montagnais, who live in eastern Canada in the place someday called Newfoundland, belong to the Algonquian language group. The name they have, given to them by the Europeans, differs from their true name. They live mostly by hunting and gathering, like their neighbors. The Montagnais live in shelters made from poles and bark with fir boughs as carpets. They keep dogs as pack animals and sled pullers.

Women have a great deal of respect among these Kinfolk. They choose their own mates and sometimes take lovers. They serve as advisors and often make decisions for the tribe. They take charge of everything except the hunting of game and their wisdom adds to the survival of their people. Because of the severity of their life, the Montagnais kill their eldest members when they can no longer keep up with the periodic movements of their families, believing it to be a kindness to them. Dreams are important to the Montagnais, serving as signs that guide their actions.

## **Northern Ojibwa**

The Algonquian speakers known as the Northern Ojibwa to outsiders dwell in a territory of many lakes and great forests of coniferous trees — the lands you know as Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Ontario. These Kinfolk hunt the woodland caribou, as well as moose, bear, beaver and small game animals. The men form small hunting bands, leaving their women and children behind in winter camps. In the cold season, women set nets in holes they make in the ice to trap fish. In early spring, the Northern Ojibwa leave their winter camps and journey to the land of sugar maples where they collect sugar to add to their diet and to use in trading with other nations. These summer camps are larger than the winter ones and consist of related families and other friendly groups. During the summer season and early fall, they pick berries, build canoes and participate in storytelling and games. For them, summer is a time to enjoy life. In the fall, they harvest the wild rice that grows near the rivers before moving on to their winter camps and another round of hunting.



## The Spirit World

The people of the great forests and tundra of the north know that they dwell in a world filled with spirits. Of these spirits, the manitous are the greatest and the most to be feared and respected. The Cree and Northern Ojibwa seek guidance from the manitous with the Shaking Tent Ceremony, in which a shaman enters a specially prepared tent and allows the manitous to visit and converse with him, sometimes sending him messages from the spirit world of things to come. The spirits also answer questions given to the shaman by the people. Northern Ojibwa shamans usually belong to the society of Midewiwin, a brotherhood of healers and intermediaries between the world of the people and the world of the spirits. The Midewiwin also study the uses of plants for healing. Dreams and omens speak to everyone, and even the very young learn to see guidance from the spirit world in everyday occurrences as well as unusual events. For those nations who hunt the bear, this event forms a sacred reenactment of the cycle of life and the spirit of the hunt. Vision quests aid both boys and girls in finding guardian spirits to link them with the other world. Because they understand and fear the power of women, many of our Kinfolk in these lands hold sacred ceremonies marking the onset of womanhood. Some nations require girls to spend their first year as a woman in isolation, spending her time with other women and living apart from the rest of her family. Afterwards, women only isolate themselves during their monthly courses. Many of the peoples in this place hold the belief that humans return after death as animals or else are reborn into a different family. The cluster of stars known to outsiders as the Milky Way has another name for our Kinfolk, who call it the Ghost Road and believe that the spirits of the dead follow this path through the heavens on their way to being reborn.

## People of the Great Lakes

In ancient times, the Anishinabe — or Original People — received a vision instructing them to travel to the West if they wished to survive. So goes the ancient legend shared by the tribes that dwell around the three Great Lakes known as Superior, Michigan and Huron. Here, in a land of harsh winters and warm, short growing seasons, our Kinfolk learn to attune themselves to the passing of the year. Here dwell the Menominee, the Ojibwa, the Ottawa, the Potawatomi and the Winnebago.

### Menominee

Following the hunting and growing patterns of the seasons, the people of the Menominee, who make their

homes near Lake Michigan's Green Bay, pay particular attention to the late-summer harvesting of the wild rice that flourishes in the marshes and swamps near their homes. Our Kinfolk here surround the gathering of rice with ceremonies and protect it from defilement by many taboos. Only certain people may harvest the rice. Those who are in mourning must purify themselves before they may gather rice, while women in their monthly flow may not participate in the harvest. The Menominee recognize two groupings of clans — those belonging to the earth and water, and those belonging to the sky. Customs requiring marriages to take place between clan groups ensures that the tribe grows stronger and that differences in clans do not divide the nation.

### Ojibwa

The Ojibwa (or Chippewa) live in the lands around Lake Superior, greatest of the Great Lakes. Using stick calendars to mark the passing of the seasons, our Kinfolk use the short growing season to plant squash and corn and to gather berries and harvest wild rice. During this time, they stockpile food for winter. Where fish is plentiful, the people reside in semi-permanent villages. In the winter they move to hunting camps, where the men hunt deer and other animals and both men and women place nets in holes beneath the ice to catch fish from the rivers and lakes. On their winter journeying, the Ojibwa travel in groups made up of several families. In the spring, groups travel to the maple forests to tap the trees for their syrup, which they use to make the sugar that serves as their principle seasoning for food or as a drink when mixed with water. They also fish for sturgeon and other early spawning fish.

The Ojibwa have many ways of traveling, depending on the seasons and the terrain. In winter, hunters wear snowshoes to travel quickly across the snow and ice. To bear burdens or carry groups, hunting parties use the *nobugidaban*, a flat-bottomed sled also known as a toboggan. Birch-bark canoes serve as the principle means of transportation over the waterways.

The people live in bark-covered houses with peaked roofs during the summer. In the winter and during other times of travel, they carry wigwams or tipis, conical tents of hide stretched over a pole-frame, to use as portable homes. Women of the Ojibwa use bone needles and basswood bark cords to weave mats to cover the frames of the wigwams. Birch bark provided one of the most useful materials for making commonly used items, including birch containers called *makuks* for storing food and carrying possessions. Scrolls made of birch bark and inscribed with symbols serve as a written record of Ojibwa lore.

Both men and women adorn their hair with decorative headpieces — either feathers attached to bone clips or leather strips decorated with porcupine quills or beads. Tattoos and body painting also serve as forms of adornment and mark special occasions. Men paint their bodies before going to war or participating in formal ceremonies. Captives used as sacrifices are also painted, as are the bodies of the dead.

### *Birch Canoes*

The most common and swiftest form of water travel for the people of the lake regions — and for most of the nations living in the northern forests — is the birch-bark canoe. The art of building such a vessel was a rare talent, allegedly given by the spirits to only a few individuals who received great respect for their ability. Although the actual building of the canoe often involved many individuals, the principle builder supervised the labor and directed the various stages. Women gathered spruce roots to use to lash the skins to the canoe's framework and tapped trees for their pitch to seal the canoe's seams. Men felled the trees, shaped the frame and fitted the sheets of birch bark to the skeleton of the canoe. Women used the roots of the spruce to lash the seams together and sealed the canoe with pitch.

### *Ottawa*

The Ottawa make their homes in the lands north of Lake Huron. Along with their seasonal wanderings, these Kinfolk spend much of their time plying the waterways of the region bearing trade goods to exchange with the many people of the area. Like the other nations of the lakes, the Ottawa dwell in villages during the summer months and travel in pursuit of game during the winter. Women weave fine cloth, known as trade cloth, for use in bartering with other nations. They also make buckskin pouches and other items, which they decorate with bead and quillwork and use in trading.

Body painting and tattooing are popular forms of adornment among the Ottawa and sometimes serve in place of clothing in the warmer seasons.

### *Potawatomi*

The Potawatomi live along the southeastern shore of Lake Michigan. Because of their vow to their ancestors, the Original People, these Kinfolk act as arbiters and dispute settlers for rival nations. They give lavish feasts in order to bring people together for peaceful

talks rather than allow them to go to war. The Potawatomi devote much of their time to planting crops, because the soil of their homeland is rich and fertile. In the fall, however, they join their neighbors in traveling to their hunting grounds to acquire meat for the hard winter months. Fishing provides the Potawatomi with food as well. In the spring, the Potawatomi send hunting parties south into the great plains to hunt bison.

### *Winnebago*

The Winnebago, who live in what you call lower Wisconsin, follow customs of hunting and gathering similar to their neighbors, but they also rely on corn as a staple crop. Divided into clans, each of which has a specific spirit as its patron, the Winnebago have an elaborate system of division of power. Chiefs customarily come from the Thunderbird clan; the title often passes from father to son unless the son proves himself unworthy of taking on leadership. Members of the Hawk clan serve as leaders in war and make up a warrior elite. Warriors, though led by a war chief, remain free to follow their own instincts and may leave a war party at any time. Any warrior may instigate a call to war if his reputation warrants it. The Bear Clan acts as custodians of traditions, making certain that no one breaks the numerous rules and customs regarding hunting and harvesting. Members of this clan have the right to punish offenders by burning their lodges, flogging them or, in extreme circumstances, killing them.

### *The Spirit World*

The people of the lakes honor the manitous, knowing that they live by the sufferance of the beings that inhabit the natural and supernatural realms. Greater manitous include the sun, moon, the four winds and other powerful spirits. Lesser ones consist of the spirits of animals, trees and other natural objects. Ceremonies intended to honor or placate the manitous play an important part in the daily life of the lake peoples. Particularly vital are the ceremonies and prayers honoring the guardian manitous of game animals. Hunters celebrate the first deer kill of the season with a great feast, thanking the spirit of the deer for allowing itself to be killed.

From birth to death, rituals honoring the spirits govern an individual's life. In infancy, a ritual naming ceremony calls down the good favor of the manitous. If necessary, a name changing ceremony gives a child a new name if his first one does not fit. Both boys and girls participate in vision quests when they are ready to assume roles in the adult community. Sometimes these



quests involve isolation in a special house constructed for the purpose, but other times, vision quests require a journey into a secluded place far from the quester's village or camp.

Personal rituals emphasize an individual's relationship to the spirit world, while communal ceremonies tie an entire group to the world of the manitous. Shamans act as intermediaries for villages and clans, leading rituals and performing ceremonies for a multitude of purposes including healing the sick, blessing an upcoming hunt, giving success in war or asking for a bountiful harvest. Inhaling sacred tobacco smoke or scattering shredded tobacco leaves across the water or earth enhances the effectiveness of rituals honoring the spirits. Shamans who specialized in herbal healing are known as the Wabeno. These wise ones learn the uses of the many plants that grow in the lake region and use these herbs in their healing ceremonies. Rituals such as the Shaking Tent Ceremony provide Ojibwa shamans with messages from the spirits that often prove useful in driving out sickness. Many shamans from the lake nations belong to the Grand Medicine Society, or the Midewiwin and use their common bonds to preserve and pass on the knowledge of their healing lore and their secret powers. Songs play a great part in the relationship with the Spirit World. Songs

of thanksgiving and petition use drums, wood or reed flutes and accompanying dances to send powerful messages to the spirits.

### *The Three Fires*

When they arrived in their new home, the Anishinabe separated into three groups, each of which made an oath to keep alive one of the traditions of their people. The Ojibwa took on the task of preserving the spiritual beliefs of the Original People. The Ottawa swore to act as traders and maintain contact among the various groups. The Potawatomi promised to act as keepers of the sacred fire, whereby peace among the groups could be achieved through negotiation.

### *People of the Hudson Valley*

Settling around the region west of the Hudson River, near Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, our Kinfolk make up a unique language group of Iroquoian speakers who maintain a rivalry with their Algonquian neighbors to the east and west of them. The land here is fertile, suitable for both hunting and planting. Al-



though the nations that share this land frequently go to war against one another, they also know the ways of peace and have produced great alliances that stand as models for uniting groups around a common purpose.

## Huron

The name "Huron" has existed only since the coming of the French traders. It comes from a word meaning "wild boar" and is intended to recognize our Kinfolk as savages. Their own name, the Wendat, means "islanders" or "peninsula dwellers" and describes the land on which they live, between Lake Simcoe and Georgian Bay near the waters of Lake Huron.

Like their Iroquoian rivals, our Huron Kinfolk live by both hunting and farming, though they rely on fishing to supply most of their food. Fishing expeditions lasting for as long as a month net catches of fresh water fish as well as eel and migrating salmon.

The Hurons divide their nation into eight clans: Bear, Beaver, Deer, Hawk, Porcupine, Snake, Turtle and Wolf. Their fortified villages consist of longhouses in which members of a clan live communally. A council of chiefs makes decisions for each village, including exacting punishments against those who commit crimes. A common penalty for murder involves paying a price to the relatives of the murdered. Because they value their women as nurturers and growers of food, the blood-price for a woman exceeds that for a man.

Trade provides a means of fostering friendships with neighbors or making peace with enemies, and the Huron excel at this sort of diplomacy.

## Iroquois

Known as the Iroquois — a name given to them by their Algonquian rivals, who referred to them as *Hilokoa*, the "killer people," the Iroquois call themselves *Hodенosaunee*, or people of the longhouse. Composed of five distinct peoples, who joined together as the League of Five Nations, the Iroquois consist of the Seneca, Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida and Onondaga nations. The great forests of firs, hemlocks, oaks, maples and birches provide our Kinfolk with timber for building houses, canoes and useful items as well as bows and arrows. Animals and birds abound in the forests, providing Iroquoian hunters with a wide variety of game. Deer and bear are the primary game animals, for not only do they provide a steady source of meat but they also contribute their hide and fur for blankets and clothing. In the clear spaces, the Iroquois find an abundance of food — wild greens, herbs, berries and nuts. Fishing the waters of the rivers and lakes in the region also adds to the variety of available food. The Iroquoians have few

taboos concerning food, although they refuse to eat snakes, which embody evil spirits.

Women sometimes participate in the hunt, particularly when large groups of people come together to drive a herd of deer into a place where the hunters can trap and kill them. Women also have charge of growing corn, a staple crop among the people of this region. For this, women are honored.

Our Kinfolk build their villages inland, using high ground as a defense against attackers such as the Hurons. Wooden palisades, ditches and earthen constructions act as fortifications. Smaller villages, without such protections, lie scattered around the region. In times of war, the inhabitants of these small settlements flee to the fortified villages.

Within the walls of the palisades, the Iroquoians construct many houses, including communal longhouses that sometimes contain as many as twenty families. Other buildings include medicine huts, steam and sweat lodges and homes for small families who do not yet claim an affiliation with one of the longhouses.

The Iroquoian peoples claim descent through their mothers, and marriages are made across clan boundaries to prevent too much interbreeding. Authority over longhouses goes to Clan Mothers, the eldest and wisest of the women in each family group. Women also hold ownership of the land for their clans. Clans among the Iroquois include the Deer, Wolf, Bear, Beaver, Turtle and Hawk, among others.

Besides hunting and engaging in warfare, Iroquoian men clear fields for the women to work and are responsible for the building and upkeep of a village's fortifications. Although our Iroquoian Kinfolk live more settled lives than our other Kinfolk nations, they frequently move their villages when the surrounding soil is exhausted. Later, when the land has recovered its fertility, the people may move back to an area.

The Iroquois have separate chiefs for peacetime and wartime. Civil councils meet in the longhouse, while councils of war often take place in more secluded places. Elders known as Old Men provide advice to the peace councils. Most of the wars in the region involve the rivalry between the Iroquois and the Huron. War parties conduct raids on their enemies, and prisoners taken in battle belong to their captors and are either adopted into a clan or else killed in a torture ceremony designed to show off the bravery of the condemned.

## The Spirit World

Both the Iroquoians and the Hurons pay respect to the many spirits that inhabit the other world. The Hurons refer to these beings as *oki*. Both groups honor the spirits of the sky when forging peace or at other

solemn ceremonies. Failure to perform the proper rituals runs the risk of offending the spirits and leading to sickness, death or ill fortune. Rituals thanking the animals' spirits before and after a hunt ensure the good will of these beings in future hunts. Ceremonies usually involve songs and dances as well as offerings of tobacco, prayers and beads. Planting and harvesting also requires giving ceremonial thanks to the spirits of the fields and of the individual plants. Sometimes games such as lacrosse serve as offerings to the spirits, becoming ritual competitions in honor of weather spirits. The Green Corn Ceremony celebrates the corn harvest, while midwinter ceremonies celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of a new one.

Healing is the province of shamans or medicine men, who often interpret dreams to determine the nature of an illness, believing that unfulfilled wishes lead to sickness of both mind and body.

The Iroquois bury their dead after holding a ceremony involving the preparation of food for the corpse. Before moving a village to a new place, the Hurons honor all those who have died since the last move in a special ceremony called the Feast of the Dead. Both groups believe that the ghosts of those who have recently died remain near their village and consume food left overnight.

## *People of the Northeastern Woodlands*

The Algonquian speakers who remained in their northeastern homelands after the departure of the Anishinabe continue to dwell in a land that poses great challenges but also bestows great rewards on those who honor the land and its creatures and pay proper reverence to the spirits who inhabit them. The lands that extend from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the region called New England by the Europeans abounds in forests and game, fish and fowl. Much of the land also brings forth food of its own accord as well as providing nurture for planted crops.

### *Eastern and Western Abenaki*

The Abenaki people dwell in the lands that include the valleys of the Penobscot and Connecticut Rivers and stretch from the Atlantic coast to the borders of Lake Champlain. Here the people make use of the riches provided them by the coastal waterways and lakes, harvesting the many kinds of fish that dwell in the sea and migrate upriver during spawning season. Along the seacoast, an abundance of shellfish, including clams and oysters, supply both flesh for eating and shells for making useful items and strings of wampum.

Trees such as alder, ash, hickory, cedar, walnut and fir provide the people with wood, sap and nuts, while the forest itself teems with berries and herbs. Game animals such as deer, raccoon, beaver, elk and moose offer a rich bounty of meat and skins, and our Kinfolk make use of every part of a slain animal. They also plant corn and squash as staple foods and grow tobacco for their sacred ceremonies.

The waterways provide the Abenaki and other coastal Algonquians with rapid means of transportation and communication. Canoes made from birch bark allow quick travel for purposes of hunting, warfare, trading expeditions and seasonal migration. Moving from one village to another, traders carry a variety of items — food and herbs as well as crafted materials — from places where they are common to villages where such goods are rare and valuable. Both men and women participate in trade journeys.

A village's houses are shaped like loaves, made from bent poles taken from young trees and covered with a variety of materials — either reed mats, animal skins or tree bark. Longhouses similar to those of the Iroquois provide shelter for family groups. The Abenaki place their villages on hills, which provide a good view of the surrounding land. They fortify their villages against attacks from rivals, for the Iroquois sometimes conduct raids in the eastern coastal lands.

Men and women work together in most activities, but they perform different tasks. Men act as hunters, while the women who accompany the hunting parties are responsible for preparing the meat and skins. Men prepare the fields for planting, but women tend the crops. Planting and raising the sacred tobacco, however, remains a province of the men.

Although women perform most of the tasks of housekeeping and raising food, they also receive great respect for their work and own the fruits of their labor. This gives women power and standing among our Kinfolk, who recognize that life consists of more than hunting and war.

The Abenaki recognize clans such as the Turtle, Otter and Bear and believe that each clan carries some of the traits of their patron animal. Leadership usually passes down through a single family line, but if a sachem (chief) proves unworthy of his position, the people may strip him of his power and replace him with a better chief.

### *Micmac*

The Micmac nation dwells in the far northeast, along the waters of the Atlantic and Gulf of St. Lawrence. Although they grow only tobacco, these Kin of ours hunt moose for meat and make

### *Wampum*

Made from beads and shells, the elaborate belts, strings, medallions, armlets and other items collectively referred to as "wampum" represented the wealth of an individual or a family and also served as records of past deeds, important events and pieces of lore. The patterns and colors of the beads and shells contained meanings. White beads or shells indicated purity, while red beads symbolized war. Gifts of wampum cemented peace treaties, served as signs of authority and also figured in trade. In the absence of written records, wampum belts, with their various symbols and patterns, acted as a pictographic language that all who saw could understand.

good use of the abundant forests. The Micmac go out to sea to pursue whales and sometimes don sealskins to stalk seals with clubs and harpoons. Occasionally a whale washes up on the shore. Such an event brings many families together to carve the whale's body for meat. Tools made from whale bones and oil from whale fat supply the Micmac with items necessary for their survival.

Our Micmac Kinfolk live in tipi-like houses covered with bark. Their leaders, the sagamores,

come from families considered powerful or wealthy. A sagamore is responsible for providing and allocating resources for everyone in his community, whether making sure that hunters have enough dogs for a hunt or that traders have ample canoes for their expeditions.

### *The Spirit World*

The eastern Algonquians recognize and honor the presence of manitous in the spirit world and in the world around them. Both beneficial and malevolent spirits exist in nature. The Abenaki both fear and respect the malicious water spirits who dwell beneath the rivers and oceans, waiting to fasten upon careless travelers and pull them under. The Micmac tell of the ghost spirit called Skatekamuc, who appears in dreams to warn an individual of his imminent death. Thanksgiving ceremonies appease the spirits of animals before a hunt, while a special ritual honors the first kill of the hunting season. Great feasts celebrate the autumn harvest and thank the spirits of the corn and other crops for their bounty.

### *People of the Great Plains*

When the great inland sea receded, leaving behind a flat and fertile land, many groups of people came to live in the vast plains region of central North





America. Great herds of bison roamed the plains, providing the inhabitants with a rich store of food and other materials for daily life. Many of these ancient cultures died out or moved on to other places and new people came to claim the lands. Our Kinfolk of the plains continue to exist as their predecessors did, through pursuing the bison and tilling the soil.

### *Blackfeet*

The Blackfeet occupy the northernmost region of the plains. The acquisition of the gun and the horse, which they called "big dog," has allowed the emergence of the Blackfoot Confederacy as a great power in the northern plains. A society of warriors within the nation, calling themselves the Brave Dogs, helps keep order within the camps and protects them from outsiders and raiders.

