

# SHATTERED DREAMS



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**WEREWOLF**  
THE APOCALYPSE

FIN & DENIER 12

# SHATTERED DREAMS



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# Introduction: Millennia of Rage

*Remember that Star Trek episode where Kirk has to let a woman he loves die so that Hitler doesn't win the war?  
Yeah. You're going to want to sit down for this one....*

— Tires-Screeching-On-Pavement (“Screech”)

The War of Rage: thousands of generations have passed down apocryphal stories of how the Garou grew too ambitious and arrogant, and waged war upon the Fera. The Garou, so they claim, believed they alone were the ones who kept Gaia's wishes and protected the Earth from the Weaver's stagnation, or the Wyrms' corruption. They believed the Fera were not acting in accordance with Gaia's sacred duties and that it fell to the werewolves to take on the extra responsibility the others had shirked.

The Fera tell a different story, of how the Garou threw away their rightful place in Gaia's order and tried to impose their will on all the other Breeds. The werewolves believed they alone were the ones who knew what Gaia wanted and that any deviation from their will was heresy and punishable by death. Even though they lacked the skills and Gifts to do the job properly, the Garou pushed aside those who were entrusted with those roles for the sake of their own egos.

Over the millennia, fear and distrust festered, breaking down the sacred duties Gaia entrusted to *all* the Changing Breeds, not just to the Garou. The Garou no longer believe that the Fera have Gaia's best interest at heart, and think instead that they have given their allegiance to either the Weaver or the Wyrms. The Fera no longer trust the Garou, believing that the werewolves still want to be the only Changing Breed on Earth, and that by killing the rest of the Fera, the Garou can take over their gifts.

All this infighting allowed the Weaver to solidify reality into one single vision, and to choke off the natural creativity that flows from Gaia's blessing. It distracted the Garou and the Fera from seeing the ways that the Wyrms was corrupting the Earth and humanity, allowing greater and greater evil into the world. Once the Apocalypse was

only a vague threat used to pull errant Garou into line; in recent times, all the signs have pointed to the Apocalypse's coming sooner than anyone anticipated.

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## Playing Through History

This book offers players and Storytellers the opportunity to tell stories of the wars between the Garou and the Fera. It covers both the War of Rage, when the werewolves first turned on their shapeshifting brethren, and the Second War of Rage, when once again the Fera died at the Garou's teeth and claws. But hope is not lost — it presents a look at the time before the Wars of Rage, when all of Gaia's chosen worked together. They didn't always see eye to eye and tensions between the Breeds often ran high, but until the War itself they were capable of banding together to combat those who would kill the world. In many ways, the prehistoric is a more optimistic time, and offers the opportunity to play out stories of cooperation and (relative) harmony between the Changing Breeds. Some Storytellers may want to offer their players the chance to take center stage in the great events of history, postponing — or even defusing entirely — the tensions that set werewolf against Fera. Into the War of Rage, players have the opportunity to lash out against their shapeshifting enemies or try to broker a fragile peace, either in their own territories or, if they have the recognition and status, to defuse tensions altogether, for a while at least. These same opportunities present themselves in the Second War of Rage, though the human desire for conquest provides a harsher backdrop. Can the Garou and Fera find any common understanding

## A NOTE FROM WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING

During the last decades the World of Darkness has explored a tremendous range of settings. From its humble beginnings in the windy streets of Chicago, stories have now been told about everything from distant umbral heavens to the depths of Stygia, from the dark side of the moon to forgotten eras where magic ruled and gods strode across the earth. It's been quite a ride. Looking back, much of this material is irreconcilable, but that's OK. Every book is, after all, told from the perspective and belief of its narrators, and every Chronicle is the sovereign domain of its Storyteller and her Players. While this book is classified as non-canon, it does not make it any less valuable. Here, the wildest ideas can be presented and explored without coming into conflict with future metaplot consequences. The material within, often spectacular and wildly imaginative, is intended for the Storyteller that wants to take the road less travelled and surprise her players, or just add to the mythology adhered to by her characters, without necessarily establishing any true "facts" about the setting. Whatever the reason, you can be sure to find some of the most unchained ideas herein. We hope you like them.

- Karim Muammar, Chief Editor and Arbiter

when the werewolves' very presence came about as a result of human agents who engage in genocide of the indigenous Fera's families and Kinfolk?

Those groups who want to experience the entire canvas of history have that chance, through two chronicle frameworks. *Into the Past* sends the characters directly back through time. Here they fight against Wyrms forces with incredibly powerful and dangerous spirit magics that could abort the universe before it is truly born – murdering Gaia and the Triat before they fully form. *Dying Dreams* has the characters repair the spiritual reflections of history long past. Here they explore Umbra realms of legend and memory, to cure the historical record and stop the Wyrms' forces before every Changing Breed succumbs to total, crippling Harano.

## The Old and The New

The chronicle frameworks in this book involve characters interacting with previous times. By accepting Kronos' help in *Into the Past*, modern characters can travel back in time to help protect the world from temporal mischief. They carry with them the knowledge and traditions that the Garou have held for thousands of generations. But at the same time, by introducing that knowledge into the time stream before its proper time, modern characters may inadvertently cause temporal ripples of their own and help the Wyrms' plans without even intending to.

Players can also create characters from the different temporal junctures, and use them to prevent Nightmaster's invasion of their time. In doing so, they can help protect the future, even if they do not understand what they are doing. Historic characters also give players a chance to

experience what life was like during those eras and to explore the challenges and problems of those eras, without needing the baggage of the modern era. Similarly, players can create historic characters within Umbral realms while playing through *Dying Dreams*.

More adventurous troupes may elect to use a combination of the two styles in either chronicle. Modern Garou characters may end up playing alongside historic Fera, helping them overcome the historic Garou and averting some of the worst atrocities from the War of Rage, or they may try to convince historic Garou to turn away from their actions in order to prevent the world from heading down the path to destruction.

Historic characters could also be previous incarnations of the modern characters, allowing the time travelers a chance to possibly rectify the wrongs they have committed in the past. This is far more ambitious and would require a lot more work on the Storyteller's part, but the potential rewards for the whole troupe might make it worth the extra effort.

Regardless of how the Storyteller and the players decide to approach the story, **W20: Shattered Dreams** gives an opportunity to explore pivotal events that have until now been painted with only the broadest of brush strokes.

## The War of Rage

Despite its name, the War of Rage was not a single, gigantic, millennia-long war that the Garou and the Fera fought across the entire world. Instead it was a series of much smaller conflicts, often spread out over hundreds or even thousands of generations.

In the beginning of time, Gaia created all the Changing Breeds to play a part in protecting the Earth and balancing the combined influences of the Weaver, the Wyrms, and the Wyld. Each Breed had their own part of play, although each Breed had some overlap between the different duties, to make sure that they could combat all of the threats to Gaia.

But, over time, individual egos got in the way and people made a series of bad decisions. Some Breeds, particularly the Garou, overstepped the bounds of their sacred duties and tried to take on the duties of the others. Other times, mistakes lead to grave offense, driving a wedge between the different Breeds and making it nigh impossible for all of them to work together to fulfill their duties before Gaia.

Mistakes and grudges built upon one another until, out of rage, fear, or spite, someone raised a claw or weapon in anger. Before long, others joined in the fight, and all hope of redeeming the situation died. The Changing Breeds slew one another, sometimes *en masse*, making it harder and harder for them to fulfil their sacred duties as Gaia originally intended.

Things only got worse as humanity took control over its own destiny and found ways to alter the environment to suit their own needs. Whereas humanity had once been under the aegis of the Garou and the Fera, they now rejected that protection and forged their own destiny. Their protectors became monsters who threatened to tear them all apart. Some of the Fera found a new place in the changing scheme by becoming gods, but the Garou and others only fought to restore things to their vision of what Gaia intended. Once humanity discovered the poisonous metals of gold and silver and their dark, secret powers over the shapeshifters became common knowledge, things took a further turn for the worse.

Like most wars, the War of Rage changed hearts and minds, and altered the course of history. The scars and grudges it created run deep and cannot be easily undone, if they can be undone at all. It brought the world from what it was to what it is now, for better or worse.

## How to Use this Book

Part adventure and part sourcebook, **W20: Shattered Dreams** allows a Storyteller to involve the players' characters in some of the most crucial and formative events in the history of the Changing Breeds. Even though the landscape may be familiar, running a chronicle set in a different time is often difficult, as many of the things people take for granted in modern times were simply not available. This is especially the case when setting stories in prehistoric times. It's sometimes difficult for people to imagine the landscape wild and dangerous, before it was divided by roads and power lines.

While it is well beyond the scope of this book to provide a definitive reference for all the different time periods that it covers, it should provide enough of a taste that Storytellers can be confident running chronicles set in these times. With some extra research to fill in the finer details, any Storyteller should be able to bring these junctures to life for the players to experience how the Wars of Rage started.

**W20: Shattered Dreams** gives the Storyteller a starting point for running chronicles set in a time that **Werewolf** has never explored before. Each chapter explains the important aspects of the different times and gives Storytellers a basic framework to build upon.

**Chapter One: History's Stage** outlines Nightmaster's fiendish plan to corrupt history in *Into the Past*, and the Nameless Angel's machinations in *Dying Dreams*. This chapter explains how modern Garou or Fera characters can become directly involved in historic events—and potentially meddle with the Wars of Rage. If they're particularly skilled and lucky they might even make changes that stick into the present time, even if it means potentially dooming the world in the process.

**Chapter Two: The Time Before** outlines Gaia's original intention for all the Changing Breeds and explains how they worked together for the greater good before the War of Rage started. It also covers seven different temporal junctures, time periods from prehistory where the events are crucial turning points in the War of Rage. It gives Storytellers a chance to learn what life was like in those times and what it might be like if the Garou did not start the War.

**Chapter Three: The War of Rage** reexamines the seven time periods from Chapter Two, but suggests all the different ways in which the War of Rage could trigger in those times. It introduces the key personalities of each time period and explains the mistakes they made, and what the players' characters could potentially do to alter the course of history to prevent that spark of war.

**Chapter Four: Nightmares In the Jungle** details the second War of Rage, which started during the Spanish conquest of South America, and how the European Garou expanded into new territories, bringing their old prejudices and Rage to a new land. It gives details on the different South American empires and the Fera that lived with them, and how the Europeans' arrival tore them apart.

**Chapter Five: Other Wars** examines the smaller conflicts that didn't engulf the entire shapeshifter population, or the forgotten wars that even the Mnesis can't recall. It details the War of Tears, when the Garou nation turned on their Australian cousins and eradicated the entire Bunyip tribe. It also travels back into earliest shapeshifter history, when the Dragon Kings ruled the world, and shows how they destroyed Gaia's earliest wonder and became the Mokolé.



# Chapter One: History's Stage

*We've been told about our kind's role in the War of Rage. How we destroyed those who, in the eyes of Gaia, were kin to us. These tales are meant to remind us of our role as Garou: to weed the weak from the strong, the sick from the healthy. To keep all creatures fit. What if it is all a lie? What if it is we who are unfit?*

— Travels-With-The-Wind

This chapter introduces Storytellers to running historic chronicles using information from latter chapters. It includes advice on achieving the best levels of historic accuracy for your group, gives you new, period-relevant Abilities, and introduces playstyles to open new challenges and enjoyment for W20 players.

*Into the Past* is a chronicle framework that sends modern-day characters across thousands of years to fix the past and save the future. The characters travel far back into prehistory where their experience is alien, yet eerily familiar.

History tends to move in cycles. Whether facing automatic rifles or flint axes, Garou are still Garou. No matter the time period, Gaia's warriors fight with unmatched fury and unrelenting arrogance. As the Apocalypse rapidly approaches and the dying Garou Nation fights to its last, their ages-old mistakes weigh heavily upon them.

Unfortunately, no one can change the past—or can they?

Alternatively, *Dying Dreams* is a chronicle framework that sends the characters on a memory quest through the Umbra. Here the characters plunge into realms of memory, restoring spiritual records of times long past. If they can't reverse the damage—and stop the culprits—all of Gaia's shapeshifters are doomed as they succumb to devastating Harano, leaving no one to fight against the Apocalypse.

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## Chronicle: *Into the Past*

*Into the Past* covers a vast time period. The Wars of Rage weren't single events, but rather a continuum of tensions and skirmishes leading to open warfare between the shapeshifters. The scenes presented here are guidelines, key junctures that are important to repairing time, but are not necessarily the best known or most significant times in the Wars of Rage. They are also not the only junctures Storytellers can include in the chronicle.

The chronicle framework has four sections. The first presents a high-level overview of what's happening, including the Wyrmspawn willing to destroy all of history and the lunar spirit who chooses the characters as its champions. It also covers how the characters come to the various time periods, and the general sense of what will happen if they don't succeed.

After that, it moves into three acts, which provide an overview of events, suggested scenes, and challenges faced by the characters. They're not set in stone—while a Storyteller who wants to use *Into the Past* as a way to focus on various periods of shapeshifter history can use additional story hooks and suggested scenes, the scenes provided are

enough for a busy Storyteller to put her players' characters through an engaging story.

The first act introduces the overlapping of multiple histories, and brings the characters to the action. The second act takes the characters through the Wars of Rage, as they choose how to defeat Nightmaster's minions and restore the future. The third act takes the characters into the unknown reaches of prehistory, in the time before time — when the Triat came together. Here they confront Nightmaster to drive him back into the Abyss, and possibly seize their chance to destroy him forever.

## *End of the World*

Yesterday, the Apocalypse was looming, approaching with an inevitability that the Garou — and other Changing Breeds — fought against to their dying breaths. Today, it's too late. The Apocalypse is here, the Garou have lost, and Gaia screams.

The question isn't what happened between yesterday and today. Nothing recent changed the end of the world from future to past. No, *the past* has changed. Yesterday, the Apocalypse hadn't yet happened, and today it had happened millions of years ago.

The Changing Breeds have vast and often shameful history. Something has changed the key events, and the characters must fix them. It doesn't matter whether time's bandits had good or ill intentions — their interference changed important details. These changes rippled down the time streams and made the world much, much worse.

## *A Brief History of Time*

The nature of time depends heavily on the viewer's lens and the powers she brings to bear. Each creature possesses a different view of time's progression and malleability. As far as Gaia is concerned, this is at it should be. Her children were designed to serve her purposes; none are meant to undo what came before. Unfortunately, as the shapeshifters know all too well, Gaia's intentions can be subverted and the Wyrms' minions ever seek new ways to desecrate and spoil her vision.

## *The Ever-Flowing River*

From a shapeshifter's perspective, time is an ever-flowing river moving steadily from past to future. The Weaver ensures time moves from past to future, the Wyld makes the future an uncertain mystery, and the Wyrms degrades what came before until nothing but memories and legends remain.

Most of history is mutable and irrelevant to shaping the modern day. Time doesn't care which primitive hunter-gatherer foraged enough food for the family group, or killed a roaming animal for its meat. Time may care who first discovered how to tame fire — giving humanity an

immense technological leap forward — but it may just as easily not. As far as time is concerned, if that individual didn't tame fire, another would have. If a military leader dies, another simply takes his place. The streams of time flow over the change with barely a ripple and, within a few short months or years, the waters smooth and the present occurs with possibly only the smallest of changes.

Some events are incredibly important to shaping the present. They're not always huge or flashy, but these are the points where time's flow can divert down a new path. Changing what occurs at these moments can change the course of history. The results may be huge and immediate, or they may be subtle and take a thousand years to show, but either way time has changed and every event that comes after follows a new course.

The periods surrounding these events form junctures of time where the streams branch and shift. A juncture may be around one specific outcome or it could be broader and require several occurrences over the period to continue on the expected path. If the outcome of these events changes, the history the characters remember disappears, with the replacement sometimes unrecognizable.

Some junctures are codependent. Changing one doesn't generate enough temporal flux to change the future, but changing one interconnected node destabilizes the network and makes every subsequent change in that system easier to achieve.

The Changing Breeds are ill-equipped to understand the vast, invisible network of junctures, streams, and outcomes. Even the greatest spirits don't have all the answers, but Luna watches over every stream on Gaia and safeguards them all. The ever-changing moon goddess marks the passage of the seasons and the march of time. One of her aspects, the Incarna Kronos, is immune to time's currents and forever watches the ebbs and flows, but rarely interferes.

## *Abyss Triumphant*

In the depths of the Abyss, Nightmaster stalks the countless caves of its craggy cliffs. He searches the endless crevasses for lost secrets that will grant him his final desire — to extinguish the sun and plunge everything into perpetual darkness.

Nightmaster sacrificed everything to the Abyss and, in return, wrested Oblivion's secrets from it. This was a hollow and empty victory — much like the Abyss itself. It gave him the terrible knowledge he sought, but not the means. The arcane rituals needed to destroy Helios had an impossible condition — the rite could only be performed deep in the past.

The magic drew upon the same primordial energies that were harnessed by the spirits that would become Dream Makers (W20, p. 443) in the creation of the world. Nightmaster

## THE ABYSS AND NIGHTMASTER

The Abyss is both an Umbral realm and a tear in the fabric of creation, a hungry maw that consumes everything lost or abandoned. Paths snake down its cavern-pocked walls, descending into darkness and madness. Some believe it is the mouth of the Wyrms itself, an entry to its ever-hungry emptiness, annihilating everything that falls into darkness.

Nightmaster, once a Shadow Lord hero, is the master-slave of the Abyss, the realm's terrible hollow champion who stalks its horror with impunity. His pack braved the depths to discover the secret of how to consume the sun and cast darkness over everything. One by one Nightmaster's packmates fell to madness and were murdered by Nightmaster, until he stood alone on the edge of Oblivion. Here, he sacrificed his soul to darkness, surrendering everything natural or worthy, leaving a hollow shell with nothing but Rage and hunger – a perfect avatar of the Abyss.

More information about the Abyss can be found in **W20** (pp. 316 and 328-329), while expanded information about the Abyss and Nightmaster is in **W20 Umbra** (pp. 43-46).

learned that the act of creation simultaneously contained the seeds of destruction. These mysterious creators – Nightmaster never discerned if they were Celestines, the Triat, or something else entirely – had to accept the counter-rite. Though they couldn't remove it, they twisted its design to render it impossible for anyone, even themselves, to ever use it to undo their great work.

Nightmaster hated the Abyss for giving him what he desired while ensuring it was never what he wanted. The enraged former Shadow Lord despised the Abyss with every remaining fragment of his worthless being. He continued plotting, exploring its depths for any long-lost secret to make his nihilistic dream possible, and raised an Abyssal army as he went.

From the modern perspective, the Abyss grew large enough to rend time sometime within the last lunar month. Nightmaster followed the broken caves to their ends, but as a creature almost wholly of the Abyss, he couldn't leave the realm. He knew the tunnels led somewhere, but all he saw was impenetrable darkness. Nightmaster sent scouts

from his Abyssal force to return with the knowledge of what was beyond the tunnels. What they reported astounded and excited the Shadow Lord. Nightmaster had found an answer to the paradox, and the tunnels in time gave the fallen Garou his chance.

Nightmaster pieced together what the realm had delivered to him through information from his spies, and torturing captives they dragged back to the Abyss. The Abyssal cracks led to different times, and those times could fulfil the needs of his rite – or at least destabilize the fabric of reality so he could unmake it. Some times coincided with legends and tales he heard as a young Shadow Lord; Nightmaster decided to destroy these events out of pure spite. After all, his ritual of unmaking needed reality to be compromised, but he could take petty delight in knowing he had subverted events held sacred by his tribe and the Garou Nation.

Though Nightmaster doesn't know of time junctures, his interference with significant events – those passed down as legends or cautionary tales – achieves his goal through sheer destructive ignorance. Once Nightmaster's minions pervert enough points of importance, Nightmaster can fully ascend to merge with the Abyss and become the Maw. From there he'll finally be powerful enough to consume Helios and consign everything to oblivion. The fact that the Maw appeared in all times after Nightmaster hatched his scheme convinces the fallen Shadow Lord that his plan will succeed.

## Nightmaster's Army

Nightmaster had amassed an army of lost and forgotten creatures from the deepest parts of the Abyss; all chose service over unmaking in the Abyss. Many of Nightmaster's servants only exist as myths in rare tomes held by the most eccentric academics and occultists.

Nightmaster's forces have a scattergun approach for their invasion of history. As the Abyss blindly eats at reality its erosions strike the most mutable points first – time junctures – but its tendrils work towards deepest prehistory, when everything was in flux. This deep in the past, the Weaver hadn't fallen to insanity and the Wyrms wasn't the corruptor. This point is most susceptible to the Abyss' blind appetite, as the Triat is ill prepared for such an attack.

## The Hive of the Jagged Maw

The Black Spiral Dancers of this Hive are Nightmaster's elite lieutenants and ensure his troops follow their master's commands. The corrupted Garou worship the Abyss and serve Nightmaster loyally as its avatar, but they are keenly aware that he isn't one of them. If he ceased to be the Abyss' champion they would turn on him. The former Shadow Lord feeds their need for pain, death, and oblivion, and the Hive follows Nightmaster in pursuing its own interests.

## CAUSE AND EFFECT

Did Nightmaster's assault trigger the Triatic imbalance that led to the mad stasis of the Weaver and the fall of the Wyrms? Did the Wyrms' fall rend the fabric of the universe, making the Abyss that would eventually degrade time and give the Wyrms' forces access to the very moment this occurred?

Could epic (and enterprising) heroes repair the Triat's balance before it's ever imbalanced? The official answer is that it can't be prevented, but as described in "As Good as it Gets" (p. 16), this could be the key moment when Gaia's greatest heroes make the World of Darkness a better place. Storytellers eager to embark on such a campaign have plenty of fodder in this book to get them started.

The Hive of the Jagged Maw worships the Wyrms' incarnation as Eater-of-Souls, and believes that the Abyss is Eater-of-Souls' mouth. These Black Spirals live as deep in the canyon as they can and as close to the great pit as they can endure. Here they enact horrific rites in preparation for the Apocalypse, when they believe the Wyrms-monster will rise from the ground to devour the world.

This belief gave Nightmaster what he needed to encourage the Black Spiral Dancers away from the depths and into the world. As Nightmaster's servants began meddling throughout time, each returned with news that the great Maw had appeared in the sky. Nightmaster used the Hive's religious fervor to 'prove' that his plan was the final step needed to release Eater-of-Souls and bring on the Apocalypse.

With the Maw as undeniable proof, emissaries of the Jagged Maw have travelled from the Abyss to Malfestas, Black Spiral hives, and other Wyrms-infested blights to proselytize and convert other Wyrms servants to the worship of Eater-of-Souls.

Their message has been persuasive; their numbers swell as a host of Dancers, Banes, and fomori swear allegiance to the Hive. News of the Hive's plans has also reached others, such as the Pentex Board.

## Pentex

Though Nightmaster doesn't care about Pentex, the reverse isn't true. The corporation is greatly interested in the Abyss' champion: how to control him, or how to replace him with someone more pliable, if needed.

## WHAT ABOUT GRYTHYG?

As the deposed priestess of the Hive of the Jagged Maw, Grythyg hates Nightmaster with a venom greater than any other member of her Hive. She was the first chosen of the Maw, listening to its whispers in the darkness that commanded her to worship and spoke of the end days when it would devour the world. Then came the Gaia-cursed Shadow Lord; somehow, he impressed the Maw with his audacity, and was chosen as its avatar. Grythyg burns with constant anger as her solid faith wars with her equally immense jealousy.

Despite her hate, she must (begrudgingly) admit that Nightmaster's plan appears to be working. This both excites and terrifies her. The priestess of Oblivion has finally realized what the destruction of everything means, and her faith wavers ever so slightly as she starts to believe that she would far prefer a world that is broken, degraded and enslaved – but that still exists to serve her pleasures.

She could be a most dangerous ally. While she can never be trusted, she will follow her own agenda over Nightmaster's, and could turn on him at a crucial moment – especially if it becomes apparent that the characters might defeat her rival, meaning she can destroy him utterly and reclaim her place as the arch-predator of the Abyss.

Pentex often has explorers in the Abyss, searching for lost secrets with which to blackmail its competitors, or to turn into some profitable, corruptive product. These teams explore the depths, enter careful negotiations with Abyssal entities – including Nightmaster and his followers – and recover near-lost artifacts and secrets for further study.

One such team learned of the time cracks while negotiating with the Hive of the Jagged Maw. The team leader saw an opportunity and offered up Pentex troops, fomori, and scientists to explore the different time periods, while stopping short of worshipping Eater-of-Souls. Sensing a chance to make powerful allies who could help depose Nightmaster, Grythyg agreed to the deal.

For his part, Nightmaster doesn't care what Pentex does as long as they destabilize history and stay out of his way. Pentex doesn't know the extent of Nightmaster's plan, but can't deny the impending signs of Apocalyptic doom. The Board works to ensure its survival in the coming end



times — or better yet, to profit from them. If they knew of Nightmaster's intention to send everything to oblivion, they might balk at the lack of profit. The corporation could even try and disrupt Nightmaster's plan, making them uneasy allies in the fight to save Gaia.

## *The Many-Faced God of Time*

The Abyss' erosion of reality and Nightmaster's temporal interference haven't gone unnoticed. The ever-watchful moon goddess has ensured she isn't blind to any great upheavals that could threaten Gaia.

Luna has a close association with time, though she is unbound by human (and shapeshifter) needs and mythology. Her cycles mark the passing seasons and her phases have significance to many different cultures. Almost every human culture reveres her shining radiance or terrifying absence, and tries to placate her ever-changing faces or respect her watching over them.

Sometimes she wants to interact more personally with the tiny creatures she watches; for this she uses avatars of her greater self. Much like Sokhta is responsible for the Umbral realm of the moon, and is simultaneously an independent Incarna and merely a fragment of the unfathomable might of Luna, so too are her other avatars both embodiments and mere fragments of the whole.

The aspect of time has had many names. To Australian Aborigines he was Altjira, Mura-mura, Tjukurpa, or any of countless other names. To them he made the earth and retired into the sky to watch the plants, animals, and humans. Some African tribes called him Mawu, who created the earth and all life thereon. To ancient Egyptians he was Khonsu, the traveler who marked time's passage with his nightly journey and his ever-changing face.

Regardless of his name — he has a preference for Kronos — this avatar of Luna is peculiar among his siblings. His role is to watch the flow of history but be ever apart from them. His timeless nature makes interaction with lesser creatures difficult; he simultaneously sees events before, during, and after they occur.

Today, Kronos is almost unknown, and even Garou who interact with Luna's messengers and lesser identities don't know of him. That he violates his noninterfering purpose speaks of the gravity of the situation. Even Kronos has difficulty knowing if he assists the characters because he sees the end of time, because Luna commands, or because his unstuck viewpoint in time tells him that here and now is where he makes himself known.

## The Laws of Time

Time forces lesser creatures to obey, even those who dare swim against its flow. Some supernatural creatures — such as reality-bending willworkers — can temporarily impose their rules on time, but most are bound to follow time's flow. Although Kronos is largely immune to time, he is an observer who doesn't interfere. He understands the boundaries more keenly than other beings and finds it almost impossible to subvert them.

Gaia and the Triat set the laws of time at the beginning of everything. For a brief period after everything came into being — if 'brief' has any meaning when time wasn't set — these laws didn't apply and almost anything could occur.

*Events are mutable, but not lastingly so* — everything can be changed. Every historical event is malleable, but most are incapable of changing the flow of history from one path to another. Only those important events occurring at time's junctures matter. Such events usually become the stories of legend.

*Subtle changes are more powerful* — history has a narrative force keeping it stabilized. Time travelers can change events, but anachronistic methods are likely to be washed over and ignored by history. Individual names in key roles may change, but the roles go on regardless. In simple terms, characters who use the tools available to the time and make multiple small changes are more likely to cause lasting change. This also allows characters to make significant ripples in time while fighting other modern foes that will be forgotten just a handful of years later. This shouldn't be relied upon, as grotesque changes can cause permanent damage, and the line where this occurs is rarely predictable.

*Participation is absolute* — the characters only get one shot at changing events. Once they participate in a time period their actions are part of that time stream. Essentially, the characters can't go back to the start of a period and try again. They are part of events and their successes and mistakes are there to stay.

## Fera, Lost Breeds, and Extinct Tribes

The disrupted time stream has overlaid times and events that never were onto the modern day. The extinction of

Fera breeds and the loss of Garou tribes all simultaneously did and didn't happen.

Fera are more common in this twisted modern day because the Wars of Rage were averted in *some timelines*. Garou and Fera interact; relations aren't always open or friendly, but they do exist.

Similarly, extinct shapeshifters live on through the temporal fluctuations. Their numbers aren't necessarily great, as some Fera died out from the loss of their animal Kin, not at the claws of their cousins. In some time streams, small animal populations survived through the ages, through ongoing, dedicated — and paranoid — care of their shapeshifters.

This opens chances for players to explore the world through the eyes of an extinct breed or lost Garou tribe. *Into the Past* is the perfect opportunity for a player to try taking on the role of one of the Changing Breeds — or of the Lost Breeds, as the fractured timeline has folded in futures where the Apis, Camazotz, Grondr, or even Khara never died.

This doesn't mean that enemies like the Black Spiral Dancers don't exist. The White Howlers still fell in some timelines, and did not in others — as such, both tribes exist at the same time in superposition. All permutations are possible at the beginning of this chronicle.

This gives rise to one of the most tragic elements of *Into the Past*. Players taking on the role of an extinct breed, or fallen tribe, do so knowing that defeating Nightmaster brings about their own doom. Saving Gaia means fixing the time junctures and casting Nightmaster back into the Abyss. This restores the status quo and returns the Garou to alpha status atop a legacy of blood, death, and Rage.

## As Good as it Gets?

Can the characters create a better future than what they remember? Can they travel back and forth along the time stream, plunging into history and fixing whatever problems they find? Can they avert the Apocalypse, defeat the Wyrms, and restore balance to the Triat?

Such a chronicle would be the shapeshifters' greatest challenge, but if the players and Storyteller want to pursue such a goal they should embrace the risk and dive into the streams. The stories required to achieve this goal would — quite rightly — be the focus of an entire chronicle. A future where the Changing Breeds no longer endlessly struggle and fight is a satisfying end to a chronicle. It probably precludes many potential story hooks to continue playing in this peaceful world — unless it's not as perfect as the characters hoped.

The nuances of temporal mechanics are difficult to understand. Fixing the future is almost impossible, but there's a lot of room to play in 'almost'. The characters' triumphs will be unknown except to the characters (and Kronos). No one will remember their sacrifices. No one

## FOR ALL THAT TIME MAY CHANGE

The rotten near-Apocalypse future is the best the World of Darkness can hope for. Perhaps the Wyrms' corruption has affected time itself, forcing even the best timeline to end in the Apocalypse. Gaia is doomed, but the characters can prolong the inevitable. This shouldn't stop players from telling suitably epic stories, and if they can make the right changes at all the right junctures, they should embrace the challenge for what it is.

will sing songs of how they saved the future; is glory more important than Gaia?

## The Most Important People in History

Kronos knows how reality suffers with the assault on time. He feels the damage as something akin to physical discomfort and a constant existential pain, but he cannot act directly. He is an ever-watchful guardian, and to repair the junctures he needs agents of his own. He needs the characters. Even Kronos doesn't know why them specifically. All he knows is that he chose them at some point, and his interesting relationship with "past" and "future" makes the reason behind that choice almost impossible for anyone to figure out.

The players' characters are the most important people in this story. They act while Kronos can only watch. They plunge backwards through time to drive events. If a tribal warlord needs to join a union of tribes, the characters must persuade him. If a belligerent Bastet threatens an important historical event, the characters must cajole, fight, or kill her to protect the time stream.

The characters aren't witnesses to history — when something must be done, the characters need to do it, or at least drive the correction. They don't have to do everything themselves — they can be puppet masters manipulating others if they wish. They can enlist others to fight their battles, or to bargain on their behalf. The important part is that it's the players' choices that matter.

## Garou or Fera?

*Into the Past* is not specific to one Changing Breed. Nightmaster's plot will doom the entire world if he is not stopped, and that brings together all of Gaia's children in ways that haven't occurred since before the Wars of Rage.

## PLAYING TO STRENGTH

Every group has different strengths and interests. In each scene, allow the players to guide the action and focus on the elements in which they're most invested. Fill in the rest with opportunities to enlist others to their cause and do the tasks the characters don't want, or that the players don't find interesting.

Don't make the story too easy though. As a general rule, Storyteller characters are never as proficient as those of the players. They may have higher Attributes and Skills in their areas of expertise, but they lack the player's range of talents.

Each scene can be played with any Changing Breed. Some shapeshifters will be more suited than others, and some scenes will require the Storyteller to think creatively to incorporate certain Fera. If the Storyteller is willing to do more work, players can even play fallen breeds and other Wyrms' minions.

Players can choose to play as a single character that experiences the entire story, but *Into the Past* also supports players using different characters for different scenes — or even in the same scene — in a style known as troupe play (p.50).

## Setting the Opposition

The Abyss' tendrils have no innate guidance. The shining lights of time's important points draw the Abyssal darkness, so most tunnels lead to time junctures where the course of history can change. Nightmaster's forces spill out into the junctures where they can create real damage.

Nightmaster doesn't particularly care where the Wyrms' forces attack, and he doesn't have the knowledge to know how he can most efficiently manipulate time. He knows ultimate victory depends on his being able to go where time is weakest — Gaia's earliest days. Nightmaster can't access this time yet; the Abyss hasn't the strength to gnaw through to that period. Nightmaster sends minions and allies to disrupt other times in the hope that this will weaken history and allow the Abyss' hunger to break through to the earliest days.

The Storyteller simulates Nightmaster's scattered approach by determining the strength of the opposition at the start of the chronicle, and assigning them to the various historical scenes. This is a planning burden on the Storyteller, but gives players satisfaction as they know depleting Nightmaster's forces reduces the aid he can call on elsewhere.

## SIDELINING THE CHARACTERS

When using troupe play, players may quite rightly ask what their usual characters are doing while they play alternative characters at center stage. The answer to this is that their characters do whatever the players want. The off-screen characters may have important roles and dramatic plans – but keep them to the shadows. Though history ignores most people, the players' usual characters probably don't want to attract too much attention as intruders from an unknowable future.

See *Shadow Play* (p. 50) for more detail on the how to build the narrative of what occurred in these shadows while others attracted history's gaze.

This list need not be overly detailed, but should include numbers and their relative strengths to suit the players' power level. How many Black Spiral Dancers comprise the Hive of the Jagged Maw? These fanatics are likely fewer in number than most Hives – only the truly demented believe living permanently in the Abyss is a good idea – but they are probably physically tougher examples of their tribe. As their (former) priestess, Grythyg is the most powerful, but is Rank 4 or 5 more appropriate to your pack's power?

Similarly, how many Banes does Nightmaster summon, which fomori flock to his banner, and what other servants has he plucked from the Abyss? The Abyss draws samples of any of the antagonists listed in *W20*, and Nightmaster subjugates all of them. He sends these minions through time and, as the players defeat them, they are lost to the fallen Shadow Lord. Those who defeat, evade, or flee the characters can regroup in the Abyss and deploy elsewhere. Every enemy the characters don't stop may come back to haunt them. They don't have to kill everyone, but they will need to trap, bind, banish, or perhaps even recruit these enemies, to stop them becoming recurring villains.

It is difficult to generalize the level of opposition any given pack can overcome. As a rough guide, in a single encounter shapeshifters can defeat spirits with combined Rage, Gnosis, and Willpower ratings similar to their own, or other shapeshifters of similar Rank. Storytellers can add an additional foe or two against characters built for combat, or reduce the number of antagonists if the spirits are combat-fo-

cused but the characters aren't. For these less combat-ready characters, the Storyteller may introduce antagonists that delight in mind games and bargains. This assumes that the characters have sufficient time to rest and recover between challenges, and that they don't exploit terrain advantages or pack tactics to defeat opponents.

Storytellers and players know the characters best. Adjust the difficulty of junctures that are too easy or hard by shuffling resources between time junctures, but keep note of what you have moved – they won't be available in the time period you took them from. If the baseline difficulty is wrong, add or subtract foes until the players have a challenge that they find most satisfying. Nightmaster is making this up as he goes as well – some junctures may be easy to fix, others exceedingly difficult. The goal, as always, is to have fun.

## Act One: Apocalypse, Now

*I remember being born under the Maw. It's always been there, growing larger and hungrier each year. I guess it changes each day, but it's hard to see that.*

*These are the final nights. The Wyrms' Maw devours Helios' life-giving warmth and sips at Gaia's essence. It takes her air and water and claws at her body. The earthquakes are more frequent now. It's a rare hour that one doesn't shake us from our feet. Every day Gaia writhes in pain and the Earth's crust splits, bringing buildings crashing to the ground.*

*It's always been this way. The tales speak of the aborted War of Rage, when we found the other Changing Breeds wanting and confronted them in anger. They talked us down from our anger back then, convinced us of their worth and promised to fulfil their duties. We believed them. In our foolishness, we believed them.*

*Sometimes, I wonder what would have happened if we hadn't. What if we'd given into our Rage and destroyed the other Breeds? If Garou took on the other duties, would we have done a better job? Would the world be better? I doubt it could be worse.*

*– Jimmy Thinks-Too-Deep, Philodox Child of Gaia*

The chronicle begins with the characters noticing that their world has changed. This may be as subtle as people they know living in different locations, to not existing at all and being forgotten by all – except the characters. Historical records reveal conflicting, confusing accounts. The War of Rage both did and didn't occur. The Changing Breeds ran and were slaughtered by the Garou, but also stood their ground, placated the Garou, and survived. Regardless of what changes the characters discover, the one constant is the Wyrms' Maw in the sky.

## The Mad, Mad World

This is not the world the characters knew. The changes have destabilized time and what should be is not what people remember. Normally, the changes would be permanent and imperceptible to anyone further down the stream.

These are not standard time shifts. The changes twist and crack time and Kronos takes particular notice. He sees that today's world is not the world he knew yesterday. The sheer scale of the upset forces him to participate in events, which Luna normally forbids. He is outraged that anyone would dare meddle in such an obvious and obnoxious manner. His unique time view reveals that now is when he must act. Kronos is also scared. He usually sees everything that was, is and will be, stretching across the entire timeline. Now he can't discern which of the multitude of possibilities will triumph. His vision is clouded, but he remembers what should have happened. He takes agents whom he knows he was meant to choose, but he doesn't know *why*. In his blindness he can only hope their intervention returns the time stream to what it should be.

## Life, but Not as We Know It

Storytellers intending to include these events as part of an existing chronicle may introduce the changes gradually. This piques the players' interest as their characters slowly

question their surroundings and the reasons for the changes. Storytellers wanting to throw the characters directly into the action should use *The Festival of Change* (below).

Storytellers should start small during the period of change. The Abyss tore through the time stream less than one month ago, so this is the point that the characters first notice the changes—even though history changed thousands of years ago. Someone the characters know well can't be found. Everyone they ask insists they've never heard of him. Eventually, the Storyteller introduces another very similar character with some slight differences. This demonstrates (perhaps with hindsight) that the niche filled by the characters' friend has been filled by someone else — someone who always filled that space, at least in this new timeline.

Over time, the Storyteller increases the weirdness by returning the missing character. This works best when the players have accepted the difference as the new normal. The change back to their friend is remarkable — draw attention to it — but completely unnoticed by the friend, or anyone besides the characters. Questioning reveals he has no idea what the characters experienced, and that he has clear memory of the time when he was (to the characters) "someone else."

As the characters abandon this one unexplainable mystery, more people and locations change — again obvious to the players and invisible to everyone else. Increase the



frequency of the swaps. Allies, contacts, and friends could change several times in the course of a story or even scene. Avoid making these substitutions a joke; the players should feel uneasy at the fluidity of the world. They should be worried about why they're not affected, possibly even accusing their allies of some supernatural conspiracy.

Add new acquaintances to the characters' social group. These work best if they embody the time changes, such as a Bastet who works openly with the character's sept, and has a strong and long-standing friendship with the sept's elders. If subtlety doesn't work, use something particularly noteworthy—a White Howler or Croatan pack visiting from a distant sept, or a Grondr or Apis on a diplomatic mission.

By now, the players know something is very wrong. This is the point to introduce the Maw's presence. The characters notice the gaping wound in the daytime sky, like a jagged circle of utter blackness sucking the sun's light away in a constant stream of fire. Human scientists call this a miniature black hole that has doomed the world, but all shapeshifters recognize this as the ever-hungering Maw of the Wyrms, visible in both physical reality and in the Umbra.

Once noticed, the Maw was always there. The characters' gradual insertion into this mad reality prevented them noticing what should have been obvious, until they'd assimilated the more subtle differences.

## *The Festival of Change*

*The Festival of Change* introduces the characters to the time changes suddenly and dramatically. One day the Garou's history included Wars of Rage, Tears, and Sorrow, the next day these events are both true and false. This confusion gives urgency to events—something is very wrong, and the characters need to act.

Every few years all Changing Breeds attend the Festival of Change. Every continent—even Antarctica—has at least one gathering. The shapeshifters come together under the sun and then the moon and stars to discuss Gaia's decline, relationships between Fera, and how they acquit their roles before the Earth Mother. Their faces darken when they must discuss the Maw that grows larger with each passing year.

The Festival helps maintain peace. Each Festival begins with singing the legend of when the Garou challenged the Fera, and how close they came to a War of Rage. The song tells of the great orators from each Changing Breed who forged a concord, giving voice to their differences and finding peaceful ways for Gaia's children to interact.

Today marks the start of the Festival. The characters are surrounded by so many different Fera and tribes they barely recognize, yet vaguely remember knowing. Gaia's pain is a constant trembling that ripples through the ground. The Earth Mother's death tremors should worry

the characters. They see the Wyrms' presence in the Maw, and know the shapeshifters have lost. In addition to the earthquakes, the Maw's irresistible pull leeches away the upper layers of the atmosphere, creating unpredictable weather shifts.

This year's festival is poorly attended, as many of Gaia's children have already succumbed to Harano and despair. They don't know that this time should never have been. Their ignorance is not their fault, but may frustrate the characters. The characters may discover a few rare individuals who remember the same history and present as they do, but only patience and persistence will uncover these allies among everyone else.

## *The Lonely God*

When the characters are thoroughly confused and concerned about the changes—either introduced gradually or through the Festival of Change—Kronos makes himself known.

Kronos stands alone from other spirits, as he has difficulty relating to those with a limited view of time. His unique duty requires an aloofness that usually prevents him from participating in events. Luna has forbidden him from interference, but he views this as a prudent suggestion rather than a command, and time has proven him correct. Kronos sometimes dabbles with being an object of worship, but more interesting events in other times eventually catch his attention.

The immediate peril of Nightmaster's plot forces Kronos to act. He sees the overlapping histories, and knows time will tear itself apart under the strain—if the Maw doesn't succeed first. Kronos can also clearly see those few individuals who stand apart from time's fluctuations. This includes the players' characters, but also alternative characters the players can draw on if their main character dies, or if they want to use multiple characters. Other individuals who see time's distress are allies and contacts for the players to use in the heroic efforts to stop Nightmaster.

The characters may ask why they're immune to history's changes. The paradoxical answer is because Kronos gives them his patronage, but he has done so *because* they are immune. Though strange for most beings, this is how Kronos sees the world. His influence and decisions are as timeless as he, and asking the characters to help ripples backwards in time to bring the characters to Kronos' attention so he can make them the offer.

Characters may debate this paradox, but it simply is. Kronos sees the characters both succeed and fail at this critical juncture, and the non-predestination worries Kronos. He is unaccustomed to not knowing how events unfold and it terrifies him.

Kronos manifests as a human clad in raiment of pure, silvery moonlight. His age is difficult to judge; he appears both old and young, and his eyes are dark pits flashing with tiny nova sparks of the birth of stars.

Kronos speaks of the character's great deeds — some of which they haven't yet done — and tells them that he needs their help. The characters may be understandably skeptical of this unknown spirit, but most shapeshifters can instinctively sense his innate connection to Luna, and the pack's totem (if any) will display respect and deference to the Incarna.

Kronos tells the characters that time is disrupted and the characters need to fix history. He is not omniscient and may not know that Nightmaster is responsible — the Storyteller should decide whether the turbulence around the earliest times prevents Kronos from clearly understanding events. Discovering Nightmaster's involvement through investigation, and interrogating Wyrms minions, would be a satisfying challenge for the characters.

Kronos instructs the characters to travel to Australia, where they may find allies and a pathway into history. He can't (or won't) transport them himself, as he knows he didn't do so. If using troupe play (p. 50) he is simultaneously with other modern-day heroes the players use, having the same conversation with each of them. He will meet them in Australia once they make contact with the Bunyip tribe. He doesn't mention the urgency with which they should act — he believes that should be obvious.

## *The Land Out of Time*

With Kronos as patron, the characters have a reason for the madness and the agency to fix it. The characters have to travel back in time, correct the disrupted junctures, and save Gaia. To give the characters the keys to time that they need, Kronos must expose one of Gaia's greatest secrets by sending the characters to meet with the Bunyip.

Australia is often described as a timeless land. For millions of years, the island continent followed its own path of evolution and climate: part of, yet separate from, the rest of the world. The first humans here experienced this timelessness as the Dreaming, interacting with the Umbral lands and endless never time in ways other humans never knew. Past, present, and future all merged in this vast expanse.

When the Bunyip arrived on Australian shores, fleeing their Rage-filled cousins, they were lost, bedraggled, and dying. Other Australian shapeshifters took pity on the werewolves and helped them adapt to the land.

The powerful totem Ngalyod, the Rainbow Serpent, embraced the tribe and molded them into the protectors she needed. Ngalyod was a spirit of shaping, associated with the ebb and flow of waterways, the regulation of wet and dry times, and time's passage between both. Under her

### *KRONOS THE MANIPULATOR*

Storytellers may have Kronos take a more active role in the drama. He transports the characters to where he needs them, or he manipulates events so they find themselves in these locations without knowing they were needed. Kronos provides specific instructions and guidance to fix history, and directs the characters in how to thwart the Wyrms' minions.

This version of events removes a lot of agency from the characters. They still fix time, but they do so at the direction of a more powerful entity. This alternative could be preferable for Storytellers running an abridged version of this chronicle in the course of a one-shot or convention game, where time is limited.

patronage, the Bunyip became Guardians of the Ways; they developed rites and Gifts to sense and tend the streams as they snaked along the songlines of hundreds of human tribes. They carefully smoothed and redirected the time streams when needed, but they were compelled by Ngalyod to not interfere with the proper order of events.

The Bunyip collected many hidden time streams across the Australian landscape. Here time moved differently from the rest of the world — flowing across the land but rarely touching it. Minutes could take an age to pass, or a century would come and go in the turning of the night sky. The Bunyip locked all these dreamlines away in their Umbral homeland, safe from the Wyrms and Gaia's blind servants. The marsupial Garou didn't seek to control or rule time, they simply fulfilled their duties.

If the characters approach the Bunyip with humility and respect, and Kronos vouches for them, the weremarsupials open Moon Bridges to their Umbral homeland and allow the characters to enter this most sacred place. If they come with arrogance and impatience, the Bunyip block their path. The characters must find another way to the homeland, and they'll have to work harder to gain entry. They can instead find other ways to travel through time, but the only other path Kronos knows is through the Abyss itself.

The spiritual reflection of Uluru from central Australia fills the center of the Bunyip's homeland. Within this massive monolith the Bunyip anchor and tend the crossing time streams. The twisting, rocky fingers of Kata-Tjuta stand beside Uluru — much closer than in the physical world. Kata-Tjuta's

## THE LOST HOMELAND AND THE BUNYIP'S FUTURE

In this alternative present, where multiple possibilities coexist and flow over one another, the Bunyip's homeland is not lost to the Garou, and they can be persuaded to allow the characters to travel to other times.

Unknown to the Bunyip, each repaired juncture brings their extinction timeline closer. The simple journeys to and from the homeland become more difficult with each victory the characters earn.

Eventually the characters may find themselves stranded in the past, with the Bunyip's homeland lost again. Characters can either live out their lives in whatever time period they've reached, or follow the Abyss' tendrils to the Umbral realm and back to their own future.

Some enterprising characters may try to prevent the Bunyip's doom. Though the homeland was a nexus for time streams, the Bunyip were blind to the future, as Kronos and Ngalyod knew mortals should not know their own fates.

Unfortunately, the Bunyip are doomed no matter how hard the characters fight. As always, nothing stops a Storyteller from changing history for her own chronicle and reintroducing the marsupial werewolves if she wishes.

reflection shakes and trembles with the Yahwie's rage, for this is where the Bunyip imprison the predator. Ngalyod is coiled around both structures, as she has particular interest in Kronos' success or failure.

After discussion, ceremony, and supplications, the Bunyip bring the characters to Uluru, and show the caves leading into the monolith's hollow center. Here, the characters see glittering, silvery rivers of time. Wafting scents and echoed sounds from their times flow through the cavern, which is impossibly bigger than the outside of the monolith. Here the characters can jump into the flows and easily travel to time junctures. With Kronos and Ngalyod's blessings, the characters can open time gateways back to the homeland — but they must ensure nothing follows them back so they can preserve the sanctity of this place. The Bunyip and their ancestor spirits work constantly within the structure, to keep the pungent, darkening streams whose junctures are under attack from breaking anchor and being cast adrift in time's rapidly fraying tapestry.

## Act Two: Slices of History

*I really don't know what I expected. We hear songs and stories of ancient times — the Impergium, the Wars of Rage, the War of Tears. We learn them by heart, speak with spirits of long ago and hear from ancestor-spirits from generations long past. But what we never have is context. We supply our own,*

*overlaying what we've heard with our own ideas and experiences and morals. We imagine ourselves in those times and believe that we know what life was like. Life was exactly like now, but without cellphones and the internet, right? Ancient Garou hunted and killed and Raged as always, maybe with spears and knives instead of guns, but still the same?*

*So why the fuck am I standing here talking at a cave-man-werewolf while he shakes a fucking stone axe at me? At least take it to Crinos and come at me! As legendary heroes go, you're a big fucking disappointment, you know?*

— Nanako Strikes-True, Galliard Black Fury

Due to the nature of the past, the changes to each of the time periods have already occurred, centuries before the characters were born. Therefore, the characters have no specific order of events to overcome Nightmaster's plans, and no one age must be visited first. The players have complete freedom to choose when and how they'll engage with each period — with the Storyteller's cooperation, of course.

Two factors may impact their choices. The first is that they only get one shot at each juncture. Once characters are part of events, they can't go back and retry until they're happiest with the results.

Secondly, each juncture carries the risk of depleting the character's resources. The characters may use talents, break fetishes, and even die. This is less of an issue for groups using troupe play (p. 50), but can be devastating for a single pack.

The scenes presented here are major events in the Wars — key times where that shaped the future of Garou and Fera forevermore. These aren't the only scenes that

## COMMUNICATING THROUGH THE AGES

Language evolves. A few hundred years can make speech almost unrecognizable — imagine what several thousand years can do. Adding to this challenge is the infancy of language in the Paleolithic era; people of this time have far fewer concepts than modern characters.

The level 2 Homid gift *Speech of the World* (W20, p.154) allows characters to overcome this difficulty, although even its magic isn't foolproof. Although the translation of language is perfect, the understanding of concepts may not be. Storytellers should call for Wits + Expression rolls for characters trying to understand cultures separated by time: difficulty 5 for those of the same time period, 6 when separated by up to 500 years, 7 for 500-2000 years distance, 8 for cultures within recorded ancient history, and 9 when attempting to communicate with prehistoric cultures.

were important to the war. The other chapters in this book give Storytellers a wealth of ideas to make their own key junctures to challenge players and defeat the Wurm.

None of the scenes in Act Two include strict victory conditions, and Storytellers should decide in each case if the characters' actions were sufficient to disrupt the corruptive forces and restore the proper outcome — or at least mitigate the damage as much as possible. Keep a tally of whether each slice of history falls to Gaia or the Wurm, as these triumphs affect time's flow and will greatly influence whether the characters can defeat Nightmaster when they finally confront him.

Although each Act takes characters further back in time, the scenes in Act Two are presented from most ancient to most recent, to help Storytellers better understand the flow of events.

## *Paleozoic and Mesozoic Eras (~200 million years ago)*

In the far depths of time, the Dragon Kings ruled the world. Two hundred millions years ago, before Gaia birthed the other shapeshifters, the Mokolé guarded Gaia alone. These intelligent reptiles made tools, built living cities from earth and plants as sophisticated as most modern human

## WHAT ARE THESE CREATURES?

These smooth-scaled bipedal reptilians are very different from the Dragon Kings described in Chapter 5 (p. 152). Their town lacks the grandeur of imperial days and their tools are built from natural fibers, not the wondrous gossamer of imagination.

This juncture is long after the Dragon Kings have fallen to become Mokolé. The villagers are one of the last surviving populations of Drachid. In another few generations the Drachid will be gone, and Dragon Kings' wonders will only be remembered in the Mnesis.

cities, and lived the Mnesis in ways unknown to their modern descendants. Every Mokolé knew as much or as little as desired, and the living Memory supplanted the need for written records or education. They were the sun's scholars, soldiers, and priests.

## *Temporal Threat*

Pentex doesn't care about any of that. Scientists working for Pentex's Neuro-Dynamic Laboratories have worked for decades to clone dinosaurs from fossilized genetic material and anonymous 'donor' samples. Pentex intends to make new mockery breeds or, failing that, develop theme parks so people can pay to enjoy the caged misery of broken-spirited reptiles.

The time rifts are a treasure trove of experimental material. When NDL learned of the passageways through whispered Pentex rumors, it seized the chance to collect actual specimens for dissection. NDL sent its best trackers and hunters, flanked by experimental rejects as cannon fodder, to spearhead its search for interesting times. This dedication — and the deaths of countless mutated victims — gave NDL what it sought. In the darkest depths of the Abyss, NDL found a passage to the time of dinosaurs.

NDL hunters immediately set to capturing as many animals as they could. They soon learned that their *ad hoc* hunting parties couldn't satisfy management's greed. NDL is sending larger holding pens and portable laboratories through the Abyss for *in situ* dissection and analysis.

The NDL hunters haven't been idle in protecting their base camp; they've discovered a town filled with a small-but-thriving population of smooth-scaled, bipedal reptilians. They're not sure what these are — they don't look like

modern Mokolé—and they're preparing a massive raid to capture as many as they can hold, and slaughter the rest.

### ***Modern and Historic Characters***

All characters are modern compared to these most ancient Mokolé. Eliminating the threat by destroying the hunters is a simple enough plan, but NDL employs some of the best shapeshifter hunters in the world, equipped with the best weapons money can buy. These hunters are iron willed and jaded from years of exposure to the Changing Breeds. They don't experience Delirium and carry silver and gold rounds as standard. The hunters work to understand the territory, set traps, prepare ambush zones, and instinctively shift tactics to minimize their weaknesses.

The hunters use pack tactics almost as well as Garou. They understand emotional weakness, and will injure one shapeshifter and leave her exposed to draw out her pack-mates, who must decide whether to attempt a rescue—and fall into the ambush—or let her die a slow and agonizing death. Those packs who try for rescue often discover she's been booby-trapped and crippled to prevent her warning other shapeshifters.

While the characters contend with the hunters, they also have the ancient Mokolé to worry about. Whether first contact between modern and ancient shapeshifters is peaceful or violent will depend heavily on the circumstances of the meeting; the characters may approach the Dragon Kings with the respect due Gaia's first children, or demand their own strength be recognized. Either way, the Mokolé will be alarmed that Gaia needed to create other Changing Breeds, and this meeting could taint the Mnesis for countless generations to come.

### ***Pre-history (~200,000 – 2,000 BCE)***

An exact date for the first War of Rage is impossible for modern-day shapeshifters to specify. Many skirmishes and conflicts born from simmering anger, mistrust, and accusations took place over thousands of years, in a multitude of disparate regions. What is remembered as the War of Rage could have stemmed from any of these.

The exact times or locations of the following scenes aren't specified, but these are temporally-significant events. Their outcomes shape the future. If the characters can't disrupt the Wyrms' machinations in these periods, the failure ripples into the past and reinforces Nightmaster's grip on time.

### ***Preemptive Assault***

Thousands of years before the first War of Rage, the different Changing Breeds worked in concert, each performing its duty for Gaia. These duties were a deep, inbuilt need,

and the shapeshifters didn't question their origin—they were a sacred gift from Gaia.

The spirits approved of the shapeshifters' purpose and reinforced the behavior with patronage and Gifts. The shapeshifters' purpose was strong and pure, and the tensions and Rage that eventually led the Garou to turn on their cousins had not even begun to simmer. But Gaia is a distant, unknowable entity, even to Celestines such as Luna and Helios. Whether she intended each Changing Breed to serve a specific role is as much a matter of faith as fact, and faith may often be tested and found wanting.

### ***Temporal Threat***

The Wyrms' forces aim to turn the Fera against the Garou in these earliest days before the werewolves gather strength in numbers and destroy their cousins. Banes skilled in perverting dreams and inflaming jealousies lead the assault, supported by Nightmaster's Black Spiral Dancers to ensure the Fera witness Garou violating and damaging their territories.

Doubts-in-the-Dark is the largest and meanest of a troupe of Harpies (**W20 Book of the Wyrms**, p. 147) unleashed on this juncture. These Banes soar though the wide open skies and seek out clans of Garou to torment. Once found, they build nests nearby to learn the mistrusts and jealousies that drive the werewolves, and to identify what the Garou value most. These corrupted spirits steal these items and plant them in the possession of others. If this isn't sufficient to foment enmity they use their Charms to inflame ill feeling.