### *Cheyenne*

Arriving in the plains later than many of the other people, the Cheyenne rely almost exclusively on the buffalo for their survival. Traveling from their homelands near Lake Michigan as a result of pressure from surrounding enemies such as the Cree and Ojibwa, the Cheyenne make their homes along the Platte Rivers and the Black Hills, where they live a nomadic life in pursuit of the buffalo. They have learned from past encounters with rivals that the settled way of life is not for them.

### *Hidatsa*

The Hidatsa make their home in the Red River Valley, south of Lake Manitoba. Despite the nomadic tendencies of their neighbors, the Hidatsa cling to farming as a mainstay in their existence. In later years, an offshoot of the Hidatsa, calling themselves the Absaroka, abandon the ways of the land and take up an exclusively nomadic existence. French explorers refer to these nomads as the Crow.

### *Mandan*

The Siouan speakers known as the Mandan occupy the lands of the northern Missouri River, in the region now called North Dakota. Their homes consist of log frames covered with mud, much like their neighbors, the Pawnee. Although these Kinfolk have strong taboos governing marriage partners, the relationship between a brother and sister remains a strong lifetime bond of mutual support and sharing.

### *Pawnee*

Arriving in the region sometime during the 13th century (by European reckoning), the Pawnee trav-

eled from the lands once home to the Mississippian culture. Our Pawnee Kinfolk practice farming as well as hunting skills. They also keep the practice of human sacrifice through their Morning Star Ceremony, in which they kill a female captive in a great ritual. They occupy the land along the Platte River, making use of the river's fertile soil for growing food. The abundance of bison also provides them with the bulk of their meat and hides.

The Pawnee live in circular houses made from logs and covered with grasses and soil. Many people, usually families, share the same lodge and a village might have from 20 to 200 lodges. In spring, our Kinfolk plant corn and other food crops. Summer brings the time for hunting the buffalo or bison herds. In late summer and early fall, the people turn their attention to the harvest and to hunting deer. By late fall, when the stores of food are gathered for the winter, the Pawnee return to the pursuit of the buffalo. In the winter, they remain in their villages and feast on the fruits of the rest of the year's work.

### *Sioux*

The many groups of people who speak the Siouan tongue have found homes in the great plains over the centuries. The peoples of the Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires) claim the land near the lake country of Wisconsin and Minnesota. From this group come the people known as the Wicilyela, Nakota and Ihanktonwan. Here they dwell in squared off houses. They hunt the herds of buffalo and deer that roam the plains near their homes, but do little in the way of farming. Wild rice provides them with grain without the trouble of raising it. The Teton Sioux, including the Lakota, Oglala, Sicangu and other nations make their homes west of the Missouri River, where they spend most of their time hunting the buffalo.

The Sioux make use of an extensive network of social relationships to keep their mobile population together as a unit. Often an older man adopts a younger one, treating him as if he were a true son. The practice of *Hunkayapi* — the making of a relative — creates closer connections among the people and crosses family lines. Many ceremonies mark significant passages in the life of the Sioux, from a girl's first manifestation of womanhood to the end of a yearlong mourning for a dead child's spirit. Gift giving demonstrates wealth and standing among the Sioux; the more an individual gives away, the greater his wealth and respect.

### *The World of the Spirits*

The spiritual life of the plains nations revolves around ceremonies and the presence of many societ-

ies dedicated to specific spiritual pursuits. The Elk Dreamers of the Sioux perform many ceremonies involving courtship and marriage. Among the Crow, Tobacco Societies govern the rituals surrounding the planting and harvesting of the sacred herb. Women have their societies as well, including ones devoted to quillworking or tipi decorating. Warrior societies provide a framework for teaching young men the skills of hunting and warfare.

Perhaps the most sacred ritual of the plains is the Sun Dance, a tortuous and exacting test of a man's courage, devotion and will. Sometimes used to garner the favor of the spirits in matters of revenge, the Sun Dance also serves as a way to petition the creatures of the other world in times of need, or to mark some life-changing experience. Successful completion of the grueling ritual results in a vision or some other message from the spirit world.

Dancing and storytelling commemorate important times in the lives of the plains people while at the same time paying respect to the spirits that govern those times. Elaborate and often secret initiation rites induct new members into the many societies of the plains. The presence of sacred clowns, or contraries, demonstrates the spiritual devotion of the plains people through humor and mockery. Contraries, inspired by the spirit of the thunderbird, make fierce warriors who do not recognize a hopeless battle but fight when everyone else has given up.

The plains people venerate the great spirits of the weather — thunder, wind, lightning, rain and other great powers of the sky. Shamans lead rituals intended to restore the balance of nature when one of these spirits threatens to overpower the others.

Vision quests and dreams provide our plains Kinfolk with personal attachments to the spirit world. Central to many rituals is the use of tobacco and the smoking of the sacred pipe. Essential to many ceremonies, including those that mark the ending of a war, the pipe is more commonly known as the "peace pipe."

Sweat lodges provide sacred places where both men and women may purify their bodies and spirits, inhaling steam mixed with sacred herbs while reciting prayers for cleansing to the spirits.

Medicine bundles, collections of objects of power wrapped in cloth or skin, aid in healing, while personal bundles, containing objects important to an individual, symbolize that person's connection to the world. Communal bundles represent the combined spirits of a family or traveling group. Rituals surrounding the keeping, making and passing on of bundles emphasize the importance of these objects to the spiritual life of the plains people.



## Playing Kinfolk of the Pure Lands

Kinfolk characters can add variety and interest to a Pure Lands chronicle. Warriors, shamans, contraries, hunters and lorekeepers of the various nations may choose — or be chosen — to travel with a pack of Garou to perform some important task. A group of Kinfolk hunters may petition their Uktena, Croatan or Wendigo guardian "spirits" to assist them in finding a lost child or locating the lair of a malicious supernatural predator. After the coming of the Europeans, Kinfolk may seek aid from the Garou in their area against the predations of the white settlers.

Although most native women did not participate in war or hunting, some nations did have women with shamanic powers — particularly those connected with healing or divining omens. Among some of the plains people, sisters often accompanied their brothers to war. These instances, however, were the exceptions — not the rule. But player characters are exceptions, and the "facts" should not prevent players desiring to play female characters from doing so. Storytellers may adjust circumstances to make exceptions for female Kinfolk by creating special situations in a female character's background. The birth of a daughter to an Iroquois warrior might be accompanied by omens that indicate that the child should be raised in the ways of war and the hunt, for her skills will one day be needed by her people. A Wendigo pack in the Pacific Northwest may recognize that a young girl belonging to their Kinfolk has the potential to become a great shaman and undertake her education themselves or urge her parents to do so. In essence, the descriptions of Kinfolk nations should enhance, not restrict, storytelling. If you have to bend the facts to enable female Kinfolk characters to participate fully in the action of your stories, then bend away.

(Naturally, female Garou don't have to work as hard to achieve acceptance among their own kin; a female werewolf born under the full moon is chosen to be a warrior by Luna herself, and that is the end of that. She may still encounter some problems when interacting with humans, particularly if she's remarkably aggressive (like, say, an Ahroun), but for the most part, her tribe will treat her as a full equal.)

Some guidelines for Kinfolk characters in this setting can be found in Chapter Four.

## Lifeways of the Wolf

The Pure Lands were a paradise for wolves — or at least as much as life can be for animals that make their living off the wilds. For the most part, prey was bountiful and territory seemingly limitless. While humans did overhunt certain prey species in some areas, and did restrict wolf pack travel into some others, these limits were mere annoyances compared to the modern-day situation.

In fact, the worst problem confronting wolves was each other — wolf packs roamed far and wide and often fought over territory as prey migrated. For the most part, equilibrium was maintained, but sometimes — usually due to human-caused prey migrations — packs clashed, sometimes wiping out half their memberships in fierce struggles or due to hunger when more prominent packs kept them from successfully finding their own prey.

Wolves were also not immune to the Wyrms-beasts crawling the land. Bane-infected or Wyrms-maddened wolves were not unknown to Garou, who viewed this corruption of their most pure breeding lines as a travesty greater than corruption of their human Kin.

Lupus Garou often led long lives exclusively among wolves, rarely meeting their homid brothers or even their human Kin. Legends from these times sound idyllic and timeless, marked by the passing of seasons and lives of famous wolves, rather than the count of years. The intensity, primacy and purity of sense perceptions are always emphasized in these tales, told almost more by gesture and scent evocation than with words. Important themes are the winning of pack leadership and the breeding rights this entailed (for both male and female), or the loyal lieutenantships of the seconds and lower-order pack members. Also popular were hunting rituals, such as the laborious choosing of the Prey, and its subtle acknowledgment of its part in the great cycle, without which the Prey could not be chased lest the pursuers anger its Animal Elder.

Wolf caerns, established deep in the wilderness, away from humans, and maintained strictly by lupus Garou, helped defend wolf packs from monsters. A few of these forgotten caerns may still exist in modern times in the most remote regions, unknown to even most descendants of the Pure Lands tribes, although the Red Talons have discovered a few of them and laid claim. Finding such caerns is difficult, for they are rarely marked by physical features. The best signs are urine marks or the occasional footprint or telling scat.



## Marrying Animals

One theme that runs through many early legends of the migration and initial settlement of the Pure Lands by the three brother tribes of Garou is that of marriage to animal spirits. To further the alliances with their new protectors, spirits would agree to marry Garou (and vice versa), most often to share spiritual powers or produce children with special abilities.

Sometimes, however, such things were done for love, such in the story of the "Tall Grass and Bear Manitou," where a powerful Bear-spirit falls in love with a Ragabash after viewing his antics. She manifests as a she-bear and tries to seduce the foolish Garou in a series of amusing but poignant encounters, but he wants nothing to do with her. Then, a monster threatens his life after capsizing his canoe, and it is revealed that the Ragabash has no power in the water, having insulted a Water-spirit a long time ago. Before the monster can devour him, the Bear-spirit plunges into the river and swats the hapless Garou back onto the shore as if he were a fish. She is then devoured herself, to the eternal guilt and agony of Tall Grass, who laughs no more.

The practice of animal marriage lessened over time, as the Garou and humans more fully defined their roles in the new lands, and almost ceased entirely after the coming of the Europeans. It is an extremely rare practice in modern times, rewarded only to the most deserving Garou.

The actual marriage requires the enactment of a rite, and it binds the spouses together in a spiritual union whereby it becomes easier for the spirit to manifest and for the Garou to step sideways, so that each may visit the other more often (and conceive children).

As beneficial as these marriages sound, they were not always allowed. Only certain couplings were considered to be ordained by Gaia, decided by the local elders after a lengthy time of viewing portents and other signs to show that other spirits approved of the union. Sometimes, the spirit's Animal Elder would disapprove, and famine would visit the Garou if such a marriage took place, requiring either an annulment (whereby neither spouse could see each other again) or an adventure to win the Animal Elder's approval.

In addition, not all spirits are friendly with each other, and wars between the animal people were often as common as those between human nations. Marrying a predator spirit might anger certain prey species, such that they would no longer grant Gifts to the married Garou's pack or sept. One example of this sort of behavior is still told in the story of "Otter Against the Beaver People," in which the Beaver-spirits wage war against a pack of Garou when their alpha marries an Otter-spirit; the issue is resolved when both parties' claim to a river is threatened by a Wurm-monster (a common unifying threat).



# Chapter Three: The Hero's Ordeals (Storytelling)

*It would be very pleasant to die with a wolf  
woman.*

*It would be very pleasant*  
—Tlingit song

## Telling Tales

When creating a chronicle set in the Pure Lands, the options available to you can leave you spoilt for choice. There's the possibility of creating stories set during the great wars and bindings of the mighty Banes; there's also the possibility of games set during the times of prosperity, when politics among often-warring human Kin are far more prominent than battles against Wym-things. You might decide to set a game during the first contacts with European settlers, or you might find the Great Migration itself equally compelling. Each time period suggests a number of different stories that might be set then, as do several of the locations.

Storytellers are urged to be as diverse as possible in creating their stories so that the players' characters can be exposed to numerous situations and sites as well as to the varied nations that form the Kinfolk backbone of the three tribes. While some scholars maintain that there were barely a million Native Americans spread out over North America when the European explorers and colonists arrived, later study indicates that the figure was probably more like 21 million (in North

America alone) when white men first touched the Pure Land's shores. In Central America, many millions more lived in great empires that far outshone any European countries in existence at that time.

## Pure Lands Chronicles

The first consideration when designing a Pure Lands chronicle is the actual era of the game. This decision impacts the choice of what tribes to include, what nations to involve, and numerous other details. Most importantly, the era has an impact on the mood and themes of your stories—a chronicle set during the Europeans' worst violations is by default going to be considerably more grim than a chronicle set in the height of the Middle Times.

## Great Migration

The characters are part of the Great Migration of the Three Brother tribes to the Pure Lands. They must fight the Wym-spawned foes that harry them every step of the way, defend their Kinfolk, and scout ahead to clear the path, both in the physical world and in the Umbra. The heavy losses



suffered by Sasquatch's tribe compel the gentle spirit to become the furious, cannibalistic Wendigo, with obvious ramifications for any characters from Younger Brother's tribe. Such a game would focus strongly on exploration, warfare and survival — any one of which is a challenge for players, and all three together make a test worthy of any hero.

Obviously, themes of harsh diversity and hard-won reward are relevant here. Such a story is not for the weak-hearted: much irrevocable loss of life and friends occurs along the way.

## *Taming the Land*

Once the Garou arrive in the Pure Lands, it's not all peace and fry bread. They've come for a reason, and that's to cleanse the Wyrms' taint from the land, to chase down various monsters and tainted humans who threaten Gaia's hegemony over this final bastion of balance. These initial battles are the fiercest of all, as the monsters have grown fat and healthy on a land where they were previously unopposed. It's for this reason that many of the Banes — including the one that would one day break free and fuse with a mighty Weaver-spirit to become the Storm Eater of **Werewolf: The Wild West** — are too strong for packs to destroy and must be bound away.

Along the way, the Garou migrate with their Kinfolk, and dedicate new caerns as some of them settle in certain places. New spirits are encountered and must be allied with — don't think that they are all happy to see the Garou! Some smell the raw rage on these wolves and it'll take some negotiating to get them to tell their secrets and give their Gifts.

Chronicles set after most of the initial work has been done can follow this general model. Even when most of the Banes have been bound beneath the earth and most of the monsters are dead, some creatures — the most cunning — still manage to slip through the cracks. In addition, the blood sacrifices of Mesoamerica are awakening and strengthening various Wyrms' spirits and blood-drinking devils, some of which may cross paths with the players' pack. Packs may find themselves spending most of their time trying to ensure the welfare of their human and wolf Kin, with the occasional battle against a loose Bane or a human who has become a monster by violating taboos. Spirit quests and rivalries between nations round the year out.

For most of these chronicles, themes of heroism and adventure are most appropriate. While the monsters are challenging, ultimately life is joyful — a well-earned respite from the Great Migration. Now, the Garou are in control and the Wyrms in the minority.

## *Wyrms' comers*

All good things come to an end. The European colonists arrive and wreak havoc on the native popu-

lations, through disease and war. With them come new Wyrms' creatures to challenge the native Garou in ways they can barely adapt to. With the loss of the Croatan tribe, the Uktena and Wendigo are greatly handicapped in fighting this new menace.

And don't forget the incoming Garou of the other tribes. They don't always make friends with the natives — and worse, it's often hard to tell just who's sincere and who isn't. What if the local Get are actually trustworthy, while the nearby Children of Gaia aren't above trying to reform the native nations of their worse habits — at nearly any cost?

This chronicle can incorporate characters of the European tribes, or the pack might remain entirely Uktena and Wendigo. In either case, the Storyteller should avoid painting things in purely black and white terms — the players shouldn't be convinced that every member of every tribe is either right or wrong. There were plenty of instances of native warriors murdering innocent whites as revenge for wrongs done to them; and as mentioned before, torture was far from taboo for most nations. That said, many actions of the European settlers and the Garou who came with them are pretty unforgivable, particularly in the cases when the native nations trusted their new "brothers" from across the sea; it would be a disservice to sugarcoat the way things played out.

Themes of betrayal and deception are appropriate and not far from the truth of things. Many characters the pack meets will initially seem friendly and trustworthy, only to reveal their true colors later on. When the Wyrms' rears its ugly head in these chronicles, it might almost be a relief to the players to finally have something to fight other than their cousins.

## *Wild West*

Obviously, the **Werewolf: The Wild West** rulebook and sourcebooks are ideal sources for this time period. This time period has several distinct advantages, not the least of which is familiarity; most players' image of Native Americans involves mounted buffalo hunts, battles against rifle-wielding soldiers and cutthroats, and other staples of the time. The Pure Lands are far from pure at the time of the Savage West's storyline, and the Croatan are long gone, but many of the themes of a Pure Lands game remain intact — in fact, the bitterness is even stronger than ever before.

## *Indian Country (Modern)*

A modern chronicle can be set on any reservation and concern the trials and tribulations — and occasional triumphs — of the Uktena and Wendigo tribes and their human Kinfolk. Obviously, much of this book's information will serve more as historical back-

ground in such a chronicle, but as any werewolf knows, the past is a very living thing. Ancestor-spirits keep the powers of the old folk alive, and the Umbra offers windows that peer with crystal clarity into the past.

Likewise, there are still forlorn places in the Americas where people don't go. Some of these are haunted by spirits never conquered by the newcomers. What lost lore and treasures wait in these groves and grottos far from the cities? Is the earthshaking legacy of the Mound Builders due to erupt once more? Are the great Banes bound beneath the earth beginning to wriggle free from their shackles? It's not an easy decision to set aside the struggles of the modern world in the hopes of finding something from the past that just might help you win a few battles in the war of Apocalypse — but sometimes you just have to take risks.

### *Other Tribes in the Pure Lands*

Common lore says that of the Garou only the Uktena, Croatan and Wendigo lived in the Pure Lands before the coming of the Europeans. But there just may be a few individual cases that disprove this rule. Vikings came to North America, and according to Fenrir lore, some of them were Get of Fenrir. What if they set up a caern in their Vinland settlements that later allowed others to arrive by Moon Bridges for various (mis)adventures? Fenrir legend holds that there might be a lost camp of Pure Lands Get, called Ymir's Sweat, that were born from just such a circumstance.

And there is the mysterious legend of Prince Madoc ap Owein Gwynneth, a Welsh prince who supposedly sailed off in coracles with a crew of colonists, never to be seen in the West again. Some believe they came to the Americas, and either provide the legend of the white Modoc among Central Americans or settled in Alabama, as the ancient stone fortifications suggest. Also, there are those legends among the Native Americans of some natives with "moon eyes" (blue eyes) and pale skin...

What if some Fianna came with this prince, and made caerns of their own in the south, just as the Vikings may have done in the north? It may explain why so many Scotch-Irish Kinfolk were later drawn to migrate to the Appalachians, a climate so different from that of their homes. There are also rumors of Stargazers other than Crescent Vision making the journey to the Pure Lands, although these rumors are vague and easily dismissed.

Of course, this is all just conjecture. Nobody would really believe it today. But that doesn't mean it didn't happen...

### *The Generational Chronicle*

One particular sort of chronicle lends itself well to a Pure Lands setting: a chronicle in which the players

eventually explore the stories of four or five successive generations of Garou and their people.

Such a chronicle would begin in the usual way, with the Storyteller describing the setting and the players creating a pack to match. (It might be a good idea to inform the players of your plans to run a generational chronicle at this point, in order to get them started thinking ahead — but then again, surprise has its merits, too. Follow your gut instincts.)

After a few stories with this initial pack and their cohorts, probably organized together in a story arc, the chronicle moves on to the next generation of Garou. (Note that this needn't literally be the next generation; the next story arc might take place a century or longer after the last one.) The players' characters for this generation are assumed to be the descendants of the last pack and their Kin, although playing descendants of the last pack's allies or even rivals is just as interesting. The new pack goes through another story arc or so, and then the chronicle moves on to their descendants, and so on until the chronicle reaches its climax. In this way, players can directly experience the millennia-old traditions of the Garou — to say nothing of having a serious stake in the final stories of the chronicle. It's one thing to disgrace your ancestors when you only have a vague idea of who they are — it's quite another thing when you're all too aware of how much they struggled and suffered on your behalf.

Of course, you can use a few tricks to even further hook the players' interest. First of all is the use of Ancestor-spirits; few players can resist the opportunity to channel their previous characters through Past Life, or to learn Gifts from them. An even sneakier technique involves granting a small bonus to those players who faithfully work to preserve the things so vital to the Garou — their traditions, their Kinfolk, and their descendants.

This technique is deceptively simple. When playing out each generation, take careful note of which characters are striving the hardest to provide for the future. In particular, remember those players whose characters treat their Kinfolk well, strive to mate honorably and produce Garou offspring, and who generally work hard for the welfare of their families and descendants. Then, when the time comes to create the next generation of characters, offer those players a few extra freebie or Background points to represent their forebears' provisions for their welfare. (You can do this even if they're not choosing to play direct descendants of their previous characters; it's the thought that counts.) Don't go out of your way to penalize players whose characters mated with other Garou, threw themselves into suicide situations without providing for their families first, or performed similarly selfish actions; just don't give them the rewards that the others are getting.

Continue this process with each generation. This does an admirable job of stressing just how important it is for Garou to think beyond "the now," as well as just how much each werewolf owes to his ancestors.

A generational chronicle is particularly appropriate to Pure Lands games largely because the local cultures and borders don't undergo quite as much drastic change from one century to the next when compared to those of, say, Europe. This tends to reduce the work on the Storyteller, who can spend less time doing research on the area's history and more time fleshing out the latest generation's immediate allies, family members and concerns.