Nocturnae (**W20 Book of the Wyrms** p. 148) and other lesser spirits follow in the Harpies' wake, all eager to taint Garou purity and offer them patronage and Wyrms' Gifts in return for neglecting their duties. Black Spiral Dancers defile the territories and kin of the Fera and ensure witnesses survive to tell of the depravity and slaughter.

If the Wyrms' gambit succeeds, the War of Rage starts prematurely, with word of the Garou's corruption quickly spreading via the Corax and Camazotz. Many Fera attack the tainted Garou to excise the corruption; the werewolves defend, with some using profane powers of corruption, further reinforcing the Fera's belief. The Garou are more able warriors than their cousins, but they can't stand before the combined might of all other Breeds. The Garou suffer devastating losses, and never recover to be the force Gaia needs to withstand later Wyrms' assaults.

### ***Modern Characters***

Stopping the Black Spiral Dancers is the most obvious and visible role for the characters, but the more insidious threat comes from the Banes lurking in the Umbra. The Harpies lead the Wyrms' Umbral forces in this period, but they're spread thinly across the pre-African plains. Other

Banes follow the Harpies' lead on who to target and corrupt for maximum impact.

Identifying and eliminating Harpy nests makes the other Banes panic and disperse. They'll latch onto random victims if not dealt with, but their uncoordinated attacks can be countered by the ancient shapeshifters. Working together to defeat these lingering malevolent spirits will help reinforce the bonds between the different Breeds and improve relations before the Garou's Rage and arrogance inevitably takes them all to war.

### ***Historic Characters***

The shapeshifters of this period lack experience in confronting the Wyrms and combatting its more subtle minions. Discovering the Harpy manipulations and disrupting them would be worthy beginnings to some of the legends shared among clan groups and between neighbors.

The Black Spiral Dancers are savage and unknown foes, using strange Gifts and tactics. They need to rely on their natural weapons as they want to be mistaken for the werewolves of this time. Confrontation with them is stacked against the ancient Fera, but through courage and using knowledge of the terrain to best advantage, the shapeshifters could resist the strange werewolves long enough for others to arrive and help.

### ***Disrupted Network***

Throughout history, caerns were the strongholds, transit hubs and communications centers of the Changing Breeds. They're a dwindling resource in the modern age, hoarded and protected at any cost, but once they were plentiful and taken for granted as one of Gaia's gifts. The shapeshifters had no innate knowledge of how to sanctify and use caerns — the rituals were developed through trial and error, and by slowly teasing information and assistance from spirits. Over the space of a few thousand years, Gaia's children established a vast network of caerns connected via Moon Bridges, giving them a flexibility of movement and exposure to different places and cultures beyond anything dreamed of by the humans of the time.

By now, the shapeshifters have encountered Wyrms spirits. These earliest spawn are limited in number and power, and mostly isolated to small areas of pestilence and corruption surrounded by the Wyld's open, living expanse. Here, before the Impergium and the rise of cities, the Wyld is supreme. The shapeshifters have Gifts to detect the influence of



the Wyrms (and the other Triatic forces) but know it to be a natural — if sometimes troublesome — aspect of the world around them, and not the existential threat it will become.

### ***Temporal Threat***

Martin Graves is a primary research consultant to Endron Oil's Environmental Rehabilitation subdivision. Endron's goal is to develop processes to return the appearance of pristine wilderness to environmental wastelands, thereby silencing critics, while leaving the lands spiritually dead.

Graves doesn't care about the damage his work causes as long as he advances science. He leapt at the chance to lead top secret field testing for the environmental alteration agents in an undisclosed location, but was less thrilled to learn he would be live testing on werewolf territory. He's backed up by a small team of engineers and technicians, and a larger force of three full First Teams. His forward-deployed unit is the vanguard of what Pentex sees as a global program, and management expects results.

Travel through the Abyss to ancient history terrified Graves but he's maintaining a professional façade. His team has established a (modern-provisioned) forward operating base and captured a few shapeshifters from a nearby caern for interrogation. Language and cultural barriers have proved insurmountable and Graves is considering having the First Teams cleanse the area of resistance and take over so they can subvert the primitive caern network.

If Graves is successful, the spiritual corruption of this single node will spread from caern to caern, tainting their purity with scientifically-refined Wym-poison. The innocuous Wym spirits of this age will be drawn to the taint and corrupted by its influence, thereafter plaguing the network and making travel a dangerous and draining experience. Ancient shapeshifters won't understand why the network is corrupted; as Graves' forward base transforms into a full taint-producing industrial facility, the shapeshifters will find that no amount of cleansing rituals and Gifts can remove the taint for long. The shapeshifters abandon the Moon Bridges — too many lives are lost trying to pass through them — and stop using the caerns. With the loss of the sacred bastions of Changing Breed society, the shapeshifters won't be able to form a consolidated resistance to the coming Banestorm.

### ***Modern Characters***

A direct assault on the Pentex facility is a simple and effective solution, followed by cleansing the area and removing all traces of any lingering taint. The primary difficulty to this approach is the presence of fully-equipped First Teams guarding the base. The secondary difficulty is how advanced Pentex's plans are. The characters will have to learn Pentex's plan from records and captives to ensure they fully repair the damage.

If the characters destroy Pentex's presence before it takes over the caern, the shapeshifters living there will be mostly none the wiser. They've lost a few members who never returned from hunting, and the characters will need to decide what to do with Pentex's (suffering but still alive) captives once they destroy the resistance.

If Graves' team has eliminated the local population and begun polluting the caern with Endron's tainted petrochemical reserves, the safest course of action is to destroy the caern and its Moon Bridges to other sites, before purifying the land with Gifts and rites. The loss of the caern will be an unsolvable mystery to the ancient Breeds who may one day reclaim the area, but to leave it intact will only allow the insidious spiritual corruption to slowly seep into the network and result in a slower but eventual victory for the Wym.

### ***Historic Characters***

The shapeshifters of this period are not as naïve as a thousand years before, but they still lack experience with Wym corruption, as opposed to destruction. Some Wym-spawn always manage to find their way to conflicts and places of tension and anger, and the Theurges and spiritualists of other Breeds study and learn from them as they do spirits of the Weaver and the Wyld.

At this point in history the Changing Breeds often work together to build and tend caerns. Racial bias and mistrust still exists, but it is not as pronounced as when the War of Rage begins. The shapeshifters are outmatched by the Pentex firepower but have the advantage of versatility. The First Teams have modern weapons, but not the flexibility of shapeshifting and Gifts. If historic characters are smart, and isolate and eliminate individuals, they could overwhelm the Pentex forces — and then face the mystery and wonders of pre-fabricated pop-up dwellings and shining bright lights. It's possible that the ancient shapeshifters could destroy the physical threat but expose themselves to spiritual degradation and corruption. This leaves modern characters with an unenviable decision if they find the caern's noble protectors compromised by their curiosity.

### ***Umbral Ambush***

Breeding rights with the dispersed human (and pre-human) populations were a constant point of contention between the different Breeds. Human populations dwindled as Gaia's surface cooled and food became scarce. Conflicts over territory became fiercer. The Garou Stands-as-Stone (see "Kin," p. 87) claimed breeding rights over at least half of humanity on behalf of all werewolves. He reasoned that Garou were Gaia's most important children and without werewolves for her defense, the other Breeds were effectively irrelevant. The Simba Gleam-of-Endings denied the Garou's arrogant claim and called on Bastet and the other Fera to reject the Garou. This defiance further kindled Garou Rage, and led to outright

conflict between the shapeshifters. This divide could be said to be the most obvious start to the first War of Rage.

The Garou and Fera were reasonably well matched in their hard-fought, bloody battles, save for the Garou's greater access to the Umbra. The werewolves made excellent use of their sidestepping abilities, and moved back and forth across the Gauntlet, flanking and ambushing their more physically-bound cousins.

### ***Temporal Threat***

Nightmaster's forces understood the advantage afforded by the Garou's mobility, but also recognized its weakness. The werewolves relied too heavily on flanking and ambushing their foes. In direct fights, the Fera's multi-breed, cooperative tactics gave them battlefield superiority. By crippling the Garou's mobility the Wyrms would change history, weakening the Garou and making the Fera overconfident in their abilities.

Black Spiral Dancers, Banes, and other despoiled creatures with Umbral access flooded to this time to trap and murder Garou. Every time the werewolves stepped sideways, foul creatures wielding tainted magic fell upon them. With each defeat, the surviving Garou — Nightmaster always wanted some survivors — retreated to their own territories, carrying fanciful tales of the Fera striking unholy bargains with these creatures. The stories of defeat drove the Garou's Rage to new heights and they redoubled their Umbral efforts, to limited effect.

Other Garou avoided the Umbral traps and fought the Fera in the physical world. The werewolves' ferocity was matched by the Bastet and Mokolé, and their strength was dwarfed by the Gurahl. The Garou couldn't win without their mobility advantage.

Some rare Garou recognized that an external foe was at work, one which threatened all Gaia's children and required their unity to defeat. These wolves sought parlay with the Fera, to strike for peace and combine their might against the Wyrms creatures. They quickly discovered the Fera's good faith had died with the Garou's first attacks. The Fera murdered the peace-seeking werewolves who didn't flee. These peacemakers encountered no less disgust and violence when they tried to convince the Garou to surrender to the Fera for survival. Branded traitors, the peace lovers had to defend themselves against the Rage of their own kind, who were frustrated at their failure to defeat the Fera.

### ***Modern Characters***

Modern-day heroes have several direct options. They can fight the Black Spiral Dancers and Banes head-on, rally spirits loyal to Gaia to confound the Banes and distract the Spirals, or ally with the ancient Garou to warn them of the ambushes and turn the tables on their foes — if they can win the Garou's trust.

The characters may also try to ease tensions between Fera and Garou by brokering a truce to counter the ambushes. This is difficult as the characters need to both persuade the Fera to listen to the Garou, but also convince the Garou that the Changing Breeds aren't allied with the Wyrmspawn. This is further complicated by the vast differences in language, culture, and shared understanding between modern characters and their ancient counterparts.

### ***Historic Characters***

Players have an excellent opportunity to be part of the decisions that turned Garou against Fera. Storytellers can rewind events to before the battle lines were drawn, and have the players take the role of Stands-as-Stone and his pack, or Gleam-of-Endings and her pride. Legends speak of the Garou's demands and the Simba's refusal, but these stories overlook the dwindling resources faced by the different Breeds, their starving kinfolk, and the desperation they all felt.

History has forgotten the many times Garou and Simba met to broker an amicable agreement, and the constant messages borne by Corax and Camazotz between the two sides. Legends recall the Garou's demands, but were these words what the werewolves said, or were they twisted in translation and understanding by the messengers — inadvertently or otherwise?

Despite whatever noble intentions Stands-as-Stone and Gleam-of-Endings held in their hearts, ultimately both sides were eager to shed blood and allow might to determine who was right. Only the most persuasive characters could make conflict not seem inevitable, but the players could make history by resolving the situation with words instead of fang and claw.

### ***Unstoppable Epidemic***

Tensions now run high between shapeshifters. Thousands of years of misunderstanding and entitlement have led them to the brink of war. While they don't live among humans yet, they linger nearby for access to the breeding stock. This proximity means skirmishes spill out to human settlements — collateral damage that the self-important shapeshifters ignore.

For their own protection, the humans came together in greater numbers and formed the first towns. They worked the land and developed agriculture and technologies to improve their lives. Though shapeshifters could look human, their magical blessings and spirit patronage meant they often took their intelligence and creativity for granted. The humans had no such talents and used innovation and technology to protect themselves from the monsters in the night.

Larger human colonies bring vermin, and for a time the Ratkin rejoice in humanity's creativity — but the Fera

know anything good will attract hated Garou. Soon enough the Ratkin discover a near-outcast Garou tribe living and hunting among these human communities. Garou feigning humanity disturb the Ratkin, especially now that werewolves have easier breeding access. The Ratkin's delight at the early towns turns to suspicion and they conceive a great and terrible plan in the darkness. They will concoct and release a plague to scourge humanity and cull their numbers – and thereby reduce the Garou.

The Ratkin's pox is wonderfully successful. Humans die by the thousands, gutting the cities and leaving them near empty. Unfortunately, the plague soon spreads to other, smaller human settlements, killing the Kinfolk of the other Fera. The Garou sense the sickness is unnatural and hunt for someone to blame for their lost kin. They murder many innocent Fera before they discover the Ratkin as the architects of death.

### ***Temporal Threat***

The Ratkin's plague inflicted terrible loss on humanity, with few left to remember the dead. The few survivors had no time to mourn or reflect. They moved away from the pestilence and left the villages to the dead. Forgotten, the restless ghosts lingered for years without purpose or passion. They eventually faded from the living lands and found themselves in the dark, hopeless caverns of the Abyss. Over the millennia, the thousands of dead dwindled as more fell victim to oblivion. The strongest, hungriest, and angriest ghosts embraced madness to continue. Nightmaster found the insane dead in the darkest caves and forced them to submit to his will.

When the Abyss tore through history these hungry ghosts clamored to be released to slake their thirst for blood. When Nightmaster's scouts reported a tunnel to the plague times, the fallen Garou gave a rare smile and released the delirious ghosts to hunt and destroy the Ratkin, their neighbors, friends, and perhaps even their former living selves.

Ratkin aren't well equipped to deal with ghosts, and the wererats had never encountered hungry ghosts like these before. Forged from thousands of years of pain, fury, and the hell of the Abyss, these ghosts tear through the walls separating living and dead to terrorize and destroy anything in their path. They can sense the Ratkin who murdered them with sickness and concentrate on killing the wererats, before turning their attentions on other sources of hot blood.

### ***Modern Characters***

Most modern shapeshifters aren't better equipped to deal with ghosts than the Ratkin, but they may have better access to millennia of lore about these corrupted spirits. The hungry ghosts behave more like spirits than human shades – with the infusion of Oblivion into their souls they function as Banes, following the rules for such as found

in W20. An additional piece of occult lore, that may be discovered through research or trial and error, is that each hungry ghost's still-living self is anathema to it. The attacks from these humans inflict unsoakable damage.

### ***Historic Characters***

Shapeshifters from history have access to the ghosts' families and loved ones, and an intimate knowledge of the customs and funeral rites for the dead. Though the ghosts are insane after thousands of years of darkness and torment, their deepest cores remember what they lost and why they cannot rest. If the ghosts can be placated long enough with the correct supplications and ceremonies, they can finally – and peacefully – go to their rest and move on to whatever comes next.

### ***Ensnared in the Webs***

The War has raged for centuries and nothing short of the Fera's extinction will satisfy the Garou. The Ananasi suffered particularly poorly – both from the Garou and the claws of the Fera. No one understood that the werespiders were forced into serving the Wyrms to keep their Mother-Queen safe, all they saw was betrayal.

Despite the hate and suspicion, the Ananasi were key to the Fera's survival. The werespiders concocted one solution for all three of their problems. By tricking the Garou they could free Queen Ananasa, distract the werewolves long enough to hide the Fera and end the war, and reclaim some good faith with the remaining shapeshifters.

The details fell to Anansi, the Queen's favored child. Gifted with an unmatched cunning, he located Queen Ananasa's opal prison in the depths of Malfeas. He persuaded the Corax to spread tales that shattering the Wyrms' Heart would weaken and possibly destroy the Wyrms. The Garou still trusted the Corax as messengers and believed what they heard. The Corax shared the tales in good faith, unaware that the Garou would eventually see this as an enemy betrayal.

The Garou, ever hungry for glory, united against a foe more worthy of their attention. They marshalled unprecedented numbers to quest through the Umbra and into the deepest layers of Malfeas, all willing to sacrifice their lives to bring the Wyrms to heel. After a vast crusade against the vilest nightmares the Wyrms could summon to resist them, the Garou found the opal prison and assaulted it. Unknown to the werewolves, Anansi had followed their crusade and was prepared for this moment. The prison cracked and Queen Ananasa could again communicate with her children. Anansi heard his Queen's orders, gathered her essence, and fled back to the physical world through hidden paths accessible only by crawlerlings.

The Garou, knowing they'd been tricked but confused about exactly what had happened, were even more enraged.

The Wyrms' remaining forces assaulted the werewolves with unprecedented ferocity. The Garou fought their way back out of Malfeas at terrible cost. Fewer than a tenth of the warriors who began the journey survived.

Although the Garou nation mourned, their Rage wouldn't let them stop. They returned to the physical world, searching for the Ananasi, the Corax, and the other Fera to suffer the consequences of their sorrow. What they found was silence. The Ananasi used the distraction to bring the Changing Breeds to their hidden places, concealed behind webs once again empowered by their Queen's presence.

The Garou's Rage was spent; they needed to rebuild their numbers, and tend the duties once performed by their cousins. The surviving Fera were safe, and would avoid the werewolves until the Apocalypse. The Ananasi found wary acceptance among the Fera, although the Corax harbored ill will for their deception.

The first War of Rage was over, and humanity advanced and thrived as so few monsters survived to hunt them in the night.

### ***Temporal Threat***

The Ragabash Black Spiral Dancer Rebecca Path-Twister works alone in this important juncture. Unlike other periods, here Path-Twister insisted on solitude and no one wanted the violence that would come from disagreeing with her. She'll call if she needs assistance, but for now she delights in the fresh corruptibility of the past and the sheer number of options available to her.

Perhaps she'll alert Malfeas about the Garou's impending raid, ensuring the opal prison is hidden away and impossible opposition waits for the werewolves. Or maybe she'll tell the Garou what she knows — they're unaware of Dancing the Black Spiral, so their guard will be lowered for a fellow werewolf. If they lay a trap for the Ananasi, the Fera will never be hidden, and the genocide will be complete.

All options are murderously delicious and she doesn't know which way to turn. Her indecision is her weakness, as she's still debating which path she should take when the characters arrive.

### ***Modern Characters***

Correcting this juncture is difficult as it hasn't yet gone wrong. Some characters may look at the normalcy of this period and return to the time streams, convinced that the Wyrms' future minions aren't at work. Path-Twister's solitude makes her difficult to locate. She's not leaving a trail of destruction in her wake (yet), and she knows how to hide her tracks and disappear into a crowd. The characters need to work quickly to find and stop Path-Twister before she acts. If they eliminate her threat before she decides, history continues its assigned course. If they delay, she'll

head down a path and the characters will find it nearly impossible to save the Garou from Malfeas, or the Fera from the combined might of the Garou nation.

### ***Historic Characters***

The end of the first War of Rage is filled with opportunity. The legends remember Anansi's role, but dozens of Ananasi played their part in locating their Queen, convincing the Corax, and confounding the enraged Garou. The names of the great Garou who led the assault into Malfeas have been lost, but now the players can take the fight to the heart of the Wyrms and tear it out.

Characters have the chance to detect Path-Twister's manipulations and work with or against her. They may not understand where this strange Garou came from or how she knows so much, but she's a threat to Fera interests and a boon to Garou. How will either side react if another group of strangers from unknown lands expose her for the Wyrmspawn she is? Will her historic allies favor her over other strangers, or will they demand proof? This could see the players take up their usual characters to defeat Path-Twister in whatever trials their historic characters demand. Players can be sure that Rebecca has nearby allies to call upon — even though she appears to work alone — who will work hard to twist challenge outcomes in the Wyrms' favor.

## ***The Age of Expansion (~1500-1600 CE)***

The second War of Rage was more limited in scope and duration than the first war, but was no less devastating to the Fera murdered at the claws of European Garou. Modern lore-keepers remember the Garou's incursion and the horrific bloodshed, but they either forget or don't know that the second War of Rage revolved around the rise and fall of Bat.

### ***The Rise of Bat***

In several South American cultures Bat was seen as a god to be worshipped and respected. Whether Bat created this worship or just took advantage of established human culture is long forgotten. At the heights of Mayan culture he was venerated and feared. The Mayans worshipped Bat's image as one of their death gods and Bat used this adoration to install his shapeshifting children into positions of worship and influence. The Camazotz were initially reluctant to embrace the recognition and come into the light, but their totem's whispered urgings eventually drew them from the darkest caves to whisper counsel, directives, and information from the shadows into the ears of their human worshippers.

These South American Camazotz openly practiced their blood rites. They worked in front of humans with Luna shining down brightly upon them. The werebats also developed daylight



versions of these rites — no less powerful, but with different intents and outcomes. The rites performed under Helios' harsh glare could be led and empowered by kinfolk supported by humans, and the Camazotz encouraged their worshippers to embrace the werebats' power.

Though the Garou perceived the blood sacrifices and rites as profane, the American Camazotz were protected from Wyrms corruption as their open practice kept them from dabbling with Wyrms-tainted variants of the rituals. The Garou only saw what they wanted — Wyrms-tainted acts that should be scourged from Gaia's face. Tragically, the fact that these werebats were open, honest, and dedicated to Gaia sealed their doom at the claws of xenophobic, arrogant werewolves.

### ***Temporal Threat***

Although the Wyrms delights in Bat's fall, the totem's screaming, tormented madness means he no longer empowers the Camazotz's creation rite. Seeing a second chance for Bat to have a controlled fall and serve with (some) sanity, the Wyrms mobilizes the last Xibalan from frozen stasis deep in the Umbra and sends them to the Abyss. These Xibalan hide from their Gaian siblings while trying to reach Bat and whisper to him about the coming darkness and Garou slaughter. They hope he will command the humans to keep their worship hidden and safe from werewolf eyes. If the fallen werebats succeed in convincing Bat to remain in the darkness, the Camazotz will perform their blood rites in hidden, dark places, and the Garou won't eradicate the werebats. Bat, fearful and hidden, will urge his children to follow him into the Wyrms' embrace. Xibalan numbers will surge and the Wyrms' intelligence network will be greatly enhanced in the end days.

### ***Modern Characters***

Bat was one of Gaia's most fickle followers. He was her supreme spymaster; no Wyrms stronghold could keep Bat from discovering its secrets and reporting them to Gaia's faithful. Bat taught the Camazotz to be like him, to discern the truth behind secrets, to understand why they needed to be revealed, and to report them to the other Changing Breeds.

## **THE WYRM IN THE SECOND WAR OF RAGE**

Nightmaster's minions must be more cautious in this era. The Garou (and Fera) know the Wyrms as a hated foe. Wyrms-detecting Gifts are widespread — Black Spiral Dancers, fomori, and Banes can be rooted out and fought by the shapeshifters from these periods.

Nightmaster's servants and allies counter this by abandoning subtlety whenever possible. They bring larger forces to these times and isolate and drive away local resistance before indulging in their wickedness.

This means the threat in each period will usually be easier for characters to identify, but the resistance they must overcome will be much greater than experienced in ancient times.

Despite his skill, Bat was a conflicted spirit. He was born to darkness but brought things into the light. His faith in Gaia cycled through heights of rabid support before plunging to moody, dark silence. In the darkness he flirted with turning to the Wyrms. Each time, Luna and other totems drew Bat back from the darkness, but with every cycle he fell closer to the Wyrms's clutches. The death of the Camazotz and Bat's final descent into madness was an incredible loss to Gaia, but it was preferable to Bat willingly turning to the Wyrms. If Bat served the Wyrms with sanity and purpose, the ultimate spy would reveal all secrets to the Wyrms, and nothing could prevent Gaia's destruction.

The characters must prevent Bat from willingly serving the Wyrms. They must bring his worship into the light where his blood rites are exposed and demonized. The characters must carry the weight of all Camazotz blood on their hands, or no caern or secret place will be safe.

If the characters act fast and intercept the Xibalan before they reach Bat, events will progress as history remembers. The South American Camazotz could be vital allies in this hunt — they'll likely learn of the presence of fallen werebats long before the other Breeds do, and they can navigate the darkness and lead the characters to the fallen invaders. This will require far more diplomacy and persuasiveness than history's Garou used, and may mark the characters for attack or capture by the Spanish forces.

## **XIBALAN**

The Xibalan appear in *W20 Book of the Wyrms*. Key details of these fallen Camazotz are included here for those Storytellers without access to that book.

The Xibalan believed they served Bat as his only true followers, who understood his enduring service to the Wyrms. They thought his temporary service to Gaia was a brief period of daylight in his existence. The Xibalan were his heralds, who explored the endless darkness to mark a path for Bat to find his way home.

Small groups of Xibalan emerged from every Camazotz population, but the South American Camazotz who drew the Shadow Lords' ire were the least corrupted population. Their openly-practiced blood rituals brought the rites out of the darkness and let them quickly identify and destroy what few Xibalan emerged.

The Xibalan were a persistent weeping boil to the Camazotz breed. Their teachings and beliefs seemed impervious to permanent eradication. Loyal Camazotz worked tirelessly to locate and destroy the Xibalan but some always escaped to restart the infection — almost as if Bat himself helped ensure some of his fallen children always existed, just in case. The number of Xibalan seemed to ebb and flow with the state of Bat's mind and his dedication to Gaia. When Bat's faith in the Celestine wavered, the Xibalan population thrived. When he regained confidence and committed himself to her cause, the Camazotz seemed better able to find and destroy Xibalan nests.

## **Historic Characters**

The Camazotz know of Xibalan and the corruptive rites they practice. The purity of the South American werebats means the other shapeshifters are less wary of the fallen. The Xibalan will seek to recruit allies among the Fera to help assault and distract their pure cousins, so the tainted bats can approach Bat while his loyal guards are distracted. They'll use lies and misdirection to do so, trying to convince the other Breeds that the Camazotz are the threat and need to be destroyed. The Xibalan need to be cautious and not alert the Europeans to the threat, as the Garou launching an assault, no matter the justification, would hasten Bat's fall.

## *The Golden Empire*

When Cortés forged an alliance against the Aztec nation — an alliance aimed at acquiring gold and glory — he used his soldiers' superior firepower in devastating demonstrations to the Aztecs. If they resisted he would annihilate them with cannons and rifles. In the history that should-have-been, the Aztecs were wary of the invaders' weapons but were brave and unbowed.

### *Temporal Threat*

Thanks to Pentex interference, when Cortés ordered his men to fire their positions were engulfed in fiery balls of high-explosive rocketry. Spanish arquebuses were outmatched by automatic weapons fire. The Aztecs had powerful allies from unknown, magical lands, ready to repel the Spanish invaders and establish the Aztec empire for ages to come.

In return, Pentex has small demands. A tribute of gold, an offering of the nation's strongest warriors — to fuse with their 'magic' and train in the use of their weapons — and access to the Aztec priests who led the empire in religious rituals. Poisoned by the Wyrms, the darkly glorious Aztec empire will rise above all challengers. Its elite fomori shock troops will conquer all other nations with their advanced weapons, and the people of the empire will perform corrupted blood rites for the glory of their new serpentine god.

### *Modern Characters*

Characters can fight Pentex with equivalent firepower, bringing a modern war to history. They should have little trouble convincing other modern Breeds to join the fight, overwhelm Pentex, and bring an end to the Aztec empire. Alternatively, the characters can employ more subtle tactics and move through the enhanced Aztec forces with assassination raids and sabotage, until the empire's troops are exhausted and weapons are disabled. The resulting confusion and damage to morale make the empire an easy target for Cortés' remaining forces.

### *Historic Characters*

The audacity of Pentex's scheme is a rare opportunity for European Garou and South American Fera to unite against a common enemy. Building such an alliance won't be easy—most Garou assume the Wyrms' presence is somehow the natives' fault—but characters who exercise cautious and careful diplomacy can bring both sides together in a way not seen since before the first War of Rage. Once the common enemy is defeated the alliance is likely to fracture, but dedicated characters could try and maintain it for as long as possible in the hope of building understanding between the Breeds.

## *The Fall of Bat*

The Camazotz blood sacrifices and corruptive rites—as the Garou insisted on believing—were quite safe for the American Camazotz. Bat's bringing his children into the light reduced the temptation to practice Wyrms-tainted variants of the rituals. Garou prejudices kept them from seeing the Gaia-blessed benefits of the rites, and made them focus only on the superficial trappings of blood. Even though their senses didn't detect Wyrms-taint, they believed the taint was cunningly concealed rather than nonexistent. The werewolves' open dedication to their patron and Gaia was the tragedy that sealed their doom.

### *Temporal Threat*

This is the Wyrms' final chance to ensnare Bat in its coils in such a way that he continues empowering the Camazotz birthing rites. The Xibalan can't be trusted with such an important task, so Lord Steel, the Maeljin Incarna of Hatred, leaves his throne and travels into history. Lord Steel takes particular delight in this task, as his mortal incarnation was a conquistador who relished the pain and suffering he brought to the civilizations of Central and South America. Lord Steel can only bring his elite guard with him for protection — 13 Scraggs of unmatched ferocity and power — as unknown fluctuations in the Abyss' hunger prevent his entire army marching to war.

Lord Steel will confront Bat and fill the totem with seething hatred for what the Garou do to his children. This hatred will replace the fear and despair that historically drives Bat's fall, and the spirit will embrace the Wyrms, offering all his children and their power to the Wyrms' service.

### *Modern and Historic Characters*

Regardless of the characters' time, they share a united goal. Lord Steel's arrival puts forth waves of corruptive Essence and taint, registering to all Wyrms-detecting senses within 500 miles. This sense grows stronger the closer the characters get to Lord Steel.

Fighting Lord Steel is an epic battle across the physical world and the Umbra, and the characters would be best served drawing together a powerful force of allies before confronting the Maeljin Incarna. Although the characters have no way of knowing, Lord Steel's mortal predecessor is present in this period and place, and time rejects such duality — even with the powers of Oblivion gnawing at its fabric. Unknown to Lord Steel, he is mortal in this period and could be killed by a supremely dedicated and lucky force.

Also unknown to the Maeljin Incarna is that his mortal self is his bane. Should the human who will become Lord Steel face him in combat, every blow struck by the human inflicts Aggravated wounds on Lord Steel, and every blow Lord Steel lands on his former self is reflected back onto

his current form, bringing him closer to destruction. How anyone would discover this weakness and locate the nameless human is left to Storyteller and player ingenuity.

## ***The War of Tears (~1788-1980 CE)***

The War of Tears was paradoxically larger and smaller than the second War of Rage. It encompassed more years and engulfed more territory. That it was primarily a civil war between Garou makes it smaller; though they murdered an entire tribe, the werewolves lived on. The War of Tears lacked the destruction of an entire Changing Breed – though the werethylacines might have disagreed, had anyone remained to sing their legends.

### ***Invasion***

The Abyssal tendrils that penetrated time could barely touch the Bunyip. As described in *The Land Out of Time* (p. 21), Australia was a place where the time streams came together but never touched the land. This convergence wasn't a juncture in itself; it was a central exchange where the timelessness of the environment made it more resistant to the Abyss' influence.

This timelessness came to an end when the European Garou invaded Bunyip protectorates and destabilized Gaia's time mechanisms. This slaughter introduces just enough weakness for the Abyss to crack through, unleashing the Wyrms' forces to search for mischief and destruction.

### ***Temporal Threat***

The Wyrms' legions don't know much about central Australia. The Wyrms has outposts in the Outback, including polluting mines and radioactive waste dumps. Near Uluru, a Pentex subsidiary runs profitable soul-corrupting luxury resorts and casinos, perched beside poverty-stricken indigenous camps where the Bunyip's kin live with addiction and desperation. Despite this, none of the Wyrms' servants understand the significance of the area, or what they're neighbors to.

The tortured Abyssal spirits that tumble from desert cracks feel the weight of time pressing upon them. They want nothing more than to be free of the Abyss and its ongoing torments. Though on Earth they are shackled to Oblivion, their leashes only extended so far. The spirits' long exposure to the Abyss somehow lets them see the songlines flowing across the land, though they don't know what these rushing pathways mean. They feel the significance of these dreaming tracks and follow to see where they lead.

When these spirits arrive at Uluru, they behold the monolith with awe. The time streams flow through cramped caves and twisted tunnels towards the rock's heart. The spirits follow the passageways and gain some understanding of the

location's significance. They know this place can counter Nightmaster's plans. The spirits see this information as their bargaining chip for freedom. If they warn Nightmaster, he could destroy the Gaian resistance, and reward the spirits with their freedom.

Ethereal alarms ripple in the cavern, warning the Bunyip of the intruders. Sentry spirits swarm to the location. The spirits' intrusions haven't gone unnoticed. The Abyssal spirits flee back into the desert, scattering in different directions as each follows random time streams. They can't simply cross the Gauntlet and fall into the Abyss – their chains forbid it – so they crisscross the desolate plains, trying to return to the Abyssal tendril. They find the desert landscape and its unfamiliar features completely disorienting.

The Bunyip scramble a response but not before the spirits have fled. The area where they lingered stinks of the Abyss. The Garou understand the threat Nightmaster poses – if he knew of Uluru, he could destroy any possibility of saving Gaia. Neither the Bunyip nor the characters can risk Nightmaster knowing Uluru's significance. They need to track and destroy the spirits before they return to the Abyss.

The race is on between desperate Garou on their home turf and ages-old spirits hungry for freedom. The spirits are broken and shackled, but they're survivors of the Abyss, filled with all the anger and dangerous cunning that entails.

### ***Modern Characters***

The most likely participants are either the players' primary characters, or the Bunyip who guard and guide Uluru. These events can be introduced after any juncture, as long as they occur before the characters confront Nightmaster in Act Three. The discovery and betrayal of Uluru is possibly most dramatically used when the characters' resources are depleted, and they're returning from a difficult time juncture already feeling like fate is weighted against them.

If the Storyteller and players wish, they can have the Abyssal spirits escape pursuit and ensure they alert Nightmaster's lieutenants. Nightmaster is already too far advanced in his plans to divert his own attention, but he dispatches a horde of banes, fomori, and other desperate Abyssal creatures to spew forth and do battle in the Australian wilderness.

The characters don't have much time to warn their Bunyip allies, and will need to fight hard to contain the incursion while the Bunyip work to divert temporal energies to patch over the Abyssal rift. If the characters fail here, the only chance Gaia has is for them to hurl themselves into the Abyss and hunt Nightmaster through the dangers of his own territory.

### ***Historic Characters***

Historic characters are unlikely to be involved in these events, unless the Abyssal spirits escape and the desperate

battle for Uluru occurs. If this happens, the Bunyip can bring forth heroic legends from history. They're unlikely to think of it while distracted by sealing the Abyssal rift and fighting off Nightmaster's forces. The players should urge the Bunyip to drag legendary shapeshifters from any time into the present to fight the evil. The players may also want to be more directly involved in plucking these heroes from time. For this, it's simple for the Storyteller to move the Bunyip to fighting Nightmaster's scouts, leaving the characters to delve into the time streams to select champions for the life-and-death fight over Gaia's future.

## *More Slices of History*

The scenes presented above are just the beginning of what's possible. The Changing Breeds have a deep history, and many more junctures suffer from the Wyrms touch. Below are brief snapshots of other events for Storytellers to expand into full scenes or draw upon as inspiration for their own historic adventures. Additionally, the other chapters of this book are rich with detail, and include specific examples of when and how characters can engage with and influence historic and legendary events.

### *Paleolithic Periods*

#### *Clipped Wings*

The Corax are easy allies to almost all the other breeds including the Garou. They move swiftly between different caerns spreading rumors and information and are welcomed for the news they bring. The Camazotz are harder to work with, but their information is less embellished than the gossip spread by the wereravens. Jealousy runs between both shapeshifters. The Corax mistrust the Camazotz because the bats don't appreciate the nuance of a good story, and dry facts often lack context. Conversely, the bats are wary of the way the ravens easily build rapport while selling lies as truth. Both messenger Breeds believe themselves most suited to Gaia's service, which makes both ideal targets for manipulation. Nightmaster's minions take the War of Rage airborne as they inflame differences, to disrupt the shapechangers' communications network and give battlefield superiority to the Wyrms.

#### *Invasive Species*

Most of the different Changing Breeds started in the same place, cradled together with the developing pre-human bipeds. Over thousands of years the shapeshifters moved and migrated across the world. They grew comfortable and forgot the ancient ties. Sometimes they even forgot about the existence of the far-away Breeds, as the distances were too great for even ancient Moon Bridges to span. What fresh misunderstandings and hatreds will develop when

the Wyrms spawn kidnap and dump foreign Breeds into the hearts of each other's territories? Will the disoriented, terrified, and furious shapeshifters unleash their Rage on those they think of as enemies? Will this bad blood ignite the War of Rage thousands of years before it's fated to begin?

### *The Great Prophecy's Lie*

When Gaia's climate changes and cools, the shapeshifters worry why she has made food scarce and kin die. The 13 Khara gather to perform the Rite of Future-Telling and determine Earth-mother's intentions. Each of them learns part of a greater secret that, when combined, tells of the suffering and horror to come, but speaking these secrets comes at a terrible price and greatly weakens each Khara. The embodiment of the Wyrms known as Cahlash whispers to his fallen Bastet children, the Histpah, (*W20 Book of the Wyrms*, p. 157) to come learn some of the greatest secrets in history and then lie about them. His price is a trifling thing — all they have to do is infiltrate and corrupt the Khara's great rite, thereby twisting and ruining the prophecy.

### *Unleashing the Unthinkable*

The Wyrms wasn't always subtle and cunning. In the earliest times, the Wyrms was brutal, direct, and devastating, such as with the Banestorm (p.67) that roused the Changing Breeds to action, alerted them to the Wyrms danger, and brought the Garou to war. With cunning generals such as Nightmaster, the Wyrms learns that warriors grow strong with conflict. The Garou fight fiercely because they are battle hardened. If no battles need fighting, Gaia has no need for warriors, and the Garou fail to thrive.

A powerful, persuasive force calms the ancient Wyrms' growing unrest and keeps the Banestorm at bay for a thousand years more. Denied a devastating foe to Rage against, the Garou weaken. The Fera grow strong in this period, but were never intended to be the warriors Gaia needed. The full force of the Banestorm will devastate Gaia — and the Garou are insufficient to withstand the attack. The Fera are enraged at the Garou's weakness and failure in their duty, and fall upon the werewolves in a Fera-driven War of Rage.

Faced with a choice between death and devastation or the loss of Gaia's last line of defense, do the characters have the will and ability to provoke the Wyrms into unleashing the Banestorm as planned?

### *Times of Expansion*

#### *Consolidated Resistance*

The Balam pushed the Incas to conquer and assimilate ever-greater territories beyond what they could control and defend. This inadvertently weakened their ability to resist the European invaders. The Incas were over-extended, poorly managed, and easy targets to divide and conquer.

The Wyrms' forces want to change this. They want to encourage the Incas to consolidate their holdings and prepare to resist the invaders within the stronghold heart of the empire. If they can do this, the Garou and European losses will be great and have significant flow-on effects for other New World campaigns — and the future.

### ***New Nobility***

The Shadow Lords were among the first European Garou to travel to the new lands, sickened by Silver Fang 'leadership,' desperate to escape the yokes of tradition, and wanting to take power and establish new territories for themselves. Nightmaster remembers the lessons he learned as a pup. If the Silver Fangs claim the Americas before the Shadow Lords, the proud Lords will chafe further as servants to the Fangs. Nightmaster hopes that with nowhere to vent their Rage the Shadow Lords will not only lay waste to the New World, but will war against the Silver Fangs in both America and Europe. This carnage ignites a third War of Rage, a nation-encompassing civil war that the Garou have managed to step back from time and again. If the proudest of tribes cannot escape the most hidebound, the battle lines will be drawn and the nation will fall upon itself.

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## ***Act Three: The Beginning and The End***

*I was once like you. Small, pathetic, and afraid. The Abyss took all of that and gave me conviction, power, and Rage. It gave me everything I desired, and now I repay its kindness by giving it everything.*

*You cannot stop me, little pup. Go enjoy your final days before Oblivion unmakes you and everything you cared for.*

*— Nightmaster*

The characters have braved the mysteries of deep time and fought Nightmaster's followers wherever they were found. They overcame the Wyrms' minions and either restored balance to time's critical junctures, or fled back into the timestream with their tails between their legs.

Now the characters travel back further than ever before, to the first days, when Gaia and the Triat balanced the energies that make up everything and laid down rules governing reality. Here the Weaver, Wyld, and Wyrms dance with each other to find the balance. Here Nightmaster enacts the rite he wrested from the Abyss. With the world in its infancy, Nightmaster's rite draws upon their vast, raw energies, and twists them into the antithesis of each other. Wyrms, Weaver, and Wyld will tear themselves apart, dissipating their power so that all that was and would ever be will return to Oblivion's nothingness.

If the characters can't defeat the fallen Shadow Lord here and now, Gaia is doomed, and Nightmaster's nihilistic obsession triumphs. Even the Wyrms will be no more, but with everything fallen into Oblivion this is a pyrrhic victory at best.

## ***Primordial Showdown***

On the plains of an as-yet-unnamed land, under the soupy fog of ever-changing skies, Nightmaster enacts his devastating rite. The thick air is difficult for modern lungs to breathe— great plumes of cyanobacteria pump oxygen into the atmosphere, but it's nowhere near enough to breathe normally. Characters with regenerative abilities must make Stamina + Endurance rolls (difficulty 6) every half hour — or every turn during physically stressful activities like combat — as their burning lungs struggle to cope. On a failure they struggle to breathe and suffer +1 difficulty to all rolls until they can return to a less hostile atmosphere. This difficulty increase accumulates with each failed roll. The characters' healing powers are focused entirely on the survival of their lungs, and they don't regenerate health levels of damage as normal; characters may spend a point of Rage to overdrive their healing abilities and regenerate as normal for a turn. Characters who do not need to breathe, such as those using the Survival Gift (W20 p. 176) don't need to roll and regenerate as normal. Characters who breathe the toxic atmosphere and can't regenerate very quickly die from suffocation.

Nightmaster is not alone. The Hive of the Jagged Maw stands around him, with dying proto-Dream Makers scattered across the plains, their ephemera slowly fading into nothingness. The Black Spirals chant in time with Nightmaster's words, offering oblations to the slowly forming wound of darkness in the sky. Abyssal tendrils spiral out from the fissure beside which Nightmaster draws forth the magic. This final incursion of the Abyss is greater than all the rest — this pathway extends to the lip of the void itself and offers nothing but devastation and Oblivion. The raw power of the Abyss destabilizes the connection between the characters and the Bunyip's homeland, collapsing their portal to other times and cutting off any hope of retreat. If they ever want to see home again, they have to confront Nightmaster.

The ribbons of inky blackness spiral from ground to sky, drawing together the Triatic powers in a mockery of their proper order. The dark lines weave with an intricacy beyond anything a mortal creature could conjure or control, spiraling into the perfect black disk in the heavens. Sporadic jagged spikes of dark lightning devour the light with their Wyld displays of anti-spark, tearing at the disk's edges, forcing a jagged edge on the growing Maw. The Wyrms' destruction draws in these non-energies with unmatched hunger, dragging natural concepts of light, sound, and warmth into the never-ending darkness.

## CHANGE THE FLOW, SHIFT THE MOMENTUM

Destabilizing time's junctures strengthened Nightmaster to be able to enact his doomed version of history. Time's momentum is with the Shadow Lord; if the characters confront Nightmaster without fixing history, they will lose. The universe dies — or rather, is never born.

Once the characters have mitigated the damage to one juncture, they stand a tiny chance. They can try to succeed, but add 5 to the difficulty of any rolls to confront or challenge Nightmaster. Fixing additional junctures reduces that penalty by 1 per juncture; after they've corrected six, they suffer no penalties. Further junctures restored increases the difficulty of Nightmaster's rolls by 1, to a maximum of 9. The characters can't benefit more from time's momentum without stealing Nightmaster's rite and meddling in the foundation powers of reality — and they'd be fools to try.

If the difficulty of a roll is increased to ten or more, the action automatically fails; if the character's dice pool is less than a third of the difficulty (round up), treat the roll as a botch.

With this primordial rite, Nightmaster mocks Gaia and the Triat by using powers reserved for these immense, unknowable beings. Gaia shakes with outrage and fear, and earthquakes try to knock everyone from their feet.

Characters must fight through the Black Spiral Dancers to reach Nightmaster. The ground is in flux with the massive energies harnessed by the rite; it moves constantly, cracks opening in an instant and muddy cliff faces heaving into existence one moment only to disappear into deep valleys the next. While the ground transforms, the air crackles with electricity and gray-green clouds swirl overhead. Lightning randomly strikes the earth, sometimes catching an unwary werewolf — particularly those swinging metal weapons about.

Nightmaster must concentrate on the rite and can't do anything against the characters until they reach him. Before then, he relies on the Hive to keep them at bay. If the characters do reach Nightmaster and appear capable of actually defeating him, Grythyg flees back into the Abyss. The other Black Spiral Dancers know Nightmaster will murder them for failure if he returns to the Abyss, and won't retreat unless it seems Nightmaster may actually die.

For all his bravado, Nightmaster is exhausted and weakened from performing the rite. He will fight — and he's tough enough that, even diminished, he may win — but if the characters are clearly stronger he'll fall back to his familiar territory by diving into the rift. The characters can leap in after him, hoping that they land somewhere on the Abyssal cliffs, and don't fall straight into Oblivion.

Even if the characters manage to kill Nightmaster before he flees, the Abyssal rift is their only chance to escape this period. They know that Grythyg waits for them, but not what reinforcements she can call upon.

## Nightmaster

**Breed:** Homid

**Auspice:** Theurge

**Tribe:** Shadow Lords

**Rank:** Nightmaster was Rank 3 before becoming the Abyss' champion, but Gaian spirits no longer recognize his legitimacy. Banes and other Wyrmspirits fearfully exalt Nightmaster as chosen of the Abyss and treat him as Rank 6.

**Physical:** Strength 5 (7/9/8/6), Dexterity 5 (5/6/7/7), Stamina 5 (7/8/8/7)

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 4 (2/1/1/1), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2)

**Mental:** Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

**Talents:** Alertness 5, Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Intimidation 4, Leadership 4, Primal-Urge 5, Stealth 3, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Melee 5, Survival 5

**Knowledges:** Enigmas 3, Investigation 3, Occult 3, Rituals 3

**Backgrounds:** Allies 5 (Hive of the Jagged Maw, Banes rescued from the Abyss), Contacts 5 (Followers of the Wyrms), Rites 5

**Rage:** 10 (10); **Gnosis:** 8 (0); **Willpower:** 9 (4) (Bracketed values are for Nightmaster while performing the rite and after he flees back to the Abyss.)

**Gaia's Gifts:** City Running, Cold Voice of Reason, Command Spirit, Direct the Storm, Fatal Flaw, Icy Chill of Despair, Persuasion, Shadow Cutting, Speech of the World, Spirit Snare, Spirit Speech, Staredown, Umbral Camouflage,

**Wyrms' Gifts:** Bale Armor, Claws of Corrosion, Feast of Essence, Stolen Hide

**Rites:** Nightmaster knows many lost rites, but the only one of relevance here is the one that will unmake everything.



## *The Abyss*

Back in the Abyssal darkness, Nightmaster's disadvantage disappears. This is his territory, and he draws power from the Abyss' presence. Not everything is in his favor — he is drained from attempting to harness power intended for the embodiments of universal imperatives. He is likely wounded from his battle with the characters, his regenerative powers are still in shock, and he isn't healing — a weakness the characters may also suffer. For each turn that the characters rest, they may make a Stamina + Primal-Urge roll (difficulty 9). Success restores their regenerative powers to full effect. Nightmaster needs to rest, recuperate, and commune with the Abyss to restore his power. Only his Rage is undiminished, as the humiliation of defeat and self-loathing at failure refill his near-bottomless depths of fury.

The surviving Black Spiral Dancers also regroup. They're also exhausted and not regenerating, and aren't as fierce as normal. A strong show of strength or intimidation will make them abandon Nightmaster and flee into the darkness.

The Abyss is more empty than usual as many creatures left to pollute time. Those that remain hope to avoid both Nightmaster and the Garou harrying him. Some watch on

with perverse hope — if the heroes prevail these lesser denizens no longer have to hide, and the stronger among them will fight to replace Nightmaster as the Abyssal apex predator.

This is Grythyg's plan as well. As the first to flee the primordial time, her regenerative powers have returned. She knows Nightmaster is vulnerable, but she's still too cowardly to directly challenge him. She may assist the characters to finally kill Nightmaster — and quickly turn on them after he is vanquished.

Even when bloodied and broken, only the Abyss itself can truly kill its champion. The characters must successfully grapple Nightmaster — automatically successful if he is Incapacitated — drag him to the edge of the cliff, and cast him into the blackness, where he is unmade in a final scream of Rage-filled hatred. If he has strength remaining, Nightmaster will try to grab and drag someone over the edge with him as one last act of revenge.

## *Time's Heroes*

With Nightmaster vanquished, the Abyss collapses in on itself. It doesn't cease to exist — as long as the Wyrms endure so will the Abyss — but the loss of Nightmaster weakens the Realm. The cliff face shudders with the contractions, and rocks tumble from high above into the darkness below.

## THE ABYSS

The Abyss is described in W20 (p. 328-329). Things that are lost find their way here to be forgotten. It falls so far that it seems bottomless, and it stretches so far across that its width appears endless.

Though entering the Abyss is simple, departing is harder. Most exits are deep in the pit, closer to oblivion. These exits appear as tributary cracks in the cliff that are usually home to Abyssal dwellers or other dangers, but are unusually abandoned at the moment of this showdown. Characters seeking an exit after the battle roll Rage or Gnosis (difficulty 7) once per day to find an escape back into the Umbra. Characters with derangements increase the difficulty of escape by 1 for each condition, to a maximum of 9. A botch spills the character back onto the cliff face, higher up and further from escape than before.

Spirits must materialize when they enter the Abyss, and can't use any Charms that would reshape reality or allow escape. Kronos refuses to enter the Abyss, and even pack totems will be very reluctant to accompany their charges into the Realm.

The Abyss' tendrils into time shrink back, ending their incursions and leaving any remaining foes trapped on the wrong side of history. The characters, exhausted but elated, must still escape the hostile Realm. The characters confronted Nightmaster at the edge of darkness, where light and sound almost fades away. This deep, the characters don't have any difficulty finding a cave that leads out into the Umbra.

Once out of the Abyss, the characters are back in modern times and their original timeline dominates once again. Any characters from extinct Breeds or tribes feel themselves fading as they leave the Abyss. They have two choices — they can accept the natural order and take the opportunity to say their final goodbyes, or they can quickly return to the Abyss, to live out their borrowed time in the hostile darkness.

Modern characters return to their septs to find everything has returned to normal. No one remembers any strangeness or overlapping history, or knows what the characters accomplished — except Kronos. The Incarna summons Lunes to invest Renown and Rank on the characters, and

## WHAT IF THEY DIDN'T WIN?

If the characters didn't defeat Nightmaster in the Abyss, or if they were forced to retreat from his superior strength, history still reasserts itself as Nightmaster's aborted rite drains the Abyss and the tendrils collapse. The characters will have to fight harder to find an exit from the Realm, and will be harried the entire way.

The worst consequence is that Nightmaster lives on, to hate and scheme and work to gain his revenge on Gaia's heroes who left him licking his wounds in defeat.

even if their sept-mates don't understand when these deeds occurred, they can't deny the Lunes' insistence.

A final side effect of the character's adventures is that they know the Bunyip's homeland still exists, and now understand the danger of leaving it untended. In the Umbra, they still catch glimpses of timestreams flowing there, and can follow these to the homeland. Perhaps the characters will reclaim the homeland and embark on other time-themed chronicles. Kronos will continue supporting the characters as they work to fix snarls in time, but they'll first have to contend with Yahwie, who is no longer chained by the Bunyip and once again walks free to wreak havoc on history.

But these are events for another chronicle.

## Chronicle: Dying Dreams

*Dying Dreams* is another chronicle framework that sends the characters on a memory quest through the Umbra. It utilizes the same historical periods and tragic events that *Into the Past* does, but here, the characters must restore — or perhaps even, at great cost, improve — the broken spiritual memory of times long past. If they fail, the Garou fall prey to widespread Harano and invite the Apocalypse to come screaming in at last.

The easiest way to win a war is to eliminate the opposition before it takes up arms at all. One of the Maeljin Incarnae intends to do exactly that. Its agents, the first fallen Mokolé, spread their corruption throughout the Umbra's echoes of the past to wrack the Changing Breeds with guilt and despair. Without the will to fight, their defenses crumble before the Wyrms' insidious whispers and the world abandons hope.

The players' characters are all that stand between Gaia and a listless death.

This chronicle framework can support any type of shapeshifter. Mokolé and Garou are especially well suited – the former for their connection to Mnesis and relation to the Mnetics, the latter for easy access to the Umbra, diverse totem relationships, and versatility. No Changing Breed is immune to despair, though, and all Fera need the Garou in the fight against the Wyrms, whether they like it or not. The players may even use troupe play (p. XX) to take turns playing characters that exist only in a given memory, like champions of the past or members of Lost Breeds and extinct tribes.

## Major Players

The characters themselves are the most important actors in this scenario, but several other figures play key roles. The Wyrms' minions include the Nameless Angel of Despair and its hidden Bane hordes, its Mnetic agents who leave their rotten fingerprints all over the shapeshifters' collective memory, and their army of Innocents. Standing against them alongside the heroes are the seven sundered pieces of Mnemosyne, Incarna of Memory.

### *The Nameless Angel of Despair*

As Harano's source and the patron spirit of self-destruction, the Nameless Angel plots to inflict a worldwide epidemic of crippling grief upon the Changing Breeds. It sends a clutch of five Mnetics to poison the spiritual memory of the shapeshifters' past. Removing them thus from the war, it will launch a campaign of mass suicides and debilitating Bane influence until the living world gives up the ghost. It gathers appropriate Banes in droves and hides them within a Column of despair in the Penumbra, waiting for the proper moment to strike.

For more information about the Nameless Angel, see *W20 Book of the Wyrms*, p. 17-18.

### *The Defiler Kings*

When the original Mnesis, wellspring of possibility and wonder, choked to death on the Dragon Kings' pride (see "The War of Dragons," p. 152), the surviving Wonder-Workers slunk off to slumber away the centuries. A few, though, refused to take the cataclysm lying down. They turned instead to shelter with the Wyrms, drowning in a despair so crushing it transformed them into the first Mnetics. One clutch journeyed deep into the Umbra, seeking new power and purpose as they rejected Gaia's commandment to remember. After thousands of lifetimes, they emerged as the Defiler Kings: ancient and terrible servants of the Nameless Angel who uncovered a dark miracle buried in the spirit lands' farthest reaches.

## *The Rite of Dead Wonders*

Level Five, Mystic

With this rite, the Defiler Kings raise potential from the dead in a ghastly imitation of the creative power they once wielded. One of them continuously maintains the ritual from a place hidden in the Deep Umbra that calls upon the memory of the universe itself. The rest craft malformed spiritual horrors from the Gauntlet – the Mnesis' scarred corpse – as they once crafted wonders from the living Mnesis. In the material world, they make weak, misshapen Banes that slither in shadows and wink into oblivion without a constant supply of Essence. In the Umbra, the rite lets the Defiler Kings make permanent changes to the historical landscape etched into Umbral reality, corrupt spirits more quickly, and craft sanity-warping spiritual weapons.

### *Who Are They?*

Lost to Wyrms-tainted hubris, the Defiler Kings consider themselves the world-spanning Dragon Empires' only true legacy, condemning modern Mokolé as pathetic echoes who crawl on their bellies to appease Gaia instead of standing tall in the Dissolver's embrace. They believe that cleaning up the lesser peoples' mess is their new sacred duty. In modern terms, they're considered Gumagan. All five have the Steal Mnesis and Corrupt Mnesis powers (*W20 Changing Breeds*, p. 142). The Storyteller can use the rules for creating Mnetics (*W20 Book of the Wyrms*, p. 161) for the Defiler Kings as individual antagonists.

**Reaps-the-World:** Rising Sun, the clutch's primary front-line warrior who seeks key memories to tarnish. The characters can catch or kill him while he surveys the Umbra, preventing him from carrying advice back to his clutch.

**Will-of-All:** Concealing mystic who maintains the Rite of Dead Wonders while her clutchmates wreak havoc on Gaia's memory. She won't stop unless the characters disrupt the rite. When they do, she retaliates, vicious and vengeful.

**Piercing-Ray-Claw:** Midnight Sun who hunts down ancestor-spirits and memory spirits to corrupt. He works to capture and defile the pieces of Mnemosyne. To rescue the Incarna or prevent further befouling of their ancestors, the characters must capture or kill him.

**Moves-Skies:** Decorated Sun who delivers messages between the Kings and their minions. Her network of Banes and fomori relay orders and report to the Nameless Angel. She works behind the scenes whenever possible, but the characters can find her and take her out to throw a wrench into the operation.

**Wings-Block-the-Sun:** Crowning leader of the Defiler Kings and war chief of the Innocent army, who claims ultimate say on decisions the clutch makes. The characters may cross her bloody path in any memory where the Innocents

interfere. If they don't take her down before they venture into the Deep Umbra, she and her army appear to protect the rite with their lives.

## *Mnemosyne, Incarna of Memory*

The Incarna of Memory has no single abode. Instead, she constantly walks the breadth of the Near Umbra, absorbing all it contains. She knows its every inch, hidden niche, and lost realm. She forgets nothing unless she wishes to. When Mnemosyne chooses to forget a thing, its spiritual representation slides toward the Abyss, lost forever if its journey isn't halted. Material beings can halt it if enough of them work to keep the memory alive, such as with monuments or annual commemorations. Shapeshifter rites like the Rite of the Glorious Past or the Gathering for the Departed lend a memory significant strength. A memory saved thus from oblivion inevitably returns to Mnemosyne in her travels.

Some say Mnemosyne was once a Celestine, but decided to forget her own limitless power and diminish herself. Her Jagglings are spirits of knowledge, history, dream, legacy, and thought. The Muses that the Black Furies revere as totems are her servants, and the Mokolé and Bastet often beseech her as patron to clutch, wallow, or tribe.

When the Defiler Kings came for her, Mnemosyne sensed the great danger posed by their warped Mnesis. She fractured herself into seven pieces and scattered them across the Umbra to prevent her capture. Piercing-Ray-Claw hunts these avatars to torture them into falling, and has already taken two prisoner: Cosmos and Satori. He's gunning for Mythos next, since weakening inherited memory would bolster his campaign against the Changing Breeds' ancestor-spirits.

Mnemosyne's seven pieces act like Incarna avatars, with power and traits roughly equivalent to Jagglings. Without her whole mind guiding them, they have less self-awareness than most avatars, carrying only a fraction of the power and insight they should show. Each fragment only knows a small clue to the enemy's plan, which the characters can put together as they rescue each. Until the characters arrive to protect them, all the avatars do is hide and run. They won't cooperate with any Mokolé until she proves she's on Gaia's side. Prying lost secrets from these memory spirits requires a chiminage quest for each, and not all secrets still exist even in the mind of Memory herself.

### *Fragments of Memory*

- **Cosmos**, memory of the universe. Cosmos remembers only what existed before living things came to be, such as planets, stars, and cosmic truths.

- **Mnesis**, memory of Gaia. Mnesis embodies the Mokolé's sacred birthright and remembers the history of all life, species by species — extinctions and genocides, evolu-

tionary links, ecosystems, habitats and domains, and broad strokes of a species' accomplishments persist through her.

- **Mythos**, memory of ancestors. Mythos represents intuition, mythology, and lineage. She remembers anything passed down through generations or inherited naturally, and has special insight into ancestor-spirits.

- **Mantra**, memory of names. Mantra embodies memorization, rote learning, facts, and the perpetuation of knowledge. She knows the names of all things that have ever been, but has no insight into them.

- **Nostalgia**, memory of lost things. Nostalgia remembers only that which has ceased to be.

- **Satori**, links between memories. Satori makes associations and gleans insight. She turns memories into reminders based on esoteric connections, but only remembers things with clear associations to what's before her.

- **Lethe**, denial of memory. Lethe is the suppression of awful things that want to be forgotten. She can remember what Mnemosyne has consigned to the Abyss, but only by drawing her mind close to the void's edge and risking her sanity. Too much reliance on Lethe's memories drives her to fall and become a Bane.

## *Chronicle Overview*

*Dying Dreams* presents the bones for the chronicle's structure. The memories the players restore are the flesh; the Storyteller can pull these from the historical events detailed elsewhere in this book. *Dying Dreams* comprises three acts, the second of which is the memory restoration arc. Decide at the beginning how many memories to include in this act; this determines the chronicle's length and complexity. Three memories make a good short chronicle, six or seven work for a medium-length one, and 10 is a reasonable target for a long one. Remember that each memory has story hooks and complications the players may pursue, so the Storyteller should leave room for extra follow-up chapters.

By the time the characters get involved, the Nameless Angel gathers its Bane hordes and the Mnetics journey to corrupt memories. Harano's effects noticeably spread, and ancestors show hostility to their descendants. The deadline of the Angel's strike looms over everything the characters do. Part of the scenario's conflict lies in deciding when to let an atrocity slide to save time for more crucial issues. If the Defiler Kings degrade a spirit close to the characters, can they spare the time to save it? Is it worth risking the Apocalypse to banish one caern's sorrow? Or do the characters take a firm stand against making compromises and vow to leave no spirit, no memory, behind?

In deciding when the Angel will strike, the Storyteller should worry less about in-game time passing and more about how many chapters she wants to include in the chronicle.

Once the characters learn how much time remains (see Act Two: Race Against Time), whether three days or two weeks, the Storyteller can pace this as she needs, since the characters won't necessarily perceive time passing normally in the various Umbral realms.

## The Stakes

The Storyteller should make the stakes clear up front: if the characters don't tip the scales of memory, the Nameless Angel scourges the world with suicide and despair. The Changing Breeds succumb to Harano in such great numbers that no one can stop its Banes from spreading anguish and misery. The hydra's other heads pounce on the opportunity to strike when Gaia's defenders are out of the way, and the world becomes the Wyrms' playground. The Apocalypse is not just nigh. It's *here*.

Even if the characters stop the Mnetics and restore Gaia's memory, they still must warn the Garou and Fera about the imminent disaster and rally them to stand against it. They're unlikely to erase all traces of the grief the Defiler Kings cause, so they need to combat it with face-to-face inspiration once they return from the Umbra. Worse, since the Angel can be in many places at once, the assault isn't centralized; the characters must quickly spread the word and banish (or at least, hold off) the Changing Breeds' melancholy in time for the Angel's coming.

Finally, the characters are their *own* enemies. They're no more immune to Harano than anyone else, and while full knowledge of what's happening does help, it may not be enough (see "Systems," p. 46). Regardless of the Mnetics' interference, the shapeshifters' bloody history brims with tragedy and every Changing Breed has been at fault at one time or another. The heroes cannot escape the truth, and seeing it firsthand forces them to fight their own sorrows.

## The Solution

The characters must first discover the crisis and investigate to learn details. They track the Mnetics' progress through the Umbra, unearth corrupted memories, and live through them to revert them to their original outcomes. They can anticipate the Kings' targets and prepare the memory's denizens to head the enemy off at the pass. They can hunt the Kings directly and take them out one by one, recruiting allies in Realms where they confront the Mnetics or subverting their enemies' own resources. They can smooth their path by finding captured or contaminated spirits and restoring them through cleansing rites or, if need be, killing them. Mnemosyne's seven fragments are the most crucial spirits to rescue, and make the most impact on the characters' success or failure. Once they realize this, they can proactively find and protect the fragments, which make valuable allies.



## Altered Memories

Normally, memory realms such as the Atrocity Realm, the Legendary Realm, and the Battleground reject changes to the status quo. Visitors can step into a memory and alter a fight's outcome, but when the fight is over, it resets to its original state. The Defiler Kings punch through this limitation with the Rite of Dead Wonders, forcing events to stay changed. They don the roles of historical Mokolé, send Banes and fomori to play supporting parts, and recruit other Wyrms-tainted shapeshifters to step in where no place for a weresaurian exists. These interlopers turn delicate peace talks into bloodbaths, victories into defeats, and friendships into enmities. Once the altered memories reset, they play out in their new forms from then on unless the characters intervene.

Ultimately, even the Rite of Dead Wonders merely changes the way history is reflected, not how it unfolded. A tapestry lies beyond even the Deep Umbra that reflects time's true passage, nigh-inaccessible to shapeshifters or even most spirits, and unchangeable without drastic temporal meddling. Some of Mnemosyne's fragments remember true history even after the Mnetics alter things. Thus, the characters can restore the memories by taking up roles in the narrative and playing out the changes with their own skills and talents. They can convince parties to sign that treaty after all, shore up a battle's losing side with their own strength, and smooth over grave insults with proper restitution.

Without the right aspects of Mnemosyne present, help from uncorrupted ancestor-spirits, or a strong education in Changing Breed history, the characters may not *know* how a memory was supposed to go. The Storyteller can allow rolls with Primal-Urge, Enigmas, or an Expert Knowledge in Shapeshifter Lore to make educated guesses as the scene progresses. Players glean clues based on their level of success. Difficulties vary depending on the prominence, age, and secrecy of the event, and whether they've accumulated insight from previous repetitions. Otherwise, the characters must simply try for the best outcome they can devise and then see how they fare once the memory resets.

## Exaggerated Memories

Some memories are tragic enough that all they need is a tweak to exaggerate their effects in the Breeds' collective subconscious. Instead of a grand battle won by strength and superior skill, the Kings create a pyrrhic victory won by meaningless sacrifice and unacceptable compromise. They turn a dreadful accident into a deliberate offense, intensifying outrage and eliminating post-conflict amends. They debase Garou Kinfolk spirits into using Wyrms-tainted powers where such never existed. The characters can restore these caricatures to their original states the same way they repair an altered memory.

## Corrupted Spirits

On top of ruining the shapeshifters' spiritual memories, the Mnetics corrupt spirits to further weaken the Breeds' morale and the Umbral record's integrity. These primarily include ancestor-spirits and Mnemosyne's fragments, but also any other spirits related to memory, history, dream, and emotion. They spread their sickness to the shapechanger homelands, dragging ancestor-spirits into the muck a tribe at a time. Anyone performing a rite that relies on the blessing or participation of an ancestor-spirit finds the ritual warped and the spirits turning against them. The more spirits the Kings torture and pervert, the harder it is to resist Harano.

Although the Rite of Dead Wonders allows too-swift spirit corruption, even the Defiler Kings can't easily turn them to Banes. The characters can cleanse tainted spirits unless too much time passes or the spirits perform too many terrible deeds; either can permanently consign them to the Wyrms' service. It takes time, rites, and hard work to reverse the Mnetics' sickness, though, so characters must decide which spirits to save now and which need to wait.

## A Brighter Umbra?

Can ambitious characters turn the tables and *improve* collective memory, raising morale to heights unheard of in the modern day? Can they erase millennia-long grudges and foster cooperation between Changing Breeds? Can they bring about a renaissance for species that haven't existed for centuries?

Maybe, but not without risk. Permanently altering the Umbra's memory is normally impossible; the Defiler Kings' command over the Gauntlet-as-Mnesis is the only known way. The characters could try forcing them to enact the changes they want, but with the Mnetics' ability to manipulate memories, it's a tall order. Some characters — like Mokolé, Uktena, and those with totems of memory, creation, dream, or history — could usurp the Rite of Dead Wonders for themselves. Doing so lets them change whatever they like, but memory realms fall apart if events are changed so drastically that the flow of spiritual history ceases to make sense, and binding themselves to a dead power erodes their sanity the more they use it.

The characters can "trick" the Umbra into letting them make permanent changes by binding a spiritual being to a similar material one and letting it ride its host out of the Umbra. For instance, a werewolf could merge with a Bunyip ancestor-spirit in an attempt to revive the lost tribe, while a Bastet could try it with a Khara ancestor. The host must sacrifice himself wholly to the spirit so it can make the transition from memory to reality, with a particular rite which the characters can petition Mnemosyne to teach them — but only if they've reunited enough fragments to preserve her identity.

The characters could alter memories to rescue totems and revive lost Breeds or tribes. Delving into Turtle's dreams to wake him might help the Mokolé rediscover their lost turtle varna and lay the groundwork for resurrecting the Croatan. Altering Bat's memories could save him from madness and bring back the Camazotz. Changing the Umbra's historical landscape enough could convince Bunyip and Ngalyod to forgive the Garou their transgressions and serve as totems for living tribes. Each quest takes at least an entire story of its own and would make a fine epilogue or follow-up chronicle to *Dying Dreams*.

## ***Building Your Own Memories***

The Storyteller can flesh out this chronicle framework with any of the historical events found throughout this book (see "Act Two," below), but she may want to create customized memories to more closely fit the characters' story. First, determine when and where the event takes place, who it involves, and how it was historically resolved. Place it in the Umbra based on the memory's nature — skirmishes and battles usually end up in the Battleground, but shapeshifter heroes' great crusades and epic defeats by the Wyrms' forces live on in the Legendary Realm, as do shapechanger deeds unrelated to combat. Use the Atrocity Realm for memories of personal horrors, the Abyss for long-forgotten memories to be retrieved from its all-consuming maw, and Pangaea for memories from the Mokolé's and Rokea's earliest days. Other realms govern other types of memories at the Storyteller's discretion, and she can use the guidelines in *W20 Umbra*, p. 81, to design her own.

Next, determine what the Mnetics change or exaggerate to cause ripples of grief and guilt in the actors' descendants. In battles, turning a conflict into a curb stomp or ascribing new motives or dark powers to one side often does the job, especially if the original battle is upheld as an exemplar of glory and heroism. The Kings can use trickery, Bane influence, intimidation, blackmail, or their innate memory-altering powers to coerce historical figures into acting dishonorably. In other circumstances, replacing one actor with another, convincing actors to take more harmful actions, and inserting the Wyrms' influence where it never existed are good methods. Don't shy away from making drastic changes, as long as the overall events remain recognizable. Remember, while the players' characters need to worry about destabilizing Umbral memory to the point of nonsense, the Mnetics don't care if a Legendary Realm kingdom succumbs to Fimbulwinter or a domain collapses entirely.

## ***Act One: Waking Up to Nightmare***

The characters are among the first to notice something's wrong. Someone the characters know could fall to Harano to directly affect them and get them invested. Without the

characters' intervention, the stakes escalate quickly. The Mokolé take drastic measures first, committing suicide or retreating into slumber at the horrors they see in their Mnesis dreams. The Uktena follow suit, as their homeland sits on the Abyss' edge and their ancestor-spirits are easiest for the Defiler Kings to subvert. Rites go awry, sept and pack totems turn against their werewolf brethren, and Harano swiftly takes the tribe. The Black Furies aren't far behind, once their Muse totems abandon them or lash out in pain and confusion through their connection to Mnemosyne. Galliards of every tribe sing of regret and woe, spreading epic melancholy across the Nation on wings of sorrow. The Bastet obsess over unearthing secrets that confirm betrayal and horrors, the Corax bring tales of despair to every corner, the Nagah see enemies everywhere — including among their own — and the Ananasi dig too deeply when they stumble across hints of the Nameless Angel's plan. One by one, the Breeds fall prey.

The characters don't see the widespread effects at first, though — only what hits close to home. These first few incidents raise alarms but don't prompt real action until the final straw: Banes and fomori attack a caern, and the characters are the only ones who fight back. Whether they flee or emerge victorious against overwhelming odds, the rest of the sept lays down arms and lets the Wyrms' forces take the caern unless the characters save it. Afterward, a spirit with ties to the characters and the Umbral troubles gives them a clue to start their journey — they may seek it out in confusion and horror, or it may come to them after witnessing their heroic resistance. If the characters are of mixed Breeds or tribes and the Storyteller wants to bring them together with the quest, a different spirit can approach each character, each with a separate clue they can use to compare notes.

Once the characters know how widespread the Harano is, and that it originates from unrest in the Umbra, they follow hints to find the first corrupted memory. Hints could include a mournful song or story they heard recently about a long-lost time, airts left in the wake of the Mnetics' Innocent army or one of Mnemosyne's fragments, or even traces of the Defiler Kings' atrocities found by simply wandering the Penumbra with what they know at the tops of their minds.

## ***Act Two: Race Against Time***

The Storyteller may compose the scenario with any combination of historical events and corrupted spirits that cross the characters' paths. The characters can try fixing a single memory as many times as they like, but the longer they try, the less time remains. They investigate as they go along to discover who's behind the damage, what their plan

## ALTERING THE RITE

Characters can hijack and repurpose the Rite of Dead Wonders by appealing to the primordial spirits at the heart of the Deep Umbra. Spend a Gnosis point and roll (Charisma or Manipulation) + Rituals, difficulty 8. Reduce the difficulty to 7 if the characters spend precious time researching the ritual ahead of time.

is, and — most importantly — how much time is left. They can examine details of memories the Mnetics have altered, or observe the movements of their minions. The characters can locate the Calumn of despair and interrogate the spirits there, or infiltrate the Innocent army and intercept Moves-Skies' messengers. They might put together clues from Mnemosyne's pieces and team up with an Ananasi or Nuwisha Umbral Danser to gain access to Wyrmlairs and Umbral niches otherwise closed to them. The Storyteller should work with any method the players devise and encourage creative investigation, as the Umbra is wide open for unconventional ideas. Regardless of what they try, the Storyteller *must* convey the Angel's planned timeline as a clue uncovered by something the characters do — the deadline's urgency makes this chronicle tick.

Interrogating the Mnetics and their Innocents directly is difficult due to the Kings' memory-altering abilities. The only reliable way is to reach the Deep Umbra, remove Will-of-All, and alter the Rite of Dead Wonders on the fly (see systems below) to turn it against the Mnetics and calcify their memories. The characters can try prying answers from captured Innocents by dragging them away from their masters, but the Kings are careful to limit access to crucial information.

## Key Memories

Historical events in the Umbra's memory are stranger and larger than life, emphasizing certain aspects and deemphasizing others in unrealistic ways to reflect how modern shapeshifters remember events. Characters can meet, rescue, or even recruit legendary figures from long ago, but these figures are spirits and act like stylized versions of themselves.

Memories can encompass events that take place over minutes, hours, years, or even centuries. Time passes for the characters as it does in dreams, where only episodes of narrative importance register and everything else is a blur that leaves only impressions and consequences.

## The Neanderthal (Atrocity Realm)

The Defiler Kings participate alongside the Ananasi in rituals that murder thousands of Neanderthals, (p. 71) leaving evidence that other Fera species are involved. The Garou rampage that follows targets not just the Ananasi but other Changing Breeds who can't hide so easily.

## The Khara (Lost Khara Homeland)

The Mnetics interfere with the events leading to the weresabertooths' extinction (see "Secrets," p. 91) at every step. They frame the Garou for revealing the werewolves' Yava to the Neanderthals, lie to the werewolves about why the Khara slew their Kinfolk, and convince Bathes-in-Burning-Blood to deny sanctuary to Generous-Gift's pride. They murder Whistle-Tends-the-Sky before she can warn anyone about the rampaging storm-spirit, and exacerbate tensions until the last Khara is dead and everyone has something to feel guilty about.

## The Impergium (Atrocity Realm)

The Mnetics' Impergium is darker, longer, and more terrifying than its historical counterpart. They interfere with the Concord, swaying hearts so it takes much more bloodshed and time to finally reach an accord, and convince more Fera Breeds to help the werewolves out.

## The Kitsune (Legendary Realm)

The Defiler Kings poison the triumphs of the hengeyokai during the War of Shame (p. 103), manipulating historical figures to distrust and kill the werefoxes who try to make peace, including Seven-Shadows-Dancing. With such hostility against Gaia's most innocent Breed, cooperation proves impossible and Ignorant-Worm never gains the Beast Courts' support.

## RESTORING MEMORIES

The characters suffer a penalty on all rolls to restore memories equal to the number of Mnemosyne's fragments Piercing-Ray-Claw has captured. If they don't rescue and protect the Incarna, their job gets progressively more difficult. Decide how quickly the Mnetic gets his hands on the spirits based on the characters' decisions, their level of success or failure, and how well they manage the consequences of their various actions. Don't punish players for pursuing interesting hooks, but instead use this to heighten the tension and drama of their looming deadline — make every choice meaningful.



### *The Pure Lands (Battleground)*

The European Garou's arrival in the New World (see "Shock Introduction," p. 120) is now a wholesale slaughter. They weaken the Fera by secretly killing their leaders, sneaking Banes into their ranks to hurt their morale, leaking information to the werewolves, and framing them for war crimes against Garou packs. They murder Sleeps-Beneath-the-Sand and help the Garou build more caerns to reach across the ocean.

### *The Camazotz (Battleground)*

The Mnetics convince the last of the Camazotz in the Americas (see "Fall of the Bat Totem," p. 126) to plead with the rampaging Garou rather than flee into the Umbra or take shelter with the Mokolé. Simultaneously, they spread false rumors of a werebat plot to trick the werewolves and deliver them to the Wyrms. This ensures the Camazotz' total annihilation, and hastens Bat's fall in the Umbra's memory.

## *Act Three: Showdown*

The characters eventually trace the origin of the Mnetics' power back to the Deep Umbra and find Will-of-All performing the Rite of Dead Wonders. Prompt this investigation by making clear the impossibility of the changes they're making. Characters could track Moves-Skies' messengers or their airts back to the

enemy's lair, through a series of Wyrms-cursed shortcuts and perilous realms. They could instead catch a Mnetic in the act of using her warped power and try emulating or examining it firsthand, leading them to the Gauntlet. They can analyze the Gauntlet itself with Enigmas, Occult, or Rituals for clues that point to the rite — alien Moon Paths that require esoteric criteria to follow, Spark spirits flickering between the ritual site and the Penumbra, or trails of evidence that the Gauntlet's fabric degrades with each change the Mnetics make.

In the Deep Umbra, the characters face the remaining Defiler Kings and Innocents, fragments of Mnemosyne they didn't save, and other corrupted spirits the Storyteller deems important enough to include. The only thing they *must* do to stop the Mnetics is disrupt or usurp the ritual, but leaving them alive and free means unleashing them along with the Angel's forces later. Without their masters, the Innocents drift back to their Umbral homes.

Regardless of how the fight in the Deep Umbra goes or where the characters are when the time comes, the Angel strikes when it planned to. If they don't leave the Umbra to warn the other shapeshifters, they find widespread devastation when they return to the material world and the fight is lost; the only recourse then is to gather what forces remain and stand against the Apocalypse as it drowns the world in sorrow. If they leave themselves enough time, they

## SYSTEMS

The base difficulty of actions Storyteller shape-shifter characters take during the Angel's strike is 10, reduced by 1 for each memory the characters restore (minimum difficulty 6). Storyteller characters may not spend Rage or Willpower unless the players succeed at an extended action to inspire them, resisted by Wits + Empathy, with a penalty based on how many of Mnemosyne's fragments they failed to cleanse. The players' characters suffer the Harano Prone Flaw (W20, p. 484-485) unless they restore every tainted memory and rescue all of Mnemosyne's fragments.

Play out the widespread stand against the Angel with individual scenes interspersed with shadow play (p. 50) to represent how the large-scale tides turn in between. Scenes might include inspiring a sept to fight against a hated enemy, preventing Kinfolk from committing suicide, convincing grief-torn Corax to spread the word about the Angel's plan, or defeating specific Banes.

The longer it takes to stop the Mnetics, the more fragile the Gauntlet becomes, as the Rite of Dead Wonders depletes it. Estimate its strength by the time the characters return based on how many memories they moved through and how long it took them to defeat—or escape—the Mnetics. The weaker it is, the more Banes harry the burdened shapeshifters during the final showdown.

can rally Changing Breeds around the world against their own Harano and set them up to repel the Angel's forces, with whatever progress they've made by then.

The Storyteller should present a definitive choice when time is about to run out: return to the physical world immediately to prepare for the Angel's coming, or stay in the Umbra to reverse or prevent some disaster. If the characters have defeated the Mnetics by then, create rippling consequences from their actions—perhaps shutting down the ritual creates disruptions in the Gauntlet, or a spirit dear to the characters succumbs to despair, or some hoary terror from time's dawn wakes in the Deep Umbra when it should have slept on.

Defeating the Angel means preventing mass suicides and stepping in and out of the Penumbra to destroy Banes wreaking havoc. The characters can't kill the Angel, but this battle can jumpstart a follow-up story in which they

rediscover the ancient rite that can kill the Nameless Angel. If they've rescued Mnemosyne, she can help in the quest to find the rite, and may agree to serve as totem for the characters' pack or sept (or equivalent group).

## Storytelling Historic Roleplaying

Historic stories can be challenging for Storytellers and players. Most groups understand the modern era and unconsciously make assumptions of how the setting works—even if set in a different city, or another country. This eases the narration of the story, and how the characters interact with events. Even if the shared assumptions are incorrect, the game flows more readily, and increases the fun.

A similar approach may be taken with historical games. Most people have read stories about ancient times or pseudo-historic fantasy realms, or seen movies and television shows about historic events. Most of these don't go back to the era of the first War of Rage, but they give a broad understanding of how to manage such settings. Records from ancient times are limited—cave paintings speak volumes to experts, but to most people they just tell what and how early humans hunted. From here, the Storyteller should talk with her players to determine what they want from a historical game, especially one set in prehistory.

One group's ideal has early humans living in small family groups, with little outside contact except during elaborate rituals of marriage and trade. Another group prefers large tribes gathered in cities built from stone, bone, and human ingenuity. A third game has the Changing Breeds manipulating the Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon breeding stock like pawns as they maneuver in the pre-War of Rage dance. None of these are the "one true way."

Many groups enjoy giving their games a level of realism, and a little research goes a long way. Most people don't have the specific education and key information to make every detail correct, but books, TV, and movies influence our ideas of these times, and this level of heavily-fictionalized detail is entirely adequate for most groups.

Accurate detail is further complicated by societal developments and cultural changes. It is easy to find information about the Conquistadores who warred against indigenous nations. These events were recent enough that anyone who cares to do the research can understand their influence in shaping our modern world. Gaming in this period is simplified by the synergies between our thinking and theirs.

Achieving historical accuracy in games delving into prehistory is difficult. These ancient times have no modern frame of reference. How do we connect with the experience

## ***CRO-MAGNON OR EARLY MODERN HUMANS?***

Cro-Magnon were essentially the same as modern humans. Their skeletons were sufficiently distinct from Neanderthals, but further study determined that Cro-Magnon weren't different enough from today's humans to be considered a separate species. The term "Cro-Magnon" fell into disuse in scientific circles and the term "Early Modern Human" (EMH) took its place.

Cro-Magnon still has a place in popular understanding and is more evocative than writing "Early Modern Human" or "EMH." We use Cro-Magnon throughout this book to describe these ancient humans who would survive to modern times. We also use the term "pre-humans" when collectively describing the different early hominid species fighting for survival in prehistoric times.

of people who lived in times before recorded history, before writing, textiles, metalwork, and other technologies we take for granted? Even the position of the lands and the changing of the climate were different in some of these periods.

## ***Anachronism***

The solution for most groups is to enjoy the anachronism. Storytellers and players should run with whatever level of research they find interesting, and incorporate the parts they like best. Some players will be less happy at such inaccurate details, but remember that the material in this book is the prehistory of the World of Darkness, not our world. Here, werewolves and other alien man-beasts culled human populations and bathed the earth in waves of human blood.

This predation placed enormous pressure on early humanity that didn't exist to the same extent in our world. When forced to choose between allying against the darkness with the tribe in the next valley, or both dying under the claws of moon-beasts, the World of Darkness humans may have clustered together much earlier than our historic records indicate, and used their gifts of innovation and larger brains to build walls of stone to keep the evil out.

Prehistoric shapeshifters also had two influential primers for civilization and development—spirits and the Umbra. This era had populations of spirits 'born' with innate knowledge of language and an alien version of civilization. The different

Breeds of half-spirit shapeshifters watched this spiritual ecology and copied what they could for their own mortal purposes.

Centuries before humans mastered conceptual language, the Changing Breeds had social groups, and interaction with each other on a *species* level. They came together for diplomacy, trade, or war. In the World of Darkness, humans may have finally learned the basics of concepts from frustrated Bastet, or humans may have developed jewelry-work after lusting after the Corax's strings of pretty shinies.

In these earliest days, the Breeds needed the humanoids for breeding stock, but they didn't think of the near-bald apes as equals or partners. Even the most nurturing shapeshifters saw the humans as assets to keep changing blood strong, and little more. To the Changing Breeds, pre-humans were property, rather than people.

Somewhere in all of this, the humans advanced beyond just aping culture, concepts, and technology from the shapeshifters. The Breeds became more reliant on the innovative and rapidly-advancing humans. Once humanity started to take advantage of their superior brains, they produced advancements independent of the shapeshifters and the spirits. It was then that they became a source of advancement for the Breeds to draw from — and a threat. Unfortunately, the Garou were displeased at a threat from what they essentially saw as breeding stock.

All these influences, and the many others examined in this book, demonstrate how a healthy dose of anachronism in a game isn't necessarily bad or inaccurate in playing prehistorical Werewolf.

## ***Technology***

The prehistoric time period predominantly covers Stone Age tools and technology. Both the Neanderthal and

## ***EMBRACE THE EXPERT***

If your group is lucky enough to have a player with a Ph.D. specializing in the Paleolithic era, use her expert knowledge for all the accuracy and detail she's willing to share. Adding verisimilitude to the game can make it a more immersive and fun experience for everyone, but if she just wants to indulge in the anachronistic experience of stone-age cities, then that's what the group should go with. After all, the golden rule is for everyone to have fun, and sometimes the most fun comes from gleefully embracing the anachronisms.

Cro-Magnon tribes had tamed fire, but they also used tools and weapons of stone and sharpened bone to manipulate their environment and assist hunting. Some relied on chipped and flaked stone edges for their blades but other, more advanced groups sharpened stone cores by removing the outer layers of rock to form extremely sharp points and edges. This shaping was a technological leap forward and gave these tribes a competitive edge over their rivals.

As much as the Changing Breeds considered themselves above the pre-humans, they always lived symbiotically—even parasitically—with the pre-human populations. Tooth and claw function perfectly well most of the time, but the shapeshifters' homid side liked using tools and gaining the benefits of their large, problem-solving brains. The earliest Theurges (and equivalents) saw the potential within these tools, and understood the spiritual reaction to the technological developments. When the Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon tribes developed stone tools, the shapeshifters took these tools and mastered the arts of crafting fetishes and talens.

Weapons of the time included spears and javelins, which were primarily used for hunting but could also be used to fight other pre-humans. Technological developments included various spear-throwers to increase leverage and improve range and power. Archery was invented in the late Paleolithic era—around when the early humans also developed language, art, and culture—and eventually replaced spear-throwing technology everywhere except Australia.

The pre-humans were apex predators who hunted and killed big game for their meat, bones and skins. Both Cro-Magnon and Neanderthals were meat-eaters, but early populations also had vegetation in their diets and cooked their food. The bones of large prey animals such as mammoths were also used in the construction of shelters and huts as the early tribes began to establish semi-permanent settlements.

### *The Umbral Advantage*

Shapeshifters' use of Moon Bridges and Moon Paths gave them an enormous advantage over pre-humans—the glittering trails giving a freedom of movement unknown to humans for thousands of years.

As Moon Bridges extended between two caerns, they gave travelers a means of fast, safe transport, and fostered, or forced, diplomatic relations between whomever maintained each end. These stable pathways were too valuable to lose to petty squabbles; other shifters would ostracize their cousins who couldn't learn to be cordial with their neighbors. This social pressure changed during the first War of Rage, when these powerful communication and supply lines became key points of capture and sabotage for every Breed.

The unpredictable nature of Moon Paths makes them far less useful than Moon Bridges, but in prehistoric times

Moon Paths were much more common. Paleolithic shapeshifters were still new to crafting Moon Bridges and learned much from observing Moon Paths.

### *Spiritual Technology*

Even though the Changing Breeds had the same material restrictions as pre-humans, their spirit-binding techniques—which are a form of technology—gave them another edge over the humans. Fetishes were stronger, sharper, and more durable than their mundane counterparts, and the addition of magical abilities beyond their capacity to cut or stab gave them a degree of power and flexibility impossible for pre-humans to match.

Spirit-bound tools offered a wealth of possibilities, but Storytellers shouldn't forget that all fetishes were limited by form, and societal imagination. Fetishes worked best if the physical tool was suitable for the magical task, and the bound spirit was compatible. Also, even though the shapeshifters were more advanced than pre-humans, they were still products of their era and didn't have the same mental concepts modern day people take for granted. Long distance, instant communications weren't even a subject of fantasy in this time—messages traveled at the speed of Corax or Camazotz, or via Moon Bridge.

Storytellers should use whatever level of technological anachronism their group enjoys, including fetishes that allow communications or scrying if desired—but when in doubt, err on the side of rudimentary or nonexistent technology.

### *Culture, Arts and Crafts*

The first traditions of art formed in this period. Small stones engraved with animal figures, or bone and ivory carvings, formed early examples of portable keepsakes and valuables. People made jewelry from bones and teeth, and from attractive items found during their hunting and gathering, such as animal shells, if available.

In some areas early tribes produced cave paintings and rock art to record their experiences and share meaning with others. This gave birth to humans externalizing and recording their experiences for others to share and embrace.

### *A Grand and Intimate Stage*

The first War of Rage shed blood across almost the entire world, drawing entire shapeshifter populations into the sweeping storm of carnage. Tribes met head-on at lush battlefields, tearing into each other's flesh until the grass was stained red with blood. The stealthiest of each breed stole into opponent's camps in the nights after battle to slit the throats of heroes and leaders, desperate attempts to prevent more slaughter of the assassin's kin.

Just as this description begins with a grand view of the hordes of combatants arrayed on the ground below, so too

should Storytellers aim to set the big picture in their descriptions. The War of Rage was big, and the players should feel this. They should know that their characters are part of something bigger than they can ever be, that the events around them have unstoppable force and they must bend to history's narrative or break against its irresistible flow.

Simultaneously, the characters are the story's protagonists — the most important actors within this play. While the battlefield is important, it is shaped by the actions of the solitary assassin in the darkness, working to save a few more from the impersonal slaughter. She individualizes the death, and makes the murder personal. Here the characters mold history, and without these personal actions the massive, impersonal events are worthless and irrelevant.

Viewing the grand vista of a setting before zooming in to the personal stories is a powerful storytelling technique, frequently used to draw audiences in and make them feel a part of the action. Take *Lord of the Rings* as one well-known example. This story's stakes were immense. A dark god would conquer all and raised an army to subjugate all other nations, but the stories we relate to were the personal ones. Without Frodo and Sam, we never would have understood the personal cost and sacrifice involved in defeating this great evil. If all we saw were Orcs and Urukhai devastating villages, towns, and cities, we would never have cared about Aragorn's journey from outcast ranger to rightful king.

So it should be with storytelling the Wars of Rage. The grand melee tearing at every Breed sets the scene, but the smaller stories — such as the scenes suggested throughout this book — make the journey more personal, more real, and more important.

## *Playing Legends*

The Wars of Rage spanned thousands of years and the entire world. Many different heroes and villains seized the opportunity to fight for glory, for their people, or for Gaia. Each period is filled with these historical heroes, and each one could be a character.

Players could take the role of the Garou hero Unyielding-Stone, who lay dying while the Gurahl refused to heal him. They could play that unnamed Gurahl, refusing to help for legitimate reasons. Perhaps the players could take play both sides of the conflict — some begging for assistance for their fallen packmate, and others denying this aid and hoping the Garou see the reason behind the refusal.

These events are legendary — passed down by lore-masters and song-singers — but the specific details are lost. Filling these details, and deciding exactly what happens, is the players' job. Exactly how was Unyielding-Stone injured? Was he fighting or was he asleep with his pack? How did the Garou approach their demand, and how did the Gurahl refuse? The players' decisions make the overall story more personal, more immersive, and more satisfying.



Playing only one character can limit the scope of stories to tell in the Wars of Rage. If the group agrees, and wants to explore as much of the past from as many angles as possible, troupe play is the way to go.

## Troupe Play

Troupe play is an extension of taking control of the people of legend. In troupe play, the group acknowledges that the Wars of Rage (and shapeshifter history in general) were too grand and occupied too long a period to be the province of just one pack of heroes. Troupe play goes beyond the pack, and thrusts the players into the roles of many different characters as the story progresses. The important factor is that *it is always the same story*. The faces may change but the goals and challenges remain the same.

In troupe play, each player controls more than one character. Most likely, players take the role of the pack chosen by Kronos as their “main” characters. Should one or two packmates split off to handle a particular situation, the other players take control of alternate characters — allies from the time period, unaligned local shapeshifters, or even minions of the Wurm that the main characters hunt! These secondary characters often don’t have a full spread of Traits, just important dice pools and Gifts worked out with the Storyteller during play. Players may want to bring their extra characters into other scenes, swapping out who they play from scene to scene according to what makes most sense. The player should define a character’s full Traits (agreed with the Storyteller) when she becomes a recurring character. Doing this gives the players a sense that their pack is at the forefront of a larger force.

Troupe play also gives the players the opportunity to try something new. If they are accustomed to playing Garou, this gives them the chance to play Bastet, Mokolé, or any one of the other shapeshifters — or their enemies. The narrative conceit behind the events of *Into the Past* brings the unique opportunity for players to indulge in playing the extinct breeds they would never have had access to, as all types exist simultaneously while Nightmaster’s forces tear the time stream asunder.

## Awarding Experience

When using troupe play, the question arises of how the Storyteller awards Experience Points. The simplest option is to assign all characters equal experience — even those off-camera or not participating in a scene. When those characters become the focus of the action again, they have this pool of experience to spend on their own advancement.

Another option is to award experience to players, who may then use these to advance any of their characters. This rewards added roleplaying effort, but penalizes players who spread their attention across multiple characters.

A third option is to give experience to specific characters. This is the most familiar option to many groups — the

## STYLES OF TROUPE PLAY

Troupe Play lends itself to a multitude of different character groups and Storytelling opportunities. Here are some possibilities, but these are just the start and are not the only ways of using Troupe Play.

- **The Garou Nation:** Multiple packs from across the different tribes coordinate their efforts to fix time and stop Nightmaster.
- **Fera, United:** Not content to rely on the Garou, the Fera fix time, either one or many Breeds.
- **Shapeshifters Together:** Packs of Garou and Fera work together. Some multi-Breed packs form, and must overcome pride and animosity to defeat a greater enemy.
- **Gaia Against the Wurm:** Players take the role of Gaian forces for some scenes, and Nightmaster’s minions in others.
- **Corrupt and Depraved:** Black Spiral Dancers, fallen Breeds, Fomori, and Pentex, all working together to destroy Gaia.
- **A Multitude of Storytellers:** A different player acts as Storyteller for each scene. Each Storyteller can run a different Troupe Play style as the group decides.

character performing the actions receives the awards. This does have the potential to unfairly favor characters with more ‘screen time’, and discourages players from switching out characters and taking advantage of playing as a troupe.

The group should discuss which option sounds most appealing, most fun, and is right for them. Ultimately, whichever option the group chooses to use is fine as long as it is consistent and everyone is comfortable with it.

## The Shadow Play

The Shadow Play is an optional, narrative-based method for groups to flesh out the challenges their off-camera characters faced while players focused their attentions on other members of the troupe. This can be used as a collaborative way of telling a thrilling story during a game session, or can be used via blue-booking, email, or chat between sessions. Shadow Play relies on the Storyteller and players working together to build an interesting and evocative narrative, with the challenges the characters defeat in pursuit of their goal.

In a Shadow Play, the players’ challenge is finding the

right balance of narrative control. By default, the players have total control over how the scene progresses and how they overcome the challenges presented by the Storyteller. As the players accept consequences in defeating challenges, they surrender more control to the Storyteller, as detailed below.

## Narrative Pools

At the beginning of shadow scenes, the players average their characters' Rage, Gnosis, and Willpower values (round up). These are the character's Narrative Points (NPs).

The Storyteller totals the players' NPs and rolls a die in secret. She adds this number to the total, forming her own pool of NPs. The Storyteller's pool is greater than the players, because legendary heroes confront bigger challenges than themselves. The players don't know exactly how much greater the Storyteller's pool is, which makes them think carefully about how they confront the various challenges in the Shadow Play.

## Setting the Scene and Defeating Challenges

The group (including the Storyteller) decides on the setting for the shadow scene. Knowing this, the Storyteller decides on the prime threat for the scene, and its NP cost (see table below). She sets these points aside, giving her a pool to use to challenge the characters.

At the start of the Shadow Play, the players are in control. They describe their characters' starting location and how they intend to achieve their goals. The players can suggest their first challenge to overcome, or can ask the Storyteller to provide a challenge. Regardless, the Storyteller determines the level of the challenge (using the nearby table as a guide) and tells the players how many NPs they'll need to defeat it. Players take turns (using whatever method they decide) describing their characters' actions and how many NPs they'll contribute. The more NPs a player contributes, the greater her character's role in the resulting narrative. If the combined NPs spent by the players equals the challenge, they overcome the challenge with full narrative control.

If players choose to pay less than an obstacle's value, or nothing at all, the Storyteller applies consequences to their characters. The Storyteller uses the table below to decide what consequences are appropriate, determined by the obstacle's NP shortfall. The Storyteller can make up the difference through multiple minor consequences, or fewer greater consequences, distributed among the characters as she sees fit. She should assign more serious consequences to characters who contributed less to overcoming an obstacle. As such, she takes narrative control away from the players a bit at a time.

The players describe how they overcame the obstacle, incorporating consequences as needed, which could limit their options for progressing towards their goal. The group continues building the narrative until the Storyteller introduces the next

obstacle. As a guide, challenges should escalate as the scene progresses, with no more than two challenges of the same level before difficulty increases. This trend can be adapted or abandoned as the developing scene (and dwindling NP pools) requires. Similarly, the Storyteller should apply greater consequences to fewer characters as they near the end, to simulate the characters' exhaustion and depletion of resources.

Play continues until the Storyteller only has the NPs set aside for the final challenge. If the players' NP pools are insufficient to overcome this, they may take whatever consequences the Storyteller requires to succeed, or slink away in defeat. The group works together to describe how this final triumph or defeat played out.

Challenge Level	Narrative Cost	Description
Trifling	1	The characters pause for only a moment
Minor	3	An irritant that calls for some effort to overcome
Moderate	5	One character can defeat this challenge, but it will cost her
Major	7	Characters must work together to overcome the obstacle
Extreme	9	The pack as a whole must work together or fail

Shortfall	Example Consequence
1	A character or the group suffers a narrative setback later in the scene
2	A character loses valuable resources
3	An important ally is injured
4	A character suffers aggravated damage
5	An important ally dies
6	A character is permanently crippled
7	A character dies

## Example Shadow Play

Kim is Storytelling a game for Panu, Cory, and Nikica. Nikica has an idea for a Shadow Play involving Banes that have convinced a prehistoric village of Gurahl Kin to eradicate all wolves in the area. He proposes that the local pack of Garou discovered the ritually despoiled corpses of several wolf-kin and is enraged. They now track the villagers back to their homes to eliminate the threat. The players agree that their goal is to somehow prevent open conflict between Gurahl and Garou.

Panu's Ragabash Bone Gnawer has 5 NPs, while Cory's Theurge Shadow Lord and Nikica's Ahroun Black Fury have 6 NPs each. Kim rolls a 2, making her Storyteller pool 19 NPs. She decides that the scene's primary threat is the angry Garou pack, which is a Major challenge, costing 7 points to overcome. She has 12 NPs to build other obstacles.

The players decide that play begins with their characters racing the Garou hunting pack to find the village first. Kim jumps in and declares that the village is hidden deep within a valley, with few easy approaches; that finding it is a Minor (3 NP) challenge. Cory spends 2 NPs towards this, describing how his Theurge asks the spirits for aid. Panu's Bone Gnawer spends the remaining 1 NP to provide appropriate chiminage to the spirits as thanks. The players maintain control of the narrative as the spirits describe where to find the village, and tell of a shadowy presence that has settled over the people.

As the characters navigate the valley, Kim sets the next Moderate (5 NP) challenge — the warriors of the village are watchful and have set various traps throughout the area. The players know they need to conserve their NPs to help control the final challenge, so they each only contribute 1 NP towards overcoming the traps and sneaking into the village. This leaves a shortfall of 2 points, so Kim sets two 1 NP consequences to cover the gap: Nikica's Ahroun is angered by the delays and must respond aggressively to the next obstacle, and the characters' lead over the Garou pack has shortened dramatically.

The characters arrive at the village and locate the chieftain. Kim spends her last 4 NPs to surround him with well-armed warriors who will try to disrupt any attempts to communicate calmly and talk through the problem. Nikica remembers his narrative setback and barges past the guards, spending the required 4 NPs and seizing control of the narrative. He describes how the Ahroun scatters the weak male warriors and stands before the chief in all her savage glory. The chieftain, being of Gurahl stock, is impressed by her bravery and bravado — and her intention to speak rather than gut him with her claws — and agrees to talk.

As the enemy Garou pack enters the village the players have retained enough control of the narrative to have several options available. They could fight the werewolves, or stand calm to make them pause and speak. They could have the villagers' aid, or decide that the chieftain throws himself at the mercy of the invading Garou, who then unite with the characters to eradicate the nest of Banes that has urged the village into such disastrous activities.

Whatever they decide, the players don't yet know that their remaining 7 NPs are enough to cover the challenge level set by Kim, and that they're in control of how this Shadow Play ends.

## Ability Changes

Some Abilities represent concepts or technologies that won't come about for thousands of years and don't fit in the War of Rage era. Modern-day characters retain their Abilities, but usually have no way of using them. Characters from ancient times have other era-specific skills that modern characters will lack.

In the Paleolithic and Neolithic eras, replace Streetwise with Thrown, Drive with Hunting, Firearms with Territory, Academics with Hearth Wisdom, Computer with Legends, and Science with Taboos. The Technology Knowledge keeps its name, but is very different in these times.

Characters from the time of the second War of Rage, replace Drive with Ride, Computer with Hearth Wisdom, and Technology with Sail. Many characters also replace Firearms with Archery, except those familiar with guns.

## Talents

### Thrown

Thrown covers the use of muscle powered ranged weapons to cause maximum damage at the greatest distances. This includes aerodynamic rocks, slings, spears, and any technology that improves their use. Thrown also covers early archery, initially developed around 12,000 BCE.

- **Novice:** You can hit a target reliably as long as you aren't under stress. You can find suitable ammunition for a sling or to throw directly.
- **Practiced:** You can use slings and spears when hunting, and you can make basic thrown weapons even if you don't have the knowledge of how to knap flint or build the fire to harden wood.
- **Competent:** You frequently hit the weak spots of prey, and throw volleys of sling-stones that crack the skulls of charging enemies.
- **Expert:** Neighboring tribes know better than to attack your family, as you can kill them before they can see you.
- **Scholar:** Tribes for miles around know you by reputation — if you can see it, you can kill it.

**Possessed By:** Hunters, Scouts, Warriors

**Specialties:** Ambush, Moving Targets, Quick shots, Specific Targets

## Skills

### Archery

Archery is the ability to use bows and crossbows, the most common ranged weapons among both Europeans and indigenous groups. Experienced archers also know how to maintain their weapons and how to make bows and arrows

from available materials. This Skill does not cover the use of spears or other thrown weapons; using those requires Athletics.

- Novice: You can shoot adequately as long as you aren't under stress. You can maintain your bow or crossbow, but not repair it.
- Practiced: You can fight and hunt competently with either a bow or crossbow, and you know how to maintain and repair your weapon, but not craft a new bow or crossbow.
- Competent: You use a bow with grace and style, and you can make weapons that are respected for their craftsmanship.
- Expert: Warlords and tribal leaders who need superior archers call on you.
- Scholar: Neither distance, nor darkness, nor the elements seem capable of stopping your arrows from hitting their target.

**Possessed By:** Conquistadors, Settlers, Indigenous Tribesmen, Guards, Hunters, Scouts

**Specialties:** Ambush, Horseback, Hunting, Moving Targets, Quick shots, Target

## Hunting

Hunting is vital for survival. Without hunting, the tribe had no meat to eat, no hides for warmth and shelter, and no bone for tools and jewelry. A character with the Hunting Skill has trained in how to make and use tools, traps, and ingenuity to hunt game found in a territory, as well as how to skin and harvest the various parts of the animal.

Shapeshifters use the higher of Hunting or Primal Urge.

- Novice: You can reliably catch rabbits or hares, and catch fish enough for your immediate family. You have joined a few hunts for larger prey.
- Practiced: Your traps and fishing nets can gather food enough for 10 or 12 people, and you are a regular part of hunting parties that tackle larger prey.
- Competent: You lead hunting parties that track boar, deer, oxen, and aurochs. Between those and your traps, your tribe rarely goes hungry when prey is about.
- Expert: The largest prey holds no fear for you; you expect to return victorious even when hunting mammoth. You also know how to fend off the predators and scavengers who would challenge your kill.
- Master: Your skill as a hunter is so legendary that you can single-handedly provide for a tribe of up to 100 people, even when the land is covered in bitter ice.

**Possessed By:** Homid Shapeshifters, Hunters, Trappers, Scouts

**Specialties:** Butchery, Skinning, Specific Prey (Aurochs, Boar, Elk, etc.)

## Ride

Ride is the ability to travel astride a horse or other riding animal, keeping it under control in varying circumstances. Experienced riders can fight from horseback, tend horses' common ailments, and evaluate the quality of their mounts and related gear. Europeans arriving in the New World would commonly have this Ability, but the indigenous peoples have never seen a horse before.

- Novice: You can get around on a good mount as long as things don't get complicated.
- Practiced: You can hunt, chase, and sustain long rides safely, if not always comfortably.
- Competent: Horses hold very few surprises for you, and you can fight from horseback without penalty.
- Expert: You can engage in fancy stunts and keep your horse calm in the midst of dangerous situations.
- Master: Alexander the Great and his Bucephalus were no closer than you are with your favored steeds.

**Possessed By:** Conquistadors, Scouts, Messengers, Most Europeans

**Specialties:** Mounted Combat, Jumping, Racing, Trick Riding

## Sail

Sail covers the fine art of piloting a ship along rivers, across seas, and even over the oceans, linking disparate continents through threads of trade and commerce. Experienced sailors know how to tie knots and adjust sails to take advantage of the winds, how to navigate without land in sight, and how to steer and pilot boats and ships through vicious reefs and hidden sandbars.

- Novice: You are as comfortable on the water as you are on land and can get to where you're going, in time.
- Practiced: You're at home in at least one kind of vessel, and have no qualms about spending days on the water.
- Competent: Long journeys hold no fear for you, whether you have a crew to work with or just your supplies and your thoughts for company.
- Expert: You've led columns of more than one vessel on voyages across the oceans, or have studied every waterway for hundreds of miles around.

- Master: Blizzards, rapids, pitched battles, and raging storms feel like a second home when you're on a boat.

**Possessed By:** Fishermen, Indigenous Tribesmen, Navigators, Sailors, Scouts

**Specialties:** Canoe, Kayak, Open Ocean, Pursuit, Rivers, Sailing Ship, Trade Vessels

## ***Territory***

Characters with the Territory Skill have a depth of understanding of the terrain, vegetation, animals and seasons of their area. They know the best places to forage and where to avoid. This intimate knowledge also gives an advantage over invaders who are less familiar with an area.

In her territory, a character can use her Territory dots in place of Stealth and Survival.

- Novice: You know the land within a mile of your home, and have a rough idea of what is where out to about five miles. You can forage enough food to keep yourself alive if stranded.
- Practiced: You're regularly part of foraging parties that bring food for your tribe. You know the land intimately for five miles around your home, and can find your way back from 15 miles away.
- Competent: You know the land for 15 miles around your home, and lead foraging expeditions to a wealth of vegetables, nuts, and fruits. You know where best to set ambushes and move without being seen.
- Expert: You can find food enough for 100 people within 20 miles of your home, and can work out when foragers from other tribes are encroaching onto your tribe's land.
- Master: You can find food and water to sustain a whole hunting party in the most barren desert, and have an almost supernatural sense of when someone is in your territory — about 25 miles around your home.

**Possessed By:** Foragers, Scouts, Territorial Shapeshifters

**Specialties:** Gathering Food, Identifying Intruders, Stealth, Survival

## ***Knowledges***

### ***Hearth Wisdom***

Hearth Wisdom is the lore of the people, as opposed to the science of the academies. It covers the body of knowledge accumulated by common people, indigenous priests, traders, and European settlers who do not benefit from servants or live in isolation. It includes mundane matters such as which plants are edible or poisonous, signs of impending bad (or good) weather, rules of thumb for resolving domestic disputes and the folk wisdom regarding the dangers of the night.

- Student: You know all the common fireside tales of your home and can recall them at need.
- College: You know the obscure and traditional lore of your region, and very little — even if it's strange or dangerous — takes you by surprise within the fields you know.
- Masters: You quickly acquire the lore of any area you pass through, and others know that when the unseen world makes itself visible, you're the one who most likely knows what to do about it.
- Doctorate: You are famous for your knowledge of mysterious affairs, and some fear you because of the potential for pacts with dark forces that your explorations afford.
- Scholar: Your supreme insights into strange matters make you the target of pleas from individuals both high and low who suffer mysterious depredations.

**Possessed By:** Farmers, Herbalists, Colonists, Matrons, Village Elders

**Specialties:** By country or region (either European or New World such as Aztec, Maya, Spanish, etc.), Omens, Wards

## ***Legends***

The art of storytelling is only just beginning during the Paleolithic. Characters with the Legends Knowledge know how to interpret events to see their lessons and craft teaching stories from them. Actually telling these stories in an interesting and engaging fashion is the province of the Performance Skill.

- Student: You know the main legends of your tribes, but you have studied them as stories rather than internalizing their lessons.
- College: You have studied the more obscure legends of your tribe, and have grasped the lessons underpinning the more common tales.
- Masters: You know the reasons behind all of your tribes' legends, and can craft variations that convey that information to your fellows.
- Doctorate: You are the primary lore-Scholar of your tribe. You know the legends of your own tribe and those of others, and frequently "discover" legendary tales that provide new insight to current events.
- Scholar: A legend in your own lifetime, you are a teacher for not only your own tribe but others who know of your prowess. While you may need others to tell the stories, you can use them to teach the unteachable.

**Possessed By:** Envoys, Messengers, Parents, Storytellers, Tribal Elders

**Specialties:** Education, Fables, Specific Meanings, Teaching

## **Taboos**

Knowing the stories of spirits and gods gives you an edge when dealing with the spirit world. Prehistoric spirits do notice human attempts at supplication and worship, and when pleased help ease the burden of prehistoric survival.

Shapeshifters can use their Taboos in place of another Ability when dealing respectfully with spirits.

- Student: You know enough not to piss off the major spirit-gods of your territory — most of the time, anyway.
- College: You know what to do and what not to do to avoid attracting the spirits' ire, and they sometimes answer your supplications.
- Masters: Others seek you out for your knowledge of the spirits' taboos. You can entreat the weather to bring rain to refresh plants, or to drive prey animals close to your tribe's hunters. Your tribe remembers when you succeed and ignores when you fail.
- Doctorate: As one of the most respected sources of spiritual knowledge in the region, other tribes come to you to learn what they must do to please the spirits. Some, you can help. Others you give deliberately misleading information.
- Scholar: When you speak, the spirits listen. With the correct actions and supplications fish leap from the rivers, predators ignore your camps, and your foragers always return with a bounty

**Possessed By:** Changing Breeds, Elders, Lore-keepers, Mystics, Shamans, Storytellers

**Specialties:** By spirit (specific animal, land, weather, etc.), Atonement, Requests for Favor

## **Technology (Paleolithic)**

While the modern Technology Knowledge covers electronics and modern devices, knowledge of Paleolithic technology focuses on the secrets of available materials—how to knap flint and maintain an edge on an obsidian blade, how to start fires, and how best to use them to cook meat or harden spear tips. Putting this knowledge into practice may require the Crafts Skill at the Storyteller's discretion.

- Student: You can start a fire and chip out a flint spearhead.
- College: You can use fire to harden a spear tip, and know the best materials for different types of trap.
- Masters: You know the secrets of different types of woods, grasses, and stones, and can use each to its best effect. After 10,000 BCE you know how to make basic bows and fletch arrows.
- Doctorate: You often have new ideas for tools and weapons, and have a reputation among your tribe for trying them out.
- Scholar: Where others see a barren wilderness you see untapped resources. You could direct your tribe to settle on an ice floe and provide them with tools, traps, and shelter.

**Possessed By:** Fire-tamers, Foragers, Hunters, Lore-keepers

**Specialties:** By material (Bone, Stone, Wood, etc.), Shelter, Traps, Tools, Weapons



# Chapter Two: The Time Before

*Great Gaia – the smells! You cannot imagine the scents. So many of them. So rich, so thick.  
The world back then was... alive. I never knew until now how dead things are.  
In our time. I want to go back and live there forever.*

– GrrBrool Bites-the-Tail

In the days before the War of Rage, the world is an unspoiled wilderness. Gaia's influence spreads easily across the world, guiding nature and all its creatures. Herds of grazing creatures wander the lush grasslands, and predators stalk them, looking to take down an easy kill. Much of the Northern Hemisphere is covered in thick glacial ice, and the sea levels are much lower than they are in modern times, with land bridges linking most of the continents, allowing passage from one to another.

Across the land, giant herds of animals migrate with seasons. Creatures such as bison, aurochs (a giant precursor to modern cattle), horses, deer, and mammoth roam across the landscape. In turn, these herds are preyed upon by the giant predators of the age: cave lions, cave hyena, saber-tooth tigers and wolf packs, as well as a plethora of smaller predator species.

The seasons themselves are highly pronounced. Winter is colder and lasts longer. Glaciers spread out across the lands, grinding down the mountains and carving new valleys. When spring finally breaks, nature takes every advantage of the warmer weather, with plants sprouting new growth as soon as the temperatures start to rise. Hibernating animals emerge from their dens to break their fast. The wild herds migrate back towards the higher latitudes, to give birth and fatten themselves up in preparation for the next winter.

Summers are briefer and cooler, and the autumn comes quickly, bringing the colder weather back. Trees drop their leaves, and many animals either begin their migrations back to warmer latitudes, or go into hibernation in preparation for the long winter.

Early humans are at the mercy of their environment; they rely on it for their shelter, their food, and their tools. They have no real way to alter their surroundings in anything other than the most superficial ways. Life is a daily struggle for survival, and larger predators prey on humanity if they are not constantly vigilant for danger. Development of labor-saving devices, such as the wheel, is many thousands of years into the future, and even the invention of writing is far in humanity's future.

The Gauntlet is thinner than it will be in the future and spirits are able to influence the physical world much more easily. Around some of the more powerful caerns, they are able to push through the thin barrier to wreak havoc with the creatures and early people who live here.

In these early years, the Garou live in a slightly uneasy harmony with the Fera. Across the world, all the Changing Breeds work together to protect Gaia's creation against the Wyrms' manipulations, carefully maintaining the network of caerns spread out around the world and making sure they are well tended and do not become corrupted.

# The Sacred Duty

In the millennia before the War of Rage, the Garou and the other Changing Breeds work together in their Sacred Duty to Gaia. Her lifeblood flows through and around the Earth and Her energy is strongest at the caerns, places that are revered by all the Changing Breeds. For thousands of years, the Breeds lived together in an uneasy harmony, maintaining the extensive network of caerns that dotted the land and sea the world over. Although the Breeds don't always see eye to eye on every issue, their shared vision of this duty is usually enough to help them settle any differences of opinion they might have. By keeping a careful watch over the caerns and ensuring they remain free of the influence of malevolent spirits, the Changing Breeds guide humanity as it develops.