Of course, ambitious Storytellers have the option to go all out. A truly epic chronicle could begin with the first story arcs taking place as the tribes cross the land bridge and enter the Pure Lands for the first time, and the great wars against the native monsters. The next story arc could deal with a pack caught up in the concerns of the pre-Columbian nations — and the arc after that could see the European colonists arrive. Finally, the Storyteller could shift the chronicle to a *Werewolf: The Wild West* format — and then perhaps even to the modern-day *Werewolf: The Apocalypse* setting. Such a chronicle could take months, even years to fully play out — but imagine how connected the players will feel to their modern characters, having lived through the deeds of so many of their ancestors. If there's a better way to express the mood of *Werewolf*, with the hopes and fears of thousands of generations riding on the children of the End Times, we don't know what it is.

## Croatian Song and the Modern-day Chronicle

Even if you choose to run a chronicle set firmly in modern times (or aren't willing to set your regular chronicle aside to play a Pure Lands game), there are still a couple of clever tactics you can use to get the most out of this book. Your players won't know what hit them.

### Past Life Flashback

Using the flashback technique, a Storyteller can vault his players' characters into the past, to play ancestors of the present-day characters. (This is even possible if not all the characters are Uktena or Wendigo, although it might be difficult to rationalize a particularly mixed pack all having ancestors in the Pure Lands at about the same time. In such a case, some of the pack members might not be seeing their own blood ancestors, but instead taking the roles of people who preceded them in purpose.) The device for this story can be the Background: Past Life, although there are plenty of other ways for a pack to receive visions in an appropriate manner.

The usual way of handling such a session is for the Storyteller to fill out the character sheets for the modern packs' ancestors, basing the Traits on what he knows of each lineage's particular strengths and weaknesses. However, there's no reason you can't just use the modern-day pack's traits as is, with only minor modifications (the Firearms Skill becoming Archery, and so forth). Such synchronicity between a pack and their ancestors is probably a side effect of the flashback's point of view — or perhaps the characters really *are* that similar to their forebears, for whatever reason destiny has ordained.

The Storyteller can use these flashbacks to shed light on a modern mystery, or as a recurring cycle of time that took place in the past and occurs again today (such as that depicted in the "Legacy Rite" comic in the *Werewolf Second Edition* rulebook). There are as many rationales for such a story as there are reasons to go vision-questing in the first place.

### Shadow of Times Past

Modern-day characters can be drawn into a replica of the past, an Umbral "shadow" of olden times, a bubble in time formed of spirit stuff. This place doesn't even have to be obvious as such — it may seem to characters that they've traveled back in time, for so exact is the replica that even the sharpest Theurge is clueless about how to tell the difference. Until an important clue is revealed by the Storyteller, that is.

Such "Twilight Zone" episodes can be similar to a flashback, but instead of ancestors, the current characters are the ones challenged. Maybe some past event was never resolved to the universe's satisfaction, so it must continually replay itself in the Umbra until the it comes out right: the hanged man is saved or revealed as innocent, and his murderers made to pay; the slain Kinfolk is revenged; the deceitful Theurge is revealed as a Wymn ally, and thus his modern-day descendants' charade is also uncovered — limitless possibilities.

Also, remember that not all spirit shadows need be exact facsimiles; consider the spin that the Battleground realm might put on a Pure Lands story, or the sort of remarkable tales that might bubble up from the Legendary Realm. And then there are the horrible things that might have reflections in the Atrocity Realm — entire villages massacred, put to death in horrible ways. *Umbra: The Velvet Shadow* brims with ideas to spice up these temporal echoes in ways that will leave your players talking.

## Life in the Pure Lands

Daily life is very different from that for most Garou characters in modern stories. There's no advanced



technology to ease the day, and certainly no televisions, Playstations or GameBoys to relieve boredom. Boredom itself is more a symptom of the repetitive, post-industrial age jobs and timeclock days than of nothing to do. Leisure time is not a moment for boredom, but one of rest and respite from hard labor.

There were no shortcuts in the old times. If there was a job that needed doing, doing it was the only answer. Sure, there was procrastination, but eventually a job got done or there'd be hell to pay when bad weather came. People had to hunt and gather extra food to store for winter, and make sure they had all the right tools in good shape in case they needed them in bad times. There was no hardware store to go to, although depending on the era, there might be some trading posts, either native or white.

One of things to get across with the atmosphere of any Pure Lands game set in the past is that people did things themselves; they were self-sufficient, although they also relied on their family and friends to get the big things done. Laziness was not a virtue. This isn't to say that there wasn't free time to be had — only that free time was much more valued, and few people could afford to sit on their asses for hours at a time.

If things get a bit dull for Garou, they can always run off and explore or sniff out Wyrms taint. But not before their chores are done! Septs, like any native village, would make sure everybody contributed to the common good.

Unless trouble loomed large, most rambling adventures would occur during the late spring or summer, when the weather was best for going forth. Sure, Garou could head out at anytime in wolf skin, braving all sorts of weather, but someone's got to stay and protect the Kinfolk, all huddled up against the snow and cold. When their food stores ran out, it was up to the Garou to help them out, or else teach them a lesson if it was their own fault that food was low.

Of course, game wasn't always plentiful for Garou, either. If somebody had insulted a prominent Animal Elder, such as Deer, he might withdraw his children from the area, and hunting would get scarce. Then it was the job of a Garou pack to seek out Deer and ask him to reconsider, usually in return for a quest, taking the pack even farther afield. Thus, Garou don't spend all their time fighting monsters; sometimes they have to laboriously uphold the Ways and keep everybody happy.

Without television or comics or even roleplaying games to entertain themselves, the people instead have stories. Tales and legends are all important for bringing people together and conveying news and lessons about the world or living in it. This is a good thing, of course; listening to the tales of great heroes can only whet your players' appetites to achieve things that will have the Galliards telling their stories for generations to come.

### *The Gauntlet in the Pure Lands*

Area	Typical Gauntlet
Mound builders' village	6
Villages of other nations	5
Well-traveled area, such as a hunting ground	4
The wilderness (most areas)	3
Average caern or "strange ground"	2
Powerful caern or unusually spiritual place	1

Note that in areas where the Gauntlet is 1, it is easy for Garou or even humans to wander in and out of the Penumbra without knowing it; this naturally leads to plenty of stories.

### *The Pure Lands Gauntlet*

The farther back in time a story is set, the weaker the Gauntlet is. In the earliest time, when the Garou first arrived in the Pure Lands, the barrier between worlds was so thin in places that even humans could wander into the spirit world and not know it, and spirits could wander out. This happens in all sorts of ways, such as when maidens go out to pick flowers and meet their animal husbands on the way, or young warriors journey to find their fathers, said to be spirits.

Quests to succor spirits involve not so much stepping sideways on the Garou's part as traveling until they are sure they have wandered into the Umbra. But even then it's hard to tell, for both worlds look so similar then. Usually, it is only the behavior of spirits or animals that can clue-in watchful Garou.

As the Mound Builders get out of hand, the Gauntlet gets thick around them, and even the destruction of that culture does little to weaken the wall again. The Wyrmscomers make it even worse, until it achieves its modern-day thickness, especially around cities.

### *Internal Strife*

Things aren't always happy between the Three Brothers' tribes even before the Wyrmscomers arrive, though the Uktena and Wendigo like to pretend that they all got along like angels and it's only the newcomer Garou who changed that. The various nations went to war with one another plenty of times, and the fact that captives were often subjected to torture before their execution is just one example of the layers of grudges often present. And when Kinfolk start killing each other, it's not uncommon for their werewolf relatives to be at each other's throats. Although the Three Brothers weren't always tearing chunks out of each other, the instances of bloody duels, rivalries and feuds are rather more common than you hear about.

Like any Garou-Garou conflict, such a story has a lot of dramatic potential. If two tribes are going to war in order to keep their Kin relations well fed, it's hard to argue that one tribe is definitively in the right. Surely all Kin deserve to eat; but with limited resources, what's to be done? The presence of the werewolves' ever-burning rage doesn't help matters any; their warriors' temperaments make minor slights seem like grave insults, and valid grievances seem all the more unforgivable. Even so, the Garou aren't meant to spend their rage on each other, and tragedy is almost certain unless some sort of compromise or solution can be found. As proud as the Garou of the Pure Lands are, this is no easy matter.

## Seasons of War

In the days before snowplows and prepackaged food, there were very real limitations on just when a werewolf could afford to go charging off into the Umbra for months at a time. There were seasons for aggressive quests and wars, and there were seasons for remaining with one's Kin. Storytellers can readily use this pattern both as a storytelling device to stress the natural cycles so important to the Pure Lands tribes, and as a convenient way of alternating stories of violent conflict with stories of politics and more mundane concerns.

As mentioned before, the usual cycle is to be most active while it's warmest. During the spring and summer, while food is relatively abundant (yet not quite so plentiful that all hands are necessary to gather it in time) — this is the time for quests and tasks. In the autumn and winter, as the nights grow long, the Garou's thoughts turn to defense. These are the seasons of guarding the caern against marauding creatures, but they're also the seasons of storytelling, spending time with Kin, and otherwise seeing to "home affairs."

Of course, there is one exception — Little Brother. The Wendigo are creatures of the winter, and are at

their fiercest and strongest when the cold has set in. A Wendigo pack might choose to make war in the summer (a traditional time for battle) and in the winter, while remaining peaceful in spring and autumn — or they might completely reverse the other tribes' traditions, questing in autumn and winter while remaining close to home in spring and summer. Such is their way.

## Middle Times Storytelling

Although the following ideas for storytelling are set in the Middle Times (from after the Mound Builder culture had passed away until just before *Werewolf: The Wild West* begins), they could be used at any time. They are included here because they are most suited to this period, not exclusive to it. Certainly, earlier cultures traded extensively and worshipped their own gods. Among the earliest cultures tales of heroes and monsters abound. And even after the Native American nations lost most of their lands and were forced onto reservations, they continued many of their spiritual and social practices. Some pointedly practiced their beliefs even in the face of forced assimilation intended to exterminate the American Indian as a race. Storytellers should thus feel free to mix and match, and even tell a story in one time period, then rework it with a similar theme for a later date and possibly a different group of characters — the descendants of the heroes who first met the challenge, perhaps. In any case, these should serve merely as jumping off points. It's your game, and the First Americans loved nothing so much as a good game or a good story.

## Trade Agreements and Land Rights

Trade was a most important aspect of daily life among the nations of the Pure Lands. Extensive trade routes crossed the country linking both nations and tribes. What one area lacked, another might provide — if something of value could be found to trade for it. When the werewolves' own nations become involved, most of the trade arrangements will probably be overseen by the Wolf Changers' Kinfolk. Even so, there might occasionally be a need for their Wolf-brothers to accompany them or help them in negotiating terms. Story ideas range from having the characters conduct delicate negotiations with once-hostile nations who might now be potential trade partners to guarding an important and valuable cargo on its way to a far-off encampment where it is to be used in a major ceremony. In some cases, the Garou might need to involve themselves if one side is cheating the other or if a greedy clan chief took the best goods for himself, leaving only the poorest goods for others.

In almost every nation the people held the concept that land was for everyone's use. In practice this meant that lands used for agriculture, fishing or hunting were not

### *The Delirium*

The nations of the Pure Lands have suffered less from the Impergium than other human cultures have, although their ancestors weren't left untouched. As a result, the night-fear still touches the Native Americans of this time, but less harshly than it does the white man. Most natives who aren't Kin move up two or three places on the Delirium chart, at the Storyteller's discretion; Berserk, Terror, Conciliatory and Controlled Fear should be the typical range. Powerful non-Kin heroes might not be affected by the Delirium at all, making them valuable allies — or dangerous rivals.

fenced off or assigned to a specific person. A nation planted crops as a community effort and everyone shared the bounty. Even when one hunter outshone another, tradition encouraged either pooling the meat and feeding the encampment off the combined efforts of the hunters, or giving away whatever meat the hunter and his family could not immediately use to those less fortunate. Encampments and towns within a nation mostly claimed the land nearby as the territory in which they sought and grew food. Unless a great rivalry or bad blood existed between them, each town abided by the unspoken pact not to take what fed their fellow town. Other nations might intrude, however, and those who occupied the land must either fight for their right to remain or make agreements and treaties with others to keep the interlopers off the residents' hunting grounds and find suitable places for the newcomers. The Garou might be especially interested in these negotiations as hundreds more mouths to feed could certainly overtax the available resources in an area and damage the Mother. Alternatively, the Wolf Changers might find themselves as the newcomers to an area and have to negotiate with another clan, nation or tribe for permission to settle.

While such storylines lend themselves readily to Philodox or Galliard characters, there are roles to be played by any auspice. Even a Ragabash might be a talented diplomat, using her humor to point out absurdities during the negotiations and leading all involved parties to view the situation with an eye to forming bonds through lighthearted interactions rather than threats and dire pronouncements.

### ***Vision Quests and Dealing with the Spirit World***

Obviously, any Werewolf game deals with spirits to a good extent (and if it doesn't, what have you been doing?). A Pure Lands game, however, presents Storytellers and players with the opportunity to go all-out when it comes to the spirit realm, vision quests and spirit teachings. The Native Americans lived a life in which the spirits played an enormous role. Every aspect of their culture celebrated, thanked, propitiated and invoked the spirits. To the Indians all things were alive and interconnected. While Theurges may find games dealing with the spirit world or centered on vision quests of most interest, all Garou must learn to deal with spirits. Petitioning spirits to teach them new Gifts could involve a lengthy Umbral journey. A greater spirit might ask the characters' aid in freeing a trapped spirit from unjust imprisonment or a spirit totem might require some sort of test or quest to determine the characters' worth. The Wolf Changers might have to deal with unhappy or hostile spirits and have to approach other Umbral beings for information on

how to handle the situation. Again, they might have to negotiate with a spirit to take over an abandoned caern or move their Kinfolk into a new region.

Vision quests provide wonderful ways to help members of a newly formed (or established) pack feel closer to one another and focus their attention on a particular task. Personal strivings, such as when the Wolf Changer seeks to earn a new rank or become a leader in her pack or sept may also call for a vision quest. Certainly, such undertakings present the Storyteller with a unique opportunity to disseminate information, foreshadow events or drop pertinent clues that are difficult to realistically give out in any other manner. Because such spiritual seekings are an integral part of their characters' culture, even the strangest occurrences become more believable to the players. For those who usually play up the combat aspect of the game, the spiritual side of the Garou as explored in these stories may provide a change of pace and admirably set the tone of a more idyllic time while still presenting challenges.

### ***Monster Fighting***

Though the Pure lands lack the same layers of Wyrmtaint and difficulties that faced the European Garou, they more than made up for that by the numbers of monsters that roamed the land. These monsters weren't necessarily born of Wyrmtaint corruption — there have always been selfish and cruel denizens of the spirit world, and where the Wyrms was weak, they were able to remain much more autonomous.

Although battles with monsters are certainly an activity especially suited to Ahroun characters, bringing down some fell beast or crazed witch often requires specialized knowledge and teamwork. Trickery has its place, as attested to by the number of stories involving heroes who stole a giant's strength or convinced a monster they were such terrible foes that it dared not try to harm them. In many cases, heroes guess the monster's secret weakness or acquire the one item that can slay it. Sometimes, a clever hero gets a monster to defeat itself by fooling it into taking self-destructive actions. Defeating a harmful, possibly supernatural creature by outwitting it or through a combination of brains and brawn can be particularly fun and gratifying for players. Wyrms creatures and destructive spirits provide great foes and Native American myths and legends teem with ideas that can be adapted to fit a Werewolf campaign.

Further, since these are *monsters*, the Storyteller can simply create her own nasty creatures and give them whatever twisted and dangerous powers she likes. This allows far more leeway to surprise and perhaps make the players nervous concerning a foe they aren't familiar with and don't automatically know how to fight. What,



for example, do the characters do when they encounter an incredibly big, unbelievably strong monster bent on destroying their Kinfolk and discover that it seems impervious to their teeth and claws — worse, any Gifts they can bring to bear against it seem of no use either? Suddenly, they must stop and think, consult with medicine folk for answers or appeal to friendly spirits for the knowledge and means to slay this creature. Simply being Garou is not enough; now they have to use their brains and perhaps undertake a journey to bring down an otherwise unbeatable foe. It can be a real eye-opener for those used to straight-out combat scenarios and provide greater fun for the non-Ahtrouns in the pack.

Finally, there are some monsters the characters may not want to battle. In this setting, it's all too easy to do the wrong thing or act foolishly and find yourself turned into a monster. How do the characters deal with things when a beloved brother or sister begins showing signs of becoming a monster? They might simply kill the person, but what happens if they then learn that killing the one who infected their loved one will return the person to normal? What if some rare herb will cure the person, but they must meanwhile protect the rest of the community from their loved one? When do they give up on the person? Further, not all monsters show what they are on the surface. The characters might need to make a desperate search among an entire encampment or town, seeking traces of Wyrn-taint or sickness on a subtle individual who must be unmasked in time to save those

she has kidnapped and plans to kill. All these twists can make monster fighting something far more than merely wading in with slashing claws and flashing teeth.

### *Creating a Specific-Use Fetish*

While fetishes are sometimes taken for granted in *Werewolf* (sad, but true), the Storyteller has every right to rule that particularly powerful fetishes might require that they be constructed from scratch. This can help bring home to the players that in this setting, if they want something, they must make it themselves or bargain for it through trade or the performance of services. Many tales of monsters and witches tell of special herbs needed or a branch from a specific tree or water from a remote well that must be used to defeat the terrible foe. No other item will do. Thus a pack might have to create a special fetish to bring down such an enemy.

There are plenty of ways to start a story where the pack must craft a fetish to accomplish a particular purpose, whether it's constructing a knife made of beechnut wood soaked for three moons in the waters of the Pool of Luna's Daughter or a handful of seeds gathered from the totem birds of the Singing Desert. This presents a chance for the Storyteller to incorporate a number of themes and settings as the characters collect the ingredients needed. Further work might be required if they must consult medicine folk to learn how to make the fetish — especially if it must be created by the hand that will wield it. Yet another aspect concerns gaining the cooperation of a



spirit to be bound into the fetish. This could lead to still more stories as the characters attempt to locate things the spirit wants or perform deeds it requires in order to consent to its binding. Finally, there is the ritual of creation itself and the use of the completed fetish. Many journeys, great deeds and intricate stories might go to make up the "simple" matter of creating a fetish.

### *Rescuing Kinfolk*

While the tribes of the Pure Lands have their own concerns outside the daily lives of their Kinfolk, they are far closer to their human relations than many other Garou. They take their job as guardians of their folk quite seriously. While they might (or might not) move to help a single individual, they would almost certainly pitch-in to battle against anything that threatened a number of their Kin. Raids were common among the Pure Lands nations and covered everything from a lightning swift grab for horses (in later times) to a concerted effort to steal as many women as possible from a rival encampment. Wolf Changers would certainly take a dim view of any Kinfolk women thus removed from their breeding stock, if nothing else. Some might actually have wives or children who were taken. In like manner, some raiders took men to become slaves. These, too, might need rescue. Beyond such considerations, the land itself might pose a threat. Wildfires, floods and cave-ins might all call for intervention by the Garou, as would depredations by enemy nations or rampaging monsters.

Then again, what are the characters to do with a young Kinfolk who bitterly resents their interventions and places herself in terrible danger to prove that humans can fight their own battles without the need for superhuman strength or teeth and claws? Do they rescue her from her own folly or let her perish against a foe too strong for her, great though her heart and will might be? Subtle variations can make even the most straightforward rescue scenario fresh.

### *Bane Binding*

The Uktena are specially noted for their abilities in binding Banes, but any tribe might be called upon to perform this task. All the tribes of the Pure Lands held it as a sacred duty to bind or destroy the Banes that plagued Gaia's most untouched lands. Rites of binding are certainly helpful and necessary as part of the undertaking, but simply enacting such a rite is rarely sufficient to truly bind a dangerous Bane. These are foes that are too difficult to defeat in the normal manner, after all. They are being bound as a compromise maneuver to remove their influence from an area rather than sacrificing far too many to attempt to kill or forever banish the foul creatures. Often the heroes must coax or lure Banes

to specific spots where they may be entombed, then attack or distract them in some other manner while their packmates or allies perform the appropriate rite. All the materials used must be perfect in form and ritually purified; chants and appeals to Gaia must be perfectly spoken or sung. There's room to involve characters in any and all parts of this process.

Some particularly powerful Banes might require the efforts of a whole sept to bind or bring to the place of binding. Convincing others of the need and bringing the forces together to do the rite may take some effort as well. Finally, what do the characters do once the Bane is bound? Are they responsible for overseeing its prison? Will they have to search for a Bane keeper to come and watch over their captive? And what happens if no sufficiently powerful guardian can be found and the Bane breaks free? Worse still, what if one of the characters or one of their loved ones was secretly corrupted by the Bane and now moves to free his imprisoned master?

### *Opening New Pathways*

The Pure Lands offer a lot of territory, much of it unexplored. When Garou first enter a new area, perhaps migrating with their Kinfolk to establish new hunting grounds, they must appeal to the spirits of the place before opening a new caern. This might require further travel to acquire special materials for Gaia's new sacred place. Some stories might revolve around exploring new territories or opening new trade routes through unknown territories fraught with dangers too powerful for their human Kin to battle.

Yet another aspect of opening new paths might be in learning something new, be it a Gift, a rite or some new idea or way of doing things that might benefit both Garou and Kinfolk. The exchange of ideas took place as often as people met to trade goods or set up peace negotiations.

Finally, those who open new caerns need to be able to open new moon bridges to and from that site. This requires the characters to scout out the path this will take or perhaps to rescue scouts who have failed to report in. They might also need to travel into the Umbra to fetch a moon stone to serve as the starting point for the moon bridge.

Perhaps one of the most telling stories featuring opening new pathways might be attempts by the characters to understand or even accept new ways of life. This might be part of a tale concerning the coming of the Wyrmbearers or entail a sorrowful tale of guarding Kinfolk as they fall victim to the Indian Removal Act.

### *Tricksterism*

No one would suggest that stories featuring tricks and foolery don't lend themselves most readily to

Ragabash characters. Nonetheless, any Garou is capable of exercising her wits and intelligence. Ragabash may seed their pranks throughout any story, yet they aren't the only Wolf Changers with a sense of humor. Even the dourest Wendigo could hardly fail to smile on seeing an enemy made into a fool. Tricksterism has been mentioned elsewhere in relation to overcoming monsters or other foes. Still, guile might be a part of any story concerned with diplomacy, negotiation or the recovery of stolen property or Kinfolk.

One story idea involves the characters in a tit-for-tat situation. Perhaps their pack has been slighted or humiliated by another pack, bested somehow or made the butt of a prank or joke. Rather than responding with rage and battle, it might be necessary for the pack to devise the ultimate prank to thoroughly humiliate those who wronged or bested them and leave the entire nation laughing at their gullibility or lack of wits. Alternatively, it might be that the characters must unravel a puzzle or defeat an attempt to make them look foolish, perhaps in order to establish themselves as worthy or to win a place for their Kinfolk among more numerous peoples.

### *Love Stories*

Europeans by no means hold the monopoly on love stories, whether they be great romances that change the world or tragic love affairs that spell doom for all concerned. In many Pure Lands societies, people were required to marry outside their own clan. This often meant that bride and groom did not meet until the marriage. Such unions could result in happy marriages, but could also lead to dissatisfaction or even hatred. Those who defied custom and married within their clan might face shunning or exile. They might even face death if their love were known, for many nations looked on such alliances as incest. What might happen if a Garou and a Kinfolk were of the same clan and loved one another? To the Wolf Changers, it would be a natural pairing, but within the nation, it would be shocking and dangerous. What could happen if a Garou loved a particular Kinfolk and found he was to be bound in marriage to someone from a different clan who also lived far from the site of the caern?

Later complications might feature Garou or Kinfolk who discover love for one of the invaders. How do they reconcile their love with what their lover's people inflict upon their nation? What if an Uktena or Croatan Kinfolk falls in love with a Get of Fenris whose pack is determined to oust the current residents of a caern and supplant them?

Some stories might concern love that inspired the characters to greatness. Others might fuel hatred or jealousy whose dark flames created a desperate, obsessed lover willing to destroy whatever lay between

him and his desired partner. In some societies, homosexuality was simply an accepted choice, in others it was condemned and those who practiced it ostracized or made into objects of scorn. How might a Garou deal with this if she or her lover were treated in this fashion?

Odd though it might sound, love need not always involve emotional or physical love for another person. Sometimes it concerns love for one's nation or sept or love for a particular place. Twisted love might involve an absorption with oneself (perhaps as the result of a curse) or the love of wealth or inflicting pain. Whatever its form, could love actually lead a Garou to the path of the Horned Serpent in order to achieve his desires? Intertwined with more regular fare, such stories can create epics not soon forgotten by those involved.

### *Warfare and Rivalry*

Warfare and rivalries were facts of life among the Native American nations long before the first Europeans arrived. Raids were common and might create enmity and bitterness lasting decades or even centuries. Nation against nation, clan rivaling clan, each would have its own litany of wrongs done them and great retaliations they performed against the foe. While many tribes simply supported their own Kinfolk, it wasn't often that simple. Kinfolk might migrate and new people move into the area behind them. Garou who stayed at their caern might then breed with the new arrivals. What happened then when the newcomers quarreled with the Wolf Changers' former Kinfolk? Some might even still be allied with or married to members of the other clan or nation. Who would they support? Could such difficulties create a state of war with some members of a sept on one side and some on the other? Ragabash might have a field day in such a setting, while Galliards would be hard pressed to create enough scathing or inspiring songs. Ahroun or Philodox might find their services in great demand depending on how the story played out, while Theurges could turn the tide with their magic or even throw up their hands in disgust and turn their attention to the Wolf Changers' real problems.

Stories might include tracking down and neutralizing a Wyrms-creature whose machinations brought about the dispute or whose poison lay behind the strife. Then again, characters might find themselves attempting to negotiate a peace treaty between the warring groups—and their warring Garou partners. If the difficulty were caused by the theft of some important object or person, the characters might be asked to recover the object or rescue the person. Failing other solutions, they might have to act as voices of compromise to reconcile the warring factions.



## Monstrous Foes

*We came out of the dawn, running forward. Drawing his great bow, Waya Five Feathers sent the red arrow winging into the creature's heart. Its screams burst our ears and we all fell to the ground. When we could stand again, we saw that a great pit had opened in the ground where Unaduti, the Great Deceiver had stood. We found nothing else of him but his teeth, which lay scattered on the ground around the hole.*

—Mohe of the Blue Clan telling the Tale of Waya

Many nations tell tales of specific monsters, legendary beings and harmful or helpful spirits. We delineate some of those here, but Native American lore abounds with others. These can easily be adapted to fit a Werewolf campaign.

Monster archetypes pepper Native American stories—several types of giants, shapeshifters, little folks, hairy men, bodiless heads and unnatural animals. A great number of monsters may seem like normal folk until they commit evil acts and show their true colors. Among these are cannibals and witches (of both sexes). Native American folklore also holds a tradition of assigning evil intentions and powers to certain oddly shaped or unnatural looking features of the terrain such as caves, twisted trees or eerie lakes. Finally, some spirit beings may dislike being disturbed or may harbor feelings of hatred for living things. These might be the spirits associated with places, things or animals or they might be evil or restless ghosts. Any of these monstrous beings might pose difficulties for Garou who must protect both their sept and their nation from harm.

Some of these monsters make suitable opponents for Kinfolk, especially those who are singular in nature and not too powerful. Though they might pose problems for ordinary warriors, Kinfolk characters should be able to outwit them or call on aid from their Garou relations to help defeat them. In general, however, most monsters should be terrible enough to require the attention of one or more Garou. This is especially true of those foes that travel in groups or whose powers can affect several beings at once.

Still, not all monsters are necessarily evil and need to be destroyed. Some creatures that seem quite monstrous may in fact be benign in intent. These are included here as more types of beings that characters can meet. In some instances, the "good" monster may become the object of a quest, as they often have insights into problems or knowledge of ways to defeat more dangerous foes.

### Giants

These monsters include everything from extremely tall and strong members of another nation to beings the size of a tall oak tree or a hill. Rarely, they might be so

large and so covered with natural vegetation (trees growing from their bushy hair, etc.) that they are mistaken for mountains until they move. Giants are usually broad-featured, well muscled, and ugly. Many have peculiar smells such as rotting meat or swamp gas. Most are also malformed in some manner such as having an extremely long nose, only one eye or a humped back. Giants often have a keen sense of smell, but poor eyesight. All devour the flesh of humans—or Garou.

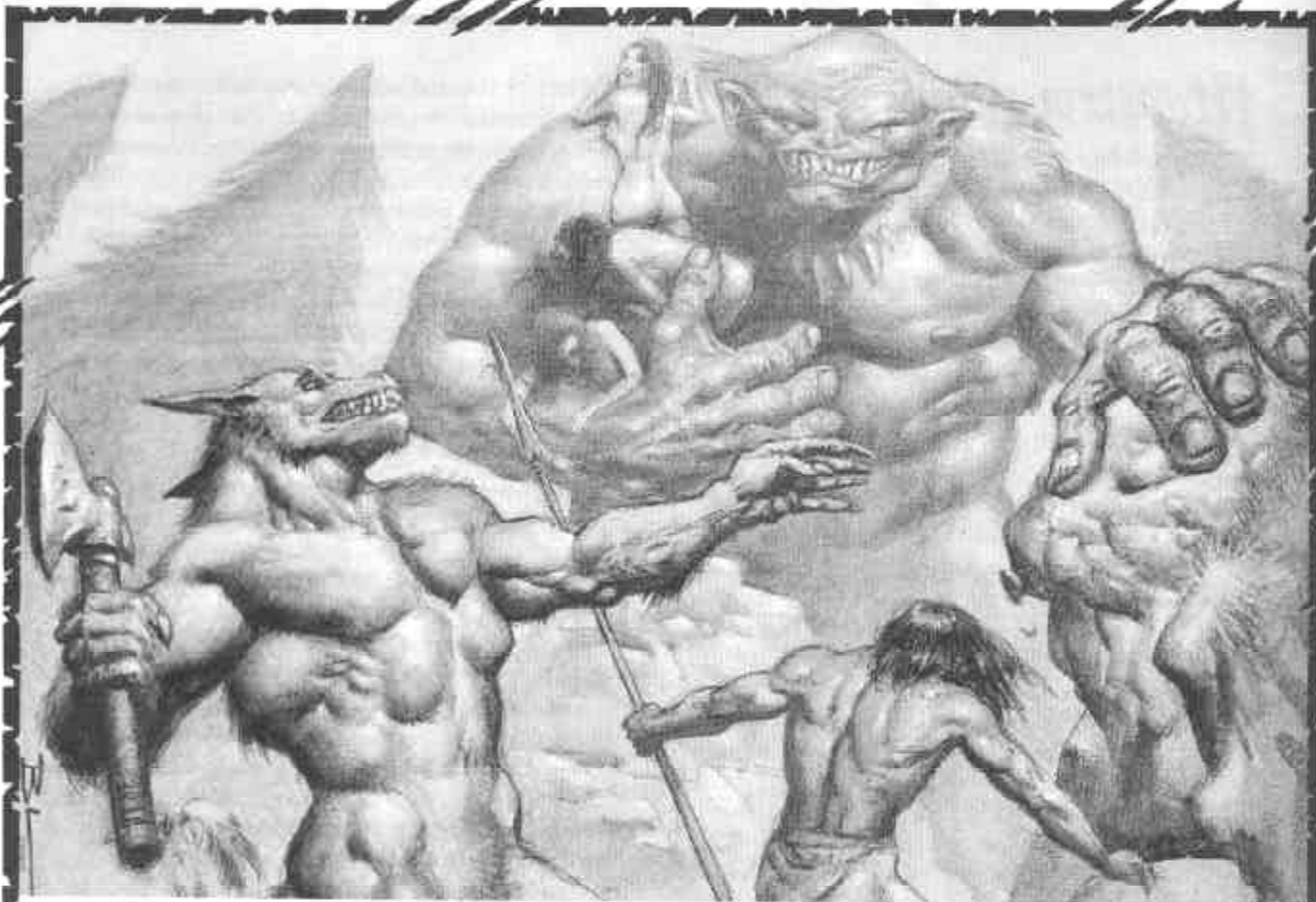
Many giants possess "magical" items such as a bow that never misses or a shirt that makes them invulnerable to physical damage. Those who oppose them may find ways to acquire these items, thus stripping giants of one of their main strengths. It's only fair, for often giants enter the heroes' lives through stealing something important to them (such as wives, children, fetishes or a treasured keepsake) or harming their Kinfolk in some way (destroying their crops and villages, raiding their livestock, or carrying off all the marriageable maidens).

Possessed of great strength and prodigious appetites for food, drink and sex, giants give the characters something truly larger than life to battle while still allowing them to use wits and clever planning rather than pure physical challenges to defeat them. These large foes often have vital organs hidden in odd areas of the body. Thus stabbing one through the chest to hit the heart may be ineffective—especially if it is displaced as far as the left heel. Giants are notorious for proposing contests that heroes win through trickery. As such they make great opponents for Ragabash and Galliards, who aren't always full of strength or rage.

### Shapeshifters

Conax, Gurahl, Pumona, Nuwisha and other known Changing Breeds populate the Pure Lands alongside the Garou, and any of these might find cause to annoy or conflict with the three tribes. But aside from even these, there are other, more malevolent shapechangers, metamorphs who are not Gaia's children but a mockery of the Changing Folk created by evil sorcery or through spiritual corruption. Though most of the great Banes have been bound, some corrupted animals with the ability to assume human shape remain loose.

Shapeshifters generally assume a human form to interact with humans, seeking to lull them into believing the shapeshifter is a normal person who means no harm. In this form, they may sabotage encampments, steal items or even harm those helpless to stop them (such as the very old or children too young to ask for help). In some cases, they seek to lead people away to a place where they can capture and torture them without interference. Such torture is usually undertaken more to learn about how humans function than for sick pleasure.



When not wanting to interact with humans as much, shifters may infiltrate camps disguised as dogs or some other domesticated animal such as sheep. From within the herd, they observe the humans, then slip into human form to steal treasured items or children. Some remain in animal form and lead their "guardians" (such as shepherds) away from other folk, then attack. Truly dangerous shapeshifters can assume more than a single human form, shifting themselves to look and sound like someone they've taken captive or murdered. Because they are so difficult to catch when able to make multiple shifts, they can cause great havoc or even panic in an encampment.

Shapeshifters are abnormally strong, and can easily overpower a single warrior. They are also possessed of unnatural vitality, expressed as extra health levels and the ability to soak damage caused by werebeasts' claws and teeth. Though they have fully human intelligence, their outlook remains animalistic—and even those who are normally herbivores in their animal forms can be predatory and enjoy a taste of human flesh or blood. Some can enter the spirit world, and others can't; a few might even possess a Wyrmish Gift or two.

## Little Folk

The little folk may be equated with the Nunnehi (or Native American fae). Despite the name, some

types of little folk may be even bigger than the Garou in Crinos form. While they are rarely evil *per se*, they may be mischievous, pulling pranks or making off with characters' possessions, then demanding something they can't acquire for themselves in exchange for returning said property. Conversely, they may try to keep Garou out of areas they consider their own or demand reparations for some unseen faerie treasure trampled by a careless native or werewolf. While their attentions can be annoying, distracting or frustrating, treating them well and respectfully and keeping strictly to any bargains struck with the little folk may benefit characters in the long run. Those whom the little folk favor can find unexpected aid at need or be gifted with a particularly beautiful or useful item. Treating them badly brings down the wrath of all faerie kind on the Garou who failed to show respect or who harmed a little person—whether intentionally or not.

While many Garou may feel that mere faeries cannot essentially harm them, they might consider that these beings are not mere changelings, but powers with the might to make one's dreams—or nightmares—come true. A year of drought or the mysterious disappearance of a herd of antelope from a tribe or nation's hunting ground can bring disaster to all. Those with wisdom walk quietly in the little people's presence and never fail to treat them

## Themes for Overcoming Monsters

In Native American lore, four themes dominate stories of monster fighting. Rather than straightforward battle or overpowering a monster with sheer might, many of the most famous native heroes sought more subtle ways to defeat otherwise unbeatable foes. Since not all characters will be Ahroun, these themes allow for more balanced and enjoyable play.

### • True Nobility or Great Sacrifice

Some monsters show an appreciation for noble actions. If heroes show them courtesy and respect and offer to fight them fairly, they may quit the field after a few token blows and allow such a noble character to "win" the fight. Likewise, some monsters may be satisfied to take the life (and thus the strength or power) of a single great warrior or shaman rather than feasting on a number of others. If characters offer themselves in return for the monster's sworn word to leave and never return, some foes might accept this. While it destroys the character, it makes for excellent roleplaying. Occasionally monsters may be impressed that a brave Wolf Changer agrees to exchange her life for the safety of many others. Such monsters might require a lesser penalty such as bringing it water from a well-guarded fountain or making a promise to return once a year with a gift of three fine sheep (see below).

### • Trickery, Deception and Thievery

Although some may feel that it is less than honorable for characters to utilize trickery or theft to accomplish their goals, there exists a whole tradition of the clever hero or trickster in Native American lore. Those who can outwit an enemy may even be accorded more respect than a mere warrior whose feats of arms overpower a foe. Trickery may involve substituting something for an item of greater value, convincing the foe that the character has access to something powerful or that he is giving such to the enemy or making the foe think the character is someone more powerful than he actually is. Decep-

tion might involve anything from using ventriloquism and invisibility to mislead the foe as to the character's whereabouts, leaving a heavy rock in a sack in place of a kidnapped friend or fooling the enemy into believing the character has performed some impossible task (such as drinking a river dry). Thievery may involve snatching a magic item belonging to the foe and turning it against her, stealing something valuable that she prizes so much she will promise to leave if it is returned or even making off with information the enemy has that she doesn't want the hero to possess.

### • Promising Something in Return

Almost as respected as tricksters are those who can negotiate with monsters and spirits. While it is usually advisable to act in good faith (especially when dealing with spirits), some may combine this talent with trickery, giving far less than it seemed they were promising while keeping to the exact letter of the words spoken. It should be noted, however, that many monsters and spirits do exactly this as well and any bargains should be clearly and plainly spelled out before agreements are made. If characters can discover what their foes want most, they are in a good position to make demands.

### • Feats of Strength or Fortitude

Monsters respect power and those who appear strong and hearty may gain the upper hand in dealing with foes. Some heroes have defeated monsters when they proved able to lift extremely heavy objects or withstand terrible blows when challenged to do so. Some feats call for the character to drink or eat a huge amount. Such challenges are usually met through trickery of some sort (such as hiding an empty bison bladder under one's shirt and pouring excess liquid in it rather than consuming it). Whether a feigned or true ability, a good showing on tests such as these can make even giants fear such mighty foes and seek ways to avoid conflict.

with respect. In general, those seeking to incorporate little people into their campaigns may simply present them as powerful and fickle folk who have a great sense of their own dignity, but little respect for anyone else's. Those wanting more specific information may consult the *Changeling Players Guide* for its section on the Nunnehi.

## Hairy Men

These hirsute beings form a race unto themselves, though each exists as an individual entity rather than

as part of a tribe. Every hairy man (or hairy woman) is unique and each has his own goals. Some haunt swamplands, others dwell in high mountain passes, but all seek out lonely, little-traveled byways in which to make their homes. Some hairy men waylay travelers, challenging them to games of chance or riddles — often with some needed piece of information or a special item needed to defeat a foe as the prize to be won.

While they may occasionally allow others, including Garou, to cross their domains or even hunt within them,



they prefer to be left alone unless they themselves initiate contact. Some hairy men kidnap abused children or adopt those unwanted and sickly children left out to die. Stories abound of kindly hairy men who took in an undersized infant and cared for it only to have the child grow to amazing size and strength and rise to leadership within his tribe or nation. Girls raised in such homes become beautiful and multi-talented, usually performing some great and noble feat that saves the nation that callously abandoned them. Such children always prove grateful to their foster parent and usually swear vengeance against any who offer their rescuer harm.

## ***Bodiless Heads***

These strange creatures are manifestations of curses or punishments inflicted upon those who willfully fail to observe the proper rites or who are greedy or mean-spirited. Sometimes murderers may also find themselves changing into nothing more than a large head, which must roll about if it wishes to move. Such heads are frequently the size of an entire body and often show signs of decay, with clumps of hair and portions of scalp peeling off or great sores and livid, putrefying skin. All such creatures have huge mouths filled with enormous sharp teeth and glaring, evil eyes that can see in the dark as well as in daylight.

While the curse causes great pain to those so afflicted, it also endangers others since bodiless heads sustain themselves by preying upon both animals and

humans. They tend to haunt the sites of their transgressions, be it on the battlefield, in the woods or within a village and seek vengeance for their condition. The sight of a bodiless head causes those who view it to either run mindlessly in terror or stand transfixed with horror. Thus the head, which moves at an astonishing rate, either overtakes a fleeing victim or runs right over its prey. It uses its razor-sharp teeth to inflict terrible wounds or sometimes swallows a smaller victim whole. Those swallowed whole are digested in fiery acid within the head. Even climbing hills or a tree cannot stop the advance of a bodiless head; such a monster need not roll on a flat surface, but can move vertically up steep slopes. Some may even float on water.

Garou who spend a point of Willpower may throw off the effects of the panic caused by the head, though its attacks are considered aggravated damage. Bodiless heads take no damage from fire, normal blows or weapons. Only those weapons imbued with power or the claws and teeth of Garou and like supernaturals can damage them. Because they are sustained without the need for bodies, however, bodiless heads take only one quarter the damage inflicted by such weapons (with a minimum of one health level on a successful damage roll).

## ***Unnatural Animals***

Unnatural animals differ from shapeshifters in that they do not change to human or any other form than



their own. They do evince odd and frightening changes within their bodies. Some unnatural animals change as a result of nearby Bane influences; others spring from evil sorcery performed by witches, who sometimes use unnatural animals as their servants. Such servants are often employed as guardians of the witch's possessions or home or to keep prisoners in line.

Whatever their origin, unnatural animals betray an almost human intelligence and sly cunning. All are strange anomalies such as deer with long, sharp fangs or rabbits with the claws of mountain lions. More fantastic unnatural beasts might be maddened wolves as large as elk whose howls can freeze someone in his tracks.

Such creatures can mask themselves from view by joining a herd or group of normal animals of their own type. Thus, an unnatural bison might lose himself within a herd of normal bison and not be spotted unless someone knew he was there and came close enough to notice the changes in his body. Though normal animals feel an unnatural animal's wrongness, they fear to invoke its predatory instincts by moving away from it too quickly.

Usually singular in nature, some unnatural animals have been known to mate with normal animals of their kind (usually a forced coupling) and produce offspring that breed true to the unnatural state. Eventually, this can lead to an entire herd of the creatures that moves from place to place, completely ravaging an area before moving on.

## Making a Better Monster

Conflict without some sort of foe may be challenging (terrain difficulties to be overcome, mental blocks to achieving a goal or even settling conflicts among pack members), but for an epic story, the characters need challenging opponents against whom to test themselves. Though the Pure Lands lack the debilitating foes the European Garou face, they have no dearth of monsters. Storytellers who want to make their characters' lives vibrant should keep in mind some of the following rules for creating unique and exciting foes for them.