The caerns are often very simple, normally just natural rock formations. Caves are especially common as caerns, but mountaintops or groves in old growth forests are often used as well. As the human populations get larger — and with them the numbers of shapechangers — they establish more elaborate sacred sites. Many create stone circles, and more elaborate structures such as Stonehenge and the Hill of Tara provide a major spiritual focus for their local communities.

All of the Breeds undertake ceremonies at the caerns at different times of the year. The Gurahl, who typically act as the caern's *de facto* leaders, lead many ceremonies, but some are led by the other Breeds. The Garou usually lead the midwinter ceremony, where they act out Gaia defeating Winter's power, bringing Spring back to the land. The Grondr conduct cleansing ceremonies at the end of winter to ensure the old frustrations are washed away with the melting snow, making sure they do not fester and attract evil spirits. The Apis conduct fertility ceremonies in the early spring to bless the matings they oversee, and to call down Gaia's blessing on the new generation that will be born that year. The Mokolé conduct initiation rites during the summer, as the young make their first change and become full adult members of the sept, and ensure they understand the sacred duties they are about to undertake. As fall draws to a close and winter approaches again, the Ratkin bards lead ceremonies celebrating the world dying off, giving new growth a space to fill come the end of winter.

Although disagreements between the Breeds are relatively common, particularly when one of them has reason to distrust one of the others, all of the others work together to smooth the bruised egos and ensure that the resentment does not fester into outright war. The Gurahl are usually instrumental in this, but they often call on the other breeds to help, particularly if the offended party's allies can calm them down. This constant mediation cultivates and maintains the sept's unity.

## LOCAL COLOR

Rather than deal with the myriad of variations of ceremonies and myths that the different septs across the world held, this book suggests the underlying basis of the rituals remains relatively common, regardless of where they are in the world. During this time, werewolves across Europe and Western Asia share common beliefs, although different clans and settlements have different names and specific rites.

When dealing with a troupe traveling across the prehistoric landscape, the Storytellers should maintain the same basic structure between the various septs the troupe encounters, but make each sept different from the others by changing the names of the ceremonies, the language used, and even the focus of the spiritual beliefs, all based on local color. This not only makes her job easier, it also provides hooks for the characters to engage with, particularly if they have strong beliefs in one particular direction that conflicts with what the locals believe.

## Tending the Caerns

Before the Garou usurp control from the other Changing Breeds, mixed septs of shapeshifters care for the vast majority of caerns. Their primary duty is protecting the caerns from supernatural influence, allowing Gaia's blessing to flow smoothly through to the physical world. By working together, they play off each other's strengths, keeping Gaia's lifeblood flowing and clean from taint. Each of the breeds takes on a different sacred duty, with some overlap, ensuring that the care given is the best it can be.

While all of the Breeds take an active role at most caerns at various times, not all of them tend every caern at all times. All the Breeds typically tend the larger and more powerful caerns, taking on duties in line with their strengths and gifts. While the larger septs are normally stronger and capable of handling bigger threats, they also suffer more from disagreements between the breeds, sometimes resulting in disunity and a weakening of the sept's combined strength.

The smaller caerns, on the other hand, are often only attended by a smaller set of Changing Breeds, who call for help if they need it. Usually, the breed most associated with the

caern's aspect is the primary caretaker. For example, the Garou often assume primary care of caerns aligned with Strength or Rage; the Gurahl care for Healing caerns; the Bastet care for Enigma caerns; and the Ratkin look after Wyld caerns. Some breeds — particularly the Garou and the Bastet — keep their smaller caerns to themselves, whereas other breeds welcome the other breeds into their sacred spaces.

The breeds all work together to create new caerns when they discover new locations that brim with Gaia's power, or to repair and rededicate any caerns that suffer either physical or spiritual damage. The Gurahl and Mokolé particularly work together to dedicate these caerns to Gaia and to ensure that Her energy and blessing flow properly through them.

If the Wyrms somehow corrupts a caern, or it begins as a place of malevolence and evil, the breeds cleanse the site together before rededicating it to Gaia. The Grondr play an important part in these ceremonies, using ritual torture to burn the corruption from any tainted individuals. In many cases, once these people are declared free from the Wyrms's taint, they are ritually sacrificed to the Earth Mother to cement her blessing and complete the caern's cleansing. Their bodies are usually dressed carefully in the finest clothes, smeared in ochre or other sacred pigments, and then entombed in the foundations of the new caern.

## *Bringers of Rain*

Many septs dislike the presence of the werhyenas, though few can doubt their necessity. As Choosers of the Slain, they cut away the dead wood among the Changing Breeds and their Kinfolk so that the new growth may show through. Unlike the Ratkin who use disease and poisons to cull the herd *en masse*, the Ajaba focus on individuals. They find those in the human community — and among the Changing Breeds — who cannot carry their own share of the burden, and kill them so the rest of the group can grow stronger.

Despite most shapeshifters agreeing that the Ajaba hold a vital role in Gaia's plans, nobody really *likes* the werhyenas. Around concentrations of their animal Kin, both in Africa and the cave hyenas of Eurasia, the Ajaba feel less need for tact or restraint. While few actually lord their position over other Changing Breeds, many exude an air of superiority. After all, it's up to the Ajaba to decide who isn't carrying their weight, with few enough checks and balances.

In some parts of the world, the Garou have turned on the Ajaba — not enough to spark outright war, but enough that the werhyenas have left more than a handful of septs. The werewolves contend that they should be the ones to decide whom the Ajaba kill, as making the same person judge and executioner is a recipe for abuses of power. The Ajaba contend that if the werewolves would do their own jobs, maybe the world would be easier to live in and the werhyenas wouldn't need to follow their role with as much vigor.

Those septs that have larger Ajaba populations often feel better about the hyenas' presence than most — not because the sept has become tolerant of the Ajaba's arrogance but because they see the werhyenas taking their own duty just as seriously when it comes to their own kind, killing their oldest to keep the breed vital. After all, Gaia does not ask the Ajaba to choose the slain from among everyone except themselves.

## *The Spider-Queen's Minions*

Though some have trouble accepting it, even the Ananasi have their place in most septs. Because most of the other breeds distrust the werespiders, usually only one or two reside in any given sept. Even they are usually enough to help direct the other Changing Breeds towards their Queen's goals.

While created as creatures of balance and serving Queen Ananasa, the cracks in Her amber prison are faint, and so the werespiders must all pay at least lip service to the Wyrms's goals if they have any hope of their Queen escaping. Though it rankles them to do so, the Ananasi of the time do not see that they have any choice in the matter. As such, they try to embody what the Wyrms was, rather than what it is — an agent of balance. Their efforts often fail, as their only knowledge and goals come from the now-corrupted Wyrms. Despite that, the werespiders manage to make some headway, guiding those ideas that work into habits that become law and dogma, while helping others recognize when a new idea harms more than it helps.

The Ananasi also recognize that if all of the other Changing Breeds discovered their allegiance to the Wyrms, the other shapeshifters would annihilate them. If they suspect that anyone is close to the truth, they spread discord among the sept's members, keeping the others focused on what everyone else is doing and not what the spiders are up to.

Despite all of this duplicity, the Ananasi often bring good ideas to the sept, concepts that make everyone's lives easier in the longer term. It is because of this that the other shapeshifters allow the werespiders to remain as part of their septs, letting them take their place among the rituals that keep Gaia's blessing flowing.

## *The Hearthkeepers*

While most of the Changing Breeds spend their time dealing with the here and now, the Apis consider it their sacred duty to be concerned about the future. They believe that unless they take care to raise future generations with Gaia's mission at heart, it spells trouble for everyone in the long run.

Breeding the future generations means keeping a close eye on the human and animal populations around each caern and carefully selecting the individuals most appropriate for

the traits that the Apis are trying foster. They then bring the shapechanger and the selected Kinfolk together and work hard to make a match. Most communities around the world at this time rely on arranged partnerships, although most septs include a ritual ceremony involved in the choice. The different Breeds are under no obligation to listen to the Apis' choices, but most recognize that the Apis choose the best and wisest of any of the breeds to fulfill a perceived need.

Choosing appropriate mates is a time-consuming task, and the Apis spend a lot of time getting to know not only the individuals involved, but also getting a feel for any missing elements in the local Changing Breeds, so they can work on filling in those shortcomings over time. The Apis use a lot of ritual divination for this task, in which they involve the Breed they are working with at the time. Sometimes, the Apis must travel to another region in order to find an appropriate mate, as there may be no one in the local area who would be an ideal match. Because of this, some Apis migrate from caern to caern during the warmer parts of the year, liaising with the local wereaurochs to determine what they are looking for and letting them know if they know of anyone suitable in another area that they have traveled to.

The Apis are the ones who also end up doing a lot of maintenance of the caerns themselves, ensuring they are clean physically and any supplies the sept needs are there at the right time. While this seems like mundane work to most of the other breeds, the Apis see this lowly work as vitally important for ensuring that the caern functions as it is supposed to at all times.

## *The Secret Stalkers*

With the world being as new as it is, and the spirit world still susceptible to flux and the corrupting influence of the Wyrms, the Bastet stalk both sides of the Gauntlet, learning the secret weaknesses of anything that dares to threaten Gaia's balance. Apart from the Simba, the Bastet are solitary creatures, so often only a single Bastet resides in a sept at any one time. In the Simba's territory, a small pride may work together to fulfill their sacred duty to the sept.

All Bastet carefully watch the spirits living in the caern's vicinity. They stalk them, watching their behaviors and studying them for any weakness that they can exploit if the need should arise. If they discover any unusual behavior, they usually – but not always, as cats are fickle beasts – pass that information onto the sept, usually via the local Gurahl.

The Bastet also watch the other members of their sept, carefully noting each member's strengths and weaknesses. The Bastet then play with that member, carefully poking at their septmate's weak spots to see how far they can be pushed before they snap.

The Bastet have a reputation for being lazy and aloof, and not contributing much to the caern's upkeep. The

werecats typically believe that the sept has plenty of others to carry out the more mundane upkeep, and they have more important things to be doing with their time. This can cause some friction with the other breeds, but the Bastet usually manage to smooth things over by providing some much-needed information at just the right time, proving their worth yet again to the other breeds.

## *The Earth Mother's Ears*

Unlike their fellow messengers, the Camazotz are perhaps the quietest of the Changing Breeds. They hate bringing attention to themselves and will stay out of sight at the back of any gatherings. But all the time they are watching and, perhaps more importantly, listening to what is going on around them. This information gathering is their sacred duty, and they take it very seriously.

Timely and accurate information is vital to the success of all of Gaia's children, and the Camazotz are masters of accumulating and assimilating data. They study everyone and everything around the septs they visit, and are masters at blending into the surroundings, appearing not to be there at all. Their constant eavesdropping is sometimes a bone of contention, but all the breeds appreciate the reason behind it, and recognize that the wererats' actions have prevented the Wyrms' minions from gaining an upper hand on many occasions.

The Camazotz only share information if they believe that the other breeds need to know it, and they will only share it at the time when the others need it. The rest of the information they keep to themselves, continuing to gain a greater understanding of what is going on around them on both sides of the Gauntlet.

## *Gaia's Messengers*

In prehistory, the largely inhospitable landscape separates septs from one another. Moving overland between the caerns can take anywhere from days to months, depending on the terrain between them. Allowing the various septs to communicate with one another is the Corax's sacred duty. They provide an easy way for septs to pass news between one another.

The most social of the changing breeds, the Corax rarely call a single sept home for any length of time. Instead, they move between several caerns, passing news and other information as they go, and meeting up with the other breeds to learn any news and secrets they have uncovered since their last visit.

Despite many thinking the Corax are only interested in socializing and gossiping, the wereravens are keenly intelligent and spend their time at each caern carefully observing what is going on there, and learning the state of the power play between the various breeds. If need be, they will trick the

information out of the caern's residents; many Corax have a way of getting the other breeds to open up to them. They understand the need for Gaia's sacred duties and they are not above manipulating situations to help smooth damaged egos, to ensure that the caern's protection remains uncompromised. They are also blunt when they need to be. If they see a problem, they usually speak plainly about it and bring it to the attention of those concerned. If no one there will listen, they will travel to another place and find someone who will.

The Corax make friends easily and make sure that they enjoy the hospitality of each caern in their travels. This is especially the case if more than one Corax happens to be at a caern at any given time. Each gathering becomes a cause for celebration, whether they have a formal reason or not.

### *The Sacred Protectors*

When it comes to protecting the caerns, the Garou are the front line of defense. Individual packs accept the responsibility for defending a caern, although some larger packs may shoulder responsibility for several additional caerns as well. The Garou's primary role is ensuring that the caern remains safe on both sides of the Gauntlet. They also take secondary duties related to the more spiritual nature of the caerns, sharing the duties with the Gurahl and Mokolé.

In the physical realm, they keep the caern free from dangerous predators such as cave lions. They regularly patrol the bawn, making sure nothing has interfered with any territory markers, deliberately or otherwise.

In the Umbra, they hunt down any malevolent spirits — especially those aligned with the Wyrms — who interfere with Gaia's blessing. Many packs spend much of their time in the Umbra, as often more trouble lurks there than in the physical realm. The Garou also track down and kill any supernatural creatures that interfere with their sacred duties, especially other shapechangers who they believe have lost sight of Gaia's will and actively pursue schemes that would damage the natural world. They are occasionally too overzealous, which rankles some of the other breeds.

Garou packs sometimes take on the sole care of some smaller caerns, especially those dedicated to Rage or Strength. The Garou relate best to the more combative spirits; the sense of rage and anger that permeates these caerns often makes it difficult for the Fera to deal with them. Consequently, the Garou often bar the other breeds from entering these caerns entirely, unless they have a specific need that requires a Gift or rite the Garou do not possess.

The Garou take their duties as caern protectors incredibly seriously, and treat all caerns as "theirs." Even before the War of Rage, they believe that they perform more of the sacred duties than the other breeds, and occasionally try to take control of a caern that one of the other breeds is tending. This always causes friction, and usually takes a

more levelheaded Gurahl or Mokolé to remind the Garou that the sacred duty belongs to all of Gaia's children.

The Garou's pent-up rage also often manifests as impatience with the Fera's actions in and around the caerns. If a caern's energy tips out of balance for any reason, the Garou typically pressure the other breeds into dealing with the problem straight away. They normally advocate using the most direct means possible, even if a more subtle approach would produce a better long-term solution.

### *Cleansers of the World*

The Grondr's sacred duty is to root out any sign of Wyrms corruption they find. Fierce fighters in their own right, the Grondr are highly social creatures, living near other communities and helping them keep their areas clean. When they aren't fighting, the Grondr are living life to the fullest and reminding the other breeds of the joys of their existence.

Although most shapechangers live in one place and commit themselves to only one sept, the Grondr are a migratory breed, moving around across wide territories. They live in groups known as Sounders and try their best to live rough off the land, taking only what they need — though after a successful hunt, the Grondr frequently forget their restraint. Grondr Sounders travel fairly lightly, carrying only as much food as they need.

Sounders spend most of their time searching for Wyrms taint wherever they travel. They are experts at reading the landscape, both the physical and the spiritual, and sensing if anything is corrupted. If they suspect a person of suffering Wyrms taint, they'll provoke a response, reading the presence or absence of corruption through his reactions.

When they find corruption, they single out the cause and go on the hunt. They have extensive and brutal rituals for cleaning away Wyrms taint using fire and foul-smelling herbal medicines. Freeing a person is often a brutal exercise involving mental and physical torture, as the Grondr believe that through pain comes purity. If the taint goes too deep, then death is the ultimate cleansing, and once that person is cleansed from a community, the rest can heal normally.

### *Gaia's Healers*

Often taking on the role of the caern's spiritual leaders and healers, the Gurahl are an integral part of Gaia's plans. Their sacred duty is to make certain that each caern's guardians maintain balance, ensuring that the spiritual energy flows properly from the Umbra and into the physical realm. Normally, a single Gurahl takes care of a caern, although the resident Gurahl may take an apprentice during the cub's time of Buri-Jaan.

Gaia's gift of wisdom and understanding of Mother Nature's design puts the werebears in the perfect position



for careful leadership of the other breeds when it comes to looking after the caerns. The Gurahl monitor the caern's balance on both sides of the Gauntlet, and call upon the other breeds' strengths and talents when something goes wrong. They spend a lot of time in meditation and consultation with the caern's spirits, and act accordingly.

The Gurahl also conduct special ceremonies at important times of the year, not only to honor the Earth Mother, but also to honor the gifts of the other breeds and to praise them for their contribution to maintaining the balance. In doing this, they use their gifts to keep the egos of the other breeds in check, and make sure the other breeds appreciate the contribution that the others provide.

Because they understand Gaia's longer-term picture of humanity's destiny on Earth, the Gurahl spend some of their time acting as shamans, teachers, and healers for the Kinfolk of all the sept's breeds. They keep a careful watch on what the various tribes and clans of humans around the caerns are doing and seeing, taking whatever action they deem as important to keep the tribe's beliefs pointed in the right direction.

The Gurahl understand that for Gaia's design to work properly all the different breeds have an important part to play, and they must each perform their sacred duties of their own volition, rather than out of obligation. Because of this, the Gurahl are careful to couch their requests to the other breeds in ways that appeal to the other shapeshifters' outlooks.

## ***Gaia's Conscience***

Without doubt, the Mokolé are the oldest of the changing breeds. They remember a time long before Gaia had created any of the other Changing Breeds and they had the whole world to themselves. Their long memories give the Mokolé an edge over the other breeds, because they can remember when situations have played out in similar fashions and have seen many permutations of the same issues time and again.

Because of this, the Mokolé have become the conscience of all the Changing Breeds, pointing out to the other breeds when a particular course of action will likely lead to ruin. They counsel caution when it is needed and recommend alternate courses of action that have worked — if only partly successfully — in the past.

The Mokolé believe that the Lizard Kings will reign supreme over the Earth again in the future, even if it takes eons to achieve this goal. They are patient, and carefully work on building an increased power base. The weresaurians focus on the long goal, and won't make rash decisions without carefully considering all the alternatives. This means that they often miss good opportunities for change, and sometimes even cause others to do the same, much to the chagrin of several of the more impatient and compulsive Changing Breeds.

## *Gaia's Judges*

Although the Nagah's detached personalities make most of the other breeds uncomfortable, they perform a vital role in the sept, and take their roles extremely seriously. They present as dancers, singers, and artisans who keep the records of all the Changing Breeds alive, though a few outside the breed know their true calling. The Nagah, perhaps of all the breeds, are the most serious about upholding Gaia's blessing and refuse to let anything stand in its way. They sense changes in others' demeanors and call them on it, appearing highly judgmental at the same time.

Most septs may never see a wereserpent, or know of only one or two Nagah — although some tropical septs may play host to many wereserpents at once. The Nagah are always studying, keeping a strong oral body of law they administer, and often come across as mystics or scholars. They sometimes act as the sept's teachers, making sure the other members understand the laws and their roles according to Gaia's intent.

The Nagah are masters of realizing when someone is hiding something. They pick up on very subtle body language cues, and pay careful attention to what people are saying. They compare what they have heard before against what they are now hearing, becoming suspicious when the two do not line up correctly. They do not hide the fact that they are watching the other members of the sept, something that often makes the others feel uncomfortable and as if they under suspicion, which in fact they are.

While a Nagah is not often willing to stand up in front of the entire sept, she will have a quiet word in the ears of the sept's leaders when she uncovers a potential problem, presenting it as something she happened to overhear. If she knows for certain that one of the sept's members is acting contrary to Gaia's will, she will take the matter into her own hands and deal with the problem — sometimes permanently — before it gets out of hand.

## *Humanity's Minders*

An essential part of Gaia's plan is the death of living things — indeed, such was the Wyrn's original duty. Without death and decay, the Earth's population would swell out of control and consume all of Gaia's resources. The Ratkin's sacred duty is ensuring the human populations in particular remain within sensible limits, lest they end up destroying the world. Even with early Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon populations being quite small, the Ratkin are especially diligent about keeping the resources available to the humans — as well as their numbers in general — as small as possible. The Ratkin fear humanity's rise, as they can already see that the humans want to control their environment and limit the Wyld's influence in the world.

The Ratkin are perhaps the fastest breeding of all the Changing Breeds. They prefer mating with their rat Kinfolk, instead of the human herd they cull. In the days before the War of Rage, the Ratkin avoided mating with humans if at all possible, although they did keep an eye on their human Kinfolk and used them to help sabotage settlements, especially during the winter when food is scarce.

It's not just humanity's physical presence that the Ratkin keep in check. They recognize that ideas are just as readily able to solidify the Weaver's control over reality, and the wererats often work to severely limit human innovation. It is for this reason that for thousands of years, humans the world over were stuck in a simple hunter-gatherer lifestyle, before the invention of agriculture freed them. The Ratkin did everything they could to prevent humanity from controlling their environment in any real way. It was not until the other Changing Breeds interrupted the Ratkin's sacred duty that humanity began to develop agriculture and writing.

## *Other Changing Breeds*

So what of the other shapeshifters: the Kitsune, the Nuwisha, and the Rokea? What role did they play in the combined septs?

The Kitsune are a much newer Changing Breed, who only appeared once humanity spread into Asia and settled in what would become China and Japan. Idealists to the last, the wererats did not believe that the tensions and rivalries that ran rampant through the other Changing Breeds could affect them. Their gift for politicking helped found the Beast Courts among those shapeshifters who had followed the migrating humans. That gift also helped defuse tensions even as the rest of the world flared into outright war. It was not enough, however, to prevent the War of Shame that threatened to end the Hengeyokai.

The Nuwisha were and remain the Nuwisha. They appear when they are needed most, and disappear once they have taught their lessons. As in modern times, only a hundred of them walk the earth at once, and this usually precludes them from settling down as part of a sept for anything more than a season or two. Often, the Nuwisha are nomads, moving from sept to sept, finding those in need of a lesson, and bringing their own brand of trickery to help humanity learn secrets that would help them through the ages.

The Rokea largely keep to themselves in the deep ocean, and maintain their own grottoes there. Occasionally, the Rokea interact with the other Changing Breeds at caerns close to the ocean shore, but usually the weresharks avoid the shapechangers of the Unsea, and the landwalkers distrust the Rokea in return. The Rokea do their utmost to keep any undersea spirit breakouts contained within the ocean, as they do not wish to resort to calling on the landwalkers for help, and see it as a mark of shame if they cannot deal with the problem themselves.

If a problem spirit from the land escapes into the ocean and causes trouble, the Rokea deal with the problem swiftly and usually brutally. If they can deal with the problem without having to deal with the landwalkers, all the better. If they must deal with those from the Unsea, they do so reluctantly, and keep the interactions to a bare minimum.

## Early Humanity

For thousands of years, the Neanderthals spread across Europe and Asia. Living in tightly-knit clans, they make their homes in caves and other natural shelters, living as Gaia intended.

Individual Neanderthal clans consist of several closely-knit family groups, who all share responsibility for the clan's survival. The Neanderthals are well adapted for life in the cold Ice Age climate, with a diet of meat supplemented with whatever vegetables they can gather. The clans make cords and baskets from plant fibers, animal sinews, and skins, allowing them to store food to last through the long winters.

Each clan has clearly-defined social roles and rules of conduct; the punishments for breaking such taboos are often swift and brutal. What duties a Neanderthal undertakes depends on sex: men hunt, defend the clan against any wild creatures that would prey upon them, and go on raiding parties for more territory when the clan expands. The women gather and prepare food, give medical care (often using plant-based remedies), and raise children.

The Neanderthals worship Gaia, at least as far as the Changing Breeds understand it, and have a strong spiritual connection with the Earth and its creatures. Neanderthal hunters honor the spirits of any animal they hunt and only kill what they need to survive. The clans also make use of the wide variety of plants available as food and medicines. They stock up for the harsh winters during the warmer months of the year, and spend the colder times listening to myths and stories of the spirits. They move when they need to, finding new shelter whenever the resources in their immediate area run low. Clans normally split whenever the populations get too large for the local environment to support them all, with part of the clan heading off to find an uninhabited cave for themselves.

Neanderthals make tools from flint, stone, bone, wood, or leather; the clans lack all knowledge about how to find and smelt metal. Instead, Neanderthals prize areas where they can gather flint from rock faces, and will sometimes fight other clans over a particularly rich seam.

By carefully knocking the edges off flint nodules, the Neanderthals create sharp cutting edges. They use the nodule cores as spearheads for hunting, or hand axes for butchering animals and cutting down trees. The chips that are flaked

off are used as scrapers to help with curing animal hides, cutting leather or sinew for cordage, or sharpening sticks for digging or use as tent poles.

Each clan has its own totem spirit, and each member also has an individual totem animal to guide them. When a child is born, the clan shaman seeks the spirits' guidance and finds a totem animal to guide the child through the rest of their lives. The shaman also helps guide the clan elders in their decisions about what to hunt and when, and helps the clan understand the signs and omens from the spirit world and how to use them to remain in harmony with Gaia's will.

While the Neanderthals are hardy people, they have only a limited spoken language. Most of their words are single syllables and are mainly used as names or simple warnings. Instead, the clans use a rich and complex sign language. From a very young age, clan members learn to understand nuanced body language, allowing the clan to communicate better than most other hominids have managed.

Throughout this time, the Garou and the Fera watched over early humanity. For millennia, the Neanderthals served well as Kinfolk, as the Changing Breeds prize their strong builds and hearty constitutions. Not all the Changing Breeds are fond of Neanderthal Kin, though. The Bastet find them ugly compared to feline Kinfolk, and refuse to take Neanderthal mates unless they absolutely have to. The Corax find the Neanderthal's limited speech and reliance on body language frustrating compared to other hominids that have more developed spoken languages, as the wereravens can mimic speech in any form but body language requires shapeshifting.

In time, the Cro-Magnon, forerunners of the modern *homo sapiens*, migrate out of Africa with the Apis' guidance, and spread out through Europe. Although they survive in much the same way as the Neanderthals, the Cro-Magnon develop much richer spoken languages, and find ways to develop more efficient and advanced tools than the Neanderthals were ever able to achieve. Cro-Magnon society typically has more balanced gender roles, although this does vary from settlement to settlement.

The arrival of the Cro-Magnon causes a great deal of consternation among the Changing Breeds. The Apis do their best to reassure the other shapeshifters that the new humans are better suited for breeding with in the longer term, but most Breeds are deeply unhappy and argue at length with the Apis over the subject. The Bastet are happier with the Cro-Magnon than they were with the Neanderthal and quickly take Kinfolk among the new humans. The Corax also prefer the newcomers' improved spoken language abilities, and are among the first of the Fera after the Bastet to find mates among the Cro-Magnon. However, most of the other breeds were hostile to the newcomers, and the Garou even hunted them to help protect their Neanderthal Kinfolk.

## PORTRAYING THE NEANDERTHAL

While it may be tempting for a Storyteller to portray the Neanderthals as simple, low-browed primitives, communicating in nothing more than grunts and chest thumps, this approach runs the risk of losing much of the rich culture that the Neanderthal clans possessed.

Instead, a Storyteller should treat the Neanderthals as being as intelligent as modern humans, although they possess a culture very different from our own. She may want to use hand gestures whenever a Neanderthal character speaks, or even to invent a simple sign language (that she shares with the other players) to demarcate Neanderthal speech compared to that of spirits or the other Changing Breeds. Some troupes may use a game featuring Neanderthal characters as impetus to go all the way and learn some words of sign language — but that's by no means a requirement.

Players and Storytellers may want to look to Jean Auel's *Earth's Children* novel series, especially the first three books: *The Clan of the Cave Bear*, *The Valley of Horses*, and *The Mammoth Hunters*. While the series has issues with characterization and tend towards soap opera in the later books, the series does an excellent job of portraying what Stone Age life was like and how to portray a seemingly-primitive people without resorting to grunting stereotypes.

In the end, the Apis are proven correct, and after the Ananasi's massacre of most of the Neanderthal population (p. 71), the Cro-Magnon completely displace the Neanderthals and migrate from Europe into Asia, Australia, and the Americas. The rest of the Changing Breeds eventually take the Cro-Magnon as Kinfolk and the Neanderthals die out, with the last of them perishing on the Iberian Peninsula some 27,000 years ago.

Eventually, through the Apis' careful breeding and the Ananasi's covert manipulations, humanity sets down permanent roots, learning how to domesticate animals and plants. This began humanity's long tradition of modifying its environment to suit its own needs and desires, rather than remaining completely subject to Gaia's whims.

These growing settlements did not come without their problems. The expanding populations were collectively stronger than they were in the smaller, cave-dwelling clans. Modifying the environment to suit themselves removed humanity's focus away from Gaia and the way nature worked. Agriculture enabled the human settlements to further grow in size, as the settlements were no longer reliant on whatever grew naturally nearby. They could grow the plants that best suited their diets, and spend less time foraging through the wilderness looking for suitable food. They could domesticate animals, making them easy to capture and butcher, nearly eliminating the dangers of hunting and foraging for food.

In time, with the Garou's attention distracted by the War of Rage, some of these early settlements continued to grow, eventually mutating into the great empires of Earth's ancient history. Humanity would turn away from worshipping Gaia, believing instead in gods of their own. They learned to modify their environment, discovering metallurgy and advanced agriculture along the way.

By the time the Changing Breeds noticed, it was far too late to return to the way things had once been.

## The Neanderthals' Fate

The Cro-Magnon's arrival in Europe caused a great deal of fear and concern among the Neanderthal clans. Before long, the Cro-Magnons were competing for the same resources and shelter, often driving the Neanderthals from their cave homes, or killing the same game that the Neanderthal needed for survival. Although the Garou and many of the other Fera breeds hunted the Cro-Magnon when they first arrived, the Ananasi's betrayal of the Neanderthals nearly wiped most of them out.

The survivors of the Ananasi's ritual were terrified for their lives and this fear left the Neanderthal susceptible to the Wyrms' corrupting influence. Kalus Banes seduced some of the more impetuous hunters in several tribes, convincing the Neanderthal that they could help drive the newcomers from their homelands, restore what was taken from them, and get revenge for the atrocity that had befallen many of their kin. These hunters, now monstrous fomori, went on a murderous rampage. They wiped out several Cro-Magnon communities, including at least one that had Garou Kinfolk.

The Garou smelled the Wyrms' taint on the scene and, incensed that the Neanderthals had repaid their protection and assistance by killing their Kinfolk, gave into their Rage and set about extracting revenge for the murder of their Kin. In their eyes, *all* Neanderthals were now tainted by the Wyrms, and they convinced the Fera of that fact. So it was that the Garou managed to do the Ananasi's dirty work for them once again.

## KINFOLK AND HISTORY

Given the number of Kinfolk of all the Changing Breeds present throughout prehistory, how is it that more people do not have some changing blood within them, protecting them from Delirium?

While not entirely recessive, the spiritual essence of Kinfolk fades over time. Three generations with only one Kinfolk parent is enough for the child to have too little of the shapeshifter's essence to count as Kinfolk. Some Changing Breeds try to maintain bloodlines and intermarry Kinfolk rather than bringing in external blood, but even then it's rare for the family's nature as Kin to last for more than five generations.

The Gurahl, still reeling from the shock of the Anansi's act of genocide, sensed the fear and apprehension the Neanderthals felt towards the Cro-Magnon. They started trying to heal the damage done, working with the clan elders to bring a balance between the two peoples. They succeeded for a while, leading to children born of Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon both, but constant raiding by Garou warriors eventually undid the Gurahl's work. The Garou's actions also further terrified the Neanderthal, making it easy for other Banes to poison the thoughts of the warriors and exacerbate the situation.

The Grondr, also sensing Wyrms' taint in several Neanderthal clans, went in to root out the corruption. In the process, they often killed off the strongest and bravest of the Neanderthal hunters, leaving the clan without a means of killing game for food. While the Grondr succeeded in freeing several clans from Wyrms' taint, they also doomed those same clans to death via starvation, or left them vulnerable to predators such as cave hyenas, that were only too willing to feast on the survivors.

The Garou were quite convincing in telling the other Fera breeds that the Wyrms had corrupted all the Neanderthal. The Corax spread the message to the distant Garou packs across Europe and Western Asia. Because the message came from other Garou, it tarred all the Neanderthal clans with the same brush — whether or not they had anything to do with Banes. The Camazotz also kept a much closer eye on Neanderthal clans, and passed word to the Garou and Grondr warriors whenever they suspected one of the clans had fallen under the Wyrms' influence.

The Apis, distraught that their careful breeding plans for the surviving Neanderthals had started unraveling, tried to counsel the other Fera to take a more cautious approach. The Gurahl sided with the Apis, concerned that many of the clans being wiped out had not fallen victim to the Wyrms, but were merely guilty by association. But the Garou and Grondr refused to listen, and systematically killed off the Neanderthals.

As the years went by, the remaining Neanderthals retreated across Europe, eventually settling on the Iberian Peninsula. However, it was not enough to escape the Garou onslaught. Before the Ice Age had finished, the Neanderthal were extinct, and the Cro-Magnon had Europe to themselves.

## The Spirit World

Before humanity claimed dominion over much of the Earth and fell victim to the Weaver's machinations, the spirit world was much closer to the physical realm and interacted with it far more often. Caerns thrummed with spiritual energy and spirits passed through the Gauntlet much easier.

The Penumbra particularly was much more vibrant and colorful, an echo of how much influence Gaia still had over the real world. The Gauntlet was much thinner than it is in modern times, and stepping sideways was much easier for the Garou and the other breeds. The physical and the spiritual differed little in appearance, which sometimes caused some confusion for Garou cubs stepping sideways for the first time. Without taking special precautions, they got lost in the Penumbra, thinking it was the physical world.

The Wyld exerted far more influence over the physical world in prehistoric times. Around caerns, all manner of life sprouted and grew. Even in the colder parts of the world during the Ice Age, the areas around larger caerns were often warmer, giving life a chance to thrive in the ice. The Penumbra side of the Gauntlet also throbbed with spiritual energy, and plant spirits often germinated at a moment's notice — particularly in the spring, once the influence of the winter began to wane. Shapeshifters sometimes found strange new creatures around caerns, as newly created spirits escaped through the Gauntlet.

Before the Banestorm (p. 67), the Gauntlet was either very thin or completely nonexistent across much of the world. When the Weaver thickened the Gauntlet around humanity to protect them from the Banes that escaped, it did not have a massive impact at first. As the Earth's population grew, the Gauntlet grew thicker every year, making it harder and harder for Gaia's influence to spread out across the land. In turn, the thickened Gauntlet drained the power of caerns, leaving many of them cut off from spiritual power entirely. By the time of the Garou's attempt at reconciliation with the other Fera (p. 77), many mixed-breed septs had abandoned their caerns, leaving them to become humanity's sacred sites and places of worship.

## The Enemy

During the last Ice Age, a myriad of strange and dangerous creatures wandered the Earth. Many were the forerunners to modern animals, while many others died out long before the ice receded. But as bizarre and dangerous as those creatures were, they pale into insignificance when contrasted against some of the true horrors that stalked the Earth in those times.

The Gauntlet between the Umbra and the physical world was still very thin in those days, and even thinner around the many caerns that dotted the landscape. Spirits, particularly those belonging to the Wyrms, found it relatively easy to slip through the Veil and prowl the Earth. Humans told myths of these malevolent creatures around the campfires during the winter, warning themselves of the dangers of dealing with evil spirits, and what happens when someone succumbs to their seductive lies.

Early humanity was particularly susceptible to spiritual manipulations. Both the Neanderthals and Cro-Magnon held animistic beliefs, and avoided offending the spirits lest bad things befall their clans. Banes, particularly Dream Makers, played upon these fears, and worked to corrupt mankind and drag them away from the guidance of the Garou and the other Changing Breeds. Promises of power and renown were highly seductive to the early humans, for whom every day was a battle for survival.

Where possible, Banes possessed humans to create fomori, who then caused havoc across the landscape and turned entire clans against Gaia and the Changing Breeds. If this happened close to one of the larger caerns, the shape-shifters could detect the fomori quickly, and the combined power of the sept rained down hard upon the Wyrmspawn. But if the clan affected was in a remote area, it could be some time before anyone noticed a fomor and dealt with it accordingly. In these situations, the Wyrms' minions could do immense damage.

Some Banes crossed the Gauntlet and stalked humanity and the Changing Breeds directly, hunting them down and killing them when they could. They wiped out whole clans of humans, sometimes leaving nothing but their bones scattered about — other times, nothing at all. Stories of untold horrors prowling the dark abounded, particularly among the Neanderthals, who are more superstitious than the Cro-Magnon.

Other Banes worked to corrupt everything that the Changing Breeds strove to protect, including the minds of the shapechangers themselves. They poisoned the caerns the Garou and Fera work together to protect, making it look as though one or other of the breeds failed in their sacred duty. The spirits did everything they could to sow discord among the shapeshifters, as they knew that once

they had divided the werecreatures it would be much easier to gain dominance.

The Wyrms' minions also fostered the Weaver-influenced concepts of agriculture and advanced tools in early humanity's minds, encouraging people to manipulate their environment. The Wyrms wanted humanity to turn away from seeing their survival as a direct blessing from Gaia, and instead to see it as something they themselves had control over.

The Weaver makes its will known through the Pattern Spiders that calcify reality. In the physical realm, the Weaver's spirits try their best to solidify the thinking of humanity, locking them into patterns and preventing them from exploring other alternatives or possibilities. Different clans end up with different ways of performing the same task, but because their thinking has become so rigid, none of them can see they are talking about the same thing and they begin to argue and fight amongst themselves.

The Garou and the Fera did what they could to keep humanity safe from spiritual predation, but sometimes, the enemy's influence was so subtle that they missed it in their daily fight for survival. Other times, Gaia's protectors had their hands so full dealing with the more overt spiritual intrusions that threaten the world and its inhabitants that they missed the subtler incursions altogether.

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## Different Times, Different Challenges

The following sections provide the Storyteller with a range of time periods throughout history, each with its own unique challenges for Garou and Fera both.

Any of the periods depicted in this section could be the flashpoint that started the War of Rage, but as presented here they are independent of that conflict. Chapter Three covers the triggers and actions that may have started the war in each time period.

### Banestorm (~70,000 years BCE)

When the Mount Toba supervolcano erupted in the Indonesian archipelago over 70,000 years ago, it vomited hundreds of cubic miles of rock and ash into the Earth's upper atmosphere, drastically altering the world's weather patterns. Heavy clouds blocked the sun for 10 years and temperatures dropped drastically. Ash fell across the whole world, and even the rain burned. Plants and animals both struggled to survive, as did the early humans who were alive at the time.

But the Toba catastrophe had effects far beyond the physical. The Wyrms' minions used the eruption's devas-

tating force to tear a hole in the thin Gauntlet, spewing thousands of Banes into the physical realm. These corporeal spirits raged across the world, spreading out and wreaking havoc wherever they went. Untold evil oozed across the landscape, decimating populations, turning animals and plants against one another, and corrupting the minds of Garou, Fera, and humanity alike. The Changing Breeds who know of this event call it the Banestorm.

For years, the Garou and the other Fera battled to protect the early humans from the Wyrms' minions. Thousands died to ensure that the Wyrms could not claim all of humanity for itself. The Garou in Europe and Northern Asia were the most successful, with many Neanderthals surviving. Banes decimated the emerging Cro-Magnon — at that time still migrating out of central Africa — and were it not for the Apis' careful influence and the combined might of the Ajaba, Swara, and the Khan, the Cro-Magnon may have died out completely before they even established a foothold.

Because the Banes possessed anyone or anything they could, trust became a very scarce resource. Individual clans isolated themselves from the rest of the world, and treated any outsiders with fear and distrust until they could prove they

were free from Wyrms-taint. Few traveled any distance and even the Corax — normally welcomed by most clans — had a difficult time proving they were on the side of the locals. Food and other resources grew scarce and most clans barely had enough for themselves, let alone enough to share with others. Some clans tried their best to welcome those they could trust to their hearths to share what little they had, but many clans turned strangers away, particularly when food was running very low. More than one clan died out because of starvation and malnutrition.

The Weaver wove the Gauntlet tighter to protect humanity, making it harder for all but the werespiders to access the spirit world. Before the Banestorm devastated the world, *all* of the Changing Breeds could step sideways with ease, but the rampaging Banes forced the Weaver to further segregate the physical realm from the nightmares. Some Changing Breeds lost the ability to step sideways altogether, and some could only do it by using special ceremonies. The Garou kept their ability, for they needed to chase evil spirits across the Gauntlet wherever they were; likewise, the Corax and Nuwisha, masters of Umbral travel, remained able to step sideways freely. Many of the breeds who lost the ability resented those who had



## THE SHADOW HISTORY

Prehistory as depicted in this book diverges somewhat from its presentation in other W20 books. This is a deliberate choice — those books reveal what current shapeshifters believe happened in prehistory, which is quite different from what actually happened. Even the powerful Mnesis of the Mokolé isn't perfect, and is shaped through the understandings of those doing the remembering. This chapter and the next also allow for a War of Rage that starts anytime between 70,000 BCE and 2,000 BCE, allowing the Storyteller and players to pick the point in history that most appeals to them. Some groups may not want to have the War of Rage as a full-on running battle, instead using this chapter as a view of how the world decayed naturally over time.

Some players may wonder what the “canon” answer is, which choice is most true. That question can't be answered. Enough about the prehistory of the World of Darkness is already bizarre and contradictory that picking one interpretation of the true history doesn't work. The truth is, and will always be, what the Storyteller decides.

somehow managed to keep the gift, and tempers ran high more than once because of it.

The Banes suffered from the Gauntlet's hardening as well, finding it much harder to cross back into the Umbra. They instead found other ways to torment humanity, by creating the first fomori. By possessing humans, the Banes broke into trusted circles and spread their poison further. They took the Garou and Fera by surprise, and in some cases, it was often years before the truth was uncovered. The Gurahl worked tirelessly, particularly with the Garou and the Grondr, to uncover the taint and clean up the mess. The Bastet and Camazotz often uncovered the secret activities that the possessed got up to when they thought they were alone, allowing the Grondr and Garou to uncover the taint. Whole families were sacrificed to clear the Wurm's mark, leaving much bitterness between the different breeds, especially when those who died had been Kinfolk in life.

Caerns are the focal point for the Garou and the Fera and, as such, the mixed septs defended their caerns with ferocity. Banes found the thinner Gauntlet around the caerns to make them ideal as staging areas, so the Chang-

ing Breeds were forced to constantly defend their sacred sites from spiritual attack. Some smaller caerns ended up abandoned or seized by the Wurm, as Gaia's forces didn't have enough warriors to defend them all.

Banes stalk the world, especially at night, making finding proper shelter every night essential. Most packs will return home before night falls, to ensure their caern's or settlement's defenses are properly in place before dark. Some Garou occasionally hunt at night, but it often results in severe casualties and leaves both the caerns and human settlements undefended. More than one pack has returned home in the morning only to find their homes decimated in their absence.

Travel between caerns and settlements is both dangerous and difficult during the Banestorm. The constant cloud cover and the acid rain has killed most of the edible plants, and with them many herbivorous animals, making living off the land a difficult prospect. While most septs make sure that the territory under their control is kept safe, they can do little about the land in between, leaving it open for all manner of evil to take root.

The first stirrings of the Delirium began with the appearance of the Banes and the other nightmares that stalked humanity. Until then, humanity had seen the half-human forms of the Garou and Fera as normal, part of the usual spiritual landscape, but with the Banestorm incursion, people began to fear creatures with supernatural powers and shy away from them whenever possible. The bravest of the Neanderthal warriors even began to attack any creatures that looked too far beyond the natural, and the clan shamans told stories of how the evil half-creatures had tried to kill them all. Though the true spiritual fear did not kick in until after the Impergium, the Banestorm is its starting point.

## Storyteller Advice

Stories set during the Banestorm should be violent, brutal battles for survival, with the troupe never really knowing whom they can trust. Hideous spirit creatures, never before seen, ravage their way across the whole planet, giving plenty of opportunities for troupes spoiling for a fight.

The world itself is a dark, foreboding place. Heavy clouds turn the noonday skies black; the sun rarely, if ever, finds a way to break through. The toxic gases from Mount Toba's eruption have turned the rain into acid, burning anything it falls on. Ash from the volcano falls from the sky for years after the eruption, coating everything in a dull layer of gray. Fresh water and unspoiled food are hard to find and competition for it is fierce. Basic survival should be a major part of any story set during the Banestorm; characters will need to find a source of unspoiled food and water.

Prior to the Banestorm, totem spirits dealt almost solely with individuals. Each shapeshifter took a personal totem, as

it was the only reliable way to gain a spirit's patronage. During the Banestorm, packs began to collectively bond with totem spirits, something that had been inconceivable until that time.

Modern players are going to struggle with the sheer lack of things they are used to. The modern Garou tribes do not exist in any form recognizable to current players — and current characters — so tribal Gifts and rites effectively do not exist. Humanity has not yet discovered metal, so any Gifts or rites that rely on metal — including Klaives and silver — are simply not available to the Garou or Fera of the time.

Another major difference is the maximum range of Moon Bridges. At the time of the Banestorm, few people traveled more than a few miles beyond their homes. It was simply too difficult and too dangerous. Many even believed that it was impossible to travel for more than a few days in any direction. This belief is reflected in a Moon Bridge's maximum length, which is limited to only a few miles for even the strongest caern. On the other hand, once a Moon Bridge is established it remains active for many years.

## *Migration (~50,000 years BCE)*

Thousands of years after the Banestorm petered out, humanity recovered and its numbers swelled once again, especially those of the Cro-Magnon who were still living in Africa. Under the Apis' guidance, the Cro-Magnon began the second wave of human expansion out of Africa, up through the Middle East and into Europe.

The Apis in Europe and western Asia foresaw the Neanderthals' inevitable demise. While the Neanderthals' numbers were still strong, the Neanderthals began rejecting new ideas in the millennia after the Banestorm. Fear of the unknown replaced their natural inquisitiveness; they typically rejected any ideas that did not confirm to their ancestral knowledge. The Apis became increasingly frustrated with the glacially-paced progress the Neanderthal were making. Because the Garou and most of the Fera had most of their Kinfolk among the Neanderthal, the Changing Breeds were not maturing as they should either.

The Cro-Magnon migration into Europe gave the Apis hope again. The Cro-Magnon were far less risk averse than the Neanderthal ever were, and they adapted to changing circumstances relatively easily. They were a highly creative people, finding ingenious solutions to their problems, and they were willing to pass those ideas onto others for their mutual benefit.

This inevitably led to problems between the two hominids. In many cases, the Neanderthals — afraid of change and believing that the Cro-Magnon were another of the Wyrms' tricks — would often go out of the way to avoid the Cro-Magnon, although they would stand their ground and defend their clans and homes against the newcomers

if pressed. Some clans believed that the arrival of the Cro-Magnon was a sign of the spirit world's disfavor and they would uproot themselves and find a safer location to live. In time, the Cro-Magnon spread out through southern Europe where they could settle, as the Neanderthals were better suited to the colder northern climes.

The Apis also led the Cro-Magnon through the Middle East into Southeast Asia. The Garou didn't contest this migration, but many of the local Fera resisted it. Over time, the Cro-Magnon would spread down through the Malay Peninsula and across the land bridge into the Indonesian Archipelago. Banes and other Wyrms horrors were still prevalent here in the area around Mount Toba, and many Cro-Magnon perished in the journey.

Eventually they set sail across the seas, reaching the top of Australia. At that time, Australia was a land populated heavily by spirits, with no shapeshifters at all. The people struggled for a long time, but eventually learned to live in harmony with the land and the spirits there.

The Apis seriously underestimated the resistance from the Garou and the other Fera. The Cro-Magnon were not as physically strong as the Neanderthals, and the Garou particularly saw this as a weakness. They wanted nothing to do with the newcomers and often hunted them to protect the homes of their Neanderthal Kinfolk. The Apis worked hard to convince the Garou and the other Fera, particularly the Gurahl, that the Cro-Magnons did not pose a threat to the Changing Breeds and their future. If anything, they actually made the future stronger.

Tensions between the Garou and the Fera festered following the Banestorm. Where all the Changing Breeds had worked side by side to defeat the Wyrms' incursion and seal the tear in the Gauntlet, most of the tales told generations later in the long winters were of the Garou's actions alone. While the other Fera recognized the Garou's prominence, some of them resented the lack of attention their ancestors' actions during the Banestorm received. Other, younger members of the Changing Breeds ignored their elders' complaints, believing that the victory against the Banestorm belonged to the Garou alone.

The Cro-Magnon's arrival brought many of these old tensions to the surface, resurrecting ancient rivalries and spreading discontent between the breeds. The increased rivalries made life at some of the mixed septs much more difficult, and many sept leaders ended up spending more time smoothing ruffled feathers than they did caring for the caerns and maintaining the balance on both sides of the Gauntlet. This, unfortunately, led to more Banes and Wyrmspawn attacking the caerns, which in turn only reinforced the idea that the Cro-Magnon's arrival was something the spirit world wanted nothing to do with.

Not all the Fera resisted the Cro-Magnon migration. Many of the Bastet and Corax sided with the Apis during this time, helping the Cro-Magnon find new homes in Europe. This brought them into conflict with the more traditional breeds and even into outright fights in some cases.

## ***Storyteller Advice***

Stories in this era should revolve around the theme of old ways versus new ways, tradition versus progress. With the Cro-Magnon migrations into traditionally Neanderthal territory, old ways of thinking are going to be challenged by the more progressive elements.

Unlike stories set during the Banestorm era, stories set during the Migration era are much more suited to political machinations instead of physical combat. While the period has plenty of opportunity for combat sequences, such as the Garou or Fera physically resisting the Cro-Magnon incursion into their territories, the Storyteller should strive to bring more peaceful solutions to the fore instead.

Many characters in this time will be resistant to the Cro-Magnon; the only exception being Apis, Bastet, and Corax characters. The Storyteller should work with the players either to make sure the whole group is on one side of the fight, or to make sure that ruptures in the characters won't lead to some players feeling like they're not seeing as much of the action.

Show the difference between the Neanderthals and the Cro-Magnon by highlighting the differences between the technology and communication of the two species. The Neanderthals have much heavier spears and weapons, really nothing more than sharpened stakes with fire-hardened points, designed for close-range thrusting attacks. The Cro-Magnon, by comparison, favor lighter throwing spears, sometimes with flint tips for greater stopping power. The Cro-Magnon also have a greater capability with flint knapping, having learned new ways to split a single flint core into many more pieces than the Neanderthals ever imagined possible. The Cro-Magnon have an extensive vocal language, while the Neanderthals use expressive body language and signs, in addition to spoken words, to convey complex information faster than speech alone.

Both Neanderthals and Cro-Magnon rely on gathered herbs and plants for medicinal purposes. The Neanderthals have a strict lineage of healers, normally matrilineal within a single family. Knowledge of which plants to use and how best to prepare them passes from mother to daughter, typically kept secret from all others. The Cro-Magnon use many of the same plants in the same ways, but they're also more willing to experiment with different results, relying more on intuition and extrapolation to come up with new techniques and sharing them within their clans.

Neanderthal clans tend to be far more insular, shying

away from contact with strangers. The Cro-Magnon are far more open to new people, and they possess much better spoken languages, which vary in relation to distance — Cro-Magnon from 500 miles away can understand one another after a little time spent listening, while often Neanderthal body language is of no use beyond the clan's immediate neighbors. The Cro-Magnon are also far more open to embracing new ideas that will make their lives easier in the long term, whereas the Neanderthal will typically shun ideas that they have not come across before.

## ***Extinction (~27,000 years BCE)***

As the millennia wore on, the climate changed across the world. Lush tropical areas in the Sahara dried up and the winds swept everything away, leaving only a barren sandy desert. Only along the rivers did the remnants of the old tropical paradise linger. Across most of the rest of the world, the climate cooled drastically, with the winters getting longer and harsher. Much of the oceans close to the poles froze over, drying up the shallow seas and exposing the land beneath. From both poles, glaciers pushed their way across the landscape towards the equator.

In Europe, the Cro-Magnon expanded northwards from the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, taking over the Neanderthal lands. Most of the Garou and the Fera — still trying to preserve their Neanderthal Kinfolk lines — kept fighting the Cro-Magnon, although some Garou had taken Kinfolk among the newcomers.

For the Neanderthal, it was the Ananasi that landed the deathblow for the older human species. Over centuries, the Ananasi had slowly tricked large numbers of Neanderthal into gathering in one place for a summer gathering every second year, as a place to share stories, ideas, and worship. Whole clans would leave their homes and travel for weeks or even months to meet up with all their other clans. Inter-clan pairings were arranged and consummated, while other clans forged new kinship bonds, and every clan traded with the others.

These summer gatherings strengthened the Neanderthal bloodlines and let the clan elders set the course for the coming years. Clan shamans conducted special ceremonies to divine the spirit's will, to ensure that Gaia's favor would continue to fall upon all the clans and keep them safe, even as the environment turned against them.

But it was all a horrible trick. Once most of the Neanderthal clans were comfortable with coming together in huge gatherings, the Ananasi struck. Over a three-day period, the werespiders sacrificed every single Neanderthal — man, woman, and child alike — and burned them on funeral pyres. The Ananasi wiped out thousands of Neanderthals; only the few who had remained

at their home caves because they were either too old, too young, or too infirm to travel to the gathering had survived.

It was a genocide that changed the course of history. The Ananasi's massacre fatally wounded the Neanderthal species. While not all the clans traveled to the gatherings, most of the ones in Western and Central Europe had. The clans that stayed home eventually learned of the massacre, normally hearing of the slaying from the Corax and Camazotz who spread the message far and wide.

The Garou and the other Fera, incensed at the Ananasi, declared them Wyrms-tainted. Garou packs started hunting the werespiders, aiming to wipe them out for the damage they had done to their Kinfolk. But the Ananasi anticipated the Garou's intentions, and disappeared into hiding holes in the Gauntlet, safely out of sight and free from the Garou's rage.

The scale of the Ananasi's evil drove spirits around the massacre sites mad. Many Garou had to deal with these twisted spirits, delaying the hunt for the Ananasi and allowing the werespiders to disappear through the Gauntlet and into the Umbra.

The Ananasi's actions spelled the beginning of the end of the Neanderthals. With the Ananasi's disappearance, the Garou's rage turned against the Neanderthals, who succumbed to the Wyrms' influence and turned against their old protectors. Over the next century or two, the Garou would complete the Ananasi's work for them.

Most of the Fera were as incensed as the Garou, and hunted the Ananasi alongside the werewolves. Although many initially refused to believe that the Neanderthals had completely succumbed to the Wyrms, the Garou and the Grondr's evidence soon convinced most of them and they too joined into the hunt for the rest of the Neanderthals.

Although the Apis had been trying to convince the rest of the Changing Breeds about the Neanderthal's lack of long-term viability as Kinfolk, they were devastated by the older race's almost complete extermination. It set back their carefully-laid breeding plans centuries and most of the Apis scrambled to find ways to mitigate the damage the Ananasi had wrought.

The biggest question to be answered in the massacre's immediate aftermath is "why?" What could have prompted the Ananasi to commit such an atrocity, and what could they imagine they would get out of it? All of the breeds search for answers, and blame the others for not doing more to prevent it ahead of time. Rumor and accusations fly back and forth as everyone looks for someone else to blame.

### ***Storyteller Advice***

Unlike the previous two time periods, the Neanderthal genocide takes place over a very short time frame, which adds a lot more pressure to any stories that the Storyteller

sets in this juncture. The actual location of the Ananasi's ritual is left to the Storyteller's discretion, though most gatherings were in western or central Europe.

This story's arc could go two ways:

The first alternative is to involve the players' characters in the events leading up to the impending massacre. It's possible that the Ananasi have tricked the players' characters into helping them organize the Clan gathering, making them unwitting participants in the ceremony to come. Another option is that the characters could find hints that something untoward is going to happen at the Clan gathering and arrive just as the Ananasi's massacre is beginning. Either way, the players' characters are going to have front row seats in a major atrocity, either as spectators or unwilling participants. Kinfolk characters may even be victims of the Ananasi's atrocity. This option puts a lot of guilt on the players' characters, and makes them targets for the Garou and the other Fera who want revenge on the Ananasi.

The other alternative is to let the players' characters get involved in the massacre's immediate aftermath. This would allow the characters to witness the genocide's sheer scale and feel the outrage first hand. The Storyteller should make it clear to the players just how brutal the Ananasi had been and how they spared nobody. The players' characters could then become instrumental in the immediate hunt for the Ananasi and help the Garou and the other Fera track down the perpetrators.

The Storyteller's focus for this juncture is to make the events as viscerally real as possible and to immerse the players in the events as they unfold. Let them get involved in the blame game, either by having them cast aspersions against the other breeds, or by letting them help defuse the situation when some of the hotter heads from the juncture accuse others of being involved (or possibly, a little of both).

In the centuries between the migration event and the Ananasi's massacre, several Garou tribes formed: the Children of Winter in northwestern Europe, the Moon's Litter in Europe's northeast, and the Desert Wind in northern Africa and the Middle East. As such, characters can now draw upon tribal Gifts and rites as appropriate. Should the players' characters encounter members of any (or all) of these tribes, the Storyteller can present them as being distinctly part of the time frame in which they are, but with some degree of common ground with modern tribes (with which the players, if not the characters, will be more familiar).

## ***Civilization (~10,000 years BCE)***

Long after the Garou killed off the last surviving Neanderthals, the ice age has finally receded and the Cro-Magnon have multiplied. Cro-Magnon, the last surviving hominid, have spread right across Europe and Asia, crossing into



North America via the Bering land bridge. The Garou and some of the other Fera travel with them, heading across to the New World.

While most of those in Eastern Asia and North America remain largely nomadic like their ancestors, in North Africa and the Middle East humanity has developed the science of agriculture. By saving some seeds at the end of each harvest and then sowing them the following spring, humanity bends their environment to their own desires, as the Weaver wants.

Initially, agriculture was limited to small-scale farming. Shepherds broke wild animals to their wills, bringing order to the beasts. After generations of breeding, they now tend small herds of animals, providing their communities with food, milk, and leather whenever they need it. Farmers grow crops of staples like wheat and barley, allowing people to stockpile supplies against the harsh winters.

Until the growth of agriculture, many clans remained partially nomadic, following game animals as they migrated, or changing regions when they over-foraged their homeland.

Once humanity learned to grow their own food, groups of humans put down roots, establishing more permanent settlements.

These developments pleased several of the Changing Breeds. The Apis were especially proud of humanity's charges and how they overcame the harshness of their environment. The Ananasi were also pleased, for the growth of agriculture distracted the humans away from thinking that Gaia provided everything for them, giving room for the Wyrms to infect their thoughts – and distracting it from Queen Ananasa's prison. The Gurahl and Grondr grudgingly accepted human settlements. While humans were now less likely to wander into sacred or dangerous territory, and far less likely to encounter Wyrmspawn, the humans' dominance over their environment and rejection of their Gaian beliefs concerned the werebears and wereboars.

But not all the breeds liked the growth of the human settlements. The Ratkin grew worried about the Weaver's increased influence over humanity, even though it gave them a target-rich environment. The wererats did everything they

could to keep the Wyld's influence over the communities, destroying food supplies, spreading sickness, and ruining crops to force humans back to a nomadic lifestyle. This interference led the Ratkin into conflict with the Apis, and though the other Changing Breeds swiftly intervened when the two came to blows, the wererats and wereaurochs remained in a state close to cold war for centuries.

The Garou hated this new reliance on agriculture. They saw humanity domesticate itself, turning away from the wild and dangerous nature it had once respected. Society's increased rigidity and planned existence blinded it from seeing Gaia in all her wonder. The werewolves despaired; many became outspoken proponents of violently punishing those who strayed too far from Gaia's teaching. To help ensure that humanity would not completely succumb to the Weaver's machinations, the Garou encouraged – or even instigated – raids between settlements, to make certain humanity would not lose their aggressive edge. The werewolves gave covert aid to the Ratkin, hoping that the two breeds could bring the fledgling humanity back to the Wyld. The Garou were more successful in northern climes; where they lacked wolf Kinfolk, particularly along the shores of the Mediterranean, humanity took more readily to domestication.

One other side effect of the rise of agriculture was that it strengthened the Gauntlet by strengthening the Weaver's influence. With humanity more focused on tending their crops and livestock, they had far less time for Gaia's will, and the slow strengthening of the Gauntlet ate away at caerns around the world. Of all the Changing Breeds, the Gurahl were the most concerned about some smaller caerns fading away, but it was the far-ranging Camazotz who first discovered that even larger caerns now had less influence over the surrounding area. Many small caerns became so weak that the shapeshifters abandoned them altogether. The Garou took this as a sign that humanity's path was the wrong one and they should return to the way they had lived for thousands of years.

This line of thinking led the Garou to start the Impergium. As the human settlements grew larger, they set up walls and other defenses to keep nature at bay. The Garou in central Europe, incensed by their caerns' fading strength, and seeing the human defenses as a personal insult, began a reign of terror. They stalked villages, destroying the settlement's defenses and occasionally every building, but leaving people alive – enough to get the message out: You have failed, and the monsters will hunt you in the night. Humanity learned to fear Gaia's protectors then.

The Fera largely opposed the Impergium from the beginning. While they understood why the Garou were trying to intimidate the humans into returning to the old ways, most of the Changing Breeds believed that they could find other methods to achieve that aim. Most tried to simply

calm the Garou down and talk them out of this course of action – but a few members of almost every breed joined with the Garou in spreading terror.

Breeds like the Bastet and Grondr were just as concerned as the Garou about humanity turning away from Gaia, but did not believe that punishing and terrorizing the humans was the way to change their minds. At times, they actively fought the raging Garou warbands, and many villages ended up as battlegrounds between the Garou and the Fera.

Ultimately, though, the Impergium spread across the land as the Garou tried forcing humanity back to Gaia. As the Impergium spread, humanity's fear of the creatures that hunted them only increased. This fear was as much spiritual as physical, and set the Delirium in stone.

In Eastern Asia and across into North America, the Garou successfully kept humanity to the old ways, with the help of some of the Changing Breeds. The Gurahl, Corax, and Camazotz traveled with them, and they lived close to the land and venerated Gaia. Many of the human bands lived much like the Neanderthals and Cro-Magnon had for thousands of years, migrating with the herds and living off the land. In these places, the Impergium took much longer to gain momentum, but the spiritual side of the Delirium infected even people never exposed to it.

## *Storytelling Advice*

The development of agriculture radically increased the tensions between the Changing Breeds. Some breeds believed it was a necessary and good idea, while others thought it a ghastly mistake, a sign that the Weaver would ultimately take control if humanity continued down that path.

Story arcs set during the Civilization juncture reflect this division. The Storyteller should focus on exploring whether agriculture and the rise of civilization is ultimately a good thing for both humanity and the Changing Breeds, or whether it will lead to the Weaver's ascent. Most Garou of all tribes want to punish humanity from turning away from Gaia, and so the Storyteller may arrange things so that the players' characters are the ones to start the Impergium. Alternatively, they may play members of those Changing Breeds who think the werewolves' tactics will do more harm than good, no matter how much they personally want to join in.

The Storyteller may want to humanize her players' experiences; once the Garou have terrorized a settlement – or a group of shapeshifters has destroyed it – she can rewind and ask the players to come up with human characters. Those human characters suffer the same fate as the victims in the previous chapter, at the hands of the players' characters. While ultimately the Impergium would let the Weaver and the Wyrms gain control over humanity, characters at this point in time have no way of knowing what will happen.

By the time of this juncture, several new Garou tribes have formed across the world, beginning to show the divisions that lead to modern tribes. The White Hunters (Fianna, Get of Fenris, and White Howlers) have formed in northwestern Europe. The Hounds of Gaia (Children of Gaia and Glass Walkers) now make their home in the Middle East. Other tribes include the Litany Singers (Black Furies and Shadow Lords), the Chosen of Luna (Red Talons and Silver Fangs), and the Wind Runners (Bone Gnawers, and Silent Striders). In America, the Three Brothers (Croatan, Uktena, and Wendigo) stand as one tribe, but are on the verge of dividing into three. Many of the tribes began to take totems of abstract spirits for the first time.

## *Deluge (~6,500 years BCE)*

After the end of the ice age, the sea level remained far lower than it was in modern times, because huge quantities of water remained trapped in glaciers and ice lakes. In some places, this left fertile land above the sea, in places that will eventually submerge once the ocean levels rise.

Once such place was Doggerland, a vast region of land that lies where the English Channel and the North Sea are now. Before the Deluge, Doggerland was a fertile region, crisscrossed by many rivers and streams that flowed out of Europe, including the ones that would eventually be known as the Thames and the Rhine.

It was home to dozens of small human settlements, and the Garou's White Hunter tribe claimed it as their territory. The White Hunters made sure none of the settlements grew too big or too advanced, although they permitted subsistence farming mainly to appease the other Fera breeds. The Garou were arrogant, unafraid of any of the other breeds, and forced their will on everyone.

As the world warmed, the ocean's level slowly began to rise and, year by year, the sea began swallowing the land. The White Hunters believed that the reason the sudden floods came is because Gaia was not happy with humanity's reverence, and had chosen to punish the locals for angering Her.

The Garou's relations with the other Changing Breeds is quite strained, as the Garou often do not listen to the concerns of others. Instead, they dictate what they expect the other shapeshifters to be doing. Some of the other breeds, particularly the Grondr and the Mokolé, continually remind the White Hunters of their own sacred duties, but the Garou are often too arrogant to listen.

At about this time, the Rokea called upon ancient bargains with the Mokolé and the Nagah, and told them that the world was about to undergo a massive change. The weresharks had seen the signs and, while they looked forward to the Unsea sinking beneath the waves, they felt

obligated to warn their distant landwalking cousins so they could escape the region before the calamity hit.

Unfortunately, the Garou refused to listen to the Rokea's message. Thrice-Blessed-Ghost, elder of the White Hunters, mocked the Nagah messenger who carried the weresharks' warning to those upon the land. The Garou had seen no warning signs and did not believe that the sea would ever rise up to swallow the land whole. They called upon the Corax and the Camazotz to search for signs of impending destruction, but neither breed could see any sign of chaos from the air. Incensed by the Rokea's insolence, the White Hunters sent the Nagah messenger back to the Rokea with nothing more than a mocking message and a warning to never again bother the Garou with such lies.

The Garou's arrogant defiance cost them dearly when an enormous mega-tsunami rose out of the North Atlantic and flooded the entire region. The ocean swallowed Doggerland's low-lying regions whole. The disaster severed Europe's northwestern peninsula from the mainland, turning it into the British Isles and isolating the Garou and the other Changing Breeds who lived there.

The massive upheaval in the Earth that caused the giant wave also disrupted the network of caerns across Doggerland. The flood destroyed dozens of caerns, and the attached Moon Bridges died with them. So great was destruction, it tore a hole through the Gauntlet and allowed dozens of Banes to escape into the physical realm in a miniature version of the Banestorm, adding to the chaos that followed the flooding.

The Rokea mocked the Garou for ignoring their warning. After all, Sea's children had no need for duplicity. The weresharks feasted upon Doggerland's dead. The Garou, outraged by the insult, blamed the Rokea for the destruction of their territory and hunted the weresharks whenever they could find them. The White Hunters unleashed their (often impotent) Rage against the other Changing Breeds, particularly the Mokolé and the Nagah, whom the Garou believed had colluded with the Rokea to undermine the Garou's supremacy.

The other Fera breeds, particularly the Gurahl, ignored the Garou's demands for retribution and concentrated instead on healing the rift in the Gauntlet. Many other shapeshifters aided the Gurahl, hunting down the Banes who had escaped into the world and stamping out Wyrmtaint that the chaos had allowed to fester. The White Hunters meanwhile demanded the other breeds help them hunt down those responsible for the calamity; their outrage only intensified when the Fera refused to help.

## *Storytelling Advice*

Storytellers can focus on two major points in this juncture: either the time during the lead up to the tsunami, or dealing with its aftermath.

The lead up to the tsunami can have the characters trying to prevent the massive amount of destruction that will completely inundate Doggerland. If they choose not to work with the White Hunters, then the task of helping to evacuate the region and moving all of the inhabitants to safety before the wave strikes will fall completely on their shoulders. Alternatively, they could be the ones to finally convince Thrice-Blessed Ghost of the threat's reality, moving towards a less acrimonious outcome.

The tsunami itself should be an utterly devastating and traumatic event. The exact time of the day, month, and season of the tsunami's strike is left to the Storyteller's discretion, so she can tailor the event to suit her chronicle's symbolism. For some, it may happen around dawn, signaling the arrival of new things and the washing away of night. It may occur during the day, so that the characters can witness the tsunami's full destructive power, or the wave may strike in the dead of night to maximize the amount of chaos and confusion the disaster causes — and to make finding survivors that much harder.

The aftermath's focus will again depend on whether the players' characters are allied with the White Hunters or working some other angle. Doggerland is below the water, and anyone not already evacuated or rescued by the next sunset is dead. The Rokea swarm into the new sea and help to fight the Banes that have escaped through the Gauntlet. The White Hunters use the opportunity to attack the Rokea and their allies, because they blame the weresharks for the disaster. The other Fera concentrate on doing what they can to contain the situation and prevent the Wyrmspawn from making matters any worse. What the players' characters do is completely up to them and their viewpoint.

The exact cause of the tsunami is largely irrelevant, unless the Storyteller is using this juncture as one of the triggers for the War of Rage (see p. 95). The tear in the Gauntlet may have come first as one of the Wyrmspawn break through into the physical realm, and the tsunami is a side effect of its emergence. Alternatively, the tsunami may have had a perfectly mundane explanation, such as a massive submarine landslide off the Scandinavian coast.

## ***Poison (~5,000 years BCE)***

Mankind's settlements have evolved further into societies. Beliefs and ideas spread as people move from one settlement to another, trading goods and forging bonds of marriage between families and villages. At this time, humanity began tracking the movements of the stars by using giant circles of stone and timber. Everyone who has some manner of trade uses copper tools, and communities bargain — or go to war — over copper mines that provide raw materials for tools and weapons. Community leaders

become kings and queens, claiming responsibility and dominion of patches of wilderness and protecting those under them from the predations of outsiders. In many ways, this time period enshrines the de facto concepts of territory and leadership into formal laws.

No one is quite certain how humanity first discovered gold. Someone may have stumbled across some alluvial gold washed up on a riverbank and thought it looked pretty enough to keep. Before long, others wanted some and they searched it out and found it, attracted to the metal's shine like a Corax to a shimmering pond. They may have found some after a landslide exposed veins in a rock face, or in the loose scree at the bottom of a hill, or they may have discovered some shining yellow waste while prospecting for a new copper vein.

Whatever the initial discovery, at some point humans in north Africa discovered gold and set about collecting as much of it as they could find. Because it was scarce and because nobody had a real use for the metal beyond ornamentation, people traded for it and it became one of the world's most enduring forms of currency. People fashioned it into jewelry, ornaments, and decoration. Artisans crafted statues to their gods from it, so that others had something concrete upon which to focus their faith.

The Apis guide humanity's development, breeding people to be stronger and wiser than their ancestors. In return, humans worship the Apis as gods. Most of the time, the Apis were benevolent, but not all could resist the lure of worldly power. A few wereaurochs subjugated humanity and treated them like slaves rather than wards.

At first, gold and silver were just pretty metals for humanity to look at. No one remembers exactly how people first learned how to use them as weapons against the Changing Breeds. Some say it was an unlucky accident, when a stray gold-bearing rock struck one of the Apis, and he writhed in agony until he died. The Camazotz believed Banes whispered the secret of gold into the ear of a man who wanted to free himself from the Apis' yoke. Whether the story is true or not doesn't matter. Word got out, and soon the Apis were no longer invulnerable gods — and people hailed those who murdered the wereaurochs as heroes.

The Garou hated the way humanity was so entrenched in their own routines that they had lost sight of Gaia and all her beauty, and they deflected that hate onto the Apis. Once they learned that the Apis would die horribly from contact with the golden metal, the Garou grabbed as much of it as they could. They wore it as jewelry and they coated their weapons with it, so they could take their Rage out on the Apis and remind them of their place in Gaia's order.

For a time, the Garou rampaged across the land, disrupting the Apis' reign and bringing chaos to human settlements.

The Garou also took their Rage out on humanity as the same time, punishing them for succumbing to the Weaver's control and living their lives away from nature.

But soon, a human discovered how silver was similarly poisonous to the Garou. Some tales tell of how a woman dreamed about a shadowy figure who told her to fashion a needle from silver and use it to poke the creature that threatened her children. Others say the Bastet learned the secret by overhearing spirits on the other side of the Gauntlet talking about ways to kill the werewolves. Still other stories tell of a Garou stumbling across a silver vein while hunting for more gold and burning his hands as soon as he touched it.

Perhaps all of these stories are true, and perhaps none are. All that matters is that humanity suddenly had another weapon with which to strike back against the monsters that stalked their settlements and threatened their gods. Word spread across the lands, despite many Changing Breeds doing everything they could to keep the news contained. Some of the Garou blamed the Corax and the Camazotz. The winged shapeshifters were the weakest in any fight, and the poison metals would even the score. For a while, many of Gaia's defenders lashed out against Her eyes and ears, and in turn the wereravens and werewolves did not limit themselves to defensive action. Only the Mokolé and Apis did not join the Garou's crusade, hurt as both breeds are by silver and gold alike. They did not, however, leap to the messengers' defense, or do anything to douse the flames of war on either side. This new war only ended when an unnamed Camazotz stood before the war leaders of the Garou and Bastet to plead her case. Those who saw it say that Gaia spoke through her, ending the senseless violence.

### ***Storyteller Advice***

Stories set in this juncture will be potentially far more dangerous than many of the others, as they center on the discovery of the poisonous metals of moon and sun, and on mankind learning to use them as weapons to kill the Changing Breeds. Stories can focus on desperate attempts to keep the secret under wraps, or on the battles between shapeshifters who each believe the other is responsible for the poison.

If the characters want to keep the metals a secret, the Storyteller could start with the discovery of one (or both) of the poison metals, and the characters' presence at their first use against a shapeshifter. They will need to try to cover up reasons for the shapechanger's death, and try to find out more about the strange weapon used against him. Ultimately though, trying to keep the secret under wraps is an impossible task. While they may be able to contain it for a while, eventually someone somewhere will independently discover the power of gold and the knowledge will spread from there instead.

Alternatively, the characters can take part in the war against the Corax and Camazotz. Unlike other shapeshifter battles, neither of Gaia's messengers are well-suited to a duel or stand-up fight, and can flee faster than most others can chase them. As such, they set traps, use decoys, and trick enemies into fighting one another. They develop and use guerilla tactics against the frenzied Changing Breeds, bat and raven alike just trying to survive this next fight so a different band of shapeshifters can try to kill them — or even so they might be able to prove their innocence.

The flying Fera exploit their advantages and target their enemies' weaknesses in one of the first demonstrations of asymmetric warfare. For Garou or other warrior shapeshifters, what should be a cakewalk against creatures that can hardly put up a fight quickly turns into a hellish war of attrition against a foe who can strike from nowhere. Though this ongoing battle might not be the entire reason for the War of Rage, the actions of the Corax and the Camazotz in dividing their foes may accidentally set the Changing Breeds against one another.

By this point in time, the Garou tribes have coalesced into the 16 tribes that werewolves recognize in modern times. While each tribe claims the deeds of their precursor tribe as theirs alone, in truth the werewolves have a far greater shared history than they would like to admit.

## ***Reconciliation (~2,000 years BCE)***

Despite the best efforts of the Changing Breeds, human empires are now stronger and far more numerous than ever before, their numbers dwarfing those of the Garou and the Fera. By leveraging the metals of moon and sun, humanity has found a way to slip free of their bonds and truly take control of the world.

Bronze is the latest metal in widespread use. By combining copper with other easily found metals such as tin, humanity discovered a metal that was both easy to work with yet extremely durable. It allowed them to create more specialized tools and weapons. Bronze armor and swords made the humans even more dangerous to the Changing Breeds. Soon, humanity will discover the secret of iron, and the new metal will replace bronze in tools, weapons, and armor.

In North Africa, the early Egyptian dynasties have already come and gone. For over ten centuries, the Egyptian pharaohs ruled the lands along the Nile. The Egyptians worshiped the Bastet and Mokolé as gods. Both breeds treat the humans as mere playthings, and the Mokolé in particular believe that they are just reclaiming their original birthright. Following the construction of the Great Pyramids, Egypt suffered a massive drought and famine, destroying the

central government. With the Pharaohs being thought of as living gods, the people have started to turn away from the Fera and instead worship a heliocentric pantheon.

On the Indian subcontinent, the Nagah and the Bastet rule, having driven the Garou from the land. The Nagah ruled over the Harappan Civilization in the Indus valley, with large cities at Harappa and Mahenjo-daro. Their rule was brutal, with humanity living in fear of the wereserpents. Lawgivers, including many Nagah Kinfolk, punish transgressions swiftly and harshly. Despite this, the Harappans are a highly organized and advanced civilization, with their architecture being the equal of anything in Egypt.

Across northern Europe, civilization is developing at a much slower pace. While communities are spread out across the continent, most of them live as they have for many thousands of years, subsistence farming and mining for copper or tin. Settlements have bronze tools and, under the guidance of the Gurahl, the local communities have started to build more permanent structures — such as Stonehenge — to track the heavens. Many of these structures are on or near the sites of weakened caerns, and the werebears hope to stave off any further degradation.

Across the sea in North America, tribes spread out across the continent, moving with the seasons and largely living in tune with the land. The Garou tribes on the continent—the Wendigo,

Croatan, and the Uktena — regularly clashed with the Fera over hunting grounds and sacred sites. That said, their battles were nowhere near as brutal as those in Africa and Europe.

By the time humanity began to develop the fundamentals of written language, the Garou and the Fera had almost completely abandoned the idea of mixed septs. Too many real betrayals and too many perceived slights over the centuries had poisoned the well, and none of the breeds would fully trust the others as they once had. While the Fera would later tell themselves that the Garou started many of these fights, raging against perceived insults, in truth the other Changing Breeds started just as many when they abandoned their sacred duty and stepped away from Gaia's will.

As the caern network's power continued to wane across the world, some of the wiser Garou realized that driving away the Fera played a big part in weakening Gaia's influence over the world. They remembered the ancient stories of how the Garou and the Fera had once cooperated to maintain the caerns together and began to wonder if it wasn't already too late to repair the damage that centuries of conflict had caused. They realized that if anything were to restore Gaia's power, it would require all of the Changing Breeds to do their part and form a united front.

These Garou first reached out to other Garou packs and tribes, attempting to spread the realization that it was not



too late to repair the disaster their ancestors had created for them. Their message was not well received: most werewolves reacted with rage, unwilling to surrender control of their caerns to the Fera — or to even entertain the idea of giving the Fera access to their caerns. The Fera reacted similarly; many doubted the Garou's sincerity, as they had suffered much at the werewolves' claws in the past, while others thought the idea of the high-and-mighty Garou telling them to make nice was a final insult from a Changing Breed that would never accept the others as equals.

This one last stab at unity may have been the ember that ignited the flames of war between the Changing Breeds, or it may have just been the spark for the latest outbreak of vicious fighting. Whatever the case, the werewolves' patronizing attempt at unity instead doomed all of Gaia's children.

It was during this time that someone forged the very first klaive. Differing legends have the fetishcrafter come from the Get of Fenris, the Glass Walkers, or the Shadow Lords, but it matters not. With a blade of silver reinforced with bronze and bound with a spirit, the klaive proved devastating in battle, and it did not take long for other tribes to produce their own. For a time, the Garou fought bitterly amongst themselves, with some septs trying to kill off those who wanted to heal relations with the Fera. But, eventually, many of them came to realize that try as they might, they needed the special gifts that only the Fera possessed, and that they needed to heal relations with the other breeds.

But, by then, it was too late. Their shared history has poisoned the future between the Garou and the Changing Breeds. Whether the werewolves' prehistory involves a full-blown War of Rage or whether that is a grand title to make up for a series of disappointments and broken promises,

by the end of this time the Garou have driven the other Changing Breeds into hiding, or exterminated them entirely.

## ***Storytelling Advice***

The main focus of story arcs set in this juncture should be on trying to get the Garou to realize that they need to work constructively with the other Changing Breeds — and convincing the Fera that the Garou are not lying to them. Many Garou and Fera alike, especially across Europe, are going to be extremely resistant to the idea, and will likely try to kill anyone who tries to convince them otherwise, as they know what to expect.

This time period highlights the problems with the Changing Breeds as a whole — Rage clouds their vision, and their history of violence begets only more violence. As such, the Storyteller should focus on the difficulties of trying to be diplomatic when both sides take any slight as a deadly threat and feel their Goddess' pain as their own. To many of the Changing Breeds, violence is the most direct way to solve trouble and remove the Wyrms' taint from the world. Why waste time with words?

Storytellers can also use this juncture to explore some of the major early civilizations. With the Bastet and Mokolé entrenched in Egypt, and the Nagah very strong in the Indus Valley, the characters may want to travel to these locations to persuade the Fera there that the Garou need their help to overcome the Wyrms' corrupting influence. The Changing Breeds in these regions are, however, unlikely to believe them and will likely either try to kill the Garou outright, or put them through a series of humiliating and potentially deadly tests to prove that they speak true and are not trying to use guile to get the Fera to lower their guard.



# Chapter Three: The War of Rage

*I used to blame our ancestors for their reckless hate against the other Changing Breeds. I judged them. And then, because of Kronos, I stood in their shoes, fighting for my life against Simba and Mokole. We were sent to stop it, but it was too big. We became what we were most ashamed of.*

— Cailean Walks-with-Wind

War is brutal, unforgiving, and vicious, especially among the Changing Breeds. Muzzles become drenched in the thickly-dripping blood of erstwhile allies. Losses on all sides are too many to count, or to ever recover from. New slights, real or imagined, sunder hard-earned peace treaties. Old grudges, passed down the ages through story or song, promise that the cycle will never truly end. Each tragic conflict is just a piece of a larger picture — a dark age of unforgiving, unending conflict.

Over seventy millennia the death toll rises. Peace never lasts quite long enough for slower-reproducing breeds to fully recover. One day the defeated are no more. A minor skirmish and the last member of the breed dies, unremarked and unremembered. No great “hero” stands above them victorious, merely a whelp anxious to prove her worth. Only many years later do others realize that their old enemies aren’t “just over the mountains” or “beyond the river”; they’re truly gone.

This is the War of Rage.

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## Causes of War

Humans justify aggression with disturbing ease and the Changing Breeds are no different. Their animal side

only enhances this primal urge to violence. Beyond this, shapeshifters must deal with the supernatural catalyst of Rage priming tempers, magnifying insults, and tempting bloody retribution.

## Resources

Competition for mundane and spiritual resources out of both need and want drives conflict between all Changing Breeds.

## Caerns

Gaia’s sacred places aren’t created equal. The Changing Breeds contest every caern and surrounding territory as hotspots of spiritual activity. Facilitating movement between worlds, they become ever more important as the Gauntlet continues to harden. War despoils many caerns over time; sometimes as collateral damage, sometimes revenge — and sometimes to deny a precious resource to a hated enemy.

Once the Changing Breeds create the Rite of Moon Bridge, caerns gain new strategic value. Moon Bridges allow shapeshifters to rapidly project force over significant distances. Over millennia, the Moon Bridges lengthen, allowing septs controlling the most powerful caerns to effectively control ever larger territories.

## MOON BRIDGES

The distance a Moon Bridge can reach (in miles) depends on the caern's level and on time — as humanity spreads across the world, so does its spiritual influence and concept of distance. As such, use the following distances for Moon Bridges in the given flashpoints and their related time periods. Each distance varies by around 10 percent over the timespan of the flashpoint. The War of Shame happens between the Extinction and Civilization flashpoints.

Flashpoint	Level 5	Level 4	Level 1-3
Present Day	10,000	6000	1000
Second War of Rage	6600	3960	660
Reconciliation	2000	1200	200
Poison	1400	840	140
Deluge	1000	600	100
Civilization	750	450	75
Extinction	400	240	40
Migration	150	90	15
Apocalypse	130	80	13
War of Shame	650	380	65

## Food

Shapeshifters rarely need to fight over food or water for themselves. The animal sides of each breed have different diets — only in times of severe privation might some compete for food. Most have access to spiritual capabilities that minimizes such conflict but these abilities are usually personal in scope, and won't appease hungry Kin. Humans, including Kinfolk, seem almost happy to go to war with other humans for food, including the Kinfolk of other shapeshifters.

## Kinfolk

Growing communities of Kinfolk and Changing Breeds require ever larger territories to accommodate them. Large populations dominate smaller neighbors, absorbing them through fear, threats, or power.

A Breed without animal Kin will perish, and shapeshifters go to extremes to protect their endangered Kin — in modern nights, the Bubasti have kowtowed to vampires for thousands of years to keep the last Kyphur cats alive. In times of emergency, some members of a Changing Breed may even broaden their range of animal Kinfolk by making small changes to their own forms, using the spiritual magics known only to the Mokolé.

A Changing Breed without human kin becomes more bestial and savage as their human ties recede. While not as final, they keenly feel the loss of culture and creativity —

until they feel it no more. Each breed has a core of human Kinfolk they cannot share, and that they protect with fervor. Even the Rokea, loath as they are to admit it, must maintain a handful of human Kin.

When the human population suffers, the shapeshifters fight to allow their Kinfolk to survive and multiply, even if that means bringing another breed's Kinfolk into the family — while such Kin are no better than humans for the kidnappers to breed with, they are at least aware of the shapeshifters' nature and immune to the Delirium.

As the population of animal and human Kin grows, the breeds become complacent, even callous. The Ratkin lose little sleep over a fire that kills thousands of rats, and the Grondr feel no remorse when human Kinfolk die as a result of their cleansing rites.

## Magic

Though shapeshifters share some Gifts, each has access to their own unique magic. Some breeds can uncover and steal the secrets of others. Each fears the loss of such advantages, and worries their enemy has fearsome unknown capabilities. This fear becomes an arms race as the Changing Breeds strive for security through spiritual power. Innovative shapeshifters design new weapons and strategies. They create new fetishes, discover new Gifts, and develop new rites. They also invent new uses for existing abilities.

After about 5000 BCE, all shapeshifters greatly value the deadly metals of gold and silver. They wish to safeguard their own banes, and control those of others. The metals can be threats or bribes, as well as useful in the creation of Klaives and other fetishes. A shapeshifter living among humans finds wealth is desirable in its own right as a route to status and power.

## **Status**

Status is ephemeral, even though Rank is concrete for every Changing Breed. Rank confers authority and respect, and is a matter of how much esteem the spirits hold of a shapeshifter's deeds, while her peers determine her status in the group. Higher status allows a better share of the kill, or the right to choose the most desirable mates, and brings followers who help claim territory. Territory brings power, caerns — and something to lose.

Status confers social power, and Rank gives supernatural power. Combine the two and it becomes a heady addiction. Each breed values different deeds — a deed that the Bastet find cunning, the Garou hold as dishonorable. Mix these differing values with human pride, envy, or hate, and violence is never far away. For many breeds honor is a goal in itself, so losing status carries the risk of a very real loss of power. As a result, few among the Changing Breeds contemplate turning the other cheek.

## **Power**

Among shapeshifters, status brings social power over Kin, packs, and sometimes even other Changing Breeds. It can also bring supernatural power in the form of Gifts, rites, and the respect of spirits if that status leads to increased rank. Such power acts as a deterrent against challengers to the shapeshifter's authority. Each breed values different behaviors, and even those who value the same types of behavior weight them differently. As shapeshifters climb their respective hierarchies, these different points of view bring them into conflict. What is worthy of Renown to one culture is abhorrent to another. The struggle to gain Renown and the fear of losing it can make shapeshifters unwilling to compromise. It drives a wedge between Gaia's children and blocks cooperation. To deter aggressors, the status-conscious shapeshifter employs severe retribution against those that harm her reputation, inadvertently or otherwise.

## **Glory**

Greater status goes hand in hand with greater renown. This leads to greater acts in accordance with a Changing Breed's values. The desire for status above all leads many shapeshifters to simply discard the values — and lives — of others in pursuit of it. Some breeds hold Glory as a worthy goal in itself. The desire for recognition incites shapeshifters into acts of Renown at the expense of any and all who are not of the same breed, and sometimes even those who are.

Enemies created when acquiring fame take satisfaction in destroying everything for which the shapeshifter has supposedly fought, in an effort to bring him low before death.

## **Fear**

Terrified animals fight when cornered. Trapped shapeshifters are no different. Their discomfort becomes fury, or Rage. The most infamous shapeshifters win battles through sheer reputation. The mere thought of facing them in combat can make the fearful turn tail. Conversely, they create their own downfall as people stand up to them.

## **Paranoia**

It is too easy for the victims of violence to see enemies everywhere. This paranoia shades the world as distinct camps of "us" versus "them." A canny leader channels this anger by demonizing other groups, using fear of the outsider to more tightly bind her pack together. In the case of shapeshifters "the other" is obvious. While they share a connection to humanity, each Changing Breed's animal side is different in ways that go beyond skin color or creed. Against these "others" a breed may justify any cruelty. The victims of such heinous acts see them in turn as perpetrated by "the other" — against which they can justify any aggression as revenge.

## **Loss**

Shapeshifters fearing — rightly or not — the loss of loved ones or security lash out with preemptive attacks upon would-be assailants to protect what's theirs. Since a superior foe can take any tangible possession, the threatened can fall into despair.

The Nuwisha especially find great humor in depriving targets of their worldly goods to teach them lessons about overcoming fear and despair, independence, and over-reliance upon worldly possessions. Such lessons are hard, and many students fail. Those who don't learn to laugh at their losses often look harshly upon the Nuwisha teaching them.

## **Alliance**

Alliances may draw even the most apathetic or harmonious shapeshifter into conflicts she'd rather avoid. Webs of obligation draw uninvolved parties into battles they otherwise have no interest in. Bonds of companionship, friendship, and even love draw strangers into conflict. To attack one sept is to attack their allied neighboring septs as well. This is one advantage that the Garou have over the other Fera breeds — they are one of the most numerous Changing Breeds, and can call on oaths of obligation between the werewolves. Mystical pacts, such as those with totems, can also bring a shapeshifter into conflict, as he must obey his totem's Ban. When two Bans conflict, it's very easy for fights to break out.

## Misunderstanding

Simple miscommunication lies at the heart of many tragedies. While a shapeshifter may communicate with any of her animal Kin, communication with humans requires knowing their language — never easy, and each tribe has its own verbal language. Communicating with other animals — even those of another Changing Breed — is nigh impossible. While many breeds have access to magic that can assist communication, few learn it and even then it is unable to convey nuance. Just speaking the same language doesn't guarantee that both parties will understand one another's outlook, values, and intent.

People who can't fully understand one another have a harder time apologizing, identifying deceit, and making their words sound sincere. In turn, this makes painting the enemy as "other" so much easier.

## Deceit

The foulest reason for waging war is deceit. Agents of the Wyrms excel at such trickery, using it to foment discord, but the Changing Breeds are also well practiced at tricking their opponents into fighting one another. Lying about status, resources, or allies — for even the noblest intentions — only works as long as nobody finds out. The paranoid may come to rely upon truth-telling Gifts, but even those are fallible, and none protect from the insidiousness of self-deception.

All too often, people see the truth only long after the damage is done. The shame of falling for a lie can be greater than lives lost or territory despoiled. The deceived may swallow his pride and admit his error, or double down on resisting the truth, but neither endears him to his victims. This cycle of warfare and recrimination lasts indefinitely — with neither side fighting for the original lie, only revenge.

The shame of being deceived can be profound. The victim may lose status for simply falling for a trick. The fear of losing Renown can incite the deceived to double down — refusing to admit the error in his ways. That very fear of shame allows malicious enemies to cause trouble between groups of humans and Changing Breeds alike; their unwillingness — or inability — to communicate effectively only exacerbates the problem.

## Propaganda

Cunning leaders secure their rule by setting restless followers upon external enemies. Whether those enemies are real or fabricated makes no difference. A tale-spinner reciting the story of a sept at war exaggerates the scope and adds moments of drama and heroism. She skips the long years between confrontations and merges individual warriors into one easily remembered epic hero. She describes the

## TALKING IT OUT

Language as we know it today does not exist in most of the time periods that the War of Rage might erupt. People in a tribe can communicate, but the idea of writing doesn't appear until the Vinca proto-language in 5,000 BCE. Characters can understand their immediate tribe and human Kinfolk, and can communicate with other members of the same Changing Breed normally. Rather than worrying about who can understand whom, Storytellers may want to state that the characters are worldly individuals who have traveled far, and know most of the local languages.

enemy as villains, casting the fighting as their fault. After they've won the war, the victors recall only a pastiche of evil, and a new generation strives to become as heroic as their forebears in legend. The defeated in turn have tales of their own, describing the victorious as epic monsters whom they must destroy. Many would-be peacemakers have seen their efforts fail when one party hears the other side's propaganda.

Even the incredible memory of the Mokolé cannot change people's opinions so easily. Mnesis is memory rather than recording, and is itself just as biased as anyone's remembrance. One Mokolé remembers Garou ambushing his clutch four times. He cares little that each raid was led by a different Ahroun, or the thirty years of peace — he knows that the Garou slaughtered his clutchmates, and that's enough.

## Faith

All breeds venerate Gaia, but their different observances can be contentious. Even the wisest shapeshifters may succumb to dogma, trying to convert others to the "right" way to worship. A shapeshifter's belief that Gaia wants his breed alone to defend a caern, protect a fetish, or possess a certain Gift or Rite causes many conflicts.

Conversely, a shapeshifter who cannot live up to the tenets of his faith — perhaps unable to kill a possessed loved one — faces shame and grief when another must do the deed. Seeing that others don't care for his crisis of conscience only amplifies the feeling of shame. Turning to others for succor is too easily seen as weakness.

## Rage

The gift of Luna's fury forever separates the Changing Breeds from humanity. It grants victory in battle. It instills

confidence, overconfidence, and arrogance. The smallest insult stokes its flame, becoming a catalyst for violence. Rage forges fear into anger, hatred, and ferocity. “We” becomes “I.”

## Consumption

When frenzy strikes, the Wyrms’ claws caress the shapeshifter. If she is unlucky, she loses all control and becomes the Wyrms’ thrall. During the War of Rage, far more shapeshifters are descended from animals compared to in modern nights. Because of this, the most common Wyrms-frenzy is that associated with Beast-of-War — brutal, merciless, and destructive. Free from human sensitivities, animal-descended shapeshifters simply accept that sometimes they lose control. They rarely ask for forgiveness, and when they do, the survivors of their Rage rarely grant it — indeed, if a survivor looks for an apology, he faces a very real risk of another frenzy in reply. The constant aggravation of stress and combat in wartime encourages frenzy after frenzy — increasing the number of Wyrms-frenzies through sheer volume.

## War

The following flashpoints describe defining events, any of which could be the cause of the War of Rage. One troupe may decide that the War started early and concluded before the great migration, while another that

starts with the migration may have the War continue on and off until the climactic battles at the time of the great floods that sank Doggerland. A third troupe may prefer to have the War start when reconciliation goes wrong, dooming the shapeshifters. All of these groups are as right as any other. The real truth of the War of Rage is lost to history. Each flashpoint spans varying lengths of time; the events within are as fluid as the Storyteller needs to suit her chronicle.

## Banestorm

Humans — weak, pathetic apes though they are — have the gift of fire. Without claws of their own, they sharpen replacements of stone and stick. They forage and hunt as they have since leaving the trees. As the sun withdraws and the temperatures fall they huddle by their fires and range further for food. They could perhaps survive without the Changing Breeds, were it not for the Banestorm.

## Current History

When the great darkness comes, the Changing Breeds can hear Gaia’s cry from the heart of Africa to the ice wastes of Beringia. The nightmare consumes the sun for ten years and winter falls for a thousand more beneath a baleful red glow. Ash coats the land, and rain can burn.



## ***Invaders***

From the heart of Malfear Banes tear their way into the world, spreading poison and despair. Animals and spirits choke and starve amidst the devastation. Avatars of the Defiler Wyrms snake over the land: maggot-ridden, multi-limbed monstrosities that blight the landscape and poison the Umbra. Avatars of Beast-of-War scream into the Middle East, Africa, and Europe, turning children against parents, and brother against sister. The spilled blood becomes black bile that seeps into the dying soil. In the Americas, the Eater-of-Souls unleashes avatars of miasmic destruction and crackling putrescence. They twist across the sky in electric fury and carve ruinous tunnels deep into the earth.

The Garou rage at the forefront of battle. Packs hunt Banes across tundra and jungle. All the shapeshifters fight ferociously, but none can match the united prowess of Gaia's warriors. However, even the werewolves cannot be everywhere at once. Thousands die because the Garou must stretch themselves thin.

As their lands die, so do the Swara and the Khan. Try as they might, the weretigers and werecheetahs cannot save their human Kin or their territory, though they force the Wyrms to pay a heavy price for every fallen Bastet. Just when things look at their bleakest, the Garou arrive and help drive back the tide. As the battle ends, the Bastet slump in relief and gratitude.

The werewolves' howls of triumph are glorious. Then prideful. Then arrogant.

From generation to generation the Galliards repeat stories about the Banestorm. With each retelling storytellers embellish for effect and forget details. The tales reduce, mock, and eventually ignore the Fera's contribution, while casting the Garou heroes as more heroic.

## ***Territory***

The loss of shapeshifter lives leads to an unforeseen development. The Gauntlet is weak around caerns, and spirits find them to be ideal entrances into the physical world. As shapeshifters die, the caerns they guarded become staging grounds for all manner of spiritual incursions and monstrous Banes.

During the Banestorm, the Theurge called Begs-for-Luna argues that the Fera must allow the Garou to use their caerns — the Garou come great distances to fight the Banestorm, and better werewolves defend Gaia's holy places than the native guardians die. The exhausted Fera cannot deny her logic; their numbers are too few to replace the dead. At first the Garou go only where the Fera say, but before long they treat every unoccupied caern as fair game.

After the Banestorm, though, the werewolves are reluctant to return the Fera's caerns. The Garou had cared for the

caerns, used them to provide succor to all of Gaia's children, and defended the holy sites — unlike the derelict Fera, who had abandoned caerns to the enemy for their own selfish reasons. The holy places of Gaia are the locations of the bitterest confrontations in the aftermath of the apocalypse.

## ***Gauntlet***

In the time before time, the Weaver split the worlds of flesh and spirit by spinning the Gauntlet. Later, according to the Mokolé, the great Wonder-Work struck Gaia, shredding the Weaver's Wall as easily as it extinguished life. Since then the Gauntlet has remained thin and threadbare — each Changing Breed save the Ananasi enjoying the delights of crossing between both realms with no more difficulty than pushing through woven branches.

By the end of the long night after the Toba eruption, the Gauntlet grows stronger. Cro-Magnon explore the darkness, beset on all sides by hunger, disease, and monsters. To survive, the dwindling families learn to cooperate. The young explore, and give directions. The old name the world and share observations. The adults create tools, and trade techniques. As the Cro-Magnon near extinction, the Gauntlet hardens around them, protecting the Weaver's newfound favorite apes from predatory spirits and Umbral storms.

While the Banes have difficulty crossing the Wall, they soon find vile new methods — even at this time, nobody knows what bitter transgression first allows a Bane to bond with a human. Where once the Fera shredded spirits with violent glee, now they face monstrous fomori, possessed Kinfolk, and murderous loved ones.

Wherever the Gauntlet thickens, shapeshifters find stepping sideways requires more effort than they expect. Some breeds, like the Garou and Corax, barely notice the change. Others, like the Bastet and Gurahl, are effectively cut off from the spirit realms. Foolhardy Corax tease the exiled breeds; belligerent Garou question what the exiles have done to warrant such punishment, and whisper rumors they have betrayed Luna or Gaia. The Bastet spit with fury, feeling unable to defend Gaia with half of reality out of reach. Each exiled breed searches for tricks to reach the Umbra once more. This takes longer for some than others. The Mokolé explore their Mnesis to rediscover the trick, forgotten since the Wonder-Work. The Bastet discover only a powerful Gift lets them cross over outside their dens. The Ananasi find the thickening Weaver's Wall a boon, granting easier access to the Umbra, and thank their Queen.

In the aftermath of a battle that pitched Bastet, Garou, and Mokolé against a war-band of fomori and enormous Wyrms-spawned beasts, the survivors rest amidst the ruins of a Cro-Magnon family. The weary and blood-soaked Ragabash Claws-of-Woe, embittered by the deaths of his pack mates, curses the Bastet for not fighting hard enough, calling them

## HUMAN KINFOLK

Even though Kinfolk aren't interchangeable between Changing Breeds, they still squabble over them for several reasons. For starters, the breeds of this era have no understanding of spiritual genetics. The overwhelming majority of shapeshifters are descended from their animal kin, which hold no attraction at all to other breeds. All of the Changing Breeds can breed with humans. Moreover, Kinfolk are human first, and even though a Bastet doesn't increase his chances of siring a new werecat through Garou kin, he doesn't reduce his chances either. Any offspring may be human, shapeshifter, or Bastet kin - but over generations they will cease to be Garou kin. The shapeshifters fight for breeding rights because even a single neglected generation could eliminate any advantage one breed has over the others.

traitors to Gaia, responsible for every Garou death in their defense. The Simba queen Peak-of-Purity throws herself at him in a storm of grief and rage. He contemptuously steps sideways, only to find the angry Mokolé Sunset-Ends waiting for him. The Archid bellows with scornful laughter as Claws-of-Woe flees in a fox frenzy. Other Garou soon hear of this tale, but rather than learning respect they grow fearful; stories of terrifying weresaurians fly from Galliard to Galliard.

## Kin

The long winter advances.

The Khan and Swara, unflinching in their stand against the Banestorm, are on the verge of extinction as their human and animal kin die. The Ahroun alpha Stands-as-Stone demands the right to take half of the remaining Cro-Magnon for the Garou, to replenish their numbers after defending the caerns that the Bastet would have lost. The Bagheera Gleam-of-Endings is incensed by her presumption and claims the surviving Cro-Magnon families belong to the Bastet. She holds counsel among the Bastet Tribes, and before the night is out they are unanimous in rejecting the werewolf's greed. They send word to the other Fera and wait.

The Gurahl Running-Hunger swears to Stands-as-Stone the werebears shall heal all Garou who need it, in return for letting the Bastet keep these humans. The Apis offer to help both breeds recover but the Ajaba side with the Garou — the Swara and Khan are too weak to live, and Gaia's Warriors have greater need of Kin.

While messengers fly between territories, Stands-as-Stone leads raids against the Bastet across the Middle East and into Africa, capturing Kinfolk and desirable humans, and butchering the rest. The Bastet retaliate, but the werewolves' mastery over the Gauntlet and pack tactics put the werecats at a disadvantage. Only once the Bastet ally with the Apis, Nagah, Ratkin, and Mokolé do the raids end. The Swara Breath-of-Dust lands the killing blow on Stands-as-Stone, and personally runs to every werewolf pack she can find to display her gory trophy and declare victory.

## Getting Involved

The world is in chaos; the characters must choose a side and fight!

The Garou rage against the Banestorm, shifting through the Gauntlet to drag the war from the physical realm to the Umbra and back. They fight and die and entreat the Gurahl to heal werewolf heroes to fight again. They ward their Kin from the depredations of Banes and fomori. If they can spare the resources, they'll fight to protect the kin of the Fera as well. Sometimes, they'll even do so without demanding compensation.

While the Garou exult themselves as Gaia's only hope, the hardening Gauntlet cuts many Fera off from the Umbra, and they must race to adapt. The different Changing Breeds quest for their own secret ways to walk between worlds, or risk losing access to the wondrous expanses of the Umbra. The werewolves scoff at the Fera's weakness, never considering that their cousins must adapt to their strengths, much as the Garou have done with their violent fury. The proud Fera consider calling for the wolves' aid, but most can't stomach the price the Garou demand; the humiliation and surrender of territory is often worse than dying in battle. Some foolish Fera make war with the Garou, hoping to defeat the werewolves while their attention is focused on other enemies. These shapeshifters don't see how badly this costs Gaia's forces in the long term; they strive for short term victories that may eventually lose them the war.

Human and Kinfolk characters must contend with harsh climate conditions in addition to the onslaught of demons, monsters and starving predators. Shelter is scarce, and clusters of survivors armed with sticks and stones make tempting targets for malicious spirits and hungry shapeshifting gods. Some humans may decide to forsake all the squabbling Changing Breeds and embrace the deceptively enticing Banes instead. Some become the first fomori, driven into the coils of the Wyrms to escape the terrifying savagery of Gaia's chosen, or to gain power enough to fight back. These fomori have the advantage of surprise on their side — the Changing Breeds have seen nothing like them before.

## Changing the Outcome

If the Khan and Swara die out, the other Bastet forever hold all the other Changing Breeds as hated enemies, the Garou especially. The werewolves spread into India, the Middle East, and Africa in greater numbers. The African Fera still resist Garou incursions, but the Garou have greater numbers and the Fera miss the speed of the Swara and might of the Simba. The battle in Africa is between three sides: the invading Garou, the Fera of Africa, and the Bastet. If the African Fera don't have the power to force out the Garou the events of the Migration flashpoint may never occur — or perhaps the ruling Garou force the Bastet to migrate into Asia, instead.

## Migration

A thousand generations pass.

The tales of heroes from the time of the Banestorm are now epics, delighting the werewolves who proudly descend from those revered ancestors. The Changing Breeds also boast and brag, but the Corax spread the Garou's legends further and faster. Each tale invariably exaggerates werewolf deeds and downplays the Fera's actions. The Corax make few friends this way, but they are honored for fulfilling their Gaian task regardless of wisdom. The Camazotz insult the werewolves by refusing to spread their version of the truth.

Tensions simmer among the breeds, but outright violence is rare.

## Current History

In Africa, the Bastet lead tribes of humans as gods. Vast Den-Realms encompass many human families and loose prides of werewolves, each warded to keep the Garou out. The Ajaba harass the werewolves, culling Garou Kinfolk from the herd along with the old and infirm. The Garou roam the lands as lonely outcasts, avoiding the more numerous — and arrogant — Fera. Keeping their legends to themselves, they sit humbly with the other breeds to protect Gaia from the great Banes lurking beneath the land. Though their skill in combat is fearsome, never do they acquire the glory of the Bastet. A schism forms between the Garou who wish to remain in their homelands and those who chafe beneath Fera rule.

The Ragabash Steps-with-Spiders takes part in a dawn raid against a fomori-infested tribe. The raid destroys the Wyrms-tainted humans but his packmates die in the blood-soaked melee. In maddened frenzy, Steps-with-Spiders slaughters the remaining humans — and when the bloodbath attracts a pride of lions he massacres them, too.

The Simba Queen Sees-Moonlight shames Steps-with-Spiders for his actions in a private audience after he presents himself for judgment. For reasons unknown, he again succumbs to frenzy, murdering the queen and her Kinfolk attendants. Knowing that retribution will be harsh and swift, he flees the realm. His tribemates plead for mercy on his behalf but the Bastet call for his death, and the death of all his Kin.

When the Bastet entreat their allies for assistance the ensuing hunt persecutes every Garou. Steps-with-Spiders remains uncaught for three years until trapped by Lore-of-Wood, a werespider. She delivers him to the Nagah Third-Sea for judgment. Third-Sea executes Steps-with-Spiders and carefully arranges the body to mimic Sees-Moonlight's dismembered corpse. Everyone who sees it — including the Corax carrying messages of what they have seen — believes he fell victim to some karmic punishment, rent by his own claws. Third-Sea's involvement remains a secret, but the Nagah believe their actions were just.

Unsatisfied by this, the Bagheera Grace-of-Luna declares the lives of all of Steps-with-Spiders' supporters and kin forfeit. The Bastet hound human, wolf, and Garou from their lands, driving them north and east. Camazotz and Corax alike carry Grace-of-Luna's decree throughout the land.

## Flight

The migration is bloody and violent. News of their flight from the Bastet spreads fast, so the Garou keep moving, unable to stay more than a few months in any location. Wherever they settle, those shapeshifters who have heard Grace-of-Luna's command regard the werewolves as intruders at best. Though still fearsome in packs, the Fera pick off lone werewolves and vulnerable Kinfolk when they can.

## India

In India the Fera battle insidious Wyrms creatures and are wary of newcomers. On the shores of a mighty river, representatives of all the local Fera meet with the Garou. The Camazotz Shining-Healer repeats what she's heard from the west. The outraged Bastet demand the right to kill the untrustworthy werewolves. Somehow, the werewolves suppress their Rage. Seeing this, Moves-the-River, a Makara, counsels that they should honor any shapeshifters who can control their Rage. The meeting descends into bickering — the Apis, Gurahl, Makara, Nagah, Ratkin and Corax side with the Garou, while the Camazotz, Ajaba, Grondr, and Ananasi support the Bastet. While the representatives' argument leads to further arguments and distrust, things remain settled for as long as the werewolves avoid the Bastet.

The Garou argue among themselves whether to risk staying or continue. Some choose to stay, taking many of the remaining wolf-kin upriver to find new territory beyond the furious werewolves. The others lead the greatly-reduced tribe of humans further east.

## Asia

The Banestorm originated in Southeast Asia, and here the Wyrms are strongest. The Fera battle the budding Umbral realms of defilement and long channels of corruption crisscrossing the land. They fight to protect the small, precarious tribes of humans thinly scattered throughout the Sundaland peninsula and archipelago. Few concern themselves with foreigners.

Communication is difficult at first, but the Mokolé leaders welcome the Garou to fight with them, offering a place to settle in return. The Garou rejoice at finding a home and throw themselves into the war, eager to prove their worth. The influx of strong new humans, however, breeds envy among the other Changing Breeds – while many are happy with their new allies, some grow resentful when the Garou refuse to share.

The Mokolé, Nagah, and Rokea care little; they have the island Kinfolk to themselves. The Camazotz steal away infants, while the Corax take their lovers' children into the jungle to perform their creation rites. The other shapeshifters take humans as they wish, by guile or force, to bolster the sparse population of Sundaland – all but the Ananasi.

Here, the children of Ananasa devote themselves to the Wyrms, and they want the werewolves' Kinfolk for themselves. They lure the Garou into devious traps and prey on their kin while the werewolves are distracted. The werespiders retreat upon discovery, only to cause trouble elsewhere.

The Garou flee south and east into the deepest jungles – into the werespiders' ultimate trap. They discover the last of their wolf kin bloated with maggots and woven among the trees. They howl to Luna in fury, and vow to end the Ananasi breed. The trail of putrid corpses leads them to a place the Mokolé call the Mountain-That-Was-Not. Now a vast lake, the Wyrms' stench here clogs their senses. To their horror they find humans caught in great webs, gibbering for Banes to possess them. Above this sordid scene crouch the Ananasi, feasting on blood and releasing new fomori. From the center of the horrific webs Beautiful-Ancestor, the most powerful werespider, beckons the Garou to join her, proclaiming their only hope of survival is to serve the Wyrms.

The werewolves Rage. Though few in number, they are all veteran warriors, and well-practiced at fighting superior numbers. Though many humans and fomori die, the Ananasi scatter into the jungle.

The Garou, harried by the cunning werespiders, lead their weakened people around the lake to the wild and dangerous lands beyond. Upon reaching the roiling seas they cry out in despair. Rainbow-at-Dawn, a Gumagan, hears their cries and investigates the newcomers. After some halting negotiations, he agrees to carry the werewolves and their people to Sahulland, the great southern continent.

In the jungles of Carpentaria the local Fera welcome the Garou with caution, having heard of their deeds from the Camazotz. The Gumagan elder Heart-of-Storms meets with the Ahroun Mighty-River on the shore of the sea. For three days they talk before the ancient weresaurians nod and the Garou and their human kin are allowed to settle the land. When asked later why he let them pass, he proclaims "they dream as we do."

## Getting Involved

The Garou flee their ancestral home. The alliances of Fera run deep from the lands of Africa through to Asia. The werewolves must protect both themselves and the humans and wolves that travel with them on this exodus. At any moment the loose tribe-of-tribes could shatter. The Bastet spread word of the perfidious Garou by magic and messenger to hundreds of prides over thousands of miles. Those Bastet in turn tell their allies.

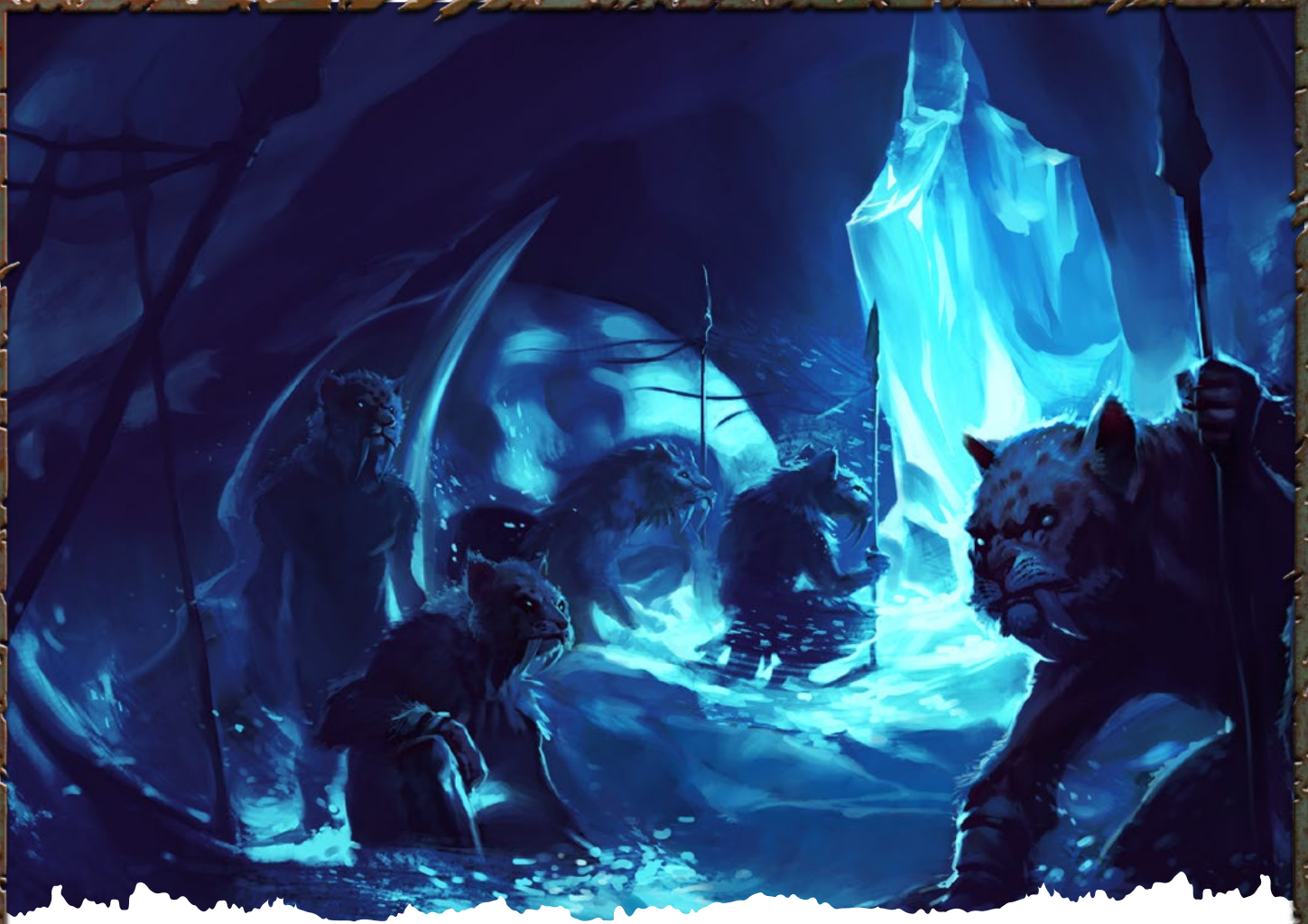
Before long, violence and death follow the Garou wherever they go. The Bastet and their allies hunt the wolves and humans to provoke the Garou. In return the Garou struggle to repel the attacks while leading their tribe to another, safer home. Though the Garou are still Gaia's Fangs, and skilled in pack tactics, they are spread thin and cannot be everywhere at once. The Fera are in their home territory, and are often content just to slaughter the kinfolk and disappear before the Garou arrive.