### Type

Choose what sort of monster or monsters to use. Make certain they fit the area and enhance the theme or mood of the game. Once you know the basic type, make it an individual. Give it a fearsome name and create a back-story for it. What has it done? What does it look like? What are its rumored powers? The more real and terrifying you make the monster, the greater its destruction will seem.

### Reason for Existence

Monsters don't pop up from nowhere. They exist for a reason. Perhaps a bad-tempered shaman discontented with his life has turned to being a witch and threatens the Garou's Kinfolk. Maybe a cannibal, having exhausted the fresh meat in one area, has traveled to a new home and now hides among a nearby native encampment. The brutal rape and murder of a young girl might cause the ground where it happened to become sour, or the ground might have called out to a weak individual, compelling him to bring the girl to its confines and kill her. Whatever the placement of the monster, make cer-

tain there is a good story behind its existence in a particular area. Remember also that many monsters possess fully human intelligence and may seek to redress wrongs done to them or want safety from something even worse than themselves.

### Advantages

Delineate the monster's actual powers. Is he particularly strong? Does he have claws capable of dealing aggravated damage to Garou? Perhaps he walks invisibly or leaves a false scent. Detail any supernatural powers. Work some of them into what is popularly known of his personality, abilities and possessions. Remember that he might have a magical item of some sort. What are the monster's best skills? Is he resistant to damage of any sort? Perhaps the monster requires the gathering of and preparation of special items in order to kill him. The greater the battle and challenge, the greater the players' enjoyment. Consider the monster's reason for existence as you define his powers: cannibals might logically have a terrible bite attack, for instance, whereas a lusty creature bent on impregnating women with hideous versions of himself might have the ability to change his form or supernatural powers of persuasion.

### Weaknesses

How can this monster be harmed or killed? Does he have a particular weakness that can be exploited such as stupidity or over-confidence? Do any taboos hold sway over him? Is he susceptible to a specific substance or item? Figure out what it takes for the characters to deal with the monster and whether this will kill him or merely drive him away.

## Wendigo and Other Cannibals

The Wendigo tribe honors Wendigo as a totem, claiming that he eats only the hearts of enemies, yet other tribes wonder if his hunger for flesh goes beyond this. None dare say this directly to the children of the Wendigo, however.

Still, there are other, less conflicted cannibal creatures in the Pure Lands, and these beasts can cause serious trouble for a pack. Cannibalism is a dangerous taboo to break, and the stories of monstrous cannibals are nearly as numerous as stories of trickster spirits. Some cannibals have a deceptively normal appearance — at least during the day. Others appear as fanged, clawed humans with a feral gleam in their eyes and the smell of blood on their breath. Some have shark-toothed mouths in unlikely places that they must hide from all but their victims. Those who masquerade as normal must assume their real appearance for at least an hour once a day, usually during the darkest part of the night. Thus they might be unmasked by those clever enough to suspect them.

While many wise ones claim that cannibals have within them small pieces left over from Eater-of-Souls, this does not explain the existence of cannibals before that manifestation of the Wyrms' entry into the Pure Lands. Some claim that evil spirits of unnatural hunger possess those who fail to maintain vigilance against them, making them into cannibals. Whether these spirits are actually Banes is a hotly debated issue. Some cannibals are wholly supernatural creatures who must feed on human or Garou flesh to maintain their powers. Others are made when cannibals fool them into eating the flesh of their own kind three times. Such people develop an all-consuming hunger for that flesh and no other.

All cannibals feed upon humans, but the most frightening ones are those who were once Wolf Changers. These horrors haunt the wastes and forests or hidden parts of the Umbra waiting to catch a lone werewolf to feed upon. Alternately, they prowl encampments of Kinfolk looking for new Changers. When denied Wolf Changer flesh, they content themselves with Kinfolk.

Although some nations partake in the eating of enemies' hearts to gain their power and bravery, most greatly fear any other evidence of cannibalism, fleeing even the hint of such a being in their midst. To fall prey to a wild animal is one thing; to be consumed by one's own kind is a terror beyond reason. A telling factor in such fear is the knowledge that the cannibal rarely

simply kills and eats his victims. Instead it holds them captive and slowly strips flesh or body parts from them every day, sending such unfortunates into gibbering madness long before their physical bodies can no longer sustain such pain.

## Witches

Many people have power. Shamans use these powers to help and protect their nations, but not all such gifted people evince such altruism. Those who use their powers for evil ends or their own gain are known as witches whether they are male or female. They may terrorize their neighbors, demand payment for their services (or to refrain from using their powers to call down ill) in goods, animals or people, and may even use magic to ensnare others to become their mates — willingly or unwillingly.

Witches usually cause difficulties by blighting crops, hexing hunts to be futile, cursing someone with a sickness or barrenness, spoiling food, drying up water sources and putting the evil eye on children and adults alike. They can make a person so ill that he cannot recover without having the witch lift the curse or without killing the curse-giver. They can make a craftsman clumsy or summon red ants to torment those who offend them. To refrain from doing any of these evil deeds, witches extort food, fine items, even services from those around them, making unreasonable and whimsical demands and threatening dire consequences if their demands are not met.

When Wolf Changers become witches, they fall to the Wyrms, using their physical prowess and the threat of annihilating whole villages to keep others in their thrall.

## Sour Ground

Certain areas, so it is believed, are created bad. They exude fear, which covers them like a miasma. Things planted there grow twisted and blighted. Animals feeding from such plants sicken and die or run mad. A smell as of old blood or rotting meat seems to seep from the soil itself, poisoning the air. Animals and people both feel nervous and uncomfortable on sour ground. The day seems darker, the terrain more ominous. At night the feeling of unreasoning terror can overwhelm those who step within its bounds. Eerie sounds echo within such dread places; it seems as if hostile eyes watch from concealment. A nebulous menace stalks sour ground, always present, yet awaiting some unknown signal to move from dislike of intruders to actual manifestations of malice.



Branches may whip out, striking interlopers or roots tangle their feet. The ground itself may suddenly collapse into a morass, sucking the unlucky pedestrian down into it. Dimly perceived shadow-shapes draw ghostly, freezing claws through the hearts of travelers, sometimes causing them to fall unconscious, sometimes leaving them with broken health or shattered minds. Those who step onto sour ground may find that their usual inhibitions disappear and the worst aspects of their characters come to the fore. Jealousy, anger, resentment, hatred, envy all receive free rein and many assaults, rapes and murders result from giving vent to such emotions. Naturally, these strengthen the taint of the place, making it even harder to resist its pull in the future. Some people (or Garou) — those with weaker minds — may find themselves drawn again and again to sour ground, where they bring victims to be tortured and abused, then killed and hastily buried.

Sour ground may be found where murders have occurred, on particularly vicious battlefields, among deserted burial grounds or where Banes are bound under the soil. It features unnatural and tortured terrain such as grotesquely twisted trees, eerie lakes, miasmic bogs or mysterious, sulphurous caves.

Combating sour ground may call for specially prepared rites, cleansings and sacrifices to powerful spirits to help scour the taint from the area. Even this may not be enough, as the terrain tends to revert to its prior state even after such measures. Garou forced to remain within the bounds of sour ground lose Gnosis from their ongoing battle to remain sane in the face of such obvious Wyrn-taint.

## **Spirit Contact**

Just as monsters provide foes for the characters to vanquish, spirits give them a reason to embark on quests, discover new rites or act as spokespeople to negotiate a spirit's good will for their tribe or nation.

To the Pure Lands Garou and the native nations, all things possess a spirit, from a blade of grass to a mountain. One cannot interact with a thing without also interacting with that thing's spirit. Dealing with spirits cannot be lightly undertaken. It requires preparation and ritual, for to approach a spirit incorrectly or fail to thank it for its help could lead to potential disaster. Thus if a Garou wanted to hunt an elk and slay it, she would need to prepare for the hunt by undergoing a ritual making clear her intentions and asking for Elk's help. When the kill was made, she would ask the elk's spirit for forgiveness, explaining that she or her family needed the food and thanking the elk for providing meat to feed them. Finally, the

hunt would be made into a story and shared with others so that the elk would know the hunter appreciated his sacrifice. In like manner, other spirits must be carefully sounded out and appeased if they are asked to aid the Garou in some fashion.

## **Evil Spirits**

There exist evil or unapproachable spirits who might seek to harm the characters or those they cherish. These become straightforward foes (inasmuch as dealing with spirits can ever be straightforward). Yet another sort of spirit simply wants to be left alone or stubbornly settles itself somewhere inconvenient and refuses to budge. In the first case, if the spirit cannot be placated, it must be fought. The second type calls for more ingenuity. Often the clever can outwit such spirits, luring them into contests and demanding that they remove themselves from the area as the price for losing. In other cases, Wolf Changers may be able to speak with the spirit and find out something it greatly desires, then bargain with the spirit to go away in return for being given its heart's desire. Some spirits simply want to be left alone, but characters find themselves having to approach them for advice or information or needing to cross its claimed territory to get where they need to be. Proving their usefulness, entertaining it or again, fetching it something it wants may all prove efficacious in gaining its help. Purely malicious spirits, on the other hand, may prove foes worthy of a song in a great hero's honor.

## **Sample Monsters** **Three-Faces**

One of the more grotesque examples of the "rolling head" monsters, Three-Faces was once a proud warrior and hunter who lived away from the rest of his nation with his wife and mother. He was overly boastful of his abilities, which offended the spirits of his hunting ground. Angered at the young buck's lack of respect, they hid the animals from him when he hunted. After three days of coming home with no results, the young hunter flew into a fit of rage and madness so terrible that he murdered his wife and mother, then ate of their flesh. It was a full week before his neighbors became so worried that they came to check on him — but by that time it was too late.

Three-Faces is as large as a buffalo, with mouths wide enough to swallow a person whole. The three faces on this awful creature are those of the hunter himself, his young wife and his aged mother, but all the faces are swollen and tortured in aspect. Its hair flies in all directions as it rolls around in search of prey.



Three-Faces would make a good adversary to add local color to a chronicle; it would be very easy to make this beast come from the nation that the players' characters call home. It isn't the most dangerous of creatures, but the hunting of Three-Faces would make a fine single-session story, particularly as an introduction for new players.

**Attributes:** Strength 6, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6

**Abilities:** Brawl 3, Dodge 1, Tracking 5  
Willpower 4

**Health Levels:** OK, OK, -1, -1, -1, -2, -2, -5; Incapacitated

**Attacks:** Strength +3 Bite (Three-Faces can make up to three bite attacks per turn, depending on how many mouths it can get next to a victim or victims), Strength +1 Crush

**Powers:** Unnatural Fear (as Delirium, only affecting Garou as well; Garou may roll Willpower, difficulty 7, to resist)

### *Bane-Wind*

This elusive and terrifying monster can manifest in a number of different places at once. Hiding its true form within a nebulous, invisible drift of air, the Bane-Wind carries sickness and corruption into the

heart of an encampment or affects a single individual, making that person a plague carrier immune to the disease he transmits to everyone he meets. Although these terrible spirit-creatures do eventually fall under the auspice of the Wyrn itself, they are not truly its children—they are creatures of pure sickness, tainted only with malevolence.

Anyone infected by the Bane-Wind suffers a debilitating illness, which may manifest as virulent fevers, relentless coughs, internal bleeding or other incurable maladies. The victim becomes lethargic as she wastes away, gradually becoming weaker and more despairing until death ensues. Even Garou are not immune to Bane-disease. Each day that a person is afflicted, she must roll Stamina (difficulty 8) or slip into the next stage of the disease. As the disease itself affects a person's Stamina Attribute, this can result in a sickness that ravages and kills its victims in a matter of hours.

Fighting a Bane-caused illness is far more difficult than combating normal sickness. Each Bane-Wind's disease is unique and must be fought in a different way. Some partially respond to traditional remedies while others stubbornly resist all attempts to cure them with herbs and such. Since the Bane-Wind afflicts the spirit along with the body, to effect

a cure, the healer must invoke a friendly spirit guide who can lead her in a vision quest to discover what specific elements are needed to quell the disease. Such things might be rare herbs, oddly shaped stones wrested from a hidden cave or reeds cut from a distant river. Conversely, the cure may require items that can only be found within the Umbra.

Battling the Bane-Wind itself is a tricky proposition, as it endangers would-be heroes with the possibility of contracting a particularly virulent form of that Bane-Wind's disease. After discovering that a Bane-Wind is at work, the Garou must locate it and battle it in the Umbra. There, its nebulous airy form becomes solid. Each blow or attack from a Gift landed upon the Bane-Wind may damage it, but elicits a flexing of its powers in return. Each strike releases a noxious mist that surrounds the one who harmed it and spreads out for about fifteen feet in all directions. All those caught within the mist must roll Stamina (difficulty 9) and achieve at least two successes to avoid becoming infected by the Bane-Wind's disease. Each time the Garou is caught in the mist without successfully resisting the effects, the infection worsens.

The true horror of the Bane-Wind, aside from its ability to wipe out entire villages, is its transformational power upon those who succumb to it. All who die from the Bane-Wind's disease must be accorded proper burial rites immediately or they will rise from their deathbed as new Bane-Winds and carry the disease on to new victims. Thus those who attempt to fight the Bane-Wind may condemn themselves to an existence after death as the very corruptive disease spirit they tried to destroy.

With the coming of the Wyrmbearers, Bane-Winds become widespread, striking entire nations with diseases heretofore unknown to them such as smallpox, measles, yellow fever, influenza and bubonic plague.

Rage 8, Gnosis 6, Willpower 6, Essence 20

**Charms:** Airt Sense, Incite Frenzy, Infect (inflicts the disease on a target with the following effects), Materialize

**Progression of the Illness**

**Stage One:** -2 to Stamina, -1 to Strength and Dexterity; 2 levels aggravated damage

**Stage Two:** -2 to Strength, Dexterity and Stamina; 4 levels of aggravated damage

**Stage Three:** -3 to Strength, Dexterity and Stamina; Garou cannot change forms, 5 levels of aggravated damage

**Stage Four:** Strength, Dexterity and Stamina reduced to 1; Garou is incapacitated

**Stage Five:** Death and transformation into a Bane-Wind

## *Witch-serpents*

Although Uktena and many of his river-serpent brood are benevolent creatures, there are a few water-monsters in the Pure Lands who are wickedly selfish. These creatures are in fact relatives of Uktena itself, cousins who refused to follow the Pact and be obedient to Garou who asked their help. They resent the fact that Gaia gave humans sentience, and they often take it upon themselves to rid the earth of the annoying little monkeys (when the Grandmother isn't looking, of course).

What makes these creatures exceptionally dangerous is their resemblance to Uktena itself—it's not an easy thing for even Uktena Theurge to tell the difference between an avatar of their totem and one of the malevolent witch-serpents. Their scales shine with the same iridescent greens and blues; their antlers are equally bright and sharp; their golden eyes and rushing voices are just as compelling. The only good way to tell a Witch-serpent from one of Uktena's brood is that a Witch-serpent dare not call itself Uktena, or claim to speak in the totem's name. Instead, it will avoid the subject, and if any werewolf it meets presumes that it's a representative of Uktena, it won't go out of its way to correct the error.

Witch-serpents are clever adversaries, and should be portrayed as such. Although they're strong fighters, they prefer to weaken their prey through trickery and guile before making a kill.

**Attributes:** Strength 6, Dexterity 5, Stamina, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Subterfuge 3, Stealth 2, Herbalism 3, Occult 4

Rage 5, Gnosis 8, Willpower 7

**Health Levels:** OK, OK, -1, -1, -1, -1, -2, -2, -2, -5, -5, Incapacitated

**Attacks:** Antler Rake (Strength +1), Bite (Strength +2), Constrict (Strength +3), Tail Sting (Strength -1 aggravated, victims halve their soak pools)





# Chapter Four: Children of the Middle Times

*Who will describe the triumph streaming  
out of her pelt, the symphonies  
wind carried to her fine nose?  
Her walk, graceful but never feline  
shoulders moving as she strode  
through undergrowth, dew from the ferns  
wet her tits, her short clear barks?*

— Diane diPrima, *Loba*

Characters created for a Pure Lands chronicle follow most of the same rules for character creation detailed in *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*; they have the same allotment of dots in Attributes and Abilities, they begin with three Gifts, and so on. This chapter rounds out the material given in the main rulebook with rules specific to Pure Lands chronicles. Other supplements, such as the *Werewolf Players Guide*, *Uktena Tribebook* and *Wendigo Tribebook* provide additional options and enhancements that can be adapted (with the Storyteller's permission, of course) for Pure Lands characters.

## **Breeds**

The guidelines given for breeds in *Werewolf: The Apocalypse* generally apply to Pure Lands Garou, with a few minor alterations. *Lupus Garou*, for instance,

make up a greater percentage of the three native tribes, almost a full half in areas with heavy wolf population. They are restricted from purchasing the Skills of Archery, Boating or Etiquette (or Ride or Firearms, if the chronicle takes place in the appropriate era) save with freebie points; they are similarly restricted from purchasing Healing, Herbalism, Linguistics, Nation Lore or Traditions with their initial allotment of Abilities.

In general, there are almost no metis Garou in the Pure Lands of the time. The children of the Three Brothers take the laws of the Litany very seriously, and the taboo against Garou-Garou pairings is regarded as one of the strongest prohibitions. Nevertheless, when metis births occur, most Pure Lands Garou wait until they receive some sign from the Grandmother or from some other spirit being before they make a decision as to whether or not to allow the child to live. If the spirits

seem to favor the metis child, his sept generally accepts the decision of the greater powers and allows the metis to grow. Occasionally, metis Garou achieve positions of great power, but they must work much harder and overcome the stigma of their birth in order to do so.

## Tribes

Naturally, the three tribes central to a Pure Lands game are the first (and usually best) option for character creation. For the Uktena and Wendigo, most of the rules given in *Werewolf: The Apocalypse* should suffice equally well for a historical setting — a few modifications are suggested, but the main rules should easily provide the bulk of necessary material.

Note that none of the native tribes have any Background restrictions; after all, they're in *their* territory, and more or less have the run of the place. However, depending on the actual chronicle, the Storyteller may choose to restrict certain Backgrounds. For instance, nobody has any real Resources worth mentioning during the Great Migration; similarly, in a chronicle centering on interaction with the burgeoning European settler towns, it might be inappropriate for Native American characters to have Contacts if they're going to spend most of their time in the whites' camps.

### Croatan

The children of Middle Brother have long been renowned for their devotion to honor; their steadfast, almost earthen resilience is the heart of their pride. They are as elementally bound to earth as the Uktena are to water and the Wendigo are to ice. They are slow to war, even their Ahroun, but they are equally slow to forgive once they've been truly angered.

**Tribal Totem:** Turtle

**Initial Willpower:** 5

**Beginning Gifts:** Cookfire, Turtle Body, Wyld Sight

**Tribal Weakness:** Obstinate. Once a Croatan has made up his mind, there's nothing that can be done to make him change it. Although this does have its benefits (such as the tribe's penchant for high Willpower), it also makes the Croatan somewhat blind to things he should otherwise see. When confronted with undeniable evidence that things are not as he'd assumed, a Croatan suffers a one-die penalty to all his dice pools until he is able to regain his composure. To completely regain his composure, the Croatan must spend a total of five Willpower points specifically toward this purpose, although he need not spend them all at once.

[Remember that Tribal Weaknesses are *optional* — the Storyteller can enforce, modify, or ignore them as she sees fit.]

### Uktena

The children of the wise water serpent still bear a burden heavier than that of their cousins, but until the coming of the Europeans, this burden remains manageable. Although their cousins treat the Uktena with some deference due to their mystic secrecy, the Uktena remain the experts on sorcery and the binding of Banes.

**Initial Willpower:** 4

**Beginning Gifts:** Pull Water, Sense Magic, Shroud

### Wendigo

After the Great Migration, the children of Sasquatch share the bitter anger of their newly-changed totem, becoming the cubs of winter itself. Even so, they still find time to enjoy the greater things in life; even to the children of Wendigo, life in the Pure Lands is more sweet than bitter.

**Initial Willpower:** 4

**Beginning Gifts:** Call the Breeze, Camouflage, Snow Sight

### Others

If the Storyteller likes, he may allow characters of other tribes into the chronicle if the timeline permits. The most likely would be Red Talons; not only are the Talons far less jarring a presence than, say, a Fianna or Get might be, but their Gift lists require the least retooling to represent a less "modern" environment. Colonial-era chronicles might allow for players to create European characters; *Werewolf: The Dark Ages* and *Werewolf: The Wild West* offer a few ideas for refitting Gift lists and tribal weaknesses to fit the time period. Again, though, it should be stressed that European Garou should show up in a Pure Lands game *only* if the Storyteller thinks it's a good idea. Even if a player can rationalize playing a Get that crossed over with Leif Ericson, there's no denying that such a character would be distracting and possibly even damaging to the chronicle's mood unless the chronicle's specifically set up to include him.

The same advice applies, more or less, to allowing other shapeshifters into the chronicle. Although the Three Brothers are on better terms with the various Changing Breeds of the Pure Lands, this can lead to some trouble — either the other shapeshifters outnumbering the Garou, which is jarringly improbable, or the sole non-Garou demanding an unfair share of the Storyteller's attention. In any case, the Gift lists provided in the various Changing Breed Books are more or less as suitable for a historical game as they are for a modern environment. If the Storyteller allows another shapeshifter into the chronicle, it shouldn't require much retooling save the different Abilities list.



## Abilities Talents

The Talents listed in the core rulebook are largely as appropriate for Pure Lands' characters as they are for modern werewolves. In fact, some are even more vital for the Pure Lands hero.

Athletics is a valued characteristic (athletic contests, including various forms of stickball, footraces and other such, are common to most nations), and most great heroes were renowned as great athletes. Expression is a similarly heroic characteristic; many leaders were expected to be eloquent speakers, even poets. And the people of the time were no strangers to Subterfuge; it was common for people of different nations to share a campfire and conversation, trying to learn things about each other's nation while revealing none of their own secrets. Conversely, Streetwise is almost useless in any pre-colonization game; the Talent of Barter replaces it.