Characters sympathetic to the Bastet might pursue the Garou and their Kinfolk through the Middle East into India and Asia. These regions hold more Bastet allies than most, so the Garou are in constant danger. While the werewolves fight in packs to overcome the singular prowess of the Bagheera, Khan, or Nagah, their human and wolf kin require constant protection.

Garou characters may try negotiating alliances with local humans while fighting Bastet, Nagah assassins, and the Wyrms' minions. Searching for a new home takes skill in scouting unknown lands, and providing for hundreds or even thousands of kin. Language barriers arise – how do the characters explain the migration is peaceful, instead of an invasion, when they arrive in such great numbers?

In India the Wyrms' forces use trickery, illusion, and deceit. Some of the Garou stay here, and venture into the heartland and even into the mountains to combat the Wyrms' illusions. This is a different battle altogether – a war of perception, dreams, and enlightenment.

In Asia, the pocket realms of malice spew forth endless varieties of Banes and fomori. The Ananasi trick and deceive the Garou, luring them and their Kin into doom. The other Fera offer aid, but the Garou have long since lost trust in others. Again, some Garou remain, having made headway with the local shapeshifters, but others move on.



The march through Sundaland provides a setting of jungle warfare. The Ananasi are masters of this environment, but the Garou are no slouches. The fight on the shores of the Mountain-That-Was-Not is vicious and desperate. The werewolves are outnumbered and in unfamiliar territory. Their wolf kin are all dead, so protecting their human kin becomes paramount. The desperation as they face extinction is palpable.

## *Changing the Outcome*

If the Garou die off, Sahulland remains human-free for many more thousands of years. Without the Bunyip, the Ananasi eventually control the continent. Without Gaia's warriors the continent falls to the Defiler Wurm, altering the spiritual landscape forever.

If the tribe-of-tribes doesn't split in India, the Stargazers may never form and the werewolves would not have Chimera as an ally. If the tribe fled north instead of south in Asia they could influence the werewolves that would eventually become the Hakken, Siberakh, and possibly even the Garou of the Americas.

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## *Extinction*

A thousand generations pass.

The Changing Breeds ask why Mother Gaia is freezing the world. Some say it is the Wurm's doing, and recite legends of the long winter. The Mokol  remember — but this time, they say, is different. Some say it is the Gurahl, cleansing the world with ice. The Gurahl say nothing.

The Khara gather in a pride of 13 to perform the Rite of Tomorrow's Memory, hoping to learn the fate of the world. For a full turn of the moon they pace out the great circle of ages. Into the ears of each Khara, a spirit of things-to-come whispers a great secret. Each in turn recites their secret, at great cost, to the assembled Pride. By the end, they all know the future — Gaia's freezing wrath passes, the world floods, humans litter the earth, the Garou fall, and the Apocalypse comes.

## *Current History*

The once near-extinct Cro-Magnon hominids have expanded out of Africa with their shapeshifting kin. In Europe the Neanderthal tribes resist, but the invasion is

## OTHER HOMINIDS

What's so special about the Cro-Magnon? The Changing Breeds instinctively feel the difference between Cro-Magnon and other hominids. The Weaver uniquely favors these humans by thickening the Gauntlet around them. Any creature favored by one of the Triat must be important! While other hominids chip rock and gather shells, they lack the drive and vitality of the struggling Cro-Magnon who must innovate to survive the ashen winter — not simply new tools, but a newly cooperative planning society. Also, the other surviving hominids simply live elsewhere. Neanderthals roam Central Asia to Europe, Denisovans live in northern Asia, Homo Erectus died throughout India and the Middle East, surviving only in isolated refuges in eastern Asia. From Africa to India, the only remaining hominid species after the Neanderthal extinction is the Cro-Magnon.

inexorable. The shared blood of Neanderthal kin unites the Changing Breeds in a tenuous alliance. The Changing Breeds, all claiming Neanderthals as Kin, hunt the invading Cro-Magnon. Families and whole tribes die, bleeding and broken in the snow.

Not all breeds feel this way, though. The Apis see potential in the Cro-Magnon. The revered elder Granite-Horn attempts to appease the Garou, travelling many miles to meet with them in the Twin-Moon caern. The alpha Ice-Eye and his pack openly mock her until she falls into frenzy. The white pelts of the werewolves shine with thick red blood as they slaughter the Apis for violating the caern. When the other Apis learn of Granite-Horn's murder, they turn their backs on the Garou completely. The Garou just laugh. The Neanderthals are plentiful and strong; the werewolves have no need for Gaia's matchmakers.

The Ananasi also turn their back on the Neanderthals. At the quiet commandment of Queen Ananasa the werespiders begin exterminating their Neanderthal Kinfolk. Few among the Changing Breeds notice this, and fewer care — they consider the Ananasi alien and unknowable, and all breeds may do as they wish to their own Kinfolk. Then, by cunning and deception, over many months, the werespiders cause thousands of Neanderthals to gather at a secret sylie. At the first moon of winter the Ananasi spring their trap. The Neanderthals are powerless against the werespiders. Over five days the Ananasi slaughter them all, feasting on

human blood, and burning the corpses in enormous pyres. For three days afterward, the Ananasi then turn on each other. Among the dead lie hundreds of shapeshifter Kinfolk.

When word of this atrocity reaches the other Changing Breeds, their Rage rises.

## Secrets

The Khara Shining-Fang and her pride hunt the Ananasi looking for answers — and retribution. They pad through mountains and forests following trails of memory in search of Neanderthal camps, finding only snow-buried corpses. After weeks of searching they find signs of living Neanderthals far to the west. The pride stalks the camps, terrifying the inhabitants, looking for the werespiders. A few brave hunters try defending their homes, but they are no match for the ferocious shapeshifters. Survivors spread tales of the great fanged beasts stalking their camps in the dead of winter.

One Neanderthal storyteller scribbles pictures of the Khara pride on a boulder by firelight. The ochre and charcoal image is imperfect, but enough to identify them. Caught unawares by sudden powerlessness, Shining-Fang falls hunting elk. Her pride-mate Strength-of-Bears is the next to weaken. He begs the Gurahl for healing, but they shake their heads sorrowfully — he isn't sick.

Sees-the-Mist the Camazotz is the first to notice the connection between Neanderthal pictures and Khara frailty. He informs the confused Khara pride, and they rapidly send word to all their Bastet allies to hunt these too-clever humans. Whole families fall beneath the claws of the Bastet; they deface all of the images they find. When the Garou demand an explanation for the slaughter of their Kinfolk, they receive nothing but silence from the secretive werecats. Rage surges within each breed.

The Garou defend their kin with fury — too much fury. Many fall thrall to the Wyrms during the vicious battles. Storm-of-Red the Ahroun feasts upon the butchered Strength-of-Bears — upon cracking his bones for marrow strange new secrets flood her mind, including the Khara's deadly weakness. When she recovers her senses, she informs her pack, and soon her whole tribe knows. The Garou begin scratching crude images in dirt, snow, wood and rock of every Khara they've ever seen. One by one the Khara fall, their Yava proving their undoing.

Generous-Gift is the last Khara in Europe. A pride of mixed Bastet joins him as he flees from the ravaging Garou. Powerful Gifts and memories of long-lost paths keep them barely ahead of the blood-spattered werewolves. They reach the southern coast exhausted, and locate the wallow of the ancient weresaurian Bathes-in-Burning-Blood. Generous-Gift pleads for sanctuary and is relieved when he acquiesces. In return, Generous-Gift surrenders his magic to Selene and entrusts his secrets to the Mokolé.

Just before sunrise on the second day, the Garou ambush the wallow. The Fera defend savagely but the werewolves are vicious and relentless. Generous-Gift dies in roaring agony, broken and mutilated. While the white-furred Garou howl praises to Luna in exultation, Bathes-in-Burning-Blood leads the remnants of the pride in a desperate retreat to his clutch.

## **North America**

While the Bastet recuperate in the care of the clutch, Corax bring tales of the Garou rampage. The werewolves hunt the Fera ceaselessly, and steal the surviving Neanderthals to replenish their own human families after the Ananasi purge and the Khara slaughter. Bathes-in-Burning-Blood convinces his clutch to leave this continent of mad werewolves. In turn they convince yet more clutches. By the turn of the year every Mokolé on the continent gathers to depart Europe forever. Hundreds of Kinfolk clamber upon gigantic Ao, and among them hide Generous-Gift's surviving pride-mates—the Simba siblings Carries-the-Moon and Usurps-the-River-Den, and the Qualmi Puzzle-Sifter.

For weeks the mighty Mokolé swim west. They follow lines of memory, connecting paths long separated by time and ocean. When great monsters attack from the depths and the skies churn with rain and wind some Mokolé die, but many more survive. Separated by the storms, over half veer south while the rest, thinking their kin lost, swim to the northern continent.

The survivors settle along the boggy inlets and streams. Native Mokolé welcome their cousins with placid disregard. The native Bastet are all too curious. The Simba find the strangely clever humans especially enthralling and listen to their European kin in awe and outrage. The other Fera pay little attention to the newcomers, except the Nuwisha Judges-Rain. The Europeans' stories captivate him, but his resemblance to the ferocious Garou unnerves them.

Judges-Rain passes these stories to the local Garou, gleefully regaling them with tales of monstrous, Wyrn-tainted werewolves. Thunder-Belly the Philodox leads his pack to hear the newcomers in person, but their approach startles Usurps-the-River-Den. Scarred by the past, and unable to believe that the Garou come in peace, the mighty Simba launches a frenzied ambush on the pack. The battle is fierce, ending only when Carries-the-Moon joins the fray and the Garou retreat. When Puzzle-Sifter asks Judges-Rain why the werewolves came he laughs, answering only that a Wyrn-ridden mind loses its memory.

## **Storm**

Scant years later the humans have multiplied, adapting well to the new land thanks to their ingenuity and Mokolé patrons. The Garou see strange, fire-making apes as an affront to Gaia and launch savage attacks upon the human

settlements. The stealthiest enter wallows to smash the eggs, vanishing before the Mokolé can retaliate.

Carries-the-Moon begs the native Bastet for help. They agree, but ask for greater access to the fascinating humans in return. The Mokolé resist this offer for many months, but know the Garou attacks are too much for them to fight alone. The two breeds unite; Stalking-Snow leading the Simba and Feather-Tail-Roar taking charge of the Mokolé, each determined to end the Garou aggression.

The enraged Mokolé hunt the Garou. Clutches of warriors strike deep into werewolf territory. Stalking-Snow ambushes six Garou packs at the Two-Rivers caern with six prides of mixed Bastet tribes. The surprised Garou fight savagely, but suffer heavy losses and flee.

The battles spark new conflicts, and new grudges, as tensions rise.

Eventually, the aging Thunder-Belly gathers a dozen Garou in the caern of Knocking Trees. Together they summon a great storm-spirit into the world to scour it clean of the hated Fera. Thunder-Belly and his pack are the first to die as the malignant storm howls and twists into existence. Coiling skyward with horns of lightning, it sucks the clouds dry with thunderclap screams.

The storm grows unabated for months, crawling across the continent while the Garou continue to fight. Sensing danger, the Corax Whistle-Tends-The-Sky flies from sylie to sept, warning all shapeshifters of the encroaching disaster. One by one the Changing Breeds listen and take heed—all of Gaia's chosen must unite to defeat this abomination.

The fight against the storm is long and violent, and forges many friendships and alliances. When the Breeds finally bind the titanic creature it thrashes across the land catching many in the destruction; its black blood gushes in poisonous waves for weeks before ceasing. In the aftermath the Breeds take stock to recover. Almost all of the Europeans and their descendants died in the storm, as did the Khara and all their Kinfolk.

## **South America**

The-Stone-Erodes, an ancient Mokolé, stands ready to greet the refugees as they arrive in South America. She listens to their songs, shares their Mnesis, and is horrified by the rampaging Garou. She guides them through river and jungle to meet with the Ananasi, Balam, Camazotz, Gurahl, and Nagah. The elders of each breed fear the same could happen here—if the European Garou can fall to Wyrn-madness, then so may all Garou.

The South American Garou find the Camazotz refuse to speak with them. Then other breeds withdraw. The confused Garou grow angry, lashing out at the Fera when they find them. The European Mokolé use this raging retaliation as evidence of madness.

Spirits tell the Garou about the discord-sowing Mokolé from across the ocean. The furious Garou hunt the foreign shapeshifters across jungle and savannah, coast and mountain. Some packs succeed, others run afoul of other Breeds first — each bloody battle another mark against them. After much debate and many years, the Fera finally agree with The-Stone-Erodes — they must drive the Garou away entirely.

The Garou fight bravely, but are outnumbered by their former allies. They fall to the magic of the Balam and the might of the Mokolé. They die at the fangs of the Ananasi and Nagah. The Camazotz feint and trick the werewolves into traps. Most crushing of all, the Gurahl, too, kill the Garou. The Fera drive the Warriors of Gaia to the far south and across the frozen ocean, howling to the last. When the fighting finishes, not a single werewolf or Garou Kinfolk remains alive in all of South America.

## Getting Involved

The Garou in Europe have suffered a tremendous loss of Kinfolk during the Ananasi purge of the Neanderthal. Uncovering the truth proves difficult with no Ananasi survivors to interrogate. A higher priority is to source new human Kinfolk, but even that is difficult given the Apis' animosity.

The Garou could ally with the Khara to search for Ananasi, but the Bastet don't share information lightly. Once the Khara turn upon the Neanderthals, killing yet more Garou Kinfolk, the werewolves unleash their rage against the secretive Bastet.

The Bastet seek to quash all knowledge of the Khara's surprising vulnerability. At first the Khara see the weakness as a powerful curse levied against them from unknown spirits or shapeshifters. In a way, they are correct.

Whoever learns the Yava first has a powerful advantage. The Garou offer much for this information, the Khara more — and both kill for it. As the battles escalate, eventually a werewolf frenzies and inadvertently cracks a Khara's bones, triggering another Yava. This is the downfall of the breed. Anyone with jaws powerful enough to snap bones can discover every secret the weresabertooth has discovered.

The pursuit of Generous-Gift is a place for all breeds to join in — to hunt or defend as they see fit — across the pristine magnificence of ice age Europe. Perhaps one of the characters takes the place of Generous-Gift as the last European Khara, trying to save his people.

The flotilla of Mokolé and Kinfolk landing on the shores of America can be used to parallel future events. This time the conflict is purely between the existing breeds and the new arrivals who awaken something best left asleep. After the horrors of their homeland, the European shapeshifters are unable to make peace with the native Garou, thus igniting

## THE KHARA YAVA

- To make an image of a Khara weakens it.
- A Khara who reveals a secret loses her magic for a lunar month.
- A Khara's secrets lie within her very bones. To know a secret, break her bone. The skull holds the most powerful and dangerous secrets.

another battle. Characters might be able to prevent this by healing the traumatized shapeshifters and brokering deals, but they'll need to gather the Gurahl and Mokolé at least to help with such a task. Worse, the newcomers cannot communicate with any of the locals (save for their own kind) without magic.

In South America the Europeans begin an utter reversal of future events. The Fera make war upon the native Garou, and win. Both sides' losses are tremendous. The Garou manage to kill the South American River-Keeper Gurahl entirely before they are, themselves, annihilated. The Fera drive them south through jungle, pampas, and snow until the remnants flee across the ice and eventually die out. Characters trying to alter this tragedy must contend with powerful Mokolé with no love for the Garou.

## Changing the Outcome

If the characters save the Khara, perhaps the Garou may never come to dominate Europe — or they may learn to work in uneasy alliance with the weresabertooths. Preventing the Mokolé migration keeps the War of Rage from reaching the Americas for millennia. The presence of South American Garou may surprise the characters. If they can save these long extinct and forgotten werewolves, the state of the Garou nation — and the misunderstandings that lead to the second War of Rage — look very different. Perhaps the lessons learned can even lessen the blow of the Apocalypse.

## Civilization

A thousand generations pass.

In Africa humans worship the Fera as gods just as they have done for generations. They revere the Garou as harbingers of death who hunt the Wyrmspawn emerging from the night. Violence among the African shapeshifters is infrequent — living in such close proximity along precious river valleys builds respect, and seasonal

floods gift fertility to all. The memory of the Mokolé is long, however, and they have not entirely forgotten the horrors of their people's treatment at the claws of the European Garou.

## Current History

As humans cluster near fertile land and sacred ground throughout the Middle East, Europe, and India, the Changing Breeds clash over territory. Some negotiate alliances, or at least truces, as their Kinfolk mingle. The Garou have long lived side-by-side with humans who now plant crops instead of hunting. Some — among Garou and Fera — call them tamed, but they aggressively protect their chosen communities from Fera interference.

## Ceilican

The European werewolves mercilessly hunt the Bastet. They remember nothing of the Khara, having only legends of a great betrayal by the werewolves in the time before time. The Qualmi occasionally return to their European territories, but never remain for long. Only the proud and unyielding European Simba remain in any numbers, but they fear for their survival — their totem Lion gave his patronage to the Garou in return for sparing his children.

The wise Simba Know-Me, boundless in courage despite her small size, sees nothing for the Simba in Europe save eventual death. Refusing to flee her homeland, she strives to free her tribe from their Yava. Her quest winds through labyrinthine forests and snowcapped mountains. The wisest shapeshifters meet with her, but none can help.

Rumors of her quest spread. In his desire to help, Sea-Circler the Corax delights in telling her story to all, and isn't above embellishing the details. When the Ahroun Blood-Eye hears of it he calls for vicious retribution against the upstart Simba and all her kin. Soon, almost every pack in Europe hunts the Bastet with renewed determination.

In desperation, Know-Me dares bargain with capricious Fae spirits. She captures one of the magical creatures and tricks it into leading her into the faerie realm. After seven years she returns. She is Simba no more — she has become the first of the Ceilican. To each remaining Simba she trades a portion of lunar magic in return for something they value. With new wildcat Kin and new Yava, the Ceilican break the werewolves' power over them.

## Agriculture

A new phenomenon emerges from the clever apes — agriculture. Families sow fields and raise fences to protect them from opportunistic neighbors. The paths between farms fix and define the wilderness, binding human society together like the Weaver's strands.

The development pleases the Apis. They find it easier to arrange pairings when both partners can find one another easily. The Bubasti enjoy the secrets gossiped about in the fields and meeting places. The Grondr and Gurahl are likewise gratified; humans confined to known ranges won't blunder into sacred ground and any taint they produce is in limited locations.

Only the Garou scorn these developments. Scent-of-Fire the Galliard calls it unnatural; against Gaia's will. She points to the hardened Gauntlet in the heart of these settlements and says the human kin are becoming weak, unworthy of Gaia. The Apis ignore her predictions.

The Camazotz called Blur-of-Mind relays a message to the belligerent Garou of the Sunrise Mountain Sept. He brings word that a coalition of Ananasi, Apis, Bastet, Grondr, and Ratkin protect the nearby human settlements. Blur-of-Mind does not return from the sept. In her place the wereraven Bright-Tears delivers the Garou response — the humans can have their Weaver-bound homes, but any who wander become fodder for the werewolves. Bellows-the-Sun, champion of the Apis, scoffs. He knows that the Garou already have settlements of Kinfolk that prey on other humans. Bright-Tears personally delivers this response to the sept during a Grand Moot. The assembled packs do not appreciate the message. Scent-of-Fire calls it an insult to all Garou.

## Plague

Beneath the notice of the wild gods, the Ratkin mutter dire prophecies. The Weaver-beloved humans are a plague; a new disease is needed to scour them from Gaia. They chitter in dark places and spread new poxes until they succeed. In a few short years the disease has spread from family to farming community to hunting tribes. Thousands sicken; the dead are burned in piles while the living pray for succor.

To humanity, it is a disaster. To the Garou, it is devastating.

Kinfolk die in droves. Septs send packs to find the source of the disease — or a cure — but they find only death. Then the werewolves themselves sicken. Whole packs seek the Gurahl for healing, only to return to the werewolves after a month. Some blame the Bastet; surely the secretive Cats are behind the foul magic! Others blame the Apis; surely the Garou need healthier mates! Yet others blame the Grondr; surely the land is sick because the boars are lazy! Only after many years do they look to the Ratkin.

Luna's-Shadow, a Ragabash, tracks a specific Ratkin from one community to the next. She watches as the humans sicken within hours. She tells her pack of her observations as the moon rises. She dies of pestilence before daybreak.

The werewolves hunt and kill whole nests with single-minded fury. In the Sept of Sunlit Apples the Garou

force the Ratkin Bard Sings-for-Food to watch as they burn thousands of rats. He just shrugs, which infuriates them more, and he dies in the fires with his Kin.

More Bards die as accusations that the Ratkin have betrayed Gaia echo across the continent. The Ratkin fight alone in the ensuing purges — too few Bards remain for diplomacy. Some Fera aid the Garou, the pox affecting their human Kin just as much as it does the werewolves'. Others fear retribution if they help either side.

After years of aggression and despair, the Bards Whisper-of-Rain and Cries-in-Spring make plans to end the genocide. They summon swarms of Ratkin to dozens of secret Wyld-places over three continents. They ensure all the local werewolves know where the Ratkin are gathering. They manipulate when the Garou will attack.

As the midsummer full moon rises, the werewolves tear into the teeming wererats and Kin. Chanting prophecies and yelling stinging insults the Bards taunt the frenzied Garou to kill them. Every death strengthens the prophetic curse. Unaware they have fallen into the Ratkin's trap the werewolves howl in victory when the last Bard falls. While the Ratkin Bards sacrifice themselves, the rest dash through Wyld bolt-holes into the Umbra. Few miss them.

The curse plays out over thousands of years. It forever sets the Garou apart from the Fera, creating "us" and "them" between allies, friends, and families. It also leaves the Garou feeling separated from humanity, a distance that breeds resentment and fans the flames of the Impergium.

## Getting Involved

The rise of agriculture is a time of massive cultural upheaval and the dawn of the Impergium. Human populations expand rapidly in fertile areas. Powerful servants of the Weaver and Wyrms find a natural home within those human settlements. The Garou use this as easy justification for killing humans. Other breeds oppose them — human settlements bring many benefits. The Ratkin cull humanity with sacred fervor and fetid disease.

In Europe the Garou revel in their power over the Simba. They go to extremes to prevent the werelions from escaping their control, fearing what the Simba might do in retaliation. Garou characters may hunt the Simba over moor and through dense forests, or track Lion through the Umbra to threaten compliance among his children. The Garou murder Bastet Kin and might even make pacts of their own with dangerous spirits to retain their advantage.

The Simba are on the defensive. They must survive, hiding and running through the mystic places of Europe. Perhaps the characters make the Kin-changing pacts with the fae in a mystery play of magic, fear, and freedom.

Characters who feel sympathy towards the Ratkin and their mission could try to intervene, mediating between wererat and werewolf in the hopes of preventing the Ratkin slaughter. With their Kinfolk dying, many more Fera join the genocide. Ratkin characters must convince their chaotic breed to work together for one great ritual, and the Bards to martyr themselves, empowering the curse. The Ratkin must join the disparate locations into one mystical field, and this too is an epic task.

## Changing the Outcome

If the Ratkin survive, the Impergium may never occur, lessening the curse of Delirium in the modern day. Perhaps the madness of the Ratkin and their fall to the Wyld never occurs and the Freak Aspects never crawl out of the Umbra.

If the European Simba die, the remaining Simba forever hate the Garou. They, rather than the White Howlers, may become the first tribe of a Changing Breed to fall to the Wyrms.

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## Deluge

Two hundred generations pass.

Agriculture has spread across three continents as communities clear forests with well-hafted stone axes. Settlements raise stone walls and worship pantheons of disparate gods. Powerful Wyrms-creatures stalk and hide among humanity, while werewolves purge the wilderness of stray humans and monsters alike.

## Current History

Deep in the Atlantic one of Qyrl's most dangerous children tunnels through Undersea and Oversea in great arcs, pursued by the Dimwater Teeth-of-the-Endless and her slew. The foul monster births a decoy to avoid certain destruction and dives into Unsea one final time while the Rokea are distracted. Furious, the Dimwater knows the Rokea can kill the creature should it ever return to Sea.

Teeth-of-the-Endless quests through Sea, Sea's Soul, and even Unsea for years, searching for the means to drag the Wyrms-spawn back to Sea. In the furthest depths she learns a powerful Rite to reunite the creature and Sea. Satisfied, the Dimwater summons the Rokea. For many months they, and aquatic Mokolé and Nagah, swim to her side.

Scouts scour the land for Qyrl's child, enlisting other breeds for assistance. The Grondr Head-Hides-the-Sun receives the request from the awkward-looking shapeshifter with respect. The Garou are less welcoming — the white-furred packs refuse the Rokea entry to their territories.

The Nagah Might-of-Judgment volunteers to negotiate with the Garou. She sneaks into the heart of werewolf territory to the Black-Chalk Caern, home of the alpha Thrice-Blessed-Ghost. She startles the werewolf, who quickly overpowers her. Even wounded she calms and intrigues him long enough to deliver the Rokea's message: The wereboars have found Qyrl's child, and need the werewolves' help to bring it to Sea where the aquatic Fera will kill it.

The Garou laughs at her words. Thrice-Blessed-Ghost threatens to disembowel her for such impertinence. He gathers his pack and recites the Litany: "Combat the Wyrms Wherever it Dwells and Wherever it Breeds." If this news is true — and the Garou have seen no sign of the creature — they will be the ones to slay the Wyrmspawn. He declares that this hunt will join those of legend. Galliards will craft songs for new heroes, and the werewolves will kill the creature easily. He dismisses the wereserpent then, sending her back to the sea.

Upon receiving this reply Teeth-of-the-Endless tells the Nagah emissary it was never for the Garou to choose, only to leave. Upon the next new moon the Rokea, Mokolé, and Nagah swim the rivers, slide through boggy marshes, and stalk the forests. Some invade caerns, while others warn the Fera and Kinfolk to leave.

When the aquatic shapeshifters are in place from coast to coast, they begin the Rite of Summoning-Sea.

## Death

Teeth-of-the-Endless and her retinue follow Head-Hides-the-Sun to a caern nestled among the low hills where Qyrl's child rests. The werewolves hold back, thinking to entrap their foes. The incensed Garou gather their Kin for war and send Corax and Camazotz messengers to every renowned shapeshifter calling upon old favors, threats, and alliances.

Portents gather on the second day of the ritual; even the dimmest Ahroun realizes Gaia is sick here. The werewolves send hundreds of tribesmen to charge the invaders. Though none doubt their bravery, the humans are little more than chum for the weresharks. Scores flee screaming at the sight of shapeshifters in war form.

At dawn on the fifth day, Might-of-Judgment assassinates Thrice-Blessed-Ghost — and almost escapes. The Galliard Shadow-of-Wolf takes command. She sends a pack to demand the Gurahl fight the Death Bear on Thrice-Blessed-Ghost's behalf. Such is the deceased's renown the old werebear Winter's-Ending agrees.

Winter's-Ending defeats the Death Bear and returns life to Thrice-Blessed-Ghost, but at great cost. Seven hours after the werewolves leave, Winter's-Ending rises as something *other*. Cursed with undying rage, he enters a berserk frenzy and runs roaring into the wild storm. No one is safe, as the



mindless werebear slays human, animal, and shapeshifter in neverending slaughter.

On the eighth day of the war, Thrice-Blessed-Ghost, weakened, but no less a war leader, orders the local Changing Breeds to attack — just as in the legends, the time for war has come. The opening skirmishes quickly become bloodbaths.

## ***Destruction***

At the last glimmer of sunlight on the ninth day the gigantic Wyrms creature bursts from the boulder-strewn hillside near the Turning Speech Caern. It is visible only as actinic after-images cast by the lightning that cavorts around its maggot-like head. Fleshy tentacles writhe and whip around its cavernous maw. Banes punch through the Gauntlet. Human and animal fomori join the fray.

The bloody conflict rages for another four days. Teeth-of-the-Endless lies dead and broken but her ritual succeeds. Thousands of people die. Thousands more flee the unstoppable deluge. An inexorable mountain of water washes in from the northern ocean. Within these churning waters swim slew upon slew of Rokea. Now it is their turn to frenzy.

When the storm breaks many of the Garou's allies turn and run. Few wish to fight in such torrential rain, and the aquatic Fera relish the water. Thrice-Blessed-Ghost, furious at what he sees as treason, howls for the deaths of every Fera who turned away from the fight.

Roaring-Nose the Mokolé delivers the final blow, slaying Qyrl's child while it is trapped within the Turning Speech Caern. The flooding sea swallows the decapitated Wyrms-beast. In the rising waters, the body of the beast writhes away to the west and coils around itself deep beneath the mountains to heal. Its monstrous head burrows to the east, weak and hungry.

The flooding sea divides the continent and the Changing Breeds. Those Garou trapped on the western islands howl to the Incarnae in fury. The Fera survivors take pains to avoid the aggressive werewolves. The Grondr fare badly; their claims of taint beneath the mountains insult those Garou who now call them home. Elsewhere on the islands the Garou make deals with other spirits and take Lion and Stag as their totem. They too hunt the Fera as bringers of ruin and ill-omen.

On the continent the werewolves guard the fens from treacherous Fera, but the thing that was once a Gurahl still haunts them.

## ***Getting Involved***

The scene is chaos around a ticking bomb. In this turbulent period, characters have many options open to them. Almost all the Changing Breeds are present; violence is everywhere.

If the characters want to join the Rokea, perhaps it is they who discover the Wyrms-beast's lair. Let them convince (or not) the Garou that the deluge is necessary. They can take part in the great Rite — taking the place of the Ritemaster, or protecting her. The Rite requires multiple rituals at many caerns to succeed; the characters could take the lead at one of those caerns. The characters might try to warn the local humans and shapeshifters, if they care, but they'll have to work hard to get the locals to trust these fearsome-looking foreigners.

Alternatively, the characters could fight to prevent the flood. The Garou, Fera, and humans all have vested interests in opposing the Rokea. The characters could argue with the Nagah envoy or simply try to kill the ritualists. If the characters lead the Garou, they must contend with assassination attempts, and would have to bargain with the Gurahl for assistance.

If the catastrophe is inevitable — or even right — do the characters try to save everyone or just themselves? Garou characters might found new tribes from the displaced werewolves, one to guard the mountains above the slumbering beast, the other to hunt the treacherous, cowardly Fera through the dark forests of the continent.

## ***Changing the Outcome***

The single biggest change the characters can make here is preventing the land sinking beneath the waves. If Britain remains connected to the continent the course of history changes drastically.

They might make a less radical change. Perhaps the Wyrms-beast chose a caern in the Middle East, leading the Rokea and their allies to fight different Garou and shapeshifters. Their deluge creates the Inhospitable Sea, submerging millions of acres of fertile land and settlements. The humans within the flood basin would have quite a tale to tell.

This moment marks a critical moment when the Gurahl agreed to return a Garou hero to life. This could have been the moment they taught the Garou the secrets of resurrection. Alternatively, perhaps the Rokea take Teeth-of-the-Endless to the Gurahl, and learn how to restore life to the fallen. Either case has drastic repercussions for the future of the War.

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## ***Poison***

Fifty generations pass.

Agriculture spreads across Eurasia. Farms and villages spread across the Middle-East and Caucasus. The Apis are ascendant, some ruling openly as God-Kings. They bless or deny marriages between families with their wise counsel and divine decree. The Ajaba and Garou have taken over culling

human populations since the Ratkin disappeared. This in turn drives more humans into larger communities for protection.

## Current History

In the land of Black Earth the Fera rule openly, but their rule has new challengers. New, powerful Wyrmbestasts that take human shape hide amongst the people, fomenting dissent. Unused to such defiance, the Changing Breeds send packs of Garou to destroy them — but the creatures prove hard to find, and even harder to kill. The Bubasti dwell among the tented communities, fascinated by the humans who so casually shape the world to their liking. Ever insatiable for knowledge, they take these shamans as Kin and steal their tricks.

## Gold

The Mokolé mark places within Mnesis where they say Helios once walked the land. They avoid these places as uncomfortable, but not Wyrmbestasted. Sparkling rocks burn like the sun and glittering streams tingle their skin. The valley of Hungry Water between the Inhospitable Sea and the Sea of Wolves is one such place.

The Apis Short-Fury guides her valley community as a goddess. When the equinox dawns, she leads the human maiden Star in a marriage procession to the neighboring village across the river. The Philodox Howl-of-Thunder, long desiring Star for himself, leads his pack in ambush as the procession fords the Hungry Water. The humans flee in Delirium-fueled panic, but the Apis wades into battle with bellows that shake the earth. Short-Fury slays two Garou before Howl-of-Thunder retreats with the rest.

In the aftermath, Short-Fury frantically searches for Star, fearing she may have been slain or stolen. The Apis finds her, cowering but alive in the rubble behind a boulder. As the Minotaur reaches for her, Star wails in terror, clutching at a rock in desperation. Short-Fury cares not; no human can injure one of Gaia's children! Still screaming, the maiden swings blindly at the monster holding her arm.

At the first blow Short-Fury gasps in sudden pain. At the next she cries out, releasing the girl. At the third she stumbles onto the scree in agony. Upon the fourth blow she dies, bewildered and betrayed.

Star stops, aghast at her deed. She drops the bloodied yellow rock and runs back to her village.

Cautiously hiding among the trees, Howl-of-Thunder observes this unnatural death with interest. Ever curious, he brings the strange glittering stone to his sept. The other werewolves scoff at his report. Thinking the girl must be a fomor, they raid the village, finding in her entrails only that Star is as fragile and untainted as any other human. Howl-of-Thunder keeps the unusual rock in her memory.

The story of the god-slaying and the divine retribution that followed spreads to every community in the region. The tales divide the region's Changing Breeds. The incredulous Apis say the Garou must be behind it, or Wyrmbestast forces. The Bastet, curious as ever, find more rocks like the one in the tale. After much study they divine no value from them, apart from a fascinating glitter. The Grondr uncover no Wyrmbestast taint in the valley, or along the Hungry Water.

Within a decade humans are digging for the sparkling rocks and adorning themselves with golden trinkets. The Apis are furious. For uncountable years they have ensured a healthy herd among humans and shapeshifters. Now the unwilling simply brandish this shining metal and deny the wereaurochs' advice. In this way the Garou scorn the Matchmakers, taking partners as they — and only they — see fit.

The powerful Apis Sky-Steppe, father to many strong children, blames the poisonous metal's rising popularity on the Garou. He leads a war host of Apis, humans, and aurochs in a thundering charge against the septs of the steppe Garou. Catching many off-guard, the onslaught sweeps around the Inhospitable Sea and into Europe. Where the werewolves might once have had Corax to warn them, the wereravens share the Apis' aversion to the yellow metal and want no part of the fight.

In the Sept of the Thunderbolt, between the wooded mountains and the sea, the Theurge Small-Tail traps Sky-Steppe. Killing the wereaurochs shatters the war host's momentum. Garou packs isolate and massacre the remaining Apis and their kin; few escape. Small-Tail buries Sky-Steppe in the hills where he fell. She desecrates his corpse with golden trinkets and jewelry to ward against his return from death, and warns the local Gurahl to leave him with his ancestors. Arrogant in victory, the gold-wielding werewolves begin raids into the lands of neighboring Fera. Exhausted after the Apis battles, however, they grudgingly withdraw after only a few forays.

## Silver

Time passes. Far fewer bull-headed deities reveal themselves openly to their worshipful humans. Garou raid human settlements unopposed for desirable mates, often slaughtering the rest. The werewolves justify this as fulfilling Gaia's duty on behalf of the "useless" Apis and presumed-dead Ratkin.

Heart-of-Glory is one such marauder. The Ahroun wears gold and butchers whole villages to flaunt his power. One winter's eve he leads his pack into a hillside village and terrorizes the humans. Flushed with victory, he cares not what baubles one trembling human is wearing.

He feels the pain though — his howl echoes through the hills. Heart-of-Glory frenzies and rips the man open in a shower of red. The shining white necklace catches around his foam-flecked muzzle and the Ahroun dies in burning agony next to his unlucky victim.

Heart-of-Glory's pack finds him in Lupus form, burns still evident through the blood and gore. Howling mournfully, they return with their packmate's corpse to the Sunrise Mountain Sept. They leave the silver necklace trapped among Heart-of-Glory's teeth, displaying his unnatural death.

Galliards compose songs in his honor as the sept sends word of the strange metal to neighboring septs. They petition spirits and search for Wurm-taint. They murder miners and metalworkers alongside their families. Some packs whisper among themselves that the metal is divine punishment for disobeying Luna's laws.

Fangs-of-Luna, High Chief of the Sunrise Mountain Sept, becomes the first Garou to tame silver, proudly wearing the same necklace that killed Heart-of-Glory. He feels Luna's burning anger, but he doesn't die as many among the sept feared he would. Wearing silver soon becomes a display of strength and purity among the Garou, making them more aggressive, prideful, and righteous. With newfound zeal the sept casts blame far and wide for silver's sudden discovery.

Though the Bastet bear the brunt of the Garou accusations at first, finding that the werecats also burn at the white metal's touch defuses tensions. The Apis are next in line to take the blame, but both silver and gold burn the wereaurochs — a fact that only comes to light after most of the Apis have fled into the Umbra, never to return. The Nuwisha do not feel the sting of silver or gold, but their tricks do not include spreading the knowledge of poison throughout humanity; likewise, the Ananasi do not bother themselves with the arguments between other shapeshifters.

The Garou look for a target and their eyes fall upon the weakest of the Changing Breeds — Gaia's eyes and ears. The purveyors of secrets and lies, seeing the other Changing Breeds giving in to their Rage again and again sought out a means to redress the balance. They discovered metals that burned and poisoned them, and gave them to humans to use against the other shapeshifters, hoping to find a secret weapon against marauding shapeshifters. The other Changing Breeds' Rage falls upon the Corax and Camazotz like never before.

## *The Silver Crusade*

The Silver Crusade rapidly expands. In Europe, the Ragabash Finds-the-Valley leads twenty septs. His cunning and innovation, along with his packs' gold and silver weapons, have saved many packs from Corax ambush and Camazotz traps. From the Sea of Wolves into the mountains and plains of India, the Galliard Worthy-of-Luna's-Love unites disparate septs to strike against the flying Fera. Despite their fragility, the werabats and wereravens develop new tactics and plans at a moment's notice, putting the other shapeshifters on the back foot. They leave only the Apis and Mokolé alone; as victims of both gold and silver, the Corax and Camazotz

hope to count them as allies. In the end, both Changing Breeds turn away from the conflict entirely.

The young wereraven Shining-in-Shadows tricks the Garou into attacking what they think is a nest of Corax Kin. The werewolves are mistaken — the humans they butcher are family to the Grondr and the Gurahl. When their shape-shifting relatives arrive, it is too late for the Kin but both sides fight with renewed vigor against what they're certain are traitors in the war. Many werewolves die but Worthy-of-Luna's-Love survives, the other shapeshifters dead at his feet. Shining-in-Shadows had a contingency in store for him. It took a lot of work to arrange, but a Nagah watches the battle without knowing its true cause. Graceful-Speaker, watching in her Vasuki form, sees only a werewolf gone mad. The next night, Worthy-of-Luna's-Love dies to the Nagah's poison. Graceful-Speaker doesn't realize that when the Garou work out what happened, her actions will have created a martyr.

Though initially a tactic to whittle down more numerous foes, the messengers of Gaia don't yet realize the full consequences of their actions.

In Africa, the Camazotz turn the werewolves against the Bastet. The Ahroun Giant-Jaw's warriors strike into the land of Black Earth, but they meet their match in prides of Simba flanked by Swara and supported by the magic of the Bubasti and Bagheera. Packs of Ajaba harry the invaders, leading them into traps and ambushes. The Camazotz track stragglers on both sides through the night and the Umbra, assassinating them with silver when they try to flee. The fighting rouses the Mokolé at last, and they bring thunder and flame upon the Garou, ignorant of the werabats' hand in the war.

War rages between the Changing Breeds across Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Indian subcontinent. Some Garou fight alongside other Changing Breeds against the Corax and Camazotz, but far more see all other shapeshifters as a threat. In a generation, everyone knows one reason or another for their war, but few, if any, know that those reasons are the lies of the werabats and wereravens, spread in vicious retaliation to Garou aggression.

As events spiral further out of their control, a few of Gaia's messengers try to stop the fighting. Their attempt is too little, too late. Whispered-Truth, the young envoy of the Camazotz, stands before the war-leaders of the Garou and Bastet. They don't believe her explanation, and leave her gutted body to rot in the sun.

## *Getting Involved*

For the first time, humans can significantly injure their would-be gods. Characters can try to prevent the spread of the poison metals, but how long they can keep the secret is another question.

The Apis call upon allies to assist their crusade. Their early victories rely on the speed of the charge. Shapeshifters open Moon Bridges between caerns to out-maneuver their foes. Characters assisting the Apis charge receive high Renown and plentiful rewards. Alternatively the characters could side with the werewolves, warning of the impending attacks or leading counterattacks. This saves many Garou lives, but weakens the Apis greatly

The Corax and Mokolé, equally affected by gold, believe the werewolves will soon turn the poisonous metal against them. Characters of these Breeds may want to broker peace, or to find a place to hide from rampaging werewolves.

Once the Changing Breeds discover the effects of silver, all bets are off. The Garou go looking for anyone and everyone to blame. It doesn't take long for them to discover that the white metal hurts many other Changing Breeds, and to turn on Gaia's ears and eyes. The players' characters could join the werewolves hunting the Corax or Camazotz. It's not a nice or honorable war — they're on the receiving end of guerilla tactics with a silver edge. Alternatively, the players may take the role of Corax and Camazotz who have turned from messengers to hunters.

As the lies of the flying Fera take hold, characters could become the first to weaponize the metals — wrapping a simple club or spear in shards of gold, or shaping silver into knives. Soon, they face a new kind of war, one where human and Kinfolk alike can inflict vicious wounds.

Another avenue to explore is how the spirit world reacts to the exile of the Apis. Shapeshifters of all breeds petition Luna and Helios for answers. One wereaurochs returns, maddened, many years later. Characters could mount a rescue, if they can make sense of the poor ramblings of the mindless, raging, Minotaur.

## *Changing the Outcome*

If the characters manage to broker peace between the Apis and the Garou, or between Gaia's messengers and the other shapeshifters before everything gets out of hand, they may defuse the coming war, preventing the Apis from fleeing into the Umbra. Their actions would leave the Apis alive in the world today — unless some other force causes the wereaurochs' extinction.

Should the characters let slip the secrets of gold and silver to embittered Kinfolk — or if the characters *are* those embittered Kinfolk — then they have a chance to stand against the shapeshifters at last. Gathering others made orphans by the war, they band together in bitterness and resentment, and lash out at the Changing Breeds. In turn, the Changing Breeds either lash out at the rogue Kinfolk, losing friends, family, and breeding stock, or find new respect for their Kin. Either way forever changes relations between shapeshifters and Kinfolk.

## *Reconciliation*

One hundred generations pass.

The kingdoms of mankind expand and squabble, despite the Changing Breeds' efforts to fulfil the duty of the lost Ratkin. The Bastet and Mokolé still rule the lands of the Nile. To combat the insidious Wyrms-creatures hiding among the people of her land the Simba known only as the Pride-Queen summons Helios himself to help her eradicate them. She enters a killing frenzy for six days as an avatar of the sun-god fights by her side. The Wyrms-beasts die to sunlight, heat, and claw — unfortunately, so do hundreds of Kinfolk. Despite her success, the carnage blights the name of the Simba among the breeds. In their stead, the Bubasti rise in esteem. They have learned much from human magi, and they believe that arcane secrets guard their feline Kin.

## *Current History*

In the hills north of the Inhospitable Sea, the Garou prince Unyielding-Stone rules the Sept of Locked Horns. His years of conquest have been too successful. The Garou no longer have Fera allies against political vampires, southern demons, or the Wyrms-tainted sorcerers in the Caucasus. The Grondr have fled; the land beneath blighted caerns remains poisoned. The Gurahl, too, have retreated; no more do the Garou warriors receive their healing. The werewolves killed the secretive, infuriating Bastet; no longer do they uncover hidden knowledge. Even the Corax give this land a wide berth. None of Unyielding-Stone's numerous children have undergone the Change, and he cannot get help from the Apis.

Unyielding-Stone looks upon this state of affairs and feels, for the first time, regret. Seeking counsel, he visits his father Butcher-at-Sunrise in the Sept of the Crescent Moon in the far-off mountains. The old king scoffs, believing such talk sign of weakness.

After a week of arguments and soul-searching, Falcon appears before both werewolves. The totem reveals that Unyielding-Stone's remorse hides wisdom — all of Gaia's children must work together to protect Her. Hearing this humbles Butcher-at-Sunrise. He immediately prepares a message for his nephew, Forever-Stands, to cease his wars against the Fera. Unyielding-Stone vows to deliver this admonishment personally.

## *Rage*

The sept of Stone Naming crouches in the hills of the Wolf-lands — a wild and savage domain south of the Sea of Wolves. The people are belligerent and territorial, and Forever-Stands has been demanding tribute from neighboring human and Fera domains for many years. Such is his power

that envoys make regular diplomatic overtures despite the danger. Legends tell of his raids against the southern cities, and the skulking city vampires despise him.

A pair of Kinfolk find the desecrated body of Unyielding-Stone barely a mile from the sept. Such base treachery enrages Forever-Stands. He accuses the Bubasti envoys, Harvest-of-Secrets and Sharp-Point, claiming that their sorcery is responsible for his brother's death. Sharp-Point dies with his tongue torn out while Harvest-of-Secrets flees the furious Garou, further proving her guilt in their Rage-maddened minds.

Forever-Stands is not a learned king, but his Galliards sing of the bear-folk who can return the dead to life. He takes the corpse to the glade of three Gurahl. Summer-Dreams-of-Life is wise in the ways of Gaia, and proclaims the murder was by the fangs of a wereserpent. If the Nagah judged Unyielding-Stone worthy of death, then it is not the Gurahl's place to return his life, nor the werewolves' place to demand it. Forever-Stands declares that the Wyrms must be addling the Gurahl mystic's mind. He and his pack fall into frenzy. At the end of a bloody fight, Summer-Dreams-of-Life and one of the other Gurahl lie dead, as do five werewolves – including Forever-Stands.

The last Gurahl flees to the camp of a Grondr known as Trample-Bane. He listens to her tale with increasing anger, and upon its conclusion sends forth a summons to all the Grondr and Gurahl that he can reach. At the Caern of Luna's Love they argue about this unprovoked outrage, and the increasing Garou aggression. After a week, Trample-Bane ends the moot. They will retaliate.

The frenzied herd of wereboar and werebear thunders into an astonished Garou pack deep in the Wolflands, killing them all. The pack's Kinfolk stumble upon the post-battle celebrations. Trample-Bane tears into the humans, knowing success against Gaia's Warriors requires surprise. The war band ravages the hills for two more weeks before the Garou finally catch them. The battle of Sunset-Stream is vicious and bloody. Neither side claims victory and they name no heroes that day.

## Escalation

Garou packs howl of the upstart Changing Breeds. In Western Europe the Garou tribes unite to strike at the Fera and their Kin. The Theurge Wyrmslayer forges the first klaives, fetish swords of bronze and silver. With these blades the werewolves slaughter the Nagah. With torcs of gold the Garou torture the Apis and Corax into betraying the other Changing Breeds.

In central Europe the Garou justify exterminating the Camazotz by comparing them to the hated vampires. The Philodox Screams-of-Foe proclaims the werebats are Wyrmspawn who birth the Banes that infest the land



through blood magics, in defiance of Gaia. The cunning Garou tribes ambush and overwhelm the Fera time and again.

In northern Europe the Garou clash with furious might against the enraged Grondr. The Grondr elder Big-Tusk leads thunderous charges into werewolf septs; he earns wary respect from his foes before his death. The Corax plead neutrality — spying and carrying messages for both sides. Their warnings save many Fera, but not enough.

The Garou cleanse the Mediterranean of other shape-shifters with claws, fangs, and trickery. They hunt the Bastet from island to island. They chase the great Mokolé Deadly-Glance through both sides of the Gauntlet for weeks. Finding themselves unable to slay her, they curse her to eternal sleep within a cave surrounded by mounds of gold and silver treasure to ward against her awakening.

Garou warriors rampage through the Middle East, chasing the Fera into the snowcapped mountains. The Apis, Gurahl, and Grondr kill many, but the Garou are faster and uncompromising. In India the Garou suffer for their losses in the mountains. The subtle Nagah assassinate many, but packs dig out any wereserpents they find. Fearing annihilation, the weresnakes fake their breed's extinction. The Ananasi Slender-Leg weaves the Fera into strategic unity. They divide, entrap, and slaughter the invaders until the Garou withdraw.

In Africa the werewolves slam into Ajaba, Bastet, and Mokolé. Many local Garou are so sure of Fera dominance they refuse to help their cousins. The werewolves use Moon Bridges to press into the continent. Forewarned by Camazotz, Corax, and Swara, the Ajaba matriarch Lightning-Cracks-Marrow occupies the destination caerns, setting upon arriving Garou with the bloodcurdling fury of Ajaba packs and Bastet prides. Faced with Fera unity, the werewolf assault falters.

Across the steppes and mountains of central and northern Asia the Garou stalk the Ananasi, Gurahl, and Bastet. The last of the Asian Qualmi are saved by the Corax Speaks-No-Lies, who leads them through the Umbra to North America. Unfortunately, the Garou track them through the cold spirit tundra and devour almost all of them before they arrive.

## **Victory**

The Gurahl gift for prophecy saves some, but not all. The Gurahl Grandmother, Rides-the-Avalanche, leads her breed in retreating from the madness. Those who can enter a great hibernation. The Garou butcher those who can't.

Unwilling to kill the last insane Apis themselves, the Garou capture Star-of-Heaven within a maze. Trapped, he descends into endless rage. The Garou send humans with gold and silver weapons to kill him. Star-of-Heaven kills many hundreds before one emerges victorious.

During the incessant Garou attacks distracting them from their duty as Gaia's warriors, the wereboars must continue purifying the land — honoring their duty to Gaia, even in the face of oblivion. When one Grondr dies, another consumes him, containing any unpurged Wyrms-things within herself until she may perform the proper rituals to burn off the taint. As more die, they devour the fallen faster and have less time for ritual. The spiritual poison accumulates with every feast. The final stand of the Grondr takes place at the Sept of Husks. The battle takes hours, and at the end the last broken Grondr, Bristle-Grows and Oak-Leaper, desperately — pathetically — crawl among the corpses to eat. The Garou slit their throats before they can finish and leave them to rot. Their last thoughts are of survival. Days later the bloated bodies exhale clouds of toxic gasses. The few human witnesses say that two Grondr corpses stood up once again and walked away, their heads rotted to bare skulls.

Garou propaganda turns the European Camazotz' allies and kin against them. Alone and despairing, they lose their Gaian purpose. The last werebat, Sings-of-Luna, dies when a Shadow Lord, Pleasing-Thunder, mistakes her for a vampire. The young werewolf remains forever ignorant as to the gravity of his act. No one notices the Camazotz' absence for many years, and none think to mourn them for even longer.

## **Getting Involved**

The Garou are at their peak of aggression and power. The Fera have powerful domains of their own, and demand equal respect, but all tread carefully around the more numerous werewolves. The War of Rage is about to earn its name.

The Garou fight with determination and fury across several continents. Their numbers and coordination give them a significant advantage over disparate enemies. Only when the Fera unite can they prevail, as events in India and Africa prove.

The werewolves' most successful battlefields are in Europe and the Middle East. They control more caerns, and arm both themselves and Kinfolk with weapons of silver and gold. The first klaives make even a werewolf in Homid dangerous. The Ananasi, Bastet, and Gurahl hide. The Mokolé and Rokea leave for parts unknown. The Corax play both sides, scouting for the Garou but also saving many Fera and their Kinfolk. The Grondr population dwindles with every spectacularly brutal raid. The remaining savage Apis win many early battles, but not enough to save them from the violent Garou. The Garou hunt the Camazotz, ostensibly for their resemblance to vampires. In truth the werewolves know the werebats spy on them. Garou packs spare no effort to destroy the judgmental weresnakes with fang and blade.

Within India the Garou slaughter so many Nagah Kinfolk the weresnakes fake their own extinction to survive. The werewolves don't outnumber the Fera here — the Ratkin of Asia didn't follow their kin into the Umbra. The Ratkin swarms surprise the Garou and when the Fera unite the Garou lose. Gaia's warriors take their toll, though. In the aftermath the Apis, Nagah, Grondr, and Gurahl have disappeared, and even the Ratkin have been reduced to a fraction of their former population.

The African Fera are united, but the raging werewolves outnumber them in every skirmish. Even so, the Fera almost halt the werewolves' advance into the continent. Almost. Once the Garou have taken enough caerns they can use Moon Bridges to leapfrog the most powerful Fera. These caerns soon become chokepoints, used to ambush the werewolves. The war despoils thousands of caerns through bloodshed and destruction. Both sides distrust the African werewolves, and few take part in any fighting. Instead, they focus on the secondary effects of the war — local Wyrms-creatures exult in the carnage, and vampires are quick to take control of humans who have lost their living deities.

## *Changing the Outcome*

The best way to prevent the outbreak of violence is to prevent Unyielding-Stone's murder. To do so, the characters must deal with the powerful, subtle, and thoroughly corrupt Nagah Humble-in-Duty. Alternatively, they could convince Forever-Stands to leave his brother dead — but they must persuade a proud, belligerent king to ignore the legends that say the Gurahl can restore life. Failing even that, if they can uncover the truth behind Humble-in-Duty's corruption, they stand a far greater chance of convincing the Gurahl to help.

Any of these actions might forestall a thousand years of war.

Humble-in-Duty is returning to India from a mission when she detours to kill Unyielding-Stone. Perhaps a powerful Wyrmspawn addled her mind. The undead have much to gain from shapeshifters fighting each other.

If the characters prevent the assassination, they might be in the position to help negotiate the first formal peace treaty between all the Changing Breeds. They'd have to arrange for powerful spirits to witness the treaty, and deal with naysayers who claim that the need for such a treaty is a sign that the shapeshifters have forgotten their duty to Gaia. Such a momentous event brings new intrigues, new betrayals, and old grudges.

If the War of Rage ends here — or never starts — what happens? With the assistance of the Fera of Britain, the White Howlers may not fall. Even if they do, between the Grondr purifying the land, and the Ceilican unearthing secrets, the White Howlers don't enter Malfeas ignorant

or alone. With the Fera active in Europe, and in greater numbers elsewhere, the Changing Breeds stand a far greater chance of pushing back the Apocalypse, or even averting it altogether.

More likely, their actions only delay the War of Rage. The wolf-standards of the Roman legions march to war against the indomitable villages of Grondr in Gaul. Kinfolk legionaries emulate the Ao in testudo formation. The Camazotz lead bloodthirsty armies against werewolves who look just a little too similar to certain shape-changing vampires as the Roman Empire crumbles. The Garou court Egyptian Bastet for aid; the threats of werewolf Kinfolk in the armies of the Fourth Crusade goes unspoken. A Nagah infiltrates septs in the great human cities of the Renaissance and murders the most visible urban shapeshifters.

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## *The War of Shame*

Separated from the Changing Breeds of the rest of the world, the Beast Courts nevertheless face the tides of history. The War of Shame is their own reflection of the events that set Changing Breed against Changing Breed the world over. Though the War of Shame itself starts around 12,000 years BCE, the history that leads to the bloody slaughter starts much earlier.

### *History*

No accounting of the War of Shame is complete without taking into account the world that came before. When the Defiler Wyrms shattered the Umbra, blisters of putrescent reality grew into boils and then cancers. They sprouted into pocket realms of vileness fed by rivers of agonized power.

The Changing Breeds of Asia fought as they did elsewhere. But here, the schisms between worlds tore them apart. The Umbra split itself into opposing forces and even souls twisted apart. The Mountain-That-Was-Not, now an enormous lake in the physical world, remained whole within a new Umbral realm, cascades of malevolent power inflating it to incomprehensible size.

### *Immortals*

Centuries later, the land along the coast north of the Mountain-That-Was-Not — the original source of the Banestorm — thrives. A thousand hominid tribes vie for primacy. As elsewhere, the Weaver has favored the humans. They name, define, and create to protect themselves. The wisest learn to guide and control the whorled opposites of land and spirit. One by one they harness the vast reservoir of power that is the Mountain Realm. They weave for themselves unending life and divine authority. These Ten-Thousand Immortals draw power from the elements

and rule, untouchable and magnificent, from the Mountain.

Wicked energies still pool and eddy around the world. Though the demons that stalk the land are mighty, time and again they fall to the claws of the Changing Breeds and the sorceries of the Ten-Thousand. The Immortals grant rightful respect to the shapeshifters, and gain the same in return. The shapeshifters sense no Wyrmtaint on these glorious humans. They are strong with life forces and the blessings of the Weaver — not considered a threat in ancient days — and no more of the Wyrms than the humanity from whence they arose.

Over many generations, the Immortals establish the idea among humanity that the Changing Breeds are imperfect, lesser divinities. The Beast People, as the people call them, care little for their status in human eyes. They honor Luna, Helios, and Gaia, and fight the Wyrms as they have since time immemorial.

The Ten-Thousand Immortals teach and guide human and supernatural communities alike, ruling kingdoms across Asia, each connected to the Mountain-That-Was-Not at the center of reality. The Mountain extends their authority further than mere Moon Bridges allow. Over thousands of generations they become unquestionable in thought and deed. They shape and nurture the realms of spirit, life, and death, and the rivers of power flow and bend to their whims. Their powerful golden children serve as glorious lieutenants and governors.

The Ananasi first aligned themselves to the Centipede — as the Defiler Wyrms became known — 2,000 years before the advent of agriculture. They claimed they followed Queen Ananasa's commands, and quickly killed those who disagreed. Since then, the duplicitous Kumo have both fought alongside the Changing Breeds and caught them within deadly traps, with equal glee. The Kumo slip effortlessly into the web of lies spun by the Ten-Thousand. The Immortals win and lose status among themselves for a myriad of intricate and complex factors, often too subtle for lesser beings to comprehend.

## **Corruption**

For all their resplendence, the Immortals are not perfect. One by one each of the Ten-Thousand slides into corruption — some requiring a push from their fellows (or the Kumo), others seeing it as only an opportunity.

The Kumo share the secrets of feasting on mortals with those Immortals most vulnerable to temptation. They find the swell of illicit life force intoxicating beyond the pleasures of heavenly peaches. The excess allows for greater displays of power among the courts and battlefields. Many Kumo die, their schemes uncovered by the keen-minded Immortals, yet they are patient, persistent, and plentiful. Though it takes many lifetimes, eventually the corruption is

complete. The Immortals no longer destroy defiled nests of essence, but gorge upon them. Arrogant yet unquestionable, the Ten-Thousand Immortals set about undermining the lesser divinities.

They marginalize the Apis. The Immortals have no need for Gaia's matchmakers. Elaborate social proprieties ensure that only they have the authority to arrange courtships among the supernatural. They subtly favor matches that weaken the shapeshifters. Where the Apis could convince people to disregard affairs of the heart, the Immortals gain support by encouraging such romance. The Kumo play their part, ensnaring the Apis in devious plans, poisoning their friends and allies against them. The wereaurochs slowly dwindle in respect and status. Most migrate to faraway lands. Many more die at the Kumo's fangs, unmourned and forgotten.

The Immortals fear and despise the Grondr for their purifying powers. Elaborate schemes fail beneath the righteous tusks of the wereboars. Cunning traps fail beneath their mighty rage. The Immortals instead tread lightly and arrange a graceful downfall for the Grondr. Over generations, they turn the wereboars into figures of mockery and derision, beneath even the Ratkin in station. Rumors spread that they consort with demons. New generations of Grondr learn early on that they are cursed. Many die needlessly in battle, fighting with reckless abandon to atone for illusory sins. Others embrace their imagined roles as demons until the other Changing Breeds kill them to protect Gaia.

The Immortals take no chances with the secretive children of Bat — the Camazotz hide in the smallest places, and overhear the most private conversations. They seduce the werebats with secrets, honors, titles, and domains. After only a few centuries of such enticement almost every werebat rejects Gaia. Loyal only to the Immortals, they willfully disregard any signs of wickedness. Some learn their masters' bloody rites and side with the Kumo. Humans, shapeshifters, and other supernatural beings come to fear and distrust the Camazotz as spies of the Immortals.

## **Cataclysm**

As the years pass, the Ten-Thousand Immortals sink ever deeper into depravity. Their veneer of holy resplendence grows thin — empty words and gestures are all that maintain the pretense of civility and order. One inauspicious night, the wicked Immortals slaughter their once-loyal children. So heinous is this deed that the Mountain shakes in violation. Tainted elemental power floods from it, destroying all in its path.

The Immortals escape, but few of their servants survive. They are shocked to find the Mountain's convulsions have devastated the material realm. Everywhere touched by the Mountain suffers under ruinous torrents of foul elemental forces. The domains of the Immortals tear themselves apart

## KITSUNE

What the Immortals miss, as do so many others, is a miracle.

The first few Kitsune awaken during the cataclysm. Obeying their natures in joyful ignorance, it takes many more years to understand their duty to the Emerald Mother: where the Apis forged individuals, the Grondr purified territory, and the Camazotz exposed corruption, the werefoxes were to bond, cleanse, and expose the corruption of societies.

The shaken and distrustful shapeshifters begin working together. While protecting the weak and unwary from the Centipede's forces, the breeds still fight for status, but now the Kitsune use wit and humor to defuse tensions and encourage cooperation as never before.

— physically and spiritually — over the course of weeks and months. Many sink through the spirit world to form new realms in Hell; others vanish into stranger locations. As the land crumbles beneath the assault the sea rushes in, obliterating the remains. Everyone flees the catastrophe; most die. Mokolé endure the elements to save who they can, but even they cannot stem the tide. Blaming the forces of Hell for this chaos, the Ten-Thousand Immortals quickly regain control of the terrified population, but the event has left them changed. They begin dark experiments to probe the realities of their new existence; some bargain with Hell, some seek enlightenment in distant lands.

## Consumption

Communities of shapeshifters gather where the wall between worlds is thinnest. The Kitsune manipulate their fellow Changing Breeds to make them more willing to work together than before. The societies around the Dragon Nests welcome all shapeshifters, even the Kumo — though few accept such invitations. Sages establish codes of respect and conduct, and agree to them via the network of Beast Courts. Warbands containing multiple breeds find strength in diversity.

In time, all save the Mokolé and a handful of sages forget the great cataclysm. A new status quo emerges from the tumultuous past. The Ten-Thousand Immortals rule myriad dominions unquestioned. As they vie for supremacy the supernatural world echoes with their power struggles.

At the behest of the Immortals, the Changing Breeds restrict human populations to auspicious numbers and keep humans from places where they might disturb meditating Immortals or desecrate Dragon Nests.

Through study and experimentation, the Immortals discover the means to absorb life force from the land itself. The trick is easiest within Dragon Nests and other sacred places, but leaves those regions poisoned and sterile. The subtlest Immortals merely sip at the fountain of power and let the area recover, but even a taste of power is addictive. Many areas sicken and die before the Immortals accept the consequences of their actions — the power of the land is no longer rightfully theirs. Knowing that the Beast Courts defend such places and punish transgressors — even Immortals — by the Ten-Thousand's own decree, the Immortals plan to take the Dragon Nests for themselves.

The Immortals use the most fractious Nests as weapons against the most stable. Discontent shapeshifters believe planted evidence and false witnesses all too readily. When adjudicating shapeshifter disputes, the Immortals deliberately make biased judgments. The Ten-Thousand smile as dishonors and insults build between and within the Courts. Their triumph comes when other shapeshifters discover that the Court of Seven Blessings harbors an Akuma — one of Hell's most powerful servants. Revered-Ancestor of the Immortals declares the Mokolé Sagacious-Tongue-of-Flame traitor and the Nest forfeit. The Ferocious People of three other Nests launch secret attacks to bring their fellows to justice.

## Conflict

Invoked-Honor dies first. He tries to warn his Nest but a poisoned arrow finds his wing. The Khan Distant-Sky snaps the Tengu's neck between his fangs. The rest of the Court of Seven Blessings fares no better. The defenders fight bravely, but Changing Breeds from three other Courts overwhelm them in both the physical and spiritual realms, killing everyone. Rage shatters the bonds of kinship and tradition.

The war escalates quickly. The Immortals manipulate the Changing Breeds until the shapeshifters are a powder keg of fragile alliances, half-remembered slights, and powerful rivalries. Jungles tremble and deserts shiver as the Ferocious People battle.

Great numbers of Garou, from the western mountains and the north, rush to the forefront of battle. The Khan are mighty, but solitary by nature, the opposite of the plentiful but weak Nezumi. The Nagah render deadly justice time and again, convinced of their righteousness. The Tengu are brave scouts, and the first targets of any raid. The Same-Bito are powerful and vicious, but rarely spend enough time on land to cement their victories. The Zhong-Lung shake the world when roused, but are the rarest Changing Breed

among the Beast Courts. The Okuma retreat to their dens; offering aid to all who can find them. The Kumo play all sides to further their own schemes. All ignore the Kitsune as too weak and too young to be serious threats.

Heroes and villains rise and fall. Much Rage is directed against the Okuma, whose healing wisdom leads them to a life of pacifism that the other Changing Breeds take as an insult. Beautiful-Midnight the Nezumi queen, whose diseases ravage human and shapeshifter alike, proudly collects the heads of Okuma who attempt to cure her sicknesses. Sunset-Roar the Khan becomes so lost in rage he massacres a Zhong Lung wallow for not showing enough deference; grieving, he quests to the Hell of Burrowing Maggots in penance. The Kumo called Three-Rock-Eyes lures injured shapeshifters into her lair by puppeteering a Kitsune corpse and posing as wise counsel. Resplendent-Sun-Through-Leaves becomes a wandering conman to hide his identity as a Zhong Lung, and murders the wise Okuma Whispering-Bamboo to keep his secret safe; in turn he is judged by Stillwater-Running, but the wereserpent cannot hope to stem the tide of violence.

Bites-the-Moon the Same-Bito protects the Peach and Chestnut Nest from all intruders, and under his guard it becomes a safe haven for shapeshifters who want to avoid violence, including many werebears, but too many seek his sanctuary and he cannot guard them all. Respected-Song-of-Tigers, the Immortal, finds an unguarded Dragon Nest, and experiments for uncountable years upon the unfortunate shapeshifters within. The Kitsune Valiant-Sapling unwittingly leaves a trail to the den of Mountain-Sage-Brother the Okuma, long hidden in the wilderness. Runs-the-Wind of the Hakken knows that the werebear has healed his enemies, and brings his pack to strike. Rather than defending her friend, the Tengu Sacred-Day flees with Valiant-Sapling and leaves Mountain-Sage-Brother to his fate.

## Shame

As time passes, the Ten-Thousand Immortals fade into the shadows to rule by subtlety. The Ferocious People are a shadow of their former selves but fight on in the name of forgotten atrocities. The Immortals goad the shapeshifters further, and the war takes its toll. Dragon Nests lie empty; many are forgotten. The Immortals bicker over each abandoned Nest to use in their own foul schemes.

The Ferocious People find enlightenment during the reign of a human emperor. The emperor is perceptive and shrewd; he hears the rumors about bloody rituals occurring in the secret places of his court and observes the movements of the sage who advised his father and his father's father. He has the bodies of the recently buried exhumed, and sees the exsanguinated corpses with his own eyes. Fearing for himself and his people, he contacts the Changing Breeds

and humbly begs their assistance in ridding the land of this evil. They don't listen — the emperor's sage is Auspicious-Divinity-of-Storms of the Ten-Thousand Immortals and above reproach.

The emperor sets forth a series of tests to trick Auspicious-Divinity-of-Storms into revealing his true self. Over the course of three tests he insults the August Personage of Jade, plays games to frustrate the Immortal, and even shoots an arrow through a bag of blood, but the sage is unmoved. Frustrated, the emperor exclaims that the age of the Ten-Thousand Immortals is long past; their wisdom and power is as nothing before him. The emperor's painful death reveals the demonic Immortal for what he really is.

This revelation shames the Ahroun Ignorant-Worm. He gathers the charred corpse and seeks the Okuma to restore the emperor's life. He finds none. His quest leads him through Dragon Nests that lie abandoned and poisoned by the Immortals. He calls for the Nagah to assassinate the demon, but none answer. As he journeys back to his pack his rage grows. He can see now that the ongoing conflict is the fault of the Immortals. Ignorant-Worm tells his Court what he has learned. They remain unsure until Seven-Shadows-Dancing, a many-tailed Kitsune, tells them she believes Ignorant-Worm speaks truth. With their wisest behind him, the Court feels centuries of deceit fall from their minds. United in anger they send messages through the remaining Beast Courts. They petition in person and by spirit, and finally the other Changing Breeds listen. The world shakes again in their united Rage. Court by Court, the Ferocious People unite under Ignorant-Worm.

Their retaliation is inconclusive — the Immortals are too powerful. Fearing defeat, a warband of shapeshifters petitions the Emerald Mother Herself with evidence of the Immortals' depravity. They know their petition is futile, but She proves them wrong. The judgment of Heaven rains down. The Immortals become the Ten-Thousand Demons, forever denied their former glory. Ignorant-Worm is in turn confined to Hell for daring to take arms against Heaven's agents, no matter how just the cause. He accepts his punishment with honor, pleased that his is the final sacrifice that ends not just the War of Shame but the reign of the Ten-Thousand Immortals.

## Getting Involved

Shapeshifters wage the War of Shame with fangs, talons, whispers, and lies. A complex web of shifting allegiances, familial obligations, and centuries of traditions determines the enemy of each Beast Court.

Prior to the cataclysm, the conflict between breeds stems primarily from the same triggers as the War of Rage, though exacerbated by the lies of the Ten-Thousand Immortals.

The Kumo and Camazotz are the Immortals' favorites; each Breed turns their talents against the others in the hope of greater reward. Should a Camazotz try to betray her masters, she has no one to turn to for help. The Changing Breeds won't believe the divine Immortals could be corrupt, and will likely think the Camazotz is testing their loyalty. The breeds know the Kumo are the Centipede's servants and therefore untrustworthy, but trust the infallible Immortals can keep the werespiders on a heavenly path.

The Apis and Grondr have tragic fates that characters may avert. Preventing the Apis from leaving Asia would be a major blow to the Immortals, denying them absolute authority and cementing the Changing Breeds' independence. Fighting the anti-Grondr propaganda is much harder. Other Changing Breeds — and eventually the Grondr themselves — believe the wereboars bathe in corruption and birth monsters. Should the characters prevent the Grondr from believing that, even though their natural instincts urge them into fouled earth, they could force the Immortals into overt action. If the wereboars survive, they are the first to find corrupted Dragon Nests and identify the Immortals as the cause; they may even be able to restore them.

During the devastation of Sundaland and for years after, the Ferocious People must protect the inhabitants — and Gaia herself. Newly-formed islands save some refugees who must adapt to a new life. Player characters can influence the development of brand new cultures, including founding new Changing Breed cultures.

The cataclysm also gives rise to the Kitsune awakening. Players could portray the first-ever werefoxes. Awakening in innocent ignorance, they must search for meaning and purpose to their lives. Without yet knowing any fox magic, they must rely upon their natural gifts of wit and humor to survive in an increasingly hostile world. The other breeds view the Kitsune with curiosity, and harbor no grudges or hatred towards them. This does not guarantee safety, but the Kitsune may approach their dangerous cousins in peace, making them useful diplomats and envoys.

Through the violence of the war, opportunities abound for characters to be heroes — or villains. Shapeshifters become more loyal to their Court than their Kin. If player characters unite the discordant Beast Courts in time, they may avert the tragedy of the Okuma's death. Anyone who

tries will have to face the wrath of the ruthless Immortals, who do everything in their formidable power to tear the Beast Courts apart.

The War of Shame ends before the discovery of the poison metals, though the Kumo are vulnerable to rosewood from the moment they swear allegiance to the Centipede. Though it will be many years until news of gold and silver's effects on the Changing Breeds reaches the Beast Courts, only time will tell whether the unifying effects of the Kitsune can prevent the Tengu joining their Western siblings' war. The Kitsune count themselves lucky to have no such weakness.

## *Changing the Outcome*

The most obvious change the characters' actions could have is preventing the death of the Okuma. Any increase in the number of Gaia's healers would have a massive knock-on benefit, strengthening the Beast Courts against the Ten-Thousand Demons. Characters may alternatively manage to save the Camazotz, Grondr, and Apis, but such meddling may convince the Emerald Mother she does not need to create the Kitsune.

The Camazotz survive in extremely low numbers after the cataclysm. Blighted by association with the Immortals, blood magic, and child stealing the Ferocious People avoid all contact. They term the werebats the *Yè-Shào*, the night sentries. Forgiving the *Yè-Shào* and welcoming them into the Beast Courts could stave off Bat's madness, and give the Changing Breeds an important edge even through to the Second War of Rage.

Should the Apis survive, they retain their matchmaking duties, but the war forever taints their image. For taking such an interest in the mating of others, the breeds consider them perverted, if good natured. Nonetheless, the breeds treat the lecherous ox-horns, the *Hào-sè-ji*, with caution for fear of their rage.

Surviving Grondr find the first despoiled Dragon Nests and become the first targets of the Immortals. By embracing the role of filthy boar demons rather than having it thrust upon them, the wereboars can do what they must regardless of their own safety. In doing so they earn the respect of the Hengeyokai. Being untouchable gives the *Yezhu Yao* freedom to act and speak as the other Changing Breeds cannot.



# Chapter Four: Nightmares in the Jungle

*Everybody's so obsessed with purity. "Pure Lands" this, "Pure Ones" that. Let me tell you: things weren't so stainless back then. You know that line from Jurassic Park? The actual line should read: "The Wyrms find a way." It didn't need us to bring it there.*  
— John "Molten Banisher"

Unlike the First War of Rage, which took place before recorded history, the Second War of Rage occurred against the backdrop of the Spanish conquest of Mesoamerica. Beginning with Christopher Columbus' discovery of the New World in 1492, the Spanish and other European nations fought a brutal war of colonization for the next century. European Garou, longing for new territories to claim, followed the conquistadors to the new continent. What followed was one of the great tragedies of history.

The loss of territory to the European Garou and the equally rapid decline of the indigenous Fera and human populations attests to the brutality of the Second War of Rage. While popular misconceptions hold that a Spanish victory was never in doubt due to their technological advantages, the Spanish fought long campaigns in Mexico, the Yucatan Peninsula, and South America against formidable native armies that frequently repulsed Spanish attacks. Werewolves who came to the New World met an equally stout resistance in their war to claim this vast tract of the Wyld from the indigenous Fera.

Characters intending to change the original course of events have many opportunities to assist either the native Fera or the recently arrived Garou. The events of the Second War of Rage culminate in the fall of the Bat totem to the Wyrms and the extinction of the Camazotz at the hands of the Shadow Lords and their allies. The Camazotz were not the

## A DARKER HISTORY

By focusing on the shapeshifters and their war, this chapter presents a version of history that demonizes all groups, European settlers, indigenous peoples, Garou, and native Fera, equally. As such, some of the events of this time period, such as the spread of smallpox amongst the native populations, have supernatural causes, or were made worse by shapeshifter intervention. In no way is this meant to diminish or ridicule the suffering of those peoples or their descendants. Storytellers should make sure that their players are happy with this attribution, and amend the setting as necessary to avoid causing unnecessary issues in the game.

only shapeshifters who fought against the Garou. Although the Garou did not completely annihilate the populations of the Balam, Rokea, Nagah, Mokole, and Ananasi, all of these groups suffered at the claws of Garou intent on purging the supposedly Wyrms-tainted Fera. Whether the players choose

to support the Garou or the indigenous Fera, the outcome of the Second War of Rage should never seem inevitable. The historical record of events in this chapter exists only as a jumping-off point for Storytellers.

This chapter can't provide a thorough history of the Age of Discovery and the violence of the Spanish colonization of the New World. Players and Storytellers interested in more information have a wealth of options available, from online research to the wide range of history books available in libraries and bookstores. Primary documents, written by both Europeans and natives, offer contemporary views on this period. Further research into the Age of Discovery can help dispel the common knowledge and popular beliefs that misconstrue many of the realities of the Age of Discovery.

## Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica

Thinking of the indigenous peoples of Mesoamerica as primitive, superstitious, or just barbaric is a convenient explanation for the ease of the Spanish Conquest of their civilizations. The societies that the Spanish encountered during the Age of Discovery were complex polities with large urban centers, armies, and sophisticated trade networks that spanned the Americas. The three largest and most famous polities of the era were the Aztec, Maya, and Inca.

### The Aztec

By 1500 the Aztec Empire had passed its peak and was in decline, but they still dominated the entirety of Mexico and had expanded into the modern American Southwest. Their capital of Tenochtitlan was one the largest cities in the world, with a population of approximately 200,000—making it larger than London and rivaled only by Constantinople and Paris. Situated on a series of islands within Lake Texcoco, the construction of the Tenochtitlan represented an architectural accomplishment that rivaled European cities and the sight of the towers and temples rising from the lake left the conquistadors dumbstruck. Tenochtitlan was an engineering marvel with levees to protect the city from storm surges on the lake and a series of bridges connecting the different islands that comprised the city, and the Aztec capital was only one of the many cities in this vast empire.

Trade and conquest were essential to support the large urban populations of the Aztec Empire. Farmers and merchants supplied goods to the markets, but the Empire functioned on the success of its army. The Aztecs required each conquered group to send tribute, usually foodstuffs and gold. In fact, the markets of Tenochtitlan were so large

and offered such a diverse amount of products that Cortés believed that the market alone was twice the size of Seville.

In the cities of the Aztecs, the Ananasi were nearly ubiquitous, spreading the Weaver's influence by quietly encouraging Aztec architects to build ever larger structures, their merchants to expand their trade routes, and their warriors to conquer nearby civilizations. While the Ananasi influence was subtle, the Balam pushed their Kinfolk into positions of power, attempting to manipulate the Aztec rulers directly. Aztec warriors already revered the jaguar spirit's ferocity and cunning, and their greatest fighters, known as Jaguar Warriors, wore the skins of jaguars into battle hoping to gain the animals' strength. Many Balam, however, were horrified to see their animal Kinfolk hunted for their hides and a warrior's pride. The Camazotz infested the jungles and caves of Mexico, observing the humans and other shapeshifters of the region, and quietly passing along information in hopes of retaining Gaia's balance. The Aztecs never revered the Camazotz in the same way that the Maya had, but Aztec rulers heeded the advice whispered into their ears at night. On the edges of the empire, the Mokolé and Nuwisha lurked. At its peak the Aztec Empire had expanded as far north as modern day Texas and southern California and trespassed into the natural range of the wercoyotes, but the Nuwisha were never strong players in Aztec politics. Likewise, the Mokolé preferred to stay in their wallows, but if the policies of the Aztec Empire threatened their interests, the Mokolé struck with a decisiveness that terrified even the other Fera of Mexico.

### The Maya

Once the most dominant civilization in the Yucatan Peninsula, the Mayan Empire collapsed around 900 CE, but individual city-states remained influential despite the loss of a central government. The exact cause of their fall is still in doubt, but whatever internal or external forces led to the decline of the Maya, by the time the Spanish arrived in the early 1500s the Maya were no longer a single polity. The remnants of the Mayan civilization warred amongst each other, but only the city-states in the northern Yucatan Peninsula continued to develop, most likely due to their contact with the Aztec Empire. The fractured groups that the Spanish encountered when they began their conquest of the region were all that remained of a once-great empire.

The peoples of the Mayan Empire excelled at both astronomy and engineering, creating a highly accurate calendar based on observational astronomy and complex cities with awe-inspiring pyramids that rivaled the creations of the Egyptians. The Mayan culture was obsessed with death and their view of the cosmos included vast realms of the underworld made up of endless cave systems and many

## JAGUAR SKIN DANCERS

Samuel Haight may have been the first Garou Kinfolk to transform himself into a werewolf, but he was not the first to undergo a metamorphosis from Kinfolk to shapeshifter. The Aztec reverence of the ferocity and cunning of the jaguar could turn to jealousy amongst the werejaguars' Kinfolk. Envious Kinfolk watched their family members experience their First Change, and none coveted that Change more than Ichtaca, the daughter of a respected Balam leader. Gaia had blessed both of her younger brothers with the ability to Change while Ichtaca watched with growing resentment.

She dedicated her life to discovering a ritual or magic that would give her the same abilities as her brothers and father. Risking her life and sanity, she made pacts with strange entities she barely understood. Eventually, she developed a version of the Rite of Sacred Rebirth that would make her a Balam as well.

Alone, she did not stand a chance against a Balam, but she was not the only Kinfolk who coveted the ability to change shape. She gathered allies from the Kinfolk who had joined the ranks of the Jaguar Warriors, enticing them to her cause with promises that she could infuse the jaguar spirit into them as well. Their first targets were her own father and brothers, and from their skins, she started stitching the hide that she would use to grant herself their Gaia-given abilities. True to her word, once she had undergone her change, she helped others become werejaguars themselves.

The ritual that Ichtaca developed works the same as the Rite of Sacred Rebirth (W20, p. 212) with the same requirement that the Kinfolk slay and skin five werejaguars to become a Skin Dancer.

gods of destruction, death, and putrefaction.

The Maya worshipped many gods of death, including the bat. The Camazotz took advantage of this association and often used Mayan cave tombs and abandoned temples as homes for their colonies. The Camazotz wielded enormous influence over the Maya. The leaders of Mayan cities frequently refused to act until they received advice and information from a Camazotz ally. These quiet whispers pervaded every aspect of Mayan leadership.

The Ananasi were also active amongst the Maya, subtly encouraging the development of astronomy, mathematics, and written language — all tools of the Weaver. The Maya were constantly intruding into areas claimed by the Mokolé, who lashed out violently at the intruders. Seeing the power that the Camazotz wielded through their influence over the humans, the werejaguars looked north to other emerging polities to gain similar power.

## The Inca

Further south along the Pacific Coast and in the Andean Mountains of South America, the Incan Empire dominated the region from their capital of Cusco in modern-day Peru. The Inca were the youngest of the three major empires when the Spanish arrived, having only risen to power in the late 15th century. They had rapidly expanded by both peacefully assimilating nearby groups and conquering any who resisted them, and when the Spanish conquistador Pizarro encountered them in 1526, the Inca were still consolidating their rule over these territories.

Much like the Aztec Empire, the Inca enforced a system of tribute and taxation that required conquered peoples to mine for precious metals, especially silver, which was common in the Peruvian mountains. The werejaguars also took their share of the silver and gold mined there and fashioned it into klaives and other weapons. An extensive network of roads allowed for the payment of taxes, movement of trade, and the deployment of their army across the mountainous terrain. The Inca lacked a written language, and although the Quechua was the official language, the people whom the Inca ruled spoke a variety of languages. The Inca were victims of their own successes, however. Their rapid growth meant that they were still in the process of securing newly-acquired territory when the Spanish arrived.

Admiring the quick victories of the Inca against their rivals in the Peruvian mountains, the Balam applied many of the lessons they had learned from the werespiders' success with the Aztec. The werejaguars inspired the ascendant Inca to conquer more territory, often leaving them overextended and unable to maintain control over their growing empire. The werejaguars were wise enough to direct the Inca away from the Amazonian basin and the strongholds of the isolationist Mokolé. As watchful as the Balam were for infestations of the Ananasi, many crept into the cities of the Inca, but they were never as influential as they had been with the Aztecs. The Camazotz watched quietly, flitting through the night sky looking for signs of corruption. A few werebats started colonies in the Andes, but the largest portion of the Camazotz remained in Central America.

## Indigenous Fera

Central and South America hosted an enormous variety of contentious shapeshifters with little in common with

each other. In the quiet jungles and in the thoroughfares of the cities they fought a covert war for dominance. These neverending conflicts contributed to the Garou's rapid conquest of the indigenous Fera.

## *Ananasi*

The secretive and manipulative Ananasi were the most successful of the Mesoamerican Fera, but only because they avoided conflicts with the other shapeshifters and focused their attention on influencing human empires. They whispered in the ears of Aztec leaders and advisors, encouraging them to build larger cities and spread their empire as far north as possible. The Ananasi grew fat on the ready supply of blood in the Aztec cities, and the werespiders' webs expanded along the trade routes. With preternatural patience, the werespiders shaped the growing Aztec Empire, but none of them could have foreseen the tumult that the arrival of the Europeans and Garou would have.

## *Balam*

The Balam despised the manipulative werebats and werespiders, preferring to strike openly against their enemies. When assassins targeted their leaders, the werejaguars knew it was the werebats who were responsible for the deaths. They nursed their grudges and waited for a chance to strike against the werebats. Many werejaguars were certain that the Camazotz were practicing Wyrmtainted rituals in their caverns, and the werejaguars led short-lived coalitions of other Changing Breeds to try to put an end to the infestation of corrupted werebats.

## *Camazotz*

Just how much did the other shapeshifters hate the Ears of Gaia? No secret was safe from the watchful Camazotz, and their surveillance bred enemies among the other Mesoamerican Fera. The Mokolé understood Gaia's reason for creating them, and the Nagah relied on the werebats' information. The rest, especially the Balam, despised them, and spoke against the werebats whenever possible. The Camazotz did nothing to improve the other Fera's opinion of them; they frequently and openly practiced blood rituals most of the Fera assumed were Wyrmtainted. Sudden increases in the number of tainted Camazotz only exacerbated the problems. The situation was already coming to a boil when the Spanish explorers pulled their boats ashore.

## *Corax*

Gaia's messengers had an information network that spread across all of North America. Although they were never as numerous in Mesoamerica as the werebats, the wereravens' hunger for secrets kept them involved in the Changing Breeds' politics regardless of geographical

boundaries. Unlike any other Fera, the Corax had kept in contact with their cousins across the Atlantic. Wereravens had traveled from Europe to the New World before the Vikings launched their ships. It's possible that the talkative Corax inspired some Pre-Columbian maps of North America found in ancient European archives, or tales of strange lands beyond the ocean.

## *Mokolé*

In the jungles and swamps of Mesoamerica, the Mokolé thrived. Other shapeshifters never ventured too far into the jungles, but those who did were often confronted by the great weresaurians. They counseled many of the other indigenous Fera but remained isolated in their wallows, watching as the Camazotz, Balam, and Ananasi battled for control of Central and South America. The weresaurians were never in doubt as to who dominated the jungles of Mesoamerica, and they enforced that control with unmatched ferocity whenever others threatened their territory.

## *Nagah*

While the Camazotz were surreptitious, the Ananasi were subtle, and the Mokolé isolated themselves, the Nagah remembered their purpose. Retaining an ancient partnership with the werebats, the Nagah assassinated troublemakers who could upset the balance between the different groups of Fera. They remembered the War of Rage vividly and listened to the histories when the Mokolé spoke. They would not allow another great war to decimate the shapeshifters.

## *Rokea*

Loathe to travel on the Unsea, the Rokea still claimed many small islands and atolls in the Caribbean Basin. The arrival of European settlers, and eventually werewolves, sent shockwaves throughout wereshark grottoes. Sensing the dangers that these intruders posed, some Rokea dared venture onto the Unsea, attacking and destroying early European settlements. When the Garou — searching for sites for new caerns — threatened their grottoes in shallow estuaries, the Rokea struck, pulling unfortunate werewolves to bloody deaths beneath the water.

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# *The First Arrival*

Christopher Columbus was mad, and the courts of Europe knew it. Although modern children's stories depict Columbus as a visionary who wanted to prove the world was round in an era when most believed that the world was flat, in 1492 educated Europeans already knew that the world was spherical. That fact had been established around the 4th century BCE and was the basis of 15th century navigation. The European courts considered Columbus mad because



he greatly underestimated the circumference of the world, assuming that a trip from the Iberian Peninsula to China would only take a matter of weeks.

Stories of a crazy human trying to find financial support for a voyage to India and China by sailing the wrong way spread throughout the Ratkin's warrens and the villas of Spanish nobles. The Ratkin scoffed at the foolishness of humanity; besides, they had a more pressing issue. Human cities had become overpopulated once again, and despite their best efforts, they could not develop a plague as successful as the Black Death. New diseases crafted in the Umbra from plague spirits either killed too quickly to spread across the whole of Europe or spread throughout the continent but were not fatal except to the very young or very old. From time to time, the wererats were able to resurrect or recreate the Black Death, but it never spread as far or killed as many as it originally had. The humans had learned to quarantine their ports and populations as soon as the disease appeared.

Although Ratkin alchemists and shamans claimed that they had created the Black Death in the deepest parts of the Umbra, not everyone believed this version of events. A few scholarly wererats traced the spread of the Black Plague to human wars with the Mongol hordes that had appeared from the distant east. They reasoned that if the Black Plague

came from the east, perhaps courageous Ratkin could find deadly diseases in those distant lands.

Breeder-of-Pox, a Homid Ratkin, saw an opportunity in the madness of Christopher Columbus. If the Europeans could establish a sea route to the Orient wouldn't that allow new and terrible diseases like the Black Plague to come back as easily as the gold and spices of which the Spanish monarchy dreamed? After Columbus received funding for his first voyage, Breeder-of-Pox stowed away on the Santa Maria, along with a colony of rat Kinfolk.

The journey across the ocean took five weeks, and no Ratkin was more miserable than Breeder-of-Pox. Yet, when the firing of the Pinta's cannons signaled that the sailors had sighted land, no Ratkin could have been happier. San Salvador, the name that Columbus gave to the first island where his ships landed, was too small to be of interest to Breeder-of-Pox, and she stayed aboard the ship while Columbus and his crew explored the tiny island. Still seeking the riches of China, Columbus's ships continued west, eventually finding modern-day Cuba (which Columbus named Juana) and Hispaniola.

Columbus and his crew explored the island chains of the Caribbean for two months. When Columbus' ship stopped along the coasts, Breeder-of-Pox would hide among the supplies on the rowboats and explore the islands alongside the Santa

Maria's crew. She discovered peaceful and friendly native tribes. She did notice that many of the natives had vicious scars from both crude weapons and what she suspected might be enormous jaws. Columbus and his crew only had eyes for the golden baubles that the natives wore and questioned the natives about the source of the gold. Columbus saw the potential for enormous wealth hidden on the islands, but Breeder-of-Pox wondered if other Changing Breeds might be nearby.

Death seemed certain when the Santa Maria ran aground on Christmas 1492, stranding the ship on the shoals off the coast of Hispaniola. With no room for the crew of the Santa Maria on his remaining ships, Columbus saw an opportunity to establish the first European settlement in the Caribbean. Breeder-of-Pox and the surviving rat Kinfolk swam to the shore and hid along the shoreline, watching the crew dismantle their ship and use its timbers to construct a fort. Naming their settlement La Navidad, 39 sailors remained when Columbus sailed away. Rats were a constant problem for them.

## *The Great Pox*

Breeder-of-Pox remained at La Navidad only long enough to birth her first brood before setting out to explore the rest of Hispaniola. In her Homid form, she traveled among the Taino – the natives of Hispaniola – trying to learn their languages and gathering some of the gold jewelry that Columbus and his crew desperately wanted. She heard of other tribes across the sea with whom the Taino traded.

Breeder-of-Pox was not present for the massacre at La Navidad, but she did arrive in time to be present for Columbus' arrival. She had succeeded in discovering a new disease, but sadly, the disease was not as fatal as the celebrated Black Plague. Instead, it was a common disease that natives spread through mating. She called it the Great Pox, a name that the humans in Europe would come to use because some of its symptoms were similar to smallpox. Later generations would call it syphilis. The longer a human had the disease the worse it became, and humans who had the disease for years would often have disfiguring facial deformities, while others would go mad as the disease affected their minds. When Columbus took slaves aboard the ships to carry back to Europe, Breeder-of-Pox made sure that several of the women were infected with this strange disease.

In Europe, the Great Pox spread from Spain to France, and French soldiers carried it with them during their invasion of Italy. In Italy, it was called the "French Disease" because of the number of French soldiers who became infected while visiting the brothels of conquered towns. From Italy it spread across Europe, and although "The Great Pox" was never as fatal as the Black Plague, Breeder-of-Pox was responsible for spreading one of the great scourges of mankind from the New World to Europe.

On the other hand, the impact of Breeder-of-Pox's arrival on the New World was nothing short of apocalyptic, which is why modern Homid Ratkin continue to revere her. Breeder-of-Pox remained on Hispaniola for the rest of her life, and her brood survived, carrying European diseases such as smallpox, typhus, and even strains of the bubonic plague at the vanguard of European excursions into the New World. Early visitors to the Americas described the shores as being ablaze with the lights of campfires, but later settlers found empty, idyllic lands ready for their plows and easy to cultivate. Breeder-of-Pox was responsible for snuffing out those campfire lights and the lives of the native who tended them.

The spread of these new diseases didn't directly affect the indigenous Fera, but their human Kinfolk were not immune. As a result, when the European conquistadors and Garou began arriving in earnest, the natives – both Fera and human – were not as capable of fighting back because diseases had decimated their populations. All shapeshifters suffered as the human population declined.

The introduction of European diseases to the New World was inevitable as no one in the 16th century understood how to combat the spread of bacteria and viruses. Contemporary solutions for the spread of a disease like the bubonic plague included quarantining ports and avoiding contact with the infected. The indigenous populations of the New World had never encountered a disease like this and nothing seemed to stop it. If anything, the disease appeared to target the caregivers of the sick and dying (such as family members and healers), as smallpox is most contagious after the symptoms become obvious and the infected person is bedridden.

## *Storytelling the Pox*

Could characters stop Breeder-of-Pox and the spread of the European diseases in the New World? Maybe, but doubtful. Breeder-of-Pox could be stopped, but she was merely the first to spread smallpox to the Americas. The real history of the spread of smallpox didn't require an agent like Breeder-of-Pox. The spread of smallpox was an unintentional side effect of the European arrival in the New World. Humans, Garou, and any others traveling to the New World could have brought these plagues with them just as easily and spread them even if characters stopped Breeder-of-Pox.

Characters seeking a cure for the European diseases would need to explore both the physical world and Umbra in order to find an elixir or remedy. The Mokolé have long been the caretakers of many of Gaia's secrets and may have some clues to developing a cure, but they would be loath to reveal those secrets to unknown Fera. Enterprising Camazotz

or Corax spies might be able to steal the information from the secretive Mokolé. Any journey to find the ingredients for a cure would require forays into unexplored and dangerous regions of the Amazon Basin and the Deep Umbra.

Regardless of the nature of the treatment the characters discover, the greatest struggle will be to disseminate that cure throughout Mesoamerica and to a variety of untrusting Fera, Kinfolk, and native humans. Moving from caern to caern via Moon Bridge is the obvious way to share any cure as quickly as possible, but since one group of Fera are unlikely to trust any of the other Changing Breeds, they would be reluctant to open their caerns to strangers. Access to caerns would allow the characters the chance to get ahead of the spread of the European diseases, enabling them to save some of the native human population.

If the characters are successful in locating and sharing a cure or vaccine to the European plagues, that will certainly turn the odds in favor of the native shapeshifters. The greatest advantage the indigenous population has is their numbers, and smallpox and the other diseases greatly reduce those numbers, allowing both the Spanish conquistadors and the Garou to conquer the human empires with only small numbers of troops backed by native allies.

Stopping the spread of the diseases in the New World will not be enough to stop the werewolves from coming to the New World or waging their genocidal war against the Mesoamerican Changing Breeds, but it would be a step in the right direction. The werewolves and the Spanish are limited in how many warriors they can bring to the New World by the number of ships that arrive. More living humans and Kinfolk mean that the Spanish and Garou have an increasingly difficult time subduing the native populations and fighting the indigenous Fera.

Wherever the Europeans traveled these diseases preceded them, brought by Ratkin, merchants along trade routes, and indigenous Fera who did not notice the sickness. The results were catastrophic. Entire villages were wiped out, and as their populations dwindled the great empires suffered and were unable to raise or feed armies. The tribute systems that powered the economies of the empires fell apart, and trade ground to a halt.

As their Kinfolk populations declined, the Fera at first blamed each other. The Ananasi, who drank blood, and the Camazotz, who practiced blood rituals, made easy scapegoats. As the European plagues ravaged their villages, the Fera ceased blaming each other and sought to protect their Kin. The Balam and Mokolé attempted to sequester their Kinfolk in villages far from the infection, but no one was safe. The rapid spread of the disease among their human Kinfolk horrified the Ananasi and, worse yet, they discovered that even if a werespider could not suffer from the disease

she could infect others with it when she consumed their blood. The Nagah hoped to stem the spread of the diseases by murdering outsiders who trespassed in their Kinfolk's villages. The Fera tried any and every method, but nothing could stop the spread of the European diseases.

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## Unfilled Promises of the Pure Lands

After his first voyage, Columbus returned certain that he had sailed to the Orient and located the farthest reaches of Asia, but by his final voyage, he suspected that he had found a new continent. Excited sailors returned to Europe with stories of an earthly paradise filled with untapped treasures. The stories grew with each telling until the New World was a rejuvenated Garden of Eden. Intent on colonizing the newly-discovered islands and continent, the Spanish crown enticed their subjects to travel to the New World by instituting the *encomienda*, which granted a tribute of indigenous labor to each worthy conqueror, explorer, or settler. Soon, ships carried hundreds of excited colonists to New Spain to take advantage of opportunities not available in Europe, access to vast, untouched tracks of land, and a huge pool of free labor guaranteed by the *encomienda*. Although Queen Isabella of Spain had declared that the native populations were not slaves, the difference between the *encomienda* and slavery was purely semantic. The Spanish settlers brutally enforced the *encomienda*, forcing the natives to labor in mines and on sugar plantations. Natives who refused to work faced torture, death, and dismemberment.

Despite the growing excitement over the discovery of the Americas, few Garou traveled to the New World. Those who did make the journey returned with tales of vast lands still untouched by the Weaver or the Wyrms. Beguiled by the beauty of the New World, some werewolves disappeared into the jungles, certain that they were returning to Gaia's arms. Those who chose to return to Europe claimed that no matter where they traveled, they found no sign of Wyrms-taint.

Song-of-the-Western-Peaks, a Shadow Lord Theurge, was one of the first Garou to make what he later called "a pilgrimage to the Unspoiled Lands." Fleeing a rising Tzimisce population and the invading Ottoman Empire, Song-of-the-Western-Peaks' pack and other packs in Eastern Europe struck out to the west. Essentially homeless, Song traveled across Europe and observed the squabbles among septs and packs over scraps of territory. He watched undeserving Silver Fangs who had never proven themselves in battle be promoted over worthy Shadow Lords, City Warders, and Children of Gaia. Song felt despair as the elders of all tribes denied young werewolves any chance at glory. Unless new

territories could be discovered, all Garou would continue to languish under the Silver Fangs' repressive regime.

Sickened and depressed, Song-of-the-Western-Peaks boarded a ship to the newly-discovered lands across the sea with no plans to return to Europe. When he arrived on the island of Hispaniola in the summer of 1500, the unblemished glory of Gaia changed his heart. For two years, he explored the island and even took voyages with humans to the continent, communing with the purest essence of the Wyld. Inspired by his visions of Gaia at her most beautiful, Song-of-the-Western-Peaks believed that these lands were the last vestiges of the untouched Wyld left on Earth and that they must be protected from the Wyrms, the Weaver, and the humans who polluted Gaia and destroyed the forests of Europe. The native humans he found were weak and primitive compared to the Europeans, and they lacked the knowledge to smelt iron or craft steel weapons. More importantly, he found no sign of the Wyrms and no Banes except what the settlers brought with them. He called it Gaia's final gift.

## *The Promise*

With a renewed sense of purpose Song-of-the-Western-Peaks returned to Europe determined to convince the Garou that they must travel to these distant lands, establish caerns, and protect the Wyld before the humans settled it and brought their corruption. Despite his revelation, Song was still a Shadow Lord and shrewd. During his return voyage, he crafted a careful argument to appeal to his own tribe and those tribes that the Silver Fangs and their allies had oppressed. Although he called upon his tribe to protect the Wyld, he also emphasized the opportunities of the New World with its unexplored and unclaimed lands, freedom from the Old World hierarchy, and chances to gain renown.

The Shadow Lord elders listened with rapt attention as Song argued his case. With their own territory threatened and these new lands available, Song found the perfect confluence of circumstances and the elders agreed, but with one caveat. The Shadow Lords alone would shoulder the entire burden of exploring and claiming these new territories, and they sent Song to build a coalition of Shadow Lords packs and septs willing to journey to the New World. He traveled across Europe, North Africa, and into Asia via Moon Bridge. At each caern he spoke to the elders, explaining the importance of protecting this new frontier and the glory of the Wyld, but his real audience was the young werewolves. He understood that many Cliath and Fostern chafed under the strict hierarchies imposed by their elders and were desperate to prove themselves. Song's Promise of the Pure Lands called to their desire to break free of their elders' reins and claim territories of their own.

Not every sept or pack was receptive to his arguments, known as the Promise of the Pure Lands or the Pure Lands Rhetoric among his audiences—so named because he referred to the New World as a “pure and vast world, a land where a Garou could prove herself.” Realizing that the Shadow Lords alone would not be enough to protect the Pure Lands, Song ignored the decree of his elders and shared his vision of the New World with all the tribes. Song's stories of the Pure Lands were most popular among the Shadow Lords, who listened to their Theurge with rapt attention, but other tribes—especially the Get of Fenris, Bone Gnawers, and Children of Gaia—were captivated as well. The Red Talons promised their support but only after the Shadow Lords established caerns, as they refused to cross the ocean on the humans' ships.

Song-of-the-Western-Peaks' speeches inspired dozens of werewolves to risk the long ocean voyage to the New World and excited the imaginations of hundreds more, who were fearful of the journey but would come later when the Moon Bridges opened. Shadow Lord scholars recorded several of Song's speeches for posterity, and the tribe still celebrates his leadership and vision of the New World's opportunities. Revisionist Garou historians, however, have noted that—similar to the Spanish Crown's *encomienda*—Song-of-the-Western-Peaks and his speeches were just as responsible for the atrocities of the Second War of Rage as the Garou who ripped the throats from “Wyrms-tainted” natives.

## *Storytelling the Promise*

The journey and speeches of Song-of-the-Western-Peaks represent another tipping point in the werewolves' conquest of the New World. Although Song was the first and most famous of the Garou who preached the Pure Lands Rhetoric, he was not the only one. Other Garou also encouraged the tribes to cross the sea. Players interested in changing the events of the War of Rage may see opportunities to either help or hinder the efforts of Song and the Galliards who spread his message. Characters who meet Song find him to be sincere in his motives and an eloquent and impassioned speaker. He believes that as Gaia's protectors the Garou must travel across the ocean and protect the Pure Lands from the machinations of the Weaver and the Wyrms.

Characters may believe that assassinating Song-of-the-Western-Peaks would reduce the number of Garou willing to journey to the New World, but that is a mistake. The conditions in Europe and the opportunities available in the New World would have driven many werewolves to the shores of the Americas regardless of Song's speeches. Song's achievement was that he was able to forge a coalition of the repressed and give them a purpose. Assassinating Song would only mean that another werewolf with similar ideas would have had similar results. Clever characters may realize that a better strategy

would be to encourage Silver Fang elders to assassinate Song and create a rift and potential war among the tribes of Europe. Assassinating Song and blaming his death on the Silver Fangs or another tribe would provoke a similar reaction.

Characters intent on changing history should find it impossible to stop all Garou from traveling to the New World, but reducing their numbers by killing Song or discrediting him would be the first step. Fewer Garou in the New World means that the indigenous Fera would have fewer enemies to fight and, more significantly, that the werewolves who do arrive in the New World would face a formidable task in establishing the caerns necessary to open Moon Bridges to Europe.

Conversely, characters may find themselves assisting Song-of-the-Western-Peaks and sharing his message in the caerns of Europe, Russia, and the near East. They face a formidable challenge in convincing tribal elders and the leaders of septs and packs of the importance of the new continent. Silver Fangs and conservative tribal elders are the most likely to oppose characters who spread Song's message, but characters can expect to find a receptive audience among the youngest members of a sept. If agents of the Wyrms or other groups have assassinated Song, characters may have to act as substitutes. In that case, the players will struggle to craft arguments that appeal to werewolves of Europe, especially the Shadow Lords, who are instrumental in the success of the Garou in the New World. The Shadow Lord elders would be unlikely to listen to anyone but members of their own tribe and, as Song realized, they would need practical reasons to support any ventures into the New World.

Whatever the characters' intent when they encounter Song-of-the-Western-Peaks, he was an inspiring and enthusiastic speaker who believes in the righteousness of his cause and in the importance of defending Gaia. Even contemporary Garou who opposed his views spoke highly of his rhetoric and love for Gaia.

## *Those Who Crossed the Sea*

The discovery of the Pure Lands spread rapidly amongst the werewolves of Europe, with many sharing Song-of-the-Western-Peaks' tales of the land across the sea. They implored their packmates to leave behind their territories and travel to New Spain to defend it from the Wyrms. Not every Garou was enticed by the promises of the Shadow Lords and most Garou remained at home. However, those who did sail to the New World had a variety of reasons for risking the journey.

### *Black Furies*

Forever the protectors of the Wyld and women, the Black Furies were hesitant to leave behind the regions they had guarded for centuries. The Children of the Pegasus

were skeptical of the Shadow Lords' promises of an idyllic land beyond the sea, untouched by the Weaver or Wyrms. Those Furies who risked the journey were appalled at the Europeans' treatment of the indigenous women. None of them were prepared for the kidnappings, rapes, and beatings they witnessed. Once the first caerns were established in the New World, more Black Furies arrived, but they were helpless in the face of the depredations of the colonists and the bloodlust of the conquistadors.

### *Bone Gnawers*

Prior to the establishment of the first European caerns in Mesoamerica, the Bone Gnawers were the second most numerous European tribe in the New World. Like the human settlers who risked their lives traveling across the ocean, the Bone Gnawers hoped to find new opportunities in the New World. However, they found the same deplorable conditions that existed in the European cities they had left behind. The Spanish colonists enslaved the native populations and put them to work in fields and mines. Though it was a new world, the Bone Gnawers found the same problems.

### *Children of Gaia*

More so than any other tribe, the Children of Gaia believed that the Pure Lands were a final gift from Gaia to buoy her defenders in the war against the Wyrms. Countless Children of Gaia traveled by ship and, once the Garou were able to wrest caerns away from the native Changing Breeds, more came via Moon Bridges. The Pure Lands were not the paradise that Song had promised; instead, they found strange shapeshifters, enormous human cities, and Wyrms-spawned Banes. Their response to the reality of the New World was to fight more savagely than any Red Talon to cleanse those lands of taint.

### *City Warders*

The defining event of the 15th century for the City Warders was not Columbus' journey to the west, but the fall of Constantinople and the rise of the Ottoman Empire. The loss of Constantinople shocked the Warders, who feared that the fall of that great city would mean a return to the Dark Ages. They had no interest in risking a long journey to slog through swamps and jungles and live in huts. Once stories about the enormous cities of the New World made their way back to the Europe, the Warders could no longer contain their curiosity, and many traveled to the Pure Lands over the newly-established Moon Bridges to explore these fabled cities. Unfortunately, they arrived too late. The native civilizations had already collapsed under the onslaught of the conquistadors.

### *Fianna*

The Shadow Lords' tales of an unconquered new continent reached even the Fianna of the British Isles who

could not resist the lure of adventure in an uncharted land. Although most remained in their home ranges, many young Fianna left behind sept and Kin to explore the jungles and mountains of Central and South America. They traveled far and wide, learning native languages and collecting indigenous stories. Once hostilities turned into open war between the Garou and indigenous Fera, the Fianna wrote new stories of their fierce battles against shapeshifting agents of the Wyrms.

### *Get of Fenris*

The Get of Fenris bided their time. Although the rhetoric of the Shadow Lords swayed many, few risked the journey by ship. The elders of the tribe waited until the Shadow Lords could establish caerns in these new territories before they would consent to the Shadow Lords' request for assistance. When Moon Bridges between Europe and the Pure Lands opened, the Get of Fenris were the first to arrive, howling for the blood of Wym-tainted creatures who despoiled the Pure Lands. Their war packs spread across Mesoamerica, hunting the indigenous Fera and conquering territory in the name of Gaia and Fenris.

### *Red Talons*

As a tribe of exclusively lupus Garou, the Red Talons were not comfortable with traveling by ship; thus, very few Red Talons attempted the ocean voyage to the Pure Lands. Those who did had to fight the urge to slaughter the ship's

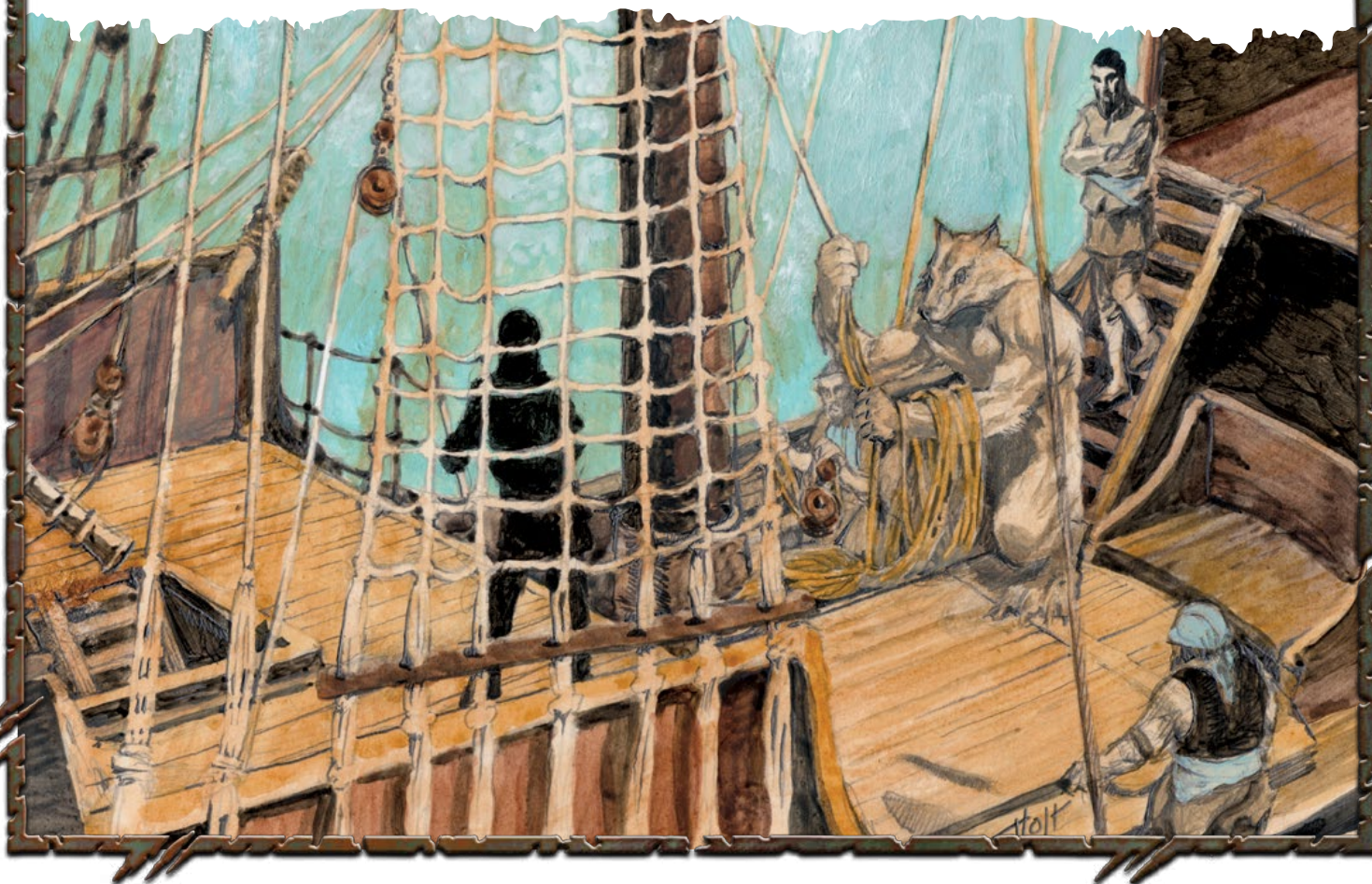
crew when claustrophobia and the scent of decay overwhelmed them. They never believed the promises that the Pure Lands were a paradise, but a land where humans lacked both steel and gunpowder weapons appealed to those Red Talons who wished to restore the Impergium. The Red Talons had some initial success dominating the indigenous populations, but by the time they arrived in sufficient number, the Spanish were already arriving en masse to settle the New World. The Talons found no reprieve in New Spain from the technology of men.

### *Shadow Lords*

While the cynics may believe that Shadow Lords manipulated the other tribes to travel to the New World and carve out new territories for the Shadow Lords to claim, the truth is that more Shadow Lords traveled to the New World than any other tribe. They led the first packs that arrived, founded the first caerns, and fought in nearly every battle against the Wym-tainted beasts that threatened the Pure Lands. Their Galliards traveled across Europe, explaining to any who would listen about the importance of protecting this New World. Of course, the Shadow Lords had ulterior motives as well. The Pure Lands represented an opportunity for the Shadow Lords to escape the oppressive regime of the Silver Fangs and establish their own domains.

### *Silent Striders*

With all the opportunities to explore a new continent, many expected that the Silent Striders would have been among



the first to arrive in the Pure Lands, but only a handful made the journey. Those Striders who did visit the lands across the sea rarely took part in the conquest of the native humans and Fera. Instead, they followed the paths of the Spanish explorers into the American Southwest, or they joined the expeditions of Ponce de León and de Soto, who explored what would become Florida and the southeastern United States. These trailblazing Garou were the first to encounter the native werewolf tribes on their home turf, as well as North American Fera such as the Nuwisha and Gurahl.