### Barter

Without an actual common coinage, the nations of the period did most of their trading through barter. This Talent represents not only a general knowledge of the comparable worth of various goods, but the ability to haggle and bargain with others skillfully enough to get them to accept your terms.

- You can guess what the fair price is for most common goods.
- You can tell when you're being cheated.
- The local trading posts have given up on getting you to pay too much or accept too little.
- You can get good horses cheap.
- You could buy Old Man Coyote's pelt for a song.

### Skills

The people of the Pure Lands obviously had to master many different skills to thrive; there was food aplenty, but not so much that the lazy and indolent could get by for long. Etiquette is often far more important in this setting than it would be in a modern-day chronicle; blood feuds between human peoples can start over seemingly minor infractions. Etiquette involves not only the proper way to greet and treat strangers, but a general knowledge of taboos common to neighboring tribes — it's as much a focus on what not to do as it is a guide to what to do.

Melee covers a variety of weapons, depending on the nation; a skilled warrior might know how to use knife, spear, war club and hatchet. Performance, like Expression, is highly valued; many spirits will accept a beautiful song as chiminage.

Instead of the modern skill Drive, Pure Lands characters may learn Boating, which applies to canoes, kayaks and the like; chronicles set after the introduction of the horse may use Ride instead. Archery should substitute for the Firearms Skill, although Pure Lands' chronicles taking place after the introduction of guns can allow characters to choose Firearms as a secondary Skill. Finally, Repair is only really appropriate for a mechanized society; Pure Lands characters use Crafts instead to fabricate the tools they need.

### Boating

This Skill is obviously prevalent only in areas with sufficient bodies of water. It can cover rivercraft or oceanraft; any given boater would probably have the opportunity to learn only one specific type of watercraft, but high enough levels in this Skill convey an understanding of boats that transcends specific forms.

- You can paddle a canoe without going in circles.
- You can safely make a living at fishing.
- The river doesn't behave like the sea, but you can navigate either in reasonable conditions.
- Rough waters aren't anything new to you.
- You're practically the child of Beaver himself.

### Crafts

Full rules for the Crafts Skill appear in the **Players Guide**; in brief, this skill covers the many and varied ways of making things with one's hands and appropriate tools. This is highly useful for crafting weapons, homesteads, clothes, trade goods and even appropriate items for investment with fetich power. Obviously, this is a valuable ability in Pure Lands' games.

### Knowledges

Finally, it should be obvious that the Knowledges available to a Pure Lands character are going to be vastly different from those a modern descendant might possess. Apart from no-brainers like Computer, it should be noted that both Medicine and Science are rather different ideals than those the Pure Landers would pursue. Law and Politics are also somewhat inappropriate; although both are important concepts, they're not quite as wide reaching in a time with a low population density. The following Knowledges are somewhat more in keeping, although the Storyteller is, as always, free to make substitutions where she sees fit.

### Animal Lore

While Animal Ken represents the ability to roughly interpret an animal's reactions or try befriending an animal, Animal Lore represents a more solid body of

knowledge on animals' behaviors, habitats, foods, habits and so on. A character with high Animal Ken, for instance, can determine whether or not a given bear is hungry; but with high Animal Lore, he can accurately name that same bear's usual foods, and therefore try to guess just why the bear hasn't been able to have any breakfast yet. This Knowledge is particularly useful in tracking prey migrations, and can be a useful complement to any Theurge's spirit knowledge. Of course, this Knowledge can't convey knowledge of animals that the character and his contacts have never encountered: the most obvious example is the horse.

- You're still learning at your elder's knee.
- You know where the herds are going and when.
- You're familiar with almost all the animals of your region.
- You know every animal in your hunting territory by name.
- Your knowledge of animals almost goes farther than your nation's trade contacts.

## Linguistics

The rules for Linguistics should be changed to reflect the new ones given in the *Werewolf Players Guide*. This allows characters to speak a number of languages, almost a necessity due to their cultural background. They may not speak all the tongues fluently, but should receive at least a basic understanding of each language thus purchased. Each dot in Linguistics doubles the character's "extra" language capacity. Thus:

- One additional language
- Two additional languages
- Four additional languages
- Eight additional languages
- 16 additional languages

Each "slot" can be spent to purchase a different human tongue, a different dialect of a tongue (such as the Choctaw and Seminole variations on Muskogean) or sign languages. It should be noted that a number of nations used trade tongues common to many different groups so that even those who had no other common language could express basic concepts. All Garou instinctively know the Garou speech, though the Storyteller might require characters to expend a slot to gain full fluency in reading the Garou glyph-writing system. In like manner, a slot could be used to learn to interpret petroglyphs. Note that European tongues are unknown until after 1492.

Some of the language groups are: Eskaleut (found along the north edge of the continent), Athapaskan (western Canada and the Southwest), Algonquian,

Iroquoian, Muskogean, Siouan, Penutian (the future California), Salishan, Uto-Aztecan-Numic, Caddoan (the groups just west of the Mississippi) and many others. Within these groupings are found each nation's tribal language, such as Apache and Navajo, both found under Athapaskan. Further lists of languages and their groupings can be found in books on Native Americans or on linguistics websites.

## Healing

Rather than using the Medicine Knowledge, Pure Lands Garou are more likely to have a general Healing skill. This Knowledge still covers a general knowledge of the workings of the human body, but relies much more strongly on herbal and even mystical cures. Although not as wide-reaching (particularly in the field of pathology) as the European study of medicine, Healing still provides the ability to administer first aid, brew simple medicines, and generally keep one's friends and family healthy.

- You can stop bleeding and set bones.
- You can bring down a baby's fever.
- You're probably your clan's healer.
- You can perform the simplest surgical procedures if need be.
- Your clan reveres your gift for healing as if it were supernatural.

## Herbalism

Although the Herbalism Knowledge can be used to complement Healing, it has a broader set of applications. Characters with herbal knowledge can identify medicinal herbs, tell edible plants and fungi from inedible or poisonous ones, select and cure plants with hallucinogenic effects for the purposes of vision-questing, and even guess at the properties that an awakened plant's spirit might possess.

- You know that jimson weed's not for eating.
- You can tell whether a given mushroom is poisonous or delicious.
- The elders send youngsters with questions about plants in your direction.
- You know not only which herbs are best for healing, but also which are necessary to poison monsters.
- Witches and medicine folk ask your advice — or plot to steal your knowledge.

## Nation Lore

This Knowledge deals with information about the various clans, villages and nations of Pure Lands' humans — their territories, means of subsistence, general aggressiveness, and other important informa-

tion. This is a valuable Knowledge on many levels, as it not only lets you know who your enemies and allies might be, but why — and how you could change that if need be. The highest levels of Nation Lore probably won't be found in anyone other than Garou — only werewolves have the mobility and the available time to gather information from so many different areas.

- You know some things about the people across the river.
- You've traded goods and stories with a number of outsiders.
- You're the most well-traveled trader in your clan.
- You know the basic lore of many, many nations, and are an expert on your neighbors.
- You know the secrets of nations from the Algonquian to the Seminole.

### Traditions

The nations of the Pure Lands have fewer laws and less complicated politics than the countries of the modern era; but they still have laws and politics, and it's still important to know the ins and outs of these things. This Knowledge covers the various laws, taboos, rituals, rank and structure of human society; although the emphasis is clearly on your own nation, you'll know things about other nations' traditions depending on the extent of your teaching and the proximity of the nation in question.

- You half-listen to your lessons.
- You know what needs to be done in most day-to-day situations.
- The elders will listen when you have something to say.
- You *are* one of the elders.
- You could build a great confederation of many nations.

### Backgrounds

Most Backgrounds can be used largely unchanged in a Pure Lands game, although social Backgrounds such as Allies, Contacts, Kinfolk and Mentor have added significance in the much smaller social groups of the time. Contacts are almost always people of different nations or villages than the character's own; almost everyone within one's own village could be considered a Contact to varying degree. This can be both a good and a bad thing; your associates are going to be within easy reach, but at the same time, you're constantly in their vision. If you start behaving in a manner that would alienate them, they'll know it.

Resources is another matter entirely; without a currency system, this Background may include domestic

animals or horses (in later chronicles), sled dogs, wampum or some other form of wealth recognized by the particular nation. Since the actual amount of and type of goods would be so variable from one area to the next, this Background should be translated into a more general sort of purchasing power.

### Resources

- You have little more than the clothes on your back and what you can make with your own hands.
- You can take care of your family, but you have no luxuries to spare.
- Your skills are in demand, and you receive good rewards for using them. You can afford to show your generosity with gifts.
- You're one of the high-ups in your clan; you could afford to throw a fairly respectable potlatch.
- Few chiefs are as wealthy as you are; you have enough goods to support your tribe for an entire winter if need be.

### New Archetypes

Archetypes provide additional opportunities for role-playing by emphasizing particular personality types. Players wishing to use Archetypes to enhance their Pure Lands characters should select one personality to represent her character's Nature, or innermost being, and one personality to indicate her character's Demeanor, or public self. Straightforward characters may choose the same personality type for both Nature and Demeanor.

The *Werewolf Players Guide* lists a number of Archetypes suitable for Garou characters, and any of these can apply to Garou from the Pure Lands. In addition, the following new Archetypes may provide additional choices for Croatan, Uktena or Wendigo involved in Pure Lands' chronicles.

### Contrary

Opposites are necessary in order to have balance. Without conflict, all life devolves into stagnation. You embody the art of reminding others of the "other" way. You do not disagree simply for the sake of disagreeing; rather, you do so to shake the complacency of others so that they do not act without questioning the truth of their actions or speak without considering the opposite point of view. Your approach to life sometimes takes the form of deliberately acting contrary to the expectations of societal or gender roles. If you are male, you question the standard of maleness by assuming the dress or responsibilities of women. If you are female, you challenge the restrictions of your gender by dressing or acting as a male. You may sometimes speak in



riddles or say the opposite of what you mean. This Nature is suitable for Ragabash Garou in particular.

- Regain Willpower whenever your contrary actions cause another person to question a previous assumption.

## Warrior

Nothing seems more important than pitting your skill as a fighter against someone or something that threatens your pack, your Kinfolk or your duty to the Grandmother. You live for battle and direct most of your attention toward honing your mind and body into the perfect weapon. You delight in the thrill of combat and in the preparations and aftermath of war. You respect others for their fighting prowess and can appreciate a worthy opponent (except in the case of creatures who have no honor). You view other activities as less important or else you tend to see all actions as if they were tactics in a larger war.

- Regain Willpower whenever you achieve a decisive victory in single combat with a foe that is at least your equal.

## Gifts

### Breed Gifts

#### Homid

The Jam Technology Gift does not exist for purposes of Pure Lands' chronicles. The Jam Gun Gift (see *Werewolf: the Wild West*) may apply for Pure Lands Garou whose septs have had contact with European Garou; otherwise, Storytellers may choose to replace it with the Croatan Gift: Shell Games, listed below.

Metis and lupus Gifts can remain unchanged.

### Auspice Gifts

Just as the auspice roles have remained largely unchanged throughout the years, most of the auspice Gifts given in the *Werewolf* rulebook are plenty appropriate for historical gaming. In most cases, only the name need change (and then only in order to keep the mood intact).

The Level Three Ragabash Gift: Gremlins is obviously out of place; it can easily be replaced with the Silent Strider Gift: The Great Leap.

The Theurge Gift: Feral Lobotomy is known as *Savage the Mind*.

The Philodox Gift: Geas is called *Sacred Vow*.

For Galliard Gifts, change the name of Eye of the Cobra to *Lure of the Serpent*, and Head Games to *Heart Twister*.

Finally, the Ahroun Gift: Razor Claws should be referred to as *Knife Claws*. *Stoking Fury's Furnace* is known as *Garbering Fury's Embers*, and *Kiss of Helios* should likely be renamed *Sun's Touch*.

## Tribal Gifts

Note that beginning characters may choose from one of three tribal Gifts. Though each Gift list is obviously most suited to the appropriate tribe, certain tribal Gifts might be taught to others, especially any Wolf Changers who fostered with the tribe in question. As a general rule, though, Gifts of Rank Four and above should remain exclusively in the hands of the specific tribe.

### Croatan Gifts

- **Cookfire (Level One)** — The Garou can turn raw, unprocessed food into a cooked meal without need of fire. In addition, the meal tastes first class. This Gift is taught by Earth-spirits allied to Corn Maiden.

**System:** The player must make a Gnosis roll, difficulty 7; the more successes, the more elaborate the final meal. This Gift cannot add any food that isn't already present — it cannot spice food if the Garou has no spices handy, for instance — but it can turn unripe corn on the cob into cakes, or a fish that hasn't been cleaned into a neatly scaled, gutted, boned and cooked meal.

- **Turtle Body (Level One)** — The Garou can call upon one of the powers of Turtle and greatly slow his metabolism. He must remain inactive, but can exist without breathing for hours at a time. In addition, uncontrolled bleeding halts. Extremes of heat or cold can be ignored. Ingested or injected poisons slow their passage through the body, and do not take full effect for hours, allowing someone to fetch an antidote before that time. This Gift is taught by a Turtle-spirit.

**System:** The player must spend one Gnosis and make a Gnosis roll, difficulty 6, to enter the torpor-like trance. The trance lasts for one hour per success, although the Garou may choose to awaken early after a given amount of time has passed.

- **Wyld Sight (Level One)** — Some Croatan can see the ebb and flow of Wyld energy, catching hints of Wyld-related storms and other phenomena before they grow too powerful. By use of this Gift, a werewolf can feel the disturbances in the spirit world that presage a tornado, earthquake, wildfire or other such happening. She can also see Wyld-spirits in the Penumbra while she remains in the physical world, although her vision is somewhat clouded. This Gift is taught by a Wyld-spirit.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Enigmas, difficulty 6. If successful, the Garou understands the

nature and source of the Wyld manifestation. The successes determine just how far in advance the Gift user can predict a Wyld event.

Successes	Time Before the Event
One	10 minutes
Two	30 minutes
Three	One hour
Four	Three Hours
Five+	One day

• **Safe Cave (Level Two)** — The Garou can cause the earth to split before him, creating a hole into a small cave that can hold up to five more Crinos-sized people.

The hole can be sealed once within the cave, so that no one outside can discern its presence without supernatural means. Any burrowing or Earth-spirit can teach this Gift.

**System:** The player must expend one Gnosis point and make a Charisma + Survival roll, difficulty 7, to open the cave. The decision of whether or not to seal the cave must be made within three turns; the Garou can't just open and close the cave once it's been created. The cave lasts for a variable amount of time; once the duration expires, anyone in the cave pops out of the earth again as the cave disappears.

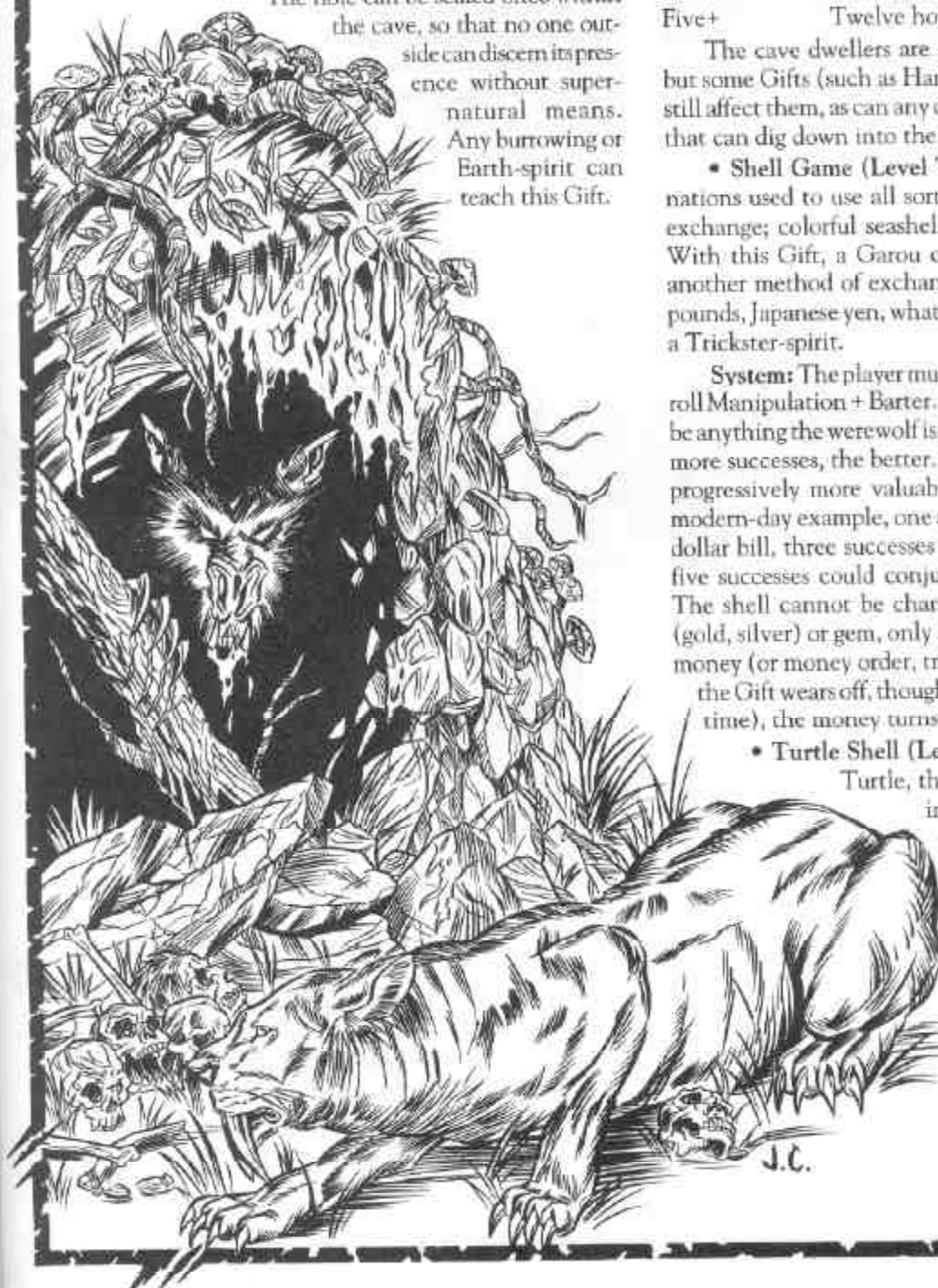
Successes	Duration
One	One minute
Two	Ten minutes
Three	An hour
Four	Six hours
Five+	Twelve hours

The cave dwellers are safe from physical attack, but some Gifts (such as Hand of the Earth Lords) can still affect them, as can any concerted burrowing effort that can dig down into the cave and break its seal.

• **Shell Game (Level Two)** — Croatan Kinfolk nations used to use all sorts of things as mediums of exchange; colorful seashells were the most popular. With this Gift, a Garou can transform a shell into another method of exchange: dollars, coins, English pounds, Japanese yen, whatever. This Gift is taught by a Trickster-spirit.

**System:** The player must spend a Gnosis point and roll Manipulation + Barter. The resulting currency can be anything the werewolf is familiar with, although the more successes, the better. The currency can become progressively more valuable with each success; as a modern-day example, one success might create a five-dollar bill, three successes a handful of twenties, and five successes could conjure up \$1000 in hundreds. The shell cannot be changed into a precious metal (gold, silver) or gem, only an exact facsimile of actual money (or money order, travelers checks, etc.). Once the Gift wears off, though (and it does so in an hour's time), the money turns back into a pretty shell.

• **Turtle Shell (Level Two)** — By calling on Turtle, the Croatan can seal himself in a mystic protective shield that resembles a turtle's shell. The shell is opaque from the outside, but those on the inside can see through it. The werewolf can opt to bring others into the shell with him, if his power is sufficient. This Gift is taught by a Turtle-spirit.



**System:** The player spends one Gnosis and rolls Stamina + Survival. Each success gives the shell two soak dice and two effective health levels; the radius enclosed is two yards per success. A Crinos-form werewolf requires about two yards radius, so with two successes, two werewolves in Crinos could be protected (or three humans or Homid-form Garou, or so on, at the Storyteller's discretion).

The shell lasts for one scene, or until broken either by the Croatan's will or by sustaining too much damage — whichever comes first. When broken, it shatters into pieces that dissolve like so much mist.

• **Call Earth Spirit (Level Three)** — The Croatan can call on his ancient alliance with Turtle, summoning an Earth-spirit to rampage forth and crush things or people for him. The Garou must have some earth at hand to invoke the Earth-spirit, although a handful of dirt or a smallish rock will suffice. This Gift is taught by an earth elemental.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis and rolls Manipulation + Occult, difficulty 8. The spirit cuts a path of destruction in a straight line for up to 30 yards, inflicting 10 dice of nonaggravated damage to anything in its path. Botching the summoning roll calls forth an Earth-spirit of some sort that is hostile to its summoner.

• **Gift of Plenty (Level Three)** — Corn Maiden's earthen spirits of fecundity teach this Gift, by which any single chosen object can be multiplied into many duplicate objects. In this way, a warrior can make more arrows from a single arrow, or more bullets from one bullet. Any object without spiritual power (in other words, no fetishes) can be multiplied: \$20 bills, strips of steak, ears of corn, and so on.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Charisma + Crafts, difficulty 7. The number of successes determines the number of objects (including the original) that result; two successes would create one extra duplicate, four successes would create three duplicates, and so on.

The newly created objects last for only 24 hours, and then disappear. But their effects remain — arrow or bullet wounds heal at normal rates, goods bought with multiplied money remain, multiplied food still provides nutrition as long as it was digested before time runs out, and so on.

• **Hand of the Earth Lords (Level Four)** — As the Uktena Gift from *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*.

• **Underearth (Level Four)** — Since Turtle went into his coma-like sleep, many secrets of earth powers once known are now forgotten — such as the Umbral tunnels beneath the Umbrascap. The Croatan did not always rely on Luna's moon paths when traveling the Umbra (especially in the era when they were estranged from her due to their devotion to Helios). This Gift

allowed them to use the secret tunnels under the earth, known to many earth-burrowing spirits and totems, such as Mole, Badger and Groundhog (who taught them the Gift). In such a way, the Croatan could travel long distances in the safety of the Umbral underground.

This Gift is all but lost to werewolves by the time of the 20th century, but this is almost a blessing; in the modern era, many of these tunnels have been occupied by Ratkin, making them hostile territory for any Garou.

**System:** The werewolf must expend one Gnosis point to be made aware of the nearest entrance into one of these tunnels. Such an entrance might not be close at hand; the Garou might have to go on a day's journey just to reach the nearest opening, depending on the local population of burrowing spirits. Once inside the tunnel, he can reach his destination safely. When he gets to a multiple branching tunnel, he'll know the proper way — otherwise, one could get lost for years!

In all other respects, this Gift is much like traveling a moon path, save that there's less chance of encountering hostile foes in the warrens (at least, during the average Pure Lands chronicle's timeline).

• **Katanka-Sonnak's Spear (Level Five)** — Although corruption came to many of the sun-worshipping cults of the Croatan's Kin, several Croatan were able to retain a purer relationship with Helios and his Incarna, Katanka-Sonnak. This Gift springs from this alliance; by invoking the power of the sun, the Garou can call a shaft of fire from the sky to impale an enemy and immolate him in continuously burning flame. An avatar of Katanka-Sonnak teaches himself this Gift himself.

**System:** The werewolf must spend a point of Gnosis and roll Dexterity + Occult to strike the target; no range penalties apply, although he must be able to see his target. If the strike is accurate, the victim takes 10 dice of fire damage each turn; this damage is aggravated, although shapeshifters are able to soak it. The fire cannot be doused with ordinary water; it will burn until 10 turns have elapsed unless quenched by a Water-spirit, somehow dispelled, or until the victim takes no damage on a particular turn.

• **Resolute Vow (Level Five)** — The Croatan's legendary stubbornness and strength of purpose was often a hindrance, but they drew great power from it as well. A werewolf with this Gift can persevere against all odds, pursuing a goal of vengeance or a spiritual quest to its end when even great heroes would turn back. Croatan Ancestor-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** As the Garou ritually declares his purpose or quest to all within earshot, the player expends a permanent Gnosis point. From that point on, the Croatan has no choice but to follow his quest until the bitter end. However, any Willpower rolls made in pursuit of the



werewolf's goals gain six extra dice (even if this takes the dice pool over 10 dice), and the character also gains six extra Willpower points to spend on the quest (unused points disappear at the quest's completion).

If the Garou voluntarily abandons his quest before its resolution, good or bad, he not only loses all the bonus Willpower points, but he loses one permanent Willpower point for each bonus Willpower that he'd already spent pursuing the quest. These points can never be regained; thus, if a Croatan were to abandon his journey after spending two of the bonus Willpower points, he could never bring his Willpower over 8 again.

• **Umbral Burrowing (Level Five)** — The Umbral tunnels that Croatan travel don't always lead precisely where one would like. This Gift neatly sidesteps that problem by allowing the Garou to dig his own tunnels through the Umbrascap, between any two points he chooses. This Gift is taught by earth-burrowing spirits, who are grateful to werewolves that share the secrets of their tunnels, so that the spirits can use them, too.

**System:** The Garou expends three Gnosis and starts digging. A successful Perception + Occult roll is necessary to make sure that the tunnel comes out in the right place. The process is a slow one, about twice as long as ordinary Umbral travel (although the burrower need not eat or rest as he digs), but the tunnel is permanent once dug. It isn't necessary to know the Underearth Gift to use Umbral Burrowing, but the werewolf without that Gift cannot necessarily travel tunnels not of his own making without getting lost.

• **Wall of Granite (Level Five)** — As the Philodox Gift.

### *Uktena Gifts*

The Uktena Gifts given in *Werewolf: The Apocalypse* are generally quite appropriate for pre-Columbian chronicles and beyond. Note that the Gift: Fetish Doll is generally seen as witch's work, and isn't very socially acceptable even among tribe members. Only in the modern era does the desperation of the tribe bring this Gift into wider use.

• **Moonstruck Path (Level One)** — Garou are well-versed in hunting and tracking prey, yet there are times when they have no idea where such a trail starts or

which journey to undertake first when a choice presents itself. The Gift of the Moonstruck Path allows the Garou to perceive the beginning of the path he must take in a given situation, even if she herself is not sure of her ultimate purpose. When the Gift is utilized, a ghostly pale blue-white beam of moonlight points to the correct direction for one scene. Sometimes, as when the Garou doesn't know why she needs to move in a certain direction or what to do once she reaches her destination, it becomes a leap of faith, with the werewolf starting on an unknown path and only later discovering why. This rare Gift is taught by one of Uktena's spirit brood.



**System:** The Gift must be utilized after dark, though there need not be a moon in the sky. It can even be used underground or in windowless structures so long as it is dark outside. The player makes a Perception + Survival roll (difficulty 8). Only one success is needed.

• **Pull Water (Level One)** — Using a forked stick or a smooth stone, a Garou can locate water hidden underground or within a succulent plant and pull it to the surface to be used. This Gift may tap into underground wells, water locked within loamy ground, moisture held within cacti or deep streams far beneath the desert floor. Some Uktena have used this Gift to help their Kinfolk in desert nations irrigate their fields, while others have kept a pack from dying of thirst when crossing badlands and open desert. Spirit servants of Uktena teach this Gift.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Enigmas (difficulty 6). For each success, he may call forth enough water to sustain a single person for a day.

• **Sight of Hidden Places (Level Two)** — As the Uktena seek all things hidden, they may be gifted with the ability to find and see within unseen hollows such as caves, hollow trees, underwater caverns and hidden spaces. Objects and beings within the hidden area are seen as though lit by normal daylight and may even be examined utilizing other Gifts such as Sense Wyrms. Spirits of burrowing animals teach this Gift.

**System:** The Garou concentrates on a single area no larger than a small hill for one turn. Keeping his eyes shut, he may then "see" any open areas inside that space (including any persons, treasures, hidden pools etc. within the place. Rolling Perception + Enigmas (difficulty 6) allows the character to see to a depth of ten feet for each success. By spending a point of Willpower, he may also bring into play any Perception-based Gifts he possesses.

• **Uktena's Passage (Level Three)** — This Gift allows the Garou to calm or agitate water, whether in the form of a river, stream or lake. She may calm rapids or endow a placid lake with waves to help speed along a canoe or wash a swimmer to shore. The power to shorten a trip or thwart enemy craft is yet another advantage of this Gift. The spirits of the river trout and salmon teach this Gift.

**System:** The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Manipulation + Survival. For each success, she may raise or lower the speed and/or roughness of the current within 100 yards by one degree. Degrees of currents are calm, slow, moderate, swift, and turbulent. The change lasts for one scene.

## Wendigo Gifts

As with the Uktena Gifts, all of the Wendigo Gifts listed in the *Werewolf* rulebook date back millennia, and are perfectly reasonable for Pure Lands' chronicles.

• **Snow Sight (Level One)** — The Garou gains the ability to see clearly even in the harshest of blizzard or "white-out" conditions. Any arctic spirit teaches this Gift.

**System:** The Garou concentrates for one turn and spends a point of Willpower. The use of this Gift cancels any disadvantages due to reduced visibility caused by bad weather conditions, whether heavy falling snow, rain, fog or glare.

• **Claws of Frozen Death (Level Two)** — By breathing on his claws, the Wendigo can change them into ice-like shards, as cold and hard as they are sharp. This Gift is taught by one of Wendigo's brood.

**System:** The Wendigo must spend one Rage point and breathe on his claws; this counts as an action, but he may take other actions in the same turn by spending more Rage (but not by splitting dice pools). For the duration of the scene, his icy claws do two additional dice of damage due to frostbite and exceptional sharpness.

• **Eye of the Storm (Level Three)** — The Garou may create a place of calmness even in the midst of a raging blizzard or any other severe weather phenomena. Up to ten people can take shelter within this quiet place, suffering no damage from the fury that surrounds them. This Gift is taught by an Air-spirit.

**System:** The Garou spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Willpower (difficulty 7). The effect of the Gift lasts for the duration of a single storm.

• **Call the Ice (Level Four)** — The Garou may summon the spirits of the ice to cause a great fissure to form underneath the feet of her enemy, engulfing and encasing the target in a prison of ice from which he has little chance of escaping. This Gift may also cause the ice on a frozen lake to crack, dumping the target into the frigid water. Ice-spirits teach this Gift.

**System:** This Gift is at its most effective on the polar ice, but is usable anywhere the ground has at least a layer of frost upon it. The player spends one Gnosis point and rolls Willpower (difficulty 7) to exert enough influence upon the Ice-spirits in a single area of up to 10 square feet. A single success causes the desired effect, with additional successes adding to the depth of the crack or size of the fissure.


## Rites

### Rites of Accord

#### Rite of the First Fruits

(Level One)

This rite gives thanks to the spirits for a bountiful harvest. Usually performed by Wendigo Kinfolk of the lakes region, some Wendigo participate in the rite to solidify their bonds with their human Kin.



**System:** No roll is necessary for this rite, but all the participants bring a small bowl of rice to a central place, where smoke from sacred tobacco is used to alert the spirits to the presence of the rice. Grains of rice are then scattered in the four directions as gifts to the spirits, thus ensuring their continuing favor in future seasons of harvest.

### *Washing the Spirit*

(Level One)

By going to water, attending a sweat lodge or performing some other sort of cleansing, the Wolf Changer purifies mind, body and spirit. He does so to make himself inoffensive, thus readying himself to speak with spirits and ask their aid. This rite shows the Garou's sincerity and respect to the spirits and incidentally cleanses him. Before undertaking greater rituals and rites, many Garou perform this rite so that no unclean or evil emanations sully him and leave him open to their influence or to inadvertently giving offense where none is intended.

**System:** The Garou performs a cleansing ritual as usual, chanting his intentions to become a pure and clarified being without stain. He states his good intentions, then makes a Charisma + Empathy roll (difficulty 6). Successful completion of the rite may, at the Storyteller's discretion, make subsequent dealings with spirits or the performance of other rites easier.

### *Rite of the Black Drink*

(Level Three)

Some nations purify themselves and prepare to speak in council by partaking of a noxious black liquid that causes them to vomit. It is thought that purging their bodies in this manner cleans them of all impurities and thus gives weight to the truthfulness of their words. Despite its black color, many nations call this the White Drink because of its reputed cleansing properties. The Uktena (and later generations) call it the Black Drink and have built a rite around the consumption of this purgative.



When consumed as part of this rite, the Black Drink not only purges as it is meant to do, ensures that all words spoken for the next hour are true and also reveals whether anyone drinking it harbors a Bane or other unclean spirit within his body. Those so afflicted will seek to escape drinking the liquid and if forced to imbibe it, will be unable to regurgitate it. Their skin mottles visibly with black patches which last for an hour.

**System:** This rite may only be performed when freshly made Black Drink is available.

The drink cannot be carried along and used as a "Bane-detector."

The point of the rite is to make certain that all parties intend to speak truthfully and clearly; discovering tainted spirits is an added bonus. No roll is needed to enact the rite, but a Perception + Awareness roll (difficulty 6) allows those in the ritual to notice if someone fails to drink or cannot purge the liquid.

## Mystic Rites

### Rite of Death-Crafting

(Level Five)

When an enemy has quickened a deep and all-consuming rage for vengeance within the heart of a Garou, that werewolf may choose to fashion a ritual weapon to be used for only one purpose — the death of this hated foe. The weapon must be fashioned over the course of a complete cycle of the moon (one month) while concentrating upon the one it is intended to slay. The weapon must either incorporate some object previously taken from the foe or a drop of blood and the tears of the maker brought forth under the full moon. During the rite proper, the Garou calls forth a spirit of vengeance, which enters the weapon, which becomes imbued with the power to slay the one who truly wronged him. A deserving enemy is struck down by even the slightest blow or scratch, but, if the foe has not truly harmed the Garou, the weapon inflicts only normal damage.

**System:** Creating the weapon of vengeance requires the Garou to spend one point of Gnosis and make a Dexterity + Crafts roll (difficulty 7). During the month in which the weapon is constructed, the Garou can do nothing else strenuous that takes him away from the caern, nor can he leave his work to return later. If the attempt to create the weapon fails, another month must be spent to repeat the crafting. The rite itself is performed once the weapon is completed.

The weapon itself inflicts ten health levels of aggravated damage, but only against the intended target. Once the weapon has struck the Garou's enemy, it shatters, wounding the slayer for two aggravated health levels as he has allowed vengeance to so rule his path. If the enemy dies from the blow (as is likely), her spirit is ravaged by agonizing pain at the time of death.

*Croatian Song*

## Raise the Sun

(Level Six)

This rite is almost legend; the last reliable report of its performance dates back to 1300 AD, when the Croatan were still allied with the Mound Builder Dreamspeakers and Helios. The rite is performed only at night, for good reason: it is said to call the sun to rise over the horizon regardless of the hour, bringing on the next day. Whether this calls on an avatar of Helios to light the hours between the rite and actual daybreak or it actually alters the flow of time for the target area is unknown.

**System:** Unknown. The effective rite level of six represents the extreme difficulty of enacting such a rite with any success; the actual chances of the rite working are left to the Storyteller's discretion.

## Rites of Renown

### Rite of the Potlatch

(Level One)

This rite enjoys its greatest popularity among the Wendigo and Croatan, although the Uktena sometimes practice it as well — particularly in areas where multiple tribes share common Kinfolk. Most commonly used to commemorate a rise in rank, Garou also perform this rite to mark other significant occasions, such as a change in pack or sept leadership or a particularly glorious deed.

**System:** The Garou enacting this rite announces his intention to other sept members at least ten days before the actual performance. Preparation for the rite includes gathering together a bounty of food and making or acquiring sufficient gifts for the attendees. The actual rite consists of hosting a feast, giving gifts (which may include fetishes or talens) to all who attend and entertaining them with stories, songs and dances. Although this rite benefits a single Garou, her pack usually participates in the preparation and performance of the rite. Three successes on a Charisma + Etiquette roll guarantees a successful potlatch; fewer successes means that although the Garou's rise in rank or attainment of a position of leadership is accepted, the Garou must offer some other tangible proof of her worthiness to receive the honor she has just celebrated. In addition, the ritemaster gains a one-die bonus on all Social rolls when interacting with participants for the following year.

### Rite of the Song Duel

(Level Two)

This rite enables the settling of feuds without resorting to bloodshed. Although Garou may use this ceremony to resolve differences between themselves, it is more commonly used on behalf of warring Kinfolk.

**System:** The participants in the rite take turns deriding their opponent through insulting songs accompanied by appropriate dance movements. After one party has completed his song, the other participant has the right to respond in an attempt to best his dueling partner. The rite ends when one of the duelers fails to reply with a more insulting or demeaning song than his rival.

No roll is necessary, since this rite should be simulated through role-playing, with the Storyteller as the final arbiter of who gains the victory. The loser loses one point of temporary Glory from her Renown score. If done on behalf of her Kinfolk rather than herself, the Garou also loses any influence she has over those particular individuals for one month.

## Seasonal Rites

### Rite of the Green Corn

(Level One)

This rite, unlike many Garou powers, is meant mainly to benefit their Kinfolk. When performed in a certain area, it causes the ground to become more fertile, to produce more food and to feed more animals from its bounty. It is a seasonal rite, performed just before planting time to ensure the maximum yield.

**System:** The Garou performing the rite walks the area to be blessed, sifting corn pollen onto the ground. Once the area has been covered, she rolls Charisma + Rituals (difficulty 6) to call forth friendly spirits to nourish the land. The Storyteller decides how much greater the yield will be and whether the food thus produced will have additional nutritional value or other properties depending on the number of successes achieved.

There is a degenerate version of this rite practiced by some modern-day descendants of Croatan Kinfolk who have lost the bloodline but not their traditions. These backcountry folks have interpreted the water the rite calls for as blood — which is dangerous business for strangers who come to town.

## Minor Rites

### Boat Song

As the name implies, this minor rite takes the form of a short song used to keep a boat from running aground or getting tossed in rapids while on its journey. No one aboard gets seasick, and the boat makes good time regardless of the weather.

**System:** If the Garou performs this rite each time before he gets into a boat for a full month, he and everyone in the boat gains two dice to their Boating Skill, even if inexperienced. However, failure to

perform the Boat Song before boarding a boat revokes the blessing, and the Garou must begin anew.

## Confederacy

This rite is performed before peaceful meetings between different tribes. The Garou involved in the meeting must recite specific oaths as part of the rite; the oaths are short and simple and formed as a command. ("None here shall raise claw against another"; "Each swears to defend the honor of the other;" "No lies shall pass our lips," and so on.)

**System:** All the participants in a meeting must perform this rite just before the talks start. If all do so, it becomes more difficult for them to frenzy as a reaction to one another's actions (one extra success on a Rage roll is required), for so long as all adhere to the oath. If broken by a single member, though, the pact is void.

## Totems

### Totems of Respect

#### Thunderbird

**Background Cost:** 6

Thunderbird is one of the greatest of totems, a powerful spirit whose battles against wicked creatures are legendary. Some say that Thunderbird has no real body—that he is a being of thundercloud with sharp claws and lightning flashing from where his eyes would be.

**Traits:** Thunderbird's children each gain Intimidation I and Survival I. They can call on an extra five Willpower points per story, and often find allies among the Wendigo and even Pumonca. In desperate times, Thunderbird might strike a pack's foes with lightning—but he dislikes having to intercede on his children's behalf in this fashion, and will always demand a quest or boon as repayment.

**Ban:** Thunderbird detests cowardice, and will not tolerate packs that flee from encounters where they aren't clearly overmatched. He also demands that his children battle against monsters, wicked spirits and the forces of decay wherever they can.

#### Turtle

**Background Cost:** 7

The great spirit that carries the earth on his back, Turtle is the very definition of honor and steadfastness. He is gentle and sturdy, and encourages his children to defend first and attack second.

When the Croatan sacrifice themselves to the last to banish Eater-of-Souls, Turtle falls into a great depression and withdraws from Gaia's spirit hierarchy,

refusing to act as totem to packs any longer. It's said that he will return just before the final battle of the Apocalypse, but none know the truth of this legend.

**Traits:** Turtle teaches his children the Gift: Turtle Body. In addition, each pack member gains a point of Stamina (even if this would take them above 5). The pack may draw on an additional five points of Willpower per story. Croatan will also look favorably on Turtle's packs.

**Ban:** Turtle is very concerned with the honor of his children. He will withdraw his favor from any child who loses permanent Honor, or who refuses to stand and struggle to defend her land.

## Totems of War

### Earth-burrowers

**Background Cost:** 4

Ancient allies of the Croatan, these totems know the secret pathways within the earth and the Umbral underground. They may manifest as recognizable animals such as moles or prairie dogs, or as more "mythical" beasts, all shadow and claws.

**Traits:** Earth-burrowers teach the Gifts: Burrow and Underearth. In addition, they can be petitioned to temporarily grant the Gift: Umbral Burrowing if the pack's need is great. Their packs also receive two extra dice on Survival rolls.

### Walrus

**Background Cost:** 7

Walrus befriended the Three Brothers during the Great Migration, and has been a friend to Wendigo in particular even into the modern era. He is a mighty totem, renowned as much for his strength as for his majestic ruses.

**Traits:** Walrus grants his packs two extra dice on that can be used on any Strength or Stamina roll, though only one member can benefit at any given time. All pack members receive two temporary Glory, and each pack member gains two dice to soak damage resulting from cold.

**Ban:** Walrus asks that his packs not hunt his animal children for their ivory, and to punish anyone who slaughters an animal for vanity. Walrus' packs are deadly enemies of professional fur trappers, although they forgive those who take an animal's fur out of need.

## Totems of Wisdom

### Corn Maiden

**Background Cost:** 5

The giver of the great gift of corn, Corn Maiden is notable for being one of the few spirits affiliated with the



Weaver that the Pure Lands Garou willingly trust. She is a strong totem with deep ties to the element of earth and the strength of plants; she also draws power from generosity. She is much loved among human nations, and her packs receive much of the same friendship.

**Traits:** Corn Maiden's packs learn the Gift: Cookfire; they also receive two temporary points of Wisdom. So long as they are friendly and helpful, Corn Maiden's children also receive three dice on any Social roll dealing with humans.

**Ban:** Corn Maiden's children must assist their human relatives with the planting and harvesting of corn, and are asked to give the gift of planting to other nations they may encounter. Packs who follow Corn Maiden usually carry a handful of corn kernels with them wherever they go, should a stranger be in need of food, or should they meet someone who has yet to learn the mystery of planting.

## Trout

### Background Cost: 5

Trout is something of a trickster figure, but he is also a spirit of bounty and generosity. He teaches his children to be as slippery and swift as he is.

**Traits:** Trout teaches his children the Gift: Spirit of the Fish. Pack members subtract 2 from all difficulties involving swimming or escaping their enemies. In addition, any one pack member at a time can call on an extra two dice for any Wits roll.

**Ban:** Trout's children must never take more fish than they need from the river. Trout also asks that all his children learn to swim without the benefit of Gifts.

[Note: These totem traits can also be used to represent Salmon, a spirit who is just as important to the people of the western coast.]