## *Silver Fangs*

Despite an edict from their king forbidding members of the tribe from traveling to the New World, other werewolves still felt their presence. Each Shadow Lord who set forth to conquer the Pure Lands was one less potential rebel in Europe, but the Silver Fangs couldn't ignore the wealth of the New World. Rather than risking themselves and their territories in Europe and Asia, the Silver Fangs sent their Hapsburg Kinfolk to govern the lands claimed by the Spanish and Portuguese. As the Shadow Lords exhausted themselves in their battles against the indigenous shapeshifters, the Silver Fangs increased their wealth and territory through shrewd maneuvering.

## *Stargazers*

Perhaps some Stargazers did travel to the New World aboard the conquistadors' ships, but most remained in their home territories. Their geographic and cultural distance from the European tribes meant that the Stargazers were never tempted by the Shadow Lords' Pure Lands rhetoric. When they discovered that the corruption of the Bat totem had rendered the werebats of the Beast Courts sterile, some Stargazers journeyed via Moon Bridge to the New World to seek clues. As the last to arrive in the New World, they were shocked at the brutality of the war the Garou were waging against the indigenous Fera and humans, but their own Rage prevented them from trying to broker peace.

## *Incoming Creatures*

The Garou were not the only supernatural creatures who traveled to Mesoamerica during the Age of Discovery. The supposedly unclaimed territories of New Spain drew all manner of Changing Breeds. Some, like the Ratkin and Garou, hid among the colonists with the hope of exploring new lands. Others did not appear in any number until the Spanish began importing slaves to replace the indigenous populations that had died from disease and war.

## *Ananasi*

No one is sure how many werespiders came from Europe to the New World, just as no one knows how many Ananasi were living in the New World prior to the Columbus'

arrival. Hidden in the corners of cargo holds and concealed in crates, the Ananasi of the Old World slipped invisibly into the New World, overlooked by the Garou who fought against the fears and horrors they brought with them. The children of Queen Ananasa were not surprised to find their kin already living amongst the cities of the Aztec, Maya, and Inca. Other than a few early misunderstandings, the Ananasi avoided internal conflicts while the other shapeshifters fought endlessly amongst themselves.

## *Bastet*

The werecats indigenous to Africa and Asia did not begin arriving in the New World en masse until after the Europeans began importing slaves to work in the silver mines of Peru and the sugar cane fields of Hispaniola. The rumors of the New World, however, drew individual Bastet to its shores as soon as word spread among them. Curious Ceilican were the first werecats to cross the ocean, but Bubasti, and even one or two Simba and Swara, risked the journey to New Spain. Early encounters between Old World werecats and the Balam were almost as likely to end in violence as those between werewolves and Bastet.

## *Corax*

The Corax were the only breed of Fera who kept in contact with their cousins across the Atlantic. Ease of travel is one of the greatest benefits of having wings, after all. Even before the wereravens accompanied the Vikings on their trips from Scandinavia to Greenland, Iceland, and Newfoundland, a few adventurous Corax had flown to the New World. When Columbus returned from his trip to the Caribbean, the Corax listened excitedly and some joined crews on later voyages or just sat upon the masts, stealing food as the humans sailed across the Atlantic. Corax and their raven Kinfolk were never numerous in Central and South America, but curiosity drove them to explore the New World, and pushed them into competition with the native Camazotz.

## *Gurahl*

Like the rest of the Changing Breeds, the untouched territories of New Spain enticed young and adventurous werebears to venture across the dangerous Atlantic to explore a new continent. Nothing could have prepared them for the genocidal war they found in the jungles of Central America. Some Gurahl joined with the indigenous Fera, offering their assistance in the war against the werewolves. Others retreated north, fleeing the battles, and discovered their North American cousins in the redwood forests of California.

## *Mokolé*

African weresaurians did not begin arriving in the New Spain until after 1550, when the Spanish began enslaving

their Kinfolk to replace the indigenous population lost to disease, war, and the horrific working conditions. The Second War of Rage was already in full swing, and the Mokolé could only weep as the events of history replayed themselves. Together with the indigenous Mokolé, the new arrivals assisted the Camazotz who fled the teeth and claws of the marauding werewolves. Saving a few individuals was not enough, however, when Bat fell to the Wyrms, and the Mokolé retreated to their wallows and wept at their futility in the face of the Garou's brutality.

## *Nagah*

Did the Nagah of South Asia and Africa surreptitiously travel to the New World, hiding among the settlers and treasure seekers aboard Spanish and Portuguese ships, to join the indigenous Nagah in their war against the invading werewolves? Countless shapeshifters on both sides of the conflict disappeared in the jungles and swamps, never to return. The Nagah could have taken advantage of the chaos and confusion of the Second War of Rage to remove the most destructive and dangerous Garou. If that were the case, someone would have noticed these dangerous assassins in the New World, surely?

## *Ratkin*

For every Garou who journeyed to the New World, a dozen wererats went with them. Breeder-of-Pox was the first, but countless more followed. Wherever the Europeans landed they brought the Ratkin's black and brown Kinfolk, introducing one of the most successful invasive species to the New World. They interbred with native rodents who had no Ratkin of their own, spreading their Kinfolk into new species. As such, they quickly and quietly claimed territory throughout Mesoamerica and undermined the efforts of the Garou to establish their own claims. The Ratkin were likely the only group that could claim victory during the Second War of Rage, having ignored both sides in order to prosper.

## *Vampires*

Expecting a land free of the influence of the Wyrms and its spawn, nothing could have surprised the Garou more than the discovery that vampires already inhabited the New World. Most Garou believed that vampires were new arrivals, but offshoots of several vampire clans had lived amongst the indigenous groups for centuries. Like some European leeches, the vampires of the New World could change shape. Rather than assuming the form of a wolf, they changed into jaguars — adding further proof that the shapeshifters of Mesoamerica were Wym-tainted. European vampires, on the other hand, had little interest in risking their accursed unlives on a six-week sea voyage just to arrive in a tiny colony with barely enough mortals to feed their nightly hunger. As Spanish and Portuguese colonies grew in size, some vampires

did travel to the New World to establish domains of their own, but by the time their numbers were enough to worry the Garou, the war between the shapeshifters was long over.

## *Mages*

Mages — with their access to reality-altering magicks and their inclination to explore beyond the edges of the map — traveled from Europe to the Americas with an ease that not even modern airplanes can replicate. As the conquistadors sketched in the blank spaces on their maps, Old World mages followed, seeking the lore of Aztec and Incan mystics. Practitioners of shamanistic magicks, grouped together as Dream-speakers by Old World mages who encountered them, had long resided in Mesoamerica but now had to compete with incoming mystics. Relations between indigenous mages and Fera were never friendly. Both competed over sites from which mages siphoned quintessence for their magicks and that the Fera required to create caerns. Despite that, alliances — or at least pacts of mutual respect between the two groups — were not uncommon, especially after fighting broke out.

## *Shock Introduction*

The Shadow Lords who arrived from Europe did not leave behind their war against the Tzimisce and Gangrel vampires who infested their homelands in Eastern Europe. The leeches were ubiquitous in the towns and keeps of Europe, and Shadow Lords who heard the Pure Lands Rhetoric did not expect to find any signs of the Wyrms — much less shapechanging, batlike creatures. Although Galliards still told tales of the First War of Rage to provide warning of the consequences of Garou pride, they no longer mentioned the Camazotz. The European Garou's legends conflated the werebats with the more familiar vampires. Unlike the Bastet and Mokolé, whom the Garou encountered infrequently in their travels, the Camazotz had disappeared even from the myths and legends of the Garou.

Ignorance of the Camazotz and the other Changing Breeds, however, was only a small part of the misunderstandings that led to the Second War of Rage. The Garou who traveled to the New World expected to find a pristine wilderness uninhabited except for small tribes of primitive humans. Song-of-the-Western-Peaks promised that New Spain would be a paradise: no Wym-taint, no vampires, and certainly no other shapeshifters. Recently arrived Garou originally assumed that the creatures they encountered were vampires who, like the parasitic bastards they were, had secreted themselves aboard the humans' ships intent on despoiling the Pure Lands. As the Garou followed the human explorers further inland, they began to discover

traces of Wyrmtaint. Enraged that someone or something had desecrated the Pure Lands, they blamed the humans, the indigenous Fera, and sometimes each other.

The indigenous shapeshifters were not innocent either. Existing rivalries among the Camazotz, Balam, Nagah, and Mokolé exacerbated the Garou's misunderstandings. Each breed hoped to turn the werewolves against their rivals, and the werewolves lashed out violently at any creature they believed could be Wyrmtainted. Although some Garou were familiar with the African and Asian breeds of Bastet, few had actually encountered any werewolves. The appearance of strange shapeshifters—especially the Ananasi, Camazotz, Mokolé, and Nagah, who were nothing more than myths and legends to the European Garou—caused most of the newly-arrived Garou to assume they were another variety of beast tainted by the Wyrms.

The Balam were the first to learn this lesson. Through Kinfolk allies, the werejaguars spread rumors about a hive of Wyrmtainted creatures that could transform into bats and practiced bloody rituals even in the light of the sun. Upon hearing the werejaguars' tales of Wyrmtainted creatures in the Pure Lands, the Garou's fury could barely be contained, and they demanded that the werejaguar Kinfolk lead them to the "death bats" hives. Turning the werewolves' fury against their adversaries seemed like an obvious solution. If all went as planned the Camazotz and invading Garou would slaughter each other. The Balam smiled with pride at their own cunning when, on the following day, they found the ruins of the werewolves' colonies and the gutted corpses of bats and people decaying in the sun.

The werewolves' fury was not easy as easy to direct as the werejaguars' thought. The Garou soon began attacking the indigenous shapeshifters indiscriminately. Ragabash spies reported evidence of Wyrmtaint among other Fera, their imaginations—and fears—stoked by observing the werewolves' blood rituals. The pack alphas were certain that the Wyrms had created its own shapeshifting servants. What did it matter if a Wyrmtainted monster turned into a bat, a snake, a spider, or a big cat? The Garou had to protect the Wyld from the corruption that these horrifying monsters could spread throughout the pristine New World. The werewolves quickly formed war packs and sent messages back to their European septa that the Wyrms threatened the Pure Lands.

The indigenous Fera were horrified at the Garou's fury and their wholesale slaughter of any native shapeshifter. The Nagah and Mokolé struck back first, attacking Spanish encampments in which the Garou sheltered. The inhabitants of small European settlements noticed an increase in the number of spiders—and missing persons. The Balam had no trouble stalking the unique tracks of wolves through the jungles. Bats large enough to eclipse the moon hunted the night skies for any sign of the Garou while snake bites became a leading cause of death among the colonists.

## Storytelling the First Meetings

Can characters clear up the Garou's misunderstanding of the indigenous shapeshifters, mitigate the damage of the rivalries that fractured the indigenous Fera, or build a coalition of native Fera to oppose the werewolves in the early stages of the European conquest of the New World? The Garou's own preconceptions about the state of the Pure Lands are the first obstacles to any diplomatic efforts between the Garou and indigenous shapeshifters. The Garou have rarely encountered Fera since the War of Rage, and European werewolves believe the Camazotz, Mokolé, and Nagah are all extinct. The Garou's own pride blinds them to the fact that Gaia's other creations still exist to protect the Wyld. The Pure Lands Rhetoric only added fuel to the burning hatred the Garou already felt for the other Changing Breeds.

Just as the Garou competed for resources and territory in Europe, the indigenous Fera fought each other as well and harbored deep animosities. Their rivalries are not going to be overcome with just a few words or a handful of minor deeds. Characters hoping to build an alliance between the rival groups may find swift rebukes before they can even state their case. A mixed group of Fera with indisputable proof of the dangers the arriving Garou pose have the best chance of success, but the indigenous Changing Breeds will expect great deeds and unmistakable portents to herald any decision to change their opinions or ally with ancient rivals.

Characters hoping to sow discord between the indigenous Changing Breeds and the invading Garou need not do much. The Garou naturally distrust the strange shapeshifters of the New World as few werewolves—other than the members of the Stargazers or Silent Striders tribes—would have encountered Bastet or the other Fera. Because very few werewolves arrive in the New World initially, the indigenous Fera are more curious than wary. The Mokolé remember the first War of Rage vividly and avoid the foreign shapeshifters, but other groups, the Camazotz in particular, watch from afar and make their presence known if they can do so without incurring the wrath of the Garou. Goading the Garou into attacking the native Fera would take only a few words or the flimsiest of evidence that these creatures are indeed Wyrmtainted, and the shapeshifters of Mesoamerica provide enough proof of that already.

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## The Conquerors

When Hernán Cortés landed on the coast of modern-day Mexico in 1519, his first objective was to conquer Veracruz and have himself named magistrate of the new city. The governor

of Hispaniola, Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar, had ordered Cortés and his crew to explore Mexico, map its land, and identify sites for future colonies, but Cortés, ever the opportunist, disobeyed de Cuéllar and assaulted Veracruz with his force of 300 men. Once the city was subdued, Cortés brokered an alliance with the conquered inhabitants of Veracruz against the Aztec Empire, adding hundreds of indigenous warriors to his expedition. Unaware of the alliance between Cortés and Veracruz, messengers from Moctezuma II, the ruler of the Aztec Empire, arrived with gifts of gold and words of welcome. Sensing an opportunity for greater wealth and fame, Cortés' expedition set out for the Aztec capitol of Tenochtitlan intent to capture the source of Aztec gold.

As Cortés marched toward Tenochtitlan, his army grew into an enormous force consisting of thousands of indigenous peoples from the territories that the Aztecs had conquered. Cortés and his troops reached the gates of Tenochtitlan, and Moctezuma II — believing that Cortés was an incarnation of the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl — invited the conquistador into the city. When messages of Aztec reprisals against Spanish troops reached Cortés, he took the Aztec emperor hostage, intending to rule the Aztecs with Moctezuma II as a puppet. Leaving behind a small force to ensure Spanish control of the city, Cortés marched east with the bulk of his forces, intent on crushing the rebellion. Cortés returned to Tenochtitlan to find the city in revolt and his forces retreating from enraged citizens who had stoned the puppet emperor to death. Cortés fled Tenochtitlan but during his retreat he gathered allies from the human tribes who despised Aztec rule. After eight months of fighting through the jungles of Mexico, Cortés returned to Tenochtitlan and laid siege to the city. Disease, however, decided the siege more than Spanish tactics or technology as smallpox ran rampant through the city, killing thousands. The siege destroyed the city, and modern-day Mexico City is built on its ruins.

Sensing an opportunity for glory and excited by the prospect of claiming new territories, some Garou joined Cortés' expedition. Cortés' goal of subduing the native population also appealed to them but, like the Aztecs, the werewolves traveling with Cortés had little interest in gold. The Garou had their own plans of conquest. Already rumors of strange shapeshifters and a new bat-like Wyrn minion, reminiscent of a vampire, had spread among the Garou. The Shadow Lords, who had promised the New World was free of Banes and Wyrn-taint, denied these tales initially, but as evidence mounted they could no longer deny the truth, and called for the werewolves of the New World to mount their own campaign against the "death bats."

Surprisingly, the Garou found allies of their own in the jungles of Central America. The werejaguars happily reinforced the ignorance of the Garou, claiming that the Camazotz were Wyrn-tainted and offered the Xibalan —

corrupted Camazotz — as evidence. The Balam realized quickly that they had started a genocide, as the Garou began attacking not only Camazotz colonies in the caves and decrepit Mayan temples, but also the wallows of the Mokolé — and any Balam they found.

The ferocity, anger, and hatred that the Garou exhibited terrified the Camazotz. Unlike the other Fera, the werebats could never reason with the werewolves, who attacked Camazotz on sight. The Camazotz retaliated when and where they could, leading Nagah assassins against the leaders of the Garou, but more and more werewolves crossed the sea. By the time the Balam realized their error in trusting the Garou, the tide of battle was already turning and groups of werewolves were attempting to establish caerns.

Using the terrain to their advantage, the indigenous Fera led the werewolves into ambushes or the lairs of vicious Mokolé, and for a short time the Mesoamerican Changing Breeds were able to stymie the Garou. Then, catastrophe struck. The Garou had captured Camazotz previously, but they had been unable to coax information from captive werebats. The werewolves tortured dozens of Camazotz warriors trying to extract the location of werebat colonies and caerns. Most captured werebats lied, but eventually one Camazotz, whose name is lost to history, broke and led the Garou to her colony.

The werebats had hoarded many secrets — including the locations of Balam and Ananasi caerns not to mention their own colonies — and the Garou turned those secrets against the werebats and other indigenous Fera. Outmatched and with the locations of their caerns and colonies no longer secret, hundreds died under the werewolves' teeth, claws, and klaives. The slaughter seemed endless, and when the Garou established their first caern in the New World, the ease of travel meant that dozens of packs could cross the sea to wage war against the Mesoamerican Changing Breeds.

## *The Caern of Gaia's Rebirth*

A journey across the Atlantic Ocean in the 16th century was a harrowing experience even for veteran sailors. The ships — carracks, caravels, and galleons — were small by modern standards and stuffed with fresh water, food, livestock, and supplies for the recently-established colonies. Captains gave priority to carrying a few more barrels of water or another crate of food over the comfort of their crews. Storms were always a danger, but calm days were even worse. Every day without wind meant another day added to the journey, and without any ports between the Canary Islands and the Bahamas, too many calm days meant that rations and fresh water might run out, leaving the crew to die of thirst or starvation.

The first Garou to arrive in the New World made the journey on the same ships as the Spanish and Portuguese colonists. Joining a ship's crew or booking passage as a



colonist wasn't difficult for anyone, including a werewolf, but it was not a journey to be taken lightly. Trapped in the claustrophobic confines of a ship for up to two months and accosted by the unfamiliar odors of the sea and the rotting food aboard the ship, a Garou's greatest enemy became her own Rage. Even the hardest werewolves struggled to maintain self-control. How many ships were lost when a Garou hiding amidst the crew gave in to her Rage and massacred all aboard? And when her rage subsided, she realized she was now adrift, with no hope of seeing land again.

Prior to the Shadow Lords' call to journey to the New World, distance had never been an impediment to travel for a Garou. Moon Bridges allowed packs to easily cross Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and even portions of Asia in relative safety. Without a caern of their own, the Garou had no other option but to make the weeks-long journey across the Atlantic by ship. In the beginning few Garou made the journey, but slowly their numbers swelled. Still, the lack of a caern limited the number of Garou who would risk traveling to the distant lands, regardless of the promises made by the Shadow Lords.

Paints-with-Words, the Shadow Lord leading the charge across the sea, understood that founding a caern was the first step in laying claim to the entirety of the New World. However, Paints-with-Words faced countless challenges in establishing a caern capable of opening a Moon Bridge to Europe. Paints-with-Words was not an eloquent speaker, nor was he a mighty Ahroun, but he was a cunning diplomat. He traveled among the disparate Garou packs of Mesoamerica, gathering together Theurges who could enact the Rite of Caern Building and warriors to protect them during the rite. Once the indigenous Fera saw the Garou gathering under the leadership of Paints-with-Words, the native Changing Breeds responded with desperate ferocity. The Ananasi, Balam, Camazotz, Nagah, and Mokolé dedicated themselves to halting the invaders' attempts at establishing a caern. If the Garou succeeded, then the Moon Bridge would open and packs of raging werewolves would pour across in a tidal wave of Rage and claws.

The founding of the Caern of Gaia's Rebirth is the tipping point in the war. Prior to its founding, the native Fera have the advantage and are able to exploit their numbers,

knowledge of the terrain, and their relationships with their Kinfolk and human allies to halt the Garou invasion. The Camazotz act as spies and scouts patrolling the likely places the Garou may try to set up a caern, and spread any knowledge about the werewolves and their movements amongst the others. The werejaguars and even some Mokolé take the fight directly to the Garou, leading ambushes and assaults on Garou strongholds. Even the Rokea contribute, although they don't coordinate with any other group, if only because they jealously protect their caerns located near the shores.

The werewolves are just as determined to establish a caern as the indigenous Fera are to stop them. The Garou's Kinfolk have a technological edge that is an important advantage in the fight against the Mesoamerican Fera, but the werewolves' greatest advantage is that they are better organized and coordinated in their efforts thanks to Paints-with-Words' leadership. Driven by a religious furor that never ebbs, the Garou spread out in packs, scouring the land for possible caern sites. Even though the werewolves are greatly outnumbered and must defend themselves from attacking Wyrms-creatures, their dedication never wavers. Gaia has given the Garou the Pure Lands to protect, and although it is infested with Her enemies, they know that they can cleanse the land of taint and make this the turning point in the war against the Wyrms.

## *Storytelling the Conquest*

The founding of the first European Garou caern offers Storytellers many opportunities to involve characters on either side of the struggle. The actual location of the first Garou caern in Mesoamerica is not as important as its effects on the conflict between the Garou and native Fera. Initially, the Garou attempted to found caerns near the shoreline, in lagoons, or at the mouths of rivers, but the Rokea protected these locations with a single-minded ferocity that horrified even the werewolves. The ferocity of the weresharks' attacks — attacks that were typically attributed to Banes or fomori — pushed the Garou further inland.

European Garou or those supporting the European Garou need to search the swamps, jungles, and mountains of the Yucatan and Central Mexico for an appropriate site for a caern. The unfamiliar and dangerous terrain is only the first obstacle. The Camazotz, Balam, and Nagah were especially effective at ambushing packs of Garou, leading them into the wallows of ancient and territorial Mokolé, or concealing actual caerns while providing trails to false sites.

Two significant problems faced the Garou as they sought to establish a caern and link it to their existing network of spiritual sites in Europe. First, not just any site would do — the power of the caern limits the range of the Moon Bridge, thus only the most potent caerns could open a Moon Bridge that

would reach from Mesoamerica to Europe. In game terms, the Garou must establish a caern of at least Level 4 or 5 in order to open a Moon Bridge with enough range (*W20*, p. 311). Second, the werewolves who journeyed to the New World were not a unified force. They fought amongst themselves almost as much as they fought the indigenous Fera. The Rite of Caern Building requires 13 skilled Theurges to work together while dozens of werewolves protect them from the Banes drawn to the rite like flies to honey. Paints-with-Words' leadership is crucial to the werewolves as they seek a location for a caern and then enact the rite.

Prior to the performance of the ritual, the Garou need to choose a ritemaster to enact the rite. Typically that role would go to the most respected Theurge among the assembled werewolves—but the ritemaster who successfully creates the first caern in the New World will be remembered in ballads sung for centuries to come. Many werewolves fight for the honor, some respecting traditional challenges, a few willing to resort to underhanded methods to become the leading ritemaster. After several unsuccessful attempts to enact the ritual, the number of Garou who know the Rite of Caern Building dwindles. Nagah and Camazotz assassins target werewolves they suspect know the ritual. Characters could be assigned to protect other Garou who know the ritual during the journey to the location of a potential caern and while the rite is being enacted. If a character knows the ritual, the assembled Garou could nominate her as the ritemaster, especially if she is a Shadow Lord.

Another point of contention for the werewolves was choosing the type of caern that they would establish. Both the Shadow Lords' and the Get of Fenris' Theurges fought for the honor of leading the ritual and, in a rare moment of compromise, the two tribes agreed that a Shadow Lord, Chases-Thunder, would lead the ritual if they established a caern to war. The Garou believed that they needed the added strength and ferocity of a war caern to protect the Pure Lands from the infestations of the Wyrms-tainted native Fera. Simply influencing the type of caern selected could change the outcome of the Second War of Rage; if the assembled Garou chose a peaceful caern type, such as a caern of the Wyld, wisdom, or healing, then the very nature of the Garou incursion into the New World may change, losing its ferocity and giving credence to the views of Garou who seek a diplomatic resolution to the war.

Although the creation of the Caern of Gaia's Blessing may seem inevitable, no other event in the Second War of Rage offers more opportunities for characters who want to change history in favor of the indigenous Fera. Only a finite number of Garou in the New World are capable of enacting the Rite of Caern Building, and they are the targets of countless ambushes and raids. The Camazotz were able to identify many of the Garou's Theurges but some, such as Chases-Thunder,

went unnoticed. Identifying these werewolves and eliminating them could postpone the creation of a caern.

In their desperation the indigenous Fera made several questionable decisions by prioritizing the Garou threat above all others. The number of Xibalan increased rapidly, offering greater evidence that the Camazotz were Wyrmtainted. Bane and fomori populations multiplied in response to the suffering of the native population. Banes associated with disease, war, and death found it much easier to materialize and plagued both the Fera and Garou.

Servants of the Wyrms may appear to desperate Fera in their dreams or during a passage through the Umbra to offer characters assistance or information in their battles against the Garou. As their Kinfolk died to disease and they lost ground to the werewolves, many Camazotz and Nagah could not resist the temptation and accepted assistance from the Wyrms. The Wyrms didn't need repayment for these favors as the discord and continuing battle between Gaia's defenders was compensation enough.

## *The Failed Coalition*

Although other Fera had suggested forming a coalition to repel the Garou, Sleeps-Beneath-the-Sand, a young and idealistic Mokol  of the Decorated Sun, was the first to get the squabbling Mesoamerican Changing Breeds to do more than listen. From the safety of his wallow, he had received messages from the Corax and the Camazotz detailing the werewolves' efforts to establish a caern in Central America. Sleeps-Beneath-the-Sand realized the incredible danger that a Garou caern represented, and set out to convince the indigenous Fera to put aside their disagreements and coordinate the defense of their territories. If they failed to form a coalition, then they would fare no better than their ancestors had during the War of Rage.

He spoke to the werejaguars hunting the Garou and Spanish conquistadors in the jungles, and whispered to the werespiders clinging to their webs in abandoned cities. He asked the werabats and the wereravens both to assist him in spreading his call to build an alliance. He walked along the brackish estuaries and swam in lagoons, imploring the Rokea to come onto the land and fight the invaders. He spoke with the Nagah, calling on their long friendship with the weresaurians. Finally, he beseeched his own people in hopes they would join a coalition to defend their wallows.

Centuries of distrust did not disappear just because the Mesoamerican Fera faced a common enemy. Gathering the Fera at the bottom of a sacred cenote, Sleeps-Beneath-the-Sand pleaded with the assembled Fera to put aside their differences. The Balam believed themselves to be the natural leaders of any coalition. They claimed that only their strength and cunning kept the werewolves from conquering

the whole of Mesoamerica. None of the gathered Fera, however, would trust the werejaguars after they had tried to direct the Garou against the werabats. Misunderstandings about the Camazotz' rituals and the blood-drinking Ananasi's nature poisoned attempts at reconciliation with these breeds. When the Nagah elders offered to mediate these disagreements, the gathered Fera rebuked them as well, distrusting the wereserpents that many had never known walked among them. The Corax sat and watched from the edges as the others argued. The weresharks ignored the call and remained beneath the waves.

Eventually, Sleeps-Beneath-the-Sand was able to persuade the bickering Fera that separately they could not defeat the werewolves and that only by combining their forces would they stand a chance. Their alliance was an alliance in name only. Their hatred and distrust for one another tainted the coalition from the very beginning, but the indigenous Fera did have some early successes against the werewolves. The Camazotz and Corax gathered information on the invaders, located their Theurges, and tracked their packs through the jungle. With this information, the Nagah were able to assassinate leaders and powerful Theurges, and the Balam and Mokol  could ambush the werewolves searching for potential caerns.

Even as the coalition celebrated their successes, the competing Fera turned on one another. The Camazotz never forgave the werejaguars for their earlier alliance with the Garou. The Balam, in turn, claimed that all of the werabats owed their victories to the Wyrms. What little trust the Fera had for the Ananasi evaporated when a curious wereraven discovered the lair of one werespider and found the desiccated corpses of Balam and Camazotz Kinfolk. The alliance shattered under the weight of these accusations.

## *Storytelling the Coalition*

Creating a coalition among the Mesoamerican Fera is not difficult. Everyone realizes the danger posed by the creation of a Garou caern in the New World. The difficulty is maintaining the coalition beyond the end of the first meeting. Nobody forgets centuries of animosity just because of the arrival of a new enemy. The Balam, in particular, despise the werespiders and werabats, believing both serve the Wyrms. None of the other Fera are willing to trust the werejaguars after they colluded with the invading werewolves against the Camazotz. Most of the indigenous Fera believe they can only survive by hiding and isolating themselves from the Garou. That strategy worked well enough for their ancestors during the original War of Rage.

The coalition is the best option for defending Mesoamerica from the Garou, but maintaining that alliance will require the players to extinguish a thousand minor arguments before

they can erupt into overt violence. Storytellers should present the characters with a number of moral and ethical dilemmas that force them to choose between preserving the coalition and doing what they know is right. Should the players cover up an Ananasi's murder of Balam Kinfolk to maintain the coalition? After all, isn't drinking blood from humans just the werespiders' nature? If silencing an outspoken and influential critic of the coalition would serve the Fera in their cause, shouldn't the characters make the offender disappear?

In addition to maintaining the alliance, the players' characters can also recruit other Changing Breeds into the war against the werewolves. If the pack can convince the weresharks that the Garou are a threat to sanctity of the oceans, the Rokea would step onto Unsea and provide much-needed warriors in the war against the Garou incursion. Words alone will not convince the weresharks, however. The characters must prove that they understand Sea through their deeds. The Nuwisha stalk the northern borders of the Aztec Empire and would enjoy a chance to "educate" the prideful European Garou. Gurahl protect the great redwood forests of modern-day southern California, and an allegiance with the werewolves would add a calming voice to the Fera's coalition. Even the Uktena and Wendigo could ally with the Mesoamerican Fera against the European tribes if they learn of scale of the genocide occurring to the south. The indigenous Fera may also find new allies among the newly-arrived Changing Breeds from Europe, but can they trust these outsiders any more than the werewolves?

## Fall of the Bat Totem

Any war among the Changing Breeds is also a spiritual war. The effects of the First War of Rage reverberated through the Umbra for millennia after the fighting stopped, and Bat never forgot the murders of its children. Bat had long struggled with its dual nature, having once been associated with the great destroyer aspect of the Wyrms, and the murders of hundreds of werewolves during the Second War of Rage finally shattered Bat's already fractured psyche. Bat's insight and ability to foretell the future are what ultimately doomed it. As its children died under the claws and fangs of the European Garou, Bat saw not only those deaths but foresaw the deaths of all of the Camazotz, including those in Asia and Australia.

The internal struggle tore Bat's psyche apart, and although Camazotz across the world attempted to intercede through prayer and ritual, nothing could stop the totem's fall. The Wyrms whispered poisoned words into its ears, but the Wyrms did not need to lie. It simply told the bitter truth of the coming Apocalypse and the Garou's endless war against the other Fera. The War of Rage would be repeated,

as the prideful Garou believed they were the only warriors that Gaia had tasked with protecting the world.

Once Bat fell to the Wyrms, the Camazotz lost their ability to reproduce because the fallen totem perverted their rituals of creation. The Camazotz tried several times to perform the ritual, most often resulting in the death of the child. Death was the best outcome — sometimes, the ritual would summon gruesome Banes that attacked the ritemaster and the gathered witnesses. Subtle Banes would infect the child and wait patiently until the child matured before transforming her into a terrifying fomor.

After Bat's psyche shatters, characters have very few options available if they wish to preserve the Camazotz. Traveling to Bat's Umbral realms would be incredibly dangerous. Characters would find a fractured landscape of decay and destruction rather than the winding caves that the werewolves describe. The only remaining inhabitants are the Xibalan, come to guide Bat during its inevitable corruption and lead it into the heart of Malfeas. Characters expecting to reason with the totem would only find shards of the once-proud servant of Gaia arguing endlessly with itself, comparing the onrushing slaughter of the Camazotz to the extinctions of the Apis and Grondr in the First War of Rage.

The key to helping Bat retain its sanity is to stop the slaughter of the Camazotz in Central America. Once the population is nearly extinct, Bat will inevitably give in to the Wyrms' corruption, if only to spite the Garou. Attempts could be made to heal Bat's fractured mind in the Umbra, but Bat as a totem is associated with destruction and decay. Bat's ability to see the future, its mindset, and especially its ties to the Wyrms contribute almost as much to its eventual corruption as the destruction of the Mesoamerican Camazotz.

## Colonialism

*Cleaves-the-World watched with pride as blood dripped from his newly-created klaive. The spirits bound to the blade relished every swing and sang out with joy each time he destroyed one of the accursed death bats. The war was nearly over, and the combined strength of the Shadow Lords and lesser tribes had destroyed those terrible Wyrms-tainted creatures. Gaia smiled upon them, granting the Shadow Lords the strength and ferocity to exterminate the werewolves who lived in the caves and abandoned temples of New Spain. Few of the twisted monstrosities remained in the New World, and the Theurges claimed that the death bats had lost the ability to reproduce.*

*The New World offered so many resources beyond what Song-of-the-Western-Peaks had promised. The Spanish colonists were already exploiting the great mountain of silver at Potosi using indigenous miners. Cleaves-the-World's great klaive was crafted from the silver of Potosi's mines. The mountain seemed to have an endless*

supply, and Cleaves could sit for hours watching the indigenous miners pull up enormous carts of silver ore from the mountain's depths. Much of the silver went to the Spanish crown, but his tribe took their part, too. Shadow Lord Theurges crafted new klaives and great hammers from the silver, or the Elders traded the precious metal for favors from their poor cousins across the Atlantic.

The Spanish had begun to solve the labor problems as well. The indigenous humans were weaker than the Europeans and more prone to disease, so the Spanish simply imported slaves from Africa. Strange creatures had come with these new, dark-skinned slaves, but like the death bats, the Shadow Lords and their allies would slaughter those creatures too. Bone Gnawers in the human settlements claimed to have spotted leeches skulking amongst the humans. Many of the problems of Europe had followed the Shadow Lords, but nothing irked Cleaves-the-World as much as the appearance of the Silver Fangs. He spat in disgust at the very thought of the late-arriving aristocracy coming to claim his hard-won spoils.

## Triumph

The discoveries of vast quantities of silver in the mountains of Peru led to the systematic exploitation and destruction of the indigenous populations of South America. The Spanish colonial government enslaved thousands of indigenous people and forced them to mine the silver from Cerro Rico, "Rich Mountain." Silver was so plentiful, in fact, that the Spanish built the city of Potosí nearby, where slaves extracted the silver from the ore and smelted it into ingots to be transported back to Europe. The conditions in the mines were nothing short of horrific, with thousands dying yearly from starvation, exhaustion, and disease. The process of smelting the silver ore produced many toxins that drew early Banes of pollution to Potosí.

Due to the apocalyptically-swift decline in the indigenous population, the Spanish began to import slaves from Africa starting in 1608. Thousands of African slaves were brought to New Spain during this time period, but Potosí was not the only destination. Large numbers of slaves were required to work the plantations on the island of Hispaniola because its indigenous populations also died from disease and overwork.

The introduction of African slaves into the New World brought over African shapeshifters and their Kinfolk, adding a new dimension to the conflicts still brewing in the Spanish colonies. The African shapeshifters were never numerous, because the journey aboard the slave ships was far too perilous. While some Bastet claim that it was curiosity that brought them to New Spain, the truth is that competing tribes often sold the captured Kinfolk of their enemies to European slavers. The conditions onboard the slave ships were deplorable. Slaves starved or died of disease during the journey, and the crews put down any rebellions aboard the ship with swift violence and executed the leaders of those revolts.

Some unfortunate African Bastet awoke in shackles aboard a slave ship after a rival captured them and sold them to European slavers. The wisest werewolves bided their time, waiting until the slavers brought them ashore before inciting rebellions against their captors; far more gave in to their Rage, spilling the blood of slave and slaver alike. A handful acted as impetus for the slaves to revolt, seizing control of their ships. Other African and European Fera who could tolerate the long sea voyages hired on with the captains of ships that plied the Atlantic slave trade. The atrocities committed during the slave trade still haunt the relationships between the Changing Breeds of the Americas and Africa, and many modern Fera who inhabit Mesoamerica carry the shame of ancestors who sold their cousins into slavery.

The Shadow Lords and the conquistadors had grown accustomed to being overlooked by the Europeans as they explored the new continent and subjugated its peoples, but with a literal mountain of wealth to plunder the Spanish crown took a closer interest in the administration of New Spain. The Silver Fangs had watched from afar also, seeing their rivals gain wealth and glory through their conquest of the New World and the exploitation of its wealth. The strength of the Shadow Lords was stretched between their new territories in the Americas and their homes in Eastern Europe. The Silver Fangs, on the other hand, understood that most of the wealth of New Spain would belong to the kingdoms of Europe. The Shadow Lords fought and bled for the land, and the Silver Fangs simply waited in Europe for the ships to bring the gold and silver to their royal Kinfolk.

For the werewolves, wealth was not an end unto itself, but access to silver meant that the Garou could craft klaives and other weapons. Potosí and the other mines of the New World were producing so much silver that the Shadow Lords thought it would never dry up, and they traded their finely-crafted fetishes for favors from other tribes. At no other time were so many new klaives available to Garou of any rank. Grandfather Thunder's chosen soon learned two hard lessons of economics: First, the increased availability of new fetish weapons diminished their value; second, the mines of Potosí only held a finite amount of silver. By the time of the American Revolution, the Shadow Lords had lost much of their control over New Spain and had traded away the silver and fetishes — leaving them in a worse position than they were in before the Age of Discovery. When the revolutions in South and Central America finally ended Spanish colonial rule, the Shadow Lords lost any claim they may have had to the land, and the indigenous Fera reclaimed the region alongside human revolutionaries.

The European population of the New World grew rapidly, and the settlements that had once held only a few dozen Europeans grew into cities. Like parasites, the vampires of the Old World followed the humans. The Bone Gnawers noticed them

first, spotting vampires feeding on slaves and native workers, but the number of leeches in the New World rose. The dangers of being discovered on the journey across the Atlantic kept many vampires away, but the temptation to establish new domains brought the bloodsuckers just as it brought the Spanish and the Garou. Vampires established their control over key bureaucrats and government officials; areas that the Garou had neglected in the quest to destroy the indigenous Fera.

## *The Last of the Camazotz*

Unlike most shapeshifters, werebats were not born, but made using rituals that were empowered by the Bat totem. When Bat turned against its children and joined the Wyrms, the Camazotz could no longer successfully enact the ritual to create new werebats. Any attempts to perform the ritual ended horribly. The would-be werebat most often died, but some became infested with deadly Banes and were warped into monstrosities worse than any Xibalan. Once the Camazotz Elders realized that no more of their kind could be created, most fled deep into the jungles of the Yucatan, one of the few places that the Spanish and their werewolf allies had not yet conquered.

The Spanish conquest of the Yucatan Peninsula was a much slower process than their subjugation of the Aztecs and Incas. The Maya who lived in the Yucatan had no central government that could surrender; each city-state was an independent polity requiring the Spanish to attack and pacify the region one city at a time. The terrain hampered the Spanish as much as the Mayan warriors. The Garou found no allies here; the atrocities that they'd committed against the indigenous Fera, especially the genocide of the Camazotz, meant that the werewolves had to fight for every inch of territory. The Mokolé, outraged at the destruction of another of Gaia's creations, offered sanctuary for the fleeing Camazotz. Many werebats simply disappeared into the Umbra, claiming to be hunting for the Bat totem, but any who witnessed their departures could see that they had accepted the inevitable destruction of their kind.

The Shadow Lords did not quit their quest to destroy the Camazotz. Dark-Claw-of-Vengeance, a revered Shadow Lord Ahroun, led a dozen war packs against any reported sighting of the werebats. His Garou delved deep into the earth, often finding Banes that slaughtered even their greatest warriors. Other warriors were overcome by their own rage and mad desire to exterminate the werebats and fell to the Wyrms, becoming some of the first Black Spiral Dancers in the New World. Dark-Claw-of-Vengeance's war packs hunted more than just the Camazotz. They targeted other werecreatures, especially the Mokolé. Killing a Mokolé became a badge of honor for his packs. Many wore the skins of dead weresaurians as proof of their skill in battle.

Dark-Claw-of-Vengeance claims to have killed the last Camazotz himself deep in the tombs of a Mayan city, but most modern Shadow Lords believe that his claim was nothing more than a boast. Rumors persisted that Camazotz survivors hid amongs the Ananasi and Nuwisha of the American Southwest, and Garou traveling with Ponce de León through what is now modern-day Florida reported sightings of enormous batlike creatures.

The Camazotz of Australia and Asia outlived their cousins in the Americas, but even they had no recourse when Bat fell to the Wyrms. The populations of werebats throughout the world dwindled, and the Camazotz who remained would set off on dangerous and foolhardy quests into the Umbra hoping that they could find a ritual to replace their rites of creation. Some Asian werebats – seeking information about the fate of their American cousins – traveled to the New World, but they found nothing but empty caves. Hoping to find any answers at all, they sought out other Fera and again found nothing except bones and pelts worn as trophies by victorious Garou.

The Second War of Rage did not end in a glorious battle or with the Mesoamerican Fera making a triumphant and futile last stand. The surviving Fera faded into the jungles of the Amazonian Basin or sought inaccessible peaks in the Andes mountains where they could recover their numbers and plan their revenge on the Garou. Ahrouns led war packs that tracked any rumors of strange shapeshifters, but soon, even the rumors evaporated.

Even at the height of the war, curious Philodox and Galliards of the Shadow Lords began to question the nature of the strange shapeshifters that the Garou had encountered in the New World. They were curious as to why they could not detect Wyrms-taint on the corpses of some of the death bats. They questioned members of the Silent Striders, hoping that members of the widely-traveled tribe could offer some insights. They listened in horror as the Striders described Changing Breeds in Africa and the Near East that were eerily similar to creatures that the Garou were fighting in New Spain. The Striders argued that these shapeshifters were not Wyrms-tainted, but those whose packs fought could not let their families die at the hands of the Fera.

With evidence of Wyrms-taint right in front of their noses most Garou dismissed the Striders' claims – but as the war waned, more Garou listened and voiced their resistance to the slaughter. The Children of Gaia and Bone Gnawers were the first tribes to argue against the fighting, but peace-minded werewolves could not rein in the war packs that roamed the New World maddened by bloodlust. By the time Galliards and Philodox of other tribes eventually found enough proof to change the minds of the sept leaders and stop the slaughter, they found no remaining Fera. Garou elders assumed that their packs had annihilated the other Changing Breeds in the New World.

The Shadow Lords' elders chastised warlords like Dark-Claw-of-Vengeance, demanding that he and his war packs take responsibility for the genocide. In retrospect, this was a transparent attempt by the tribe's leaders to mitigate the damage of their crusade against the Camazotz. Others argue that the Shadow Lords knew that the Mesoamerican Fera were creations of Gaia and not Wyrms tainted from the beginning, but that they had lied to the rest of the Garou so that once the indigenous Changing Breeds were dead, the Shadow Lords could claim their territory.

The repercussions of the Camazotz genocide remain a scar on the Shadow Lords' legacy that they still attempt to repair. Modern Galliards see the events of the Second War of Rage as another example of how the Garou's pride has led them to commit terrible atrocities. The Shadow Lords, for their part, have admitted their fault, but to whom can they apologize? The Camazotz are dead. Some Shadow Lord Theurges have set off on quests into the Umbra to attempt to redeem the fallen Bat in hopes of resurrecting the Camazotz. The descendants of the Shadow Lord conquistadors often claim that they dream of great bats or that they see a cloud of bats following them when they travel through the Umbra.

## *Totem of the Wyrms*

While the destruction of the Camazotz weighs heavily on the minds of the Shadow Lords, the fall of the Bat totem has had a greater effect on the war against the Wyrms. Now affiliated with the Wyrms, Bat offered its gifts to the Garou's greatest enemies, the Black Spiral Dancers. Indeed, Bat enjoyed the irony of gifting the Garou's greatest enemies with the abilities of the Camazotz, such as the patagia that many Garou associate with modern Black Spiral Dancers. The caverns in which the Maya and Aztec built their tombs and that once housed the Camazotz's colonies became terrible hellholes and blights as the Black Spiral Dancers took up residence.

The Fera of Central and South America fought and died to defeat ancient Banes that had stalked the jungles and mountains of their homelands. When Banes proved too powerful for the indigenous Fera to destroy, the Camazotz bound them with potent blood rituals, but Bat, in its hatred of the Garou, taught the Black Spiral Dancers how to counteract the wards. Once the Black Spiral Dancers had unleashed these ancient Banes, the werewolves who thought they had pacified the New World found themselves fighting against terrible new foes.

While some Banes rampaged through the territories that the Garou claimed, others slipped deep into the jungles of the Amazon, biding their time until they had regained their full strength. Although the Garou did not remember them, these Banes remembered the werewolves when human logging operations began cutting deep into the Amazon.

The Garou who came to defend the wilds of the Amazon discovered that the jungles were home to Banes with an unquenchable hatred of werewolves.

## *The Bane of Silver*

Cerro Rico, the great mountain of silver, is now home to one of the largest warrens of Black Spiral Dancers in the world. Although the Spanish were wrong to believe that Cerro Rico was literally made of silver, they weren't far from the truth. The slaves who worked in the mines removed so much silver and other mineral ore that the mountain actually shrank. Recently, a large sinkhole opened in the peak of the mountain. Most of the silver may have been depleted by 1800, but the city of Potosi remains and mining operations continue at the site. New methods of extraction scrape the last remnants of silver from the mountain. The suffering of the native population and the African slaves who worked the mines created a terrifying Bane, which made its home in the collapsed mine shafts. The Bane, which local shape-shifters call Greed-of-the-World, has extended its influence throughout the entire region, corrupting hundreds of square miles. The Bane has quietly grown in power by feeding off the suffering of the people who are forced to work in the unsafe conditions of the mines. Though Greed-of-the-World claims that it is responsible for the short lifespan of the citizens of Potosi, the truth is that the terrible working conditions and lack of safety equipment are just as responsible.

Curious Black Spiral Dancers soon began investigating the caverns of Cerro Rico after most of the silver had been depleted. They discovered Greed of the World and were awed by not only its power, but that it manifested itself in the physical world as undulating coils of luminescent silver glowing and shimmering in the deep darkness of the mines. The Black Spiral Dancers summoned many more of their tribe and dedicated a shrine to the Bat totem. For over a hundred years, the Black Spiral Dancers have bred in the darkness of the cave.

Most recently the Black Spiral Dancers have invited their allies at the Madison Mining Group, a subsidiary of Pentex, to extract silver and other precious metals from the mine, all of which Greed-of-the-World has infused with the Wyrms' power. The Black Spiral Dancers hope that the tainted silver finds its way into the hands of Gaian Garou to be crafted into corrupted klaives. The Bat totem smiles at its new children from the depths of Malfaeas as it too guides the silver into the paws of greedy Garou.

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## *Blood Rituals*

When the first War of Rage ended and the victorious werewolves had driven the Camazotz from Europe and North America, Bat observed its worthy children hiding deep in



their caves. Realizing that its children lacked the ability to confront the Garou directly, it taught the wisest Camazotz shamans rituals learned from the Wyrms before the Weaver chained the Great Serpent in its webs. Although the rituals were not inherently tainted, they carried a risk of tainting any Camazotz who practiced them and, because of that risk, the werebats never practiced the rituals in private. By openly practicing these rituals, the werebats assumed that they could identify any of their members who fell to the Wyrms' taint.

Known as "blood rituals" due to the use of blood as a key catalyst, the Camazotz work these rituals to curse their opponents, craft weapons from the bones of their dead, or bind powerful Banes. The rituals were dangerous to those who practiced them as well. Most rituals called on sympathetic magics that required the ritemaster to harm herself in order to inflict harm on the target. Ironically, the open practice of the blood rituals damned the Camazotz in the eyes of the invading Garou, but only when the rituals were practiced in seclusion were they dangerous, as the werebats could give in to the Wyrms' temptation without witnesses to hold them accountable. The Garou of Europe were already familiar with blood magic, and the differences between the Camazotz' blood rituals and the magic of vampires like the Tremere and Tzimisce were minor, especially to enraged werewolves.

Due to the risk of taint involved in using the rituals, no Camazotz could perform a blood ritual without a majority of the colony to assist or observe. If a colony caught an

individual werebat using the rituals privately, the elders of the colony declared her an enemy of Gaia and hunted her to the ends of the Earth.

**System:** Blood rituals are a class of ritual specific to the Camazotz. The ritemaster must spill her own blood as part of the ritual, suffering one level of lethal damage. This damage does not heal until the ritual's effects end. She then rolls Wits + Rituals (difficulty 7 unless otherwise noted). Working a blood ritual without witnesses always leaves those present open to Wyrms-taint—the difficulty required to detect them with Sense Wyrms and similar abilities starts at 9 and goes down by 1 for each additional ritual that goes unwitnessed.

## Mark of the Wyrms

### Level One

The Camazotz did not just spy on the other Fera, but also spied on the agents of the Wyrms. Only the bravest or most insane of the werebats would risk traveling into the warrens of Banes and fomori in order to learn their secrets, but these missions were essential in the fight against the Wyrms. Bat taught its children how to camouflage themselves from the sight of the Wyrms' minions when they took on these dangerous missions.

**System:** The ritemaster mixes the essence of a Bane she has killed with her blood and the blood of the ritual's recipient. The recipient of the ritual then drinks the mixture and, until the next new moon, he identifies as a minion of

the Wyrn to any who attempt to discern the Camazotz's nature. Wyrn-tainted creatures often mistake the recipients of this ritual as Xibalan, but anyone who uses Sense Wyrn will also detect an overpowering corruption within the recipient. The target of this ritual need not be willing, as long as the ritemaster can force him to drink the mixture. Many Camazotz spies — and less fortunate enemies — died at the hands of other Camazotz and Fera who could not discern the recipient's true nature.

## *Blade of the Ancestors*

### Level Two

The indigenous humans of Central and South America never learned how to smelt iron or create steel. Instead, their weapons were made of wood and edged with shards of obsidian, but wood rots and obsidian is a brittle material. The Camazotz, always associated with death and the dead, often used the bones of their own dead as the raw material for weapons. By ritually preparing the bones of their ancestors, a Camazotz ritemaster could infuse the bone with the power and destructive nature of the great destroyer. The ritual reshapes the bones into the form of a dagger, sword, or mace, depending on how much bone is available and the Camazotz' preference. More permanent than a talen created by Rite of Binding but less versatile than either the Rite of Binding or Rite of the Fetish, the werebats enacted Blade of the Ancestors to provide their warriors with weapons imbued with the strength of their forbearers.

**System:** The Camazotz must gather the bones of one of her ancestors and bathe them in water, before coating them with a mixture of ashes and the Camazotz' own blood. The ritual attracts a spirit of destruction and pain, which is bound into the bones, transforming them until they take on the dark, glossy sheen of obsidian.

A successful ritual creates a weapon that deals Strength +1 aggravated damage, and the difficulty to strike with the weapon is 6. Unlike klaives, a sharp blow could easily shatter the weapon. A botch on an attack roll results in the blade shattering.

## *Tongue of the Accursed*

### Level Three

Due to their nature, the Camazotz often found themselves the targets of conspiracies, but those who attempted to build a coalition against a colony of werebats would often find themselves unable to muster support for their cause. Anyone affected by this ritual would find herself struggling to simply be coherent: Her thoughts would be jumbled, her arguments fell to pieces, or she was simply tongue tied. The more the speaker struggled the worse the effect would get until the speaker attempting to discredit the werebats was herself discredited.

**System:** The ritemaster imbibes a mixture of poisons and then severs her own tongue. The difficulty of the roll is the target's Charisma + Expression. The target suffers a penalty equal to the ritemaster's successes to all Social rolls involving attempts to persuade others to work against the Camazotz. This effect lasts until the Ritemaster chooses to grow back her tongue. She may choose not to grow back her tongue for as long as she is conscious, but without her tongue, the ritemaster cannot speak.

## *The Scalding Blood*

### Level Four

Gaia did not create the Camazotz to be warriors; instead they were her ears, listening in the darkness and quietly passing along messages to those who could strike. After the War of Rage the Camazotz needed the ability to strike the enemies of Gaia themselves, and Bat taught his children this ritual to weaken their enemies, making them easier to kill. The ritual requires that a ritemaster and the observing werebats maintain the rite while the colony's warriors attack the target.

**System:** The Camazotz smears a mixture of oleander and the sap of the manchineel tree over an effigy of the target, which she then places in the slow-burning coals of a dying fire. For as long as the coals remain red, the target feels his body burning from the inside out. For the duration of the ritual, the target increases his wound penalties by 1, and suffers a -1 wound penalty even if uninjured.

## *Poison for the Undying*

### Level Five

Gaia's greatest gift to the Changing Breeds was their ability to recover from any wound. Broken bones and gushing lacerations could not kill one of Gaia's chosen. During the First War of Rage, the Garou seemed unstoppable thanks to their inexhaustible rage and healing abilities. Bat, as a spirit of destruction and decay, taught its children how to deny the Garou and other supernatural creatures their healing abilities. Afraid that this rite might fall into the claws of the Xibalan, teachers were reluctant to share it except with their most trusted disciples. The Camazotz who mastered this rite could make their enemies as weak as humans.

**System:** The ritemaster chooses how much damage to inflict upon herself as part of this ritual, then rolls (difficulty of the higher of the target's Rage or Willpower). If the ritual is successful the target loses access to any supernatural healing capability, including any healing bestowed through the Gifts or the powers of her allies for one day per level of damage the ritemaster took. The target heals as though she were a normal human being for the duration. The ritual is equally effective on all supernatural creatures, including vampires and mages.



# Chapter Five: Other Wars

*There's a joke that everything in Australia wants to kill you. It's blowback – just desserts for what we Garou did to that vast, ancient place. If there was a way to go back and do it all again – and do it right this time – would you take it? Believe me, there is a way. But we only get one chance. Come dream with me.*

— Henry R Moore III

The Wars of Rage are the best known shapeshifter conflicts. Countless stories from every surviving Changing Breed tell of the times when the Garou fought everyone else. Most Garou tales paint them as reluctant aggressors, doing what had to be done to protect Gaia. The Fera cast the werewolves as arrogant, bloodthirsty louts who violently insisted they could fulfill the purposes of all Gaia's children. Sometimes even the Garou sing these songs, when the moon hangs low and the current generation feels the weight of so many past decisions. A few legends even portray the werewolves as suffering guilt and sorrow at their historic aggression.

## Lesser-Known Wars

The Wars of Rage weren't the only shapeshifter wars. Gaia's dreams of unity among her children have been shattered time and again. Misunderstanding and competition – and sometimes simple humanlike hatred – turn brother against sister. The size of these conflicts varied with their purposes. Some were so small they might not deserve the name "war," except that the Rage and aggression were too great for them to be considered anything else.

Not every war involved clashes between Garou and Fera. Werewolves fought amongst themselves with depressing frequency – the War of Tears that eradicated the Bunyip is

the best-known example, but it is far from the only one. Few know of the breed wars in ages long past, when homid and lupus warred against each other. The antagonism between wolf and human existed for as long as Gaia forged a creature propagated through both lineages. The lupus struck first, hunting and killing their soft, hairless rivals for primacy among the Garou nation. Momentum shifted as humanity grew. Homids embraced their inventive, tool-using natures to set traps for their wolf rivals, and killed those they captured with sharp blades. Humans conquered the Earth just as homid werewolves conquered the Garou nation. Most tribes have forgotten this period, but the howling, discordant songs of the Red Talons never forget, and will never forgive. Their hatred continues to simmer, and they contemplate one final breed war before the Apocalypse comes.

Other wars entirely ignored the Garou. Though the Bastet are a single Changing Breed, the great cats have waged terrible, hidden wars between the species more times than they can count. The secrecy of the cats means few other shapeshifters even know these civil wars occurred. Similarly, centuries before the werebats fled into the mad darkness, they fought savage battles for the skies against the Corax. Both sides fought through air and Umbra to establish aerial dominance, and to hunt and kill their enemy's next generation of shapeshifters as they underwent spiritual gestation in the Umbra's hidden places.

## What Makes a War?

The life of every shapeshifter is conflict. Even the most peace-loving of Gaia's children have the war form in their arsenal, with tearing fangs and rending claws. Though not every Changing Breed wants to use these gifts, they will shed blood and destroy their enemies — or die trying — when they have to.

Not every skirmish is a war. The shapeshifters often fight each other for territory and purpose, but these aren't wars. Even conflicts between large groups, such as septs, or multiple packs, don't necessarily beat the path to war. War must have an ideological component, a purpose designed to force the loser to accede to the victor's point of view. The violence and atrocities achieve this purpose. The Wars of Rage established the dominance of Garou over all other shapeshifters. The werewolves believed they were the only ones capable of fulfilling every purpose required by Gaia, and by their strength of arms they were proven right. That the oncoming Apocalypse proves them wrong is separate to the purpose of the war.

## The War of Tears

Garou rightfully reflect on the horrors of the War of Tears. This war ended in living memory and several old warriors who took part in the genocide still survive. Even though they carry the shame, it's debatable whether the Garou learned anything from their Rage this time.

The Bunyip's fate was cast long ago, when they accepted the transformation that mingled their blood with the native marsupials of their strange new home. With this change, they took on a vital responsibility that had to remain forever hidden from the outside world. It was inevitable that werewolves — who as a nation hold purity of breed and lineage in high regard — would see their Australian cousins as polluted and corrupt. That the Bunyip sought neither conquest nor capture of territory was also anathema to the Garou.

Garou are products of their time, and absorb the ways of the humanity they hide within. Much like the human settlers saw indigenous Australians as nuisances to be moved from British land, European tribes considered the Bunyip to be lesser creatures to be cleansed from Garou territory. The Garou fought dirtier than ever before, murdering animal kin and stealing away human Kinfolk.

The Garou succeeded in their determined slaughter