## Fetishes

### Eagle Claw

#### Level 1, Gnosis 7

This fetish is usable only by females; legend holds that a woman made a pact with an Eagle-spirit for this fetish. If a Wolf Changer female lightly scratches her arms and above her eyes with the eagle claw, she gains the power of birds. Flight is the first power granted to her, but she also gains an eagle's magnificent eyesight. Both powers last for only one scene or one hour, whichever comes first. The claw is only usable during the phase of the moon under which the female was born. Thus if she is a Theurge, the power only functions when the moon is in its crescent stage.

## Dance Mask

#### Level 2, Gnosis 5

This elaborately carved and painted wooden mask may represent any number of animals, spirits or other beings. When activated and used in a ceremonial dance or during the performance of an appropriate ceremony, the mask adds an automatic success to any rolls that determine the success of the ritual or ceremony. If no roll is required, the use of the mask increases the effect of the ceremony in some fashion (determined by the Storyteller).

To create this fetish, the Garou must bind a spirit appropriate to the type of mask (i.e., a raven spirit must enter a raven mask).

## Porcupine Quill

#### Level 2, Gnosis 5

These fetishes are sovereign remedies for poison. If the poison spewed forth by a Wyrin creature harms a Garou, scratching the affected area with the porcupine quill releases the toxin from the body. While it does not restore lost health levels, it does cleanse the poison from the person and prevent further damage from that same poison for up to an hour. If poison is ingested, crushing the quill and boiling it in water to make a tea has the same effect.

## Storyknife

#### Level 2, Gnosis 4

This fetish consists of an elaborately carved ivory knife etched with pictures of a totem animal honored by the individual preparing the knife. When activated by a Wendigo Daebaudjimoot, the knife assists the user's memory, aiding her in any activities involving Performance or Expression adding an automatic success to any rolls involving these Abilities.

To create this fetish, the Garou must bind a spirit of the animal etched into the knife's surface.



## Story Bag

Level 3, Gnosis 5

This fetish is a small rawhide or deerskin bag worn at the waist or carried tucked within a shirt. Often decorated with quillwork, shells or bone, the bag holds within it a number of stories that might be appropriate to a given situation. Once per story, the Garou who possesses a story bag may open it and draw forth a tale. This story will have something in common with a current problem or situation facing the Garou and may give some insight into how others handled similar difficulties. Sometimes it will instead give a clue to what foes the Garou is facing or a hint concerning how to defeat an apparently unbeatable foe. In game terms, the player must tell the Storyteller she intends to consult her story bag at the end of a playing session (or sometime within the game if the Storyteller is good at thinking fast on his feet). The Storyteller then constructs a legend or tale that contains clues on handling the current crisis. They need not be extensive and may even be cryptic, but must always offer a true solution (if the character can but figure it out).

## Special Items

Certain items worn or carried by the nations and tribes of the Pure Lands are accorded special powers. For non-Garou, such things are usually props, symbolic of their traditions. However, the Garou sometimes bind spirits into such things to create fetishes; although the actual powers vary, some suggestions are given below.

### Badger Claws

A set of three claws from a badger or a dried and preserved badger paw are known as badger claws. When worn around the neck or held within a medicine bag, badger claws might grant their owner the ability to use the Get of Fenris Level Four Gift: Hero's Stand. Like the indomitable, immovable badger, the Garou stands her ground until battle has ceased. Badger claws must be invoked to confer their power, which takes one combat turn.

(Suggested: Level 3, Gnosis 6)

### Bear Claws

Though a necklace of bear claws traditionally denotes the power and ferocity of the wearer (who is assumed to have defeated the bear whose claws he wears), when worn by a wolf-changer, this item confers healing power. Bear claws might grant their wearer the ability to perform the Level One Theurge Gift: Mother's Touch or the Level One Philodox Gift: Resist Pain. These may be used on the wearer or anyone she can touch.

(Suggested: Level 2, Gnosis 6)

## Corn Pollen

Corn pollen may be used in two ways. First, it may be poured onto a person's face to cleanse them of impurities. Anyone using corn pollen in this way that is injured might remove one health level of damage due to the invigorating effects of the pollen. An added benefit of using corn pollen in this way is that it may be combined with the Green Corn Rite to make that person more fertile. Thus, if either a Kinfolk or a Garou were to use the pollen, he would be more likely to produce offspring that are also Garou. The second use is to throw the pollen into the air to blanket an area that is ready for planting or that the Garou wants to use as a sacred circle. The pollen makes the ground more fertile while it also outlines any tainted soil, making it clearly visible to the Wolf Changer so that it may be uprooted.

(Suggested: Talen, Gnosis 7)

## Dream Catcher

Dream catchers are usually constructed of woven twigs, yarn or other pliant material strung in a pattern between crossed sticks and a circular frame. Typically used to "catch" nightmares, they are often placed above the heads of sleepers to grant them restful slumber. Dream catchers used by Garou might ensure that evil influences couldn't reach those who sleep beneath them. Further, if the one who is to sleep beneath the dream catcher spends a point of Gnosis, she may roll Perception + Occult (difficulty 8) to see if she is granted a vision. Those receiving visions may or may not know what they mean. Visions do not always pertain to events transpiring in the Garou's life at present; often they point to some future event or conflict.

(Suggested: Level 2, Gnosis 5)

## Owl's Talon

This potent talisman is used to counteract witches' spells. Generally, owl feathers are hung within a dwelling to keep witches' spells and curses from affecting those within. Some say that hanging owl feathers within the doorway will also keep witches from entering. Though these measures are not always effective, a fetish version of this talisman (which takes the form of a talon tied with feathers) is. Hung around the neck of someone afflicted by a witch's spell, the owl's talon breaks the spell's power. The one afflicted feels as though the owl's talon is scratching its way inside him, where it locates the "badness" and roots it out. Though not painful enough to cause damage, it is distracting and uncomfortable enough to call for the patient to lie down and relax while a shaman (or concerned family member) chants for his recovery and applies the talon.

(Suggested: Level 1, Gnosis 6)

## *Owl Feather Arrow*

Owl's wisdom gives much protection from witches. It also imparts to owl the best way to kill a witch or evil sorcerer. Many witches are very clever in protecting themselves from all manner of deaths, so much so that a few of the more powerful ones cannot be killed by any normal means. Those who must fight such foes are gifted with special white ringed arrows fletched with owl's feathers. Such arrows are reputed slay witches, even Wolf Changers. Though the arrow confers no additional skill in hitting its target, a witch hit by such arrows loses his power to soak damage from any source (for the next turn only). Those who wish to make certain that a witch is permanently dead usually shoot another owl-feather-fletched arrow into the witch's heart after death. To be completely certain, the witch must then be buried, the arrow broken and burned and the ashes sifted onto her grave.

(Suggested: Talen, Gnosis 7)

## *Peace Pipe*

Smoking the pipe to release the sacred smoke is a time-honored tradition among the native nations. Many rituals and traditions exist concerning how to hold the pipe, what it is made of, what mixture is to be smoked, how to store the pipe when not in use and other such matters. To misuse the pipe brings great evil upon both the perpetrator and those who witnessed it. The peace pipe is used to call to order Pure Lands councils. The pipe is given into the hands of the person who is to speak in council and none may interrupt the speaker until he or she passes the pipe on. This much is ceremonial. The power of a fetish peace pipe might lie in the smoke that rises from it when it is passed to those within the circle. If the smoke rises, this shows the truth of the words spoken by those who partake. If the smoke hovers, all know that there is something either half-truthful or questionable about the speech. Smoke that falls to the floor shows that the speaker is lying. It should be noted that if someone is lying but does not realize he is speaking untruthly, the smoke hovers.

(Suggested: Level 1, Gnosis 6)

## *Sapiya*

These colored stones are kept in a hide bag and used for healing. Sapiya must be nurtured, keeping their potency intact by washing them in squirrel's blood and dew once per month. Using a fetish sapiya, any Wolf Changer may enact the Level One Theurge Gift: Mother's Touch or the Level One Philodox Gift: Resist Pain. In addition, the user may determine the general

state of health of a person's body. By making a Perception + Medicine roll (difficulty 7), someone using sapiya may assess a single person's health. Extra successes beyond the first enable the user to determine illnesses, ailments and chronic problems afflicting the target.

(Suggested: Level 3, Gnosis 7)

## *Turquoise*

This blue-green stone is also called the sky stone. When worn, it protects the wearer from thirst, allowing her to travel far longer in the desert and other dry places without becoming dehydrated. The fetish version might allow a character to go up to a week without any water and still function relatively normally. When used as a focus, the turquoise calls forth a small amount of rain by gathering whatever moisture is diffused in the air into a single place. Thus water may be gained even in arid climes. When a number of turquoise are used in a rain ceremony, they increase the amount of rain garnered.

(Suggested: Level 1, Gnosis 5)

## *Turtle Shell Rattle*

Turtle shell rattles have two uses. When tied to a stick and the stick planted in the earth, it may be used to attempt to turn away or control a tornado. The user chants and gestures, indicating what direction the twister should take. Evil shamans might use the rattle to summon a tornado toward a particular inhabited location. Though twisters are too chaotic to predict their exact pattern of movement, this can urge it in a particular direction and bring it adjacent to specific spots. From there, it may or may not actually churn through its intended target. Only one attempt at control may be made per rattle.

The second use of the rattle is purely ceremonial. When the Garou attempts to summon or speak with spirits, shaking the rattle in rhythmic fashion increases the chance that the spirit will answer in a favorable manner (lowering difficulties of dealing with non-hostile spirits by one).

(Suggested: Level 4, Gnosis 7)

## *Merits and Flaws*

While some of the Merits and Flaws detailed below are more appropriate for certain tribes, any might be made available to all characters as long as the Storyteller and player find ways to incorporate them.

### *Intertribal Fosterage (1 Point Merit)*

You are of one tribe, but were fostered in another. You might, for example, be an Uktena who has lived with the Croatan or a Croatan fostered to the Wendigo.



You may choose your tribal Gifts from among those available to either tribe (although you receive no cost break on purchasing Gifts outside your true tribe's with experience) and may learn skills usually only known to nations associated with the other tribe. Thus, a Garou who normally belongs to a woodland nation that subsists by hunting and gathering might learn how to cultivate maize when fostered to a southwestern caern.

### ***Heart of Sasquatch*** ***(3 point Wendigo Merit)***

You have a gentler spirit than most of your tribe. Those who recognize this quality in you claim that you are a throwback to the manitou of Sasquatch, before he grew bitter and became the cannibal-monster known as Wendigo. Because of your calmer nature, you often act as a go-between when encountering groups of Kinfolk or when dealing with other Garou tribes, allowing you to avoid situations that might end up in an unnecessary battle. You get an additional success whenever trying to resist giving in to your rage, and have one less effective success on any Rage roll only for the purpose of determining whether or not you fly into frenzy.

### ***Elemental Affinity (7 point Merit)***

You are tied to one of the four elements — earth, air, fire or water. You feel especially attuned to that element and can derive certain powers from that bond. Storytellers who wish to emphasize this connection may add other benefits, but should also require greater maintenance of the tie such as services to be rendered.

- If you are linked to air, you have no difficulty finding Bird or Air-spirits willing to teach you Gifts, possibly even outside those normally available to you. Your arrows also fly straighter (Archery difficulty is lowered by one) and you are able to withstand strong or chill winds up to hurricane force. You must always wear or carry something white, be it a feather, paint, jewelry or clothing and thank your patron daily for these gifts.

- A bond with fire allows you to kindle a fire even in the worst downpour with no dry wood available. You take one less health level of damage per turn from fire. As with air, you must thank your patron daily and always wear or carry something red.

- An affinity with water allows you to swim in any turbulence up to hurricane or tidal wave force. Additionally, you can always tell in which direction pure water lies, though you may not realize whether it lies underground or on the surface. As with the other affinities, you must thank your patron and wear or carry something blue.

- Being linked with earth gives you great strength. So long as you touch upon the earth, your Strength is effec-

tively one higher in whatever form you are in, even if this takes you beyond maximum human Strength when in that form. Further, you always know the direction in which food may be found, though you will not know whether it is a field of maize, a herd of deer or within the storehouse of a rival nation. Thanks to your patron must be maintained and you must wear or carry something brown.

### ***Blabbermouth (2-3 point Flaw)***

You can't keep a secret, not even to save your life. If you know something that is hidden from others, you just have to tell someone. This may get you in trouble with friends whose confidences you betray or worse, bring trouble to your tribe or nation when you blithely give away the location of their secret hunting grounds. To maintain silence concerning something secret that you know, you must spend a Willpower point and get at least one success on a Wits + Enigmas roll (difficulty 7). Even one success lets you suppress the urge for a scene. This is a two-point Flaw for all except Uktena; for them this Flaw is worth three points, since Uktena traditionally possess far greater numbers of potentially deadly secrets.

### ***Witch Kin (2 point Flaw)***

You are known to be related to a known witch. Because of this relationship, your nation and tribe alike distrust you. Positions of leadership within your nation are closed to you, though within your tribe you can still be accorded respect based on your deeds. Your Wolf Changer Gifts give rise to suspicion and make your other Kinfolk wonder if you too are a witch. When something goes wrong in the nation, be it a betrayal or simple accident you are the first to be suspected. This Flaw even extends to those who have recently met you, as people scurry to warn them about your witch-kin. And, of course, your witch relative will probably make further trouble for you, although even his or her death won't stop the suspicion.

### ***Unsuited to Tribe (3 point Flaw)***

You were obviously born into the wrong tribe. You constantly feel out of step with your own people and the native culture their Kinfolk espouse. If your Kinfolk depend upon agriculture, you make an abysmal farmer, instead preferring to hunt or fish. If your nation is noted for its basketry, you're more interested in weaving blankets. You cannot achieve any position of prominence in your nation since they view you as hopelessly out of step. Your tribe also sees you as an oddity. If you are Uktena, you may have no interest in secrets and wisdom, instead striving for honor; if you are Wendigo, you might

seek wisdom, failing to strive for glory in battle; if Croatan, you might crave glory and disdain the path of honor. For this reason, it is hard for you to gain the actual renown you deserve. You may lose positions of leadership you merit and you always lag behind on being accorded the next higher status and renown you've earned. As an additional injury, when purchasing tribal Gifts with experience, you must always pay the out-of-tribe cost.

### **Witch Finder (3 point Flaw)**

For some reason, you attract the attentions of evil witches and sorcerers. It may be that they believe you have powers they can acquire or they may just get the sense you're out to oppose them. Whatever the reason, witches either seek you out or create problems for you behind the scenes, keeping their hand in your difficulties secret. Whichever way they function, you are a prime target for any witch manipulations or curses. Even the usual remedy of placing an owl feather in the doorway of your home doesn't protect you from their interest and interference. The best that can be said about this is that you'll always have something interesting complicating your life.

### **Dark Moments (4 point Flaw)**

You experience (or don't experience) moments of mental darkness under great stress or in the face of utter failure. Your conscious mind enters a black place where you lose any awareness of what you are doing. Sometimes, you fear you commit horrible actions during these periods — murder, cannibalism or some other heinous crime against either your tribe or your Kinfolk. Whenever you know what you have done, you try to atone for it, but sometimes you have no idea as to the nature of your deeds. Only those around you can tell you of your actions, if they happen to survive.

The Dark Moments Flaw takes effect whenever you botch a Rage or Willpower roll. During this time,

the Storyteller takes charge of your character. As a player, you may be aware of what your character is doing, but your character is amnesiac. This Flaw is most appropriate for Wendigo characters, but Uktena (or Croatan) fostered by the Wendigo may become infected with this Flaw through their exposure to the Wendigo's overabundance of rage.

## **Weapons**

Although the Native Americans did indeed use spears, knives, hatchets and bows to fight, they also used a few more weapons that don't immediately spring to mind. For example, the Cherokee tended to construct blowguns out of river reeds and fletch their darts with cattail fluff. The northernmost nations used harpoons that were plenty effective in the hands of an angry Wendigo. And many nations had some form of war club, from the Sioux clubs that were fashioned from a smooth stone bound to a handle, to the carved wood clubs of the Seneca. Below are statistics for the weapons most common to the North American nations; they can also prove useful for devising fetish weapons appropriate to the chronicle.

## **Kinfolk Character Generation**

Of course, Kinfolk characters can add an entire new layer to a Pure Lands game. The mortal Kin who stands alongside his or her Garou brethren is obviously a hero indeed. Since such bravery should be encouraged in *Werewolf* chronicles, we've included some guidelines on creating Kin characters for a Pure Lands setting. A much more elaborate look at Kinfolk characters exists in *Kinfolk: Unsung Heroes*; Storytellers and players alike may find more ideas there, as well as sufficient material to create all-Kin games.

### **Period Weapons**

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	Notes
Blowgun	7	2	Often poisoned; worthless during windy conditions; range of 10 yards
Bow	7	6	Attack successes after the first add to the damage pool; range is about 100 yards
Harpoon	6	Strength +4	Can imbed in victim's flesh
Lance	7	Strength +3	Available only after the introduction of the horse; adds three damage dice when used from a charging horse
Spear	6	Strength +3	
Tomahawk	6	Strength +5	Can be thrown; range is Strength x 3 yards
War Club	5	Strength +3	

## Archetypes

It's necessary to select a Nature and Demeanor for Kinfolk characters; werewolves may regain Willpower from appropriate auspice behavior, but Kin have no auspices. Most archetypes listed in the *Werewolf Players Guide* will work just fine for Kin, as will the two given earlier in this chapter.

## Attributes

Kinfolk have a little less raw ability than Garou, and begin the game with 6/4/3 in Attributes rather than the werewolves' standard of 7/5/3.

## Abilities

Kin characters have fewer points to distribute; the ratio is 11/7/4.

The list of Talents given for Garou is mostly appropriate for Kinfolk, save that human Kin characters cannot possess Primal-Urge. Instead, the Storyteller may wish to substitute Intuition, a Talent that allows the Kin to make fairly good intuitive guesses about things.

The Skill list given for Garou is equally appropriate for Kinfolk.

Knowledges are handled the same as for other Pure Lands Garou characters, with one caveat. Rituals is not quite as useful as it is for Garou; it is very rare for the spirits to answer a Kinfolk's call (meaning that a Kinfolk should only be able to make a rite work at the Storyteller's discretion). This does not, however, mean that Kin characters can't take the Rituals Knowledge; many Kin are granted the lore of their Garou cousins' rites, in order that they may help teach young cubs what is expected of them.

## Backgrounds

Kinfolk can select from the various Backgrounds available to Garou, with some modifications. Obviously, the Kinfolk and Past Life Backgrounds are inapplicable. The Contacts Background should have specific applications to contacts with local Garou. Mentor Background can delineate either a powerful individual in the Kinfolk's nation or else a Garou mentor.

Fetish is iffy. It's possible for Kinfolk to possess a fetish or a talen given to them by one of their Garou kin, but this should be rare; what's more, the fetish must be something that doesn't require Gnosis to use.

Pure Breed is possible, and in fact greatly desirable (from a Garou's point of view). Pure-Bred Kin do not necessarily pull more weight with their werewolf cousins,

nor do they receive extra social dice; however, they do increase the chance of breeding true, and therefore have more of a chance of earning great honor by bearing (or siring) a Wolf Changer.

The Resources Background does not have monetary applications, but may include domestic animals or horses (in later chronicles), sled dogs, wampum or some other form of wealth recognized by the particular nation.

Finally, it is possible for exceptional Kin to be adopted into a pack, and such individuals may contribute to the pack totem through the Totem Backgrounds as usual. Kinfolk so blessed will likely be honored by their allies and family members who understand the relationship, although this can also have a tendency to set a Kin apart from the other mortals of her nation.

## Finishing Touches

Kinfolk characters gain 21 freebie points rather than the 15 that Garou characters receive. They do not begin play with any Gifts, although exceptional Kin may, at the Storyteller's discretion, learn Level One Gifts that do not require Rage or Gnosis to activate. The cost is prohibitive, though — 15 freebie points for a single Gift, and even then the Kin can't purchase any Gifts that require Rage or Gnosis to use. With one exception, that is; certain rare Kin can possess a dot or even two or three of Gnosis. This is treated as a Merit: one point of Gnosis is worth five points, while two Gnosis costs six points and a Gnosis score of 3 (the maximum) costs seven freebie points. This Gnosis is only usable to attune fetishes or activate Gifts; it does not convey the ability to step sideways.

Of course, Kinfolk characters are immune to the Delirium. Regrettably, they cannot soak aggravated damage, and their healing ability is no better than that of ordinary humans.

As mentioned before, the Gauntlet is lower in the Pure Lands than in modern times. Although Kinfolk, even those with Gnosis, are unable to step sideways, the Storyteller may allow them to use special rites to cross into the Umbra in places where the Gauntlet is as low as 2.

Kin characters do not ordinarily receive Renown, but exceptions have been known to happen. These exceptions are very rare, and always require the Kin to have performed some vital service for her Garou kin. Kinfolk can never receive more than the effective rank of one, however. Further information on Kin Renown (and Kin society in general) is available in *Kinfolk: Unsung Heroes*.



# CROATAN SONG

## *The World Before the Wyrms Came*

Three brothers: Uktena, Wendigo and Croatan. Three tribes that kept the Wyrms at bay, that kept the Pure Lands pure. Three tribes that guarded the Americas with their lives. But the Pure Lands were never truly peaceful — and ultimately, one of the three tribes was forced to sacrifice itself so that the other two could live. This is the story of the Three Brothers, and the lands they guarded, in a time when the Pure Lands were still pure.

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### **Croatan Song** contains:

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- Extensive notes on how to run a historical Pure Lands chronicle, as well as how to integrate this information into modern-day games
- Character creation rules for Pure Lands Croatan, Wendigo and Uktena characters, antagonists, fetishes, rites and more

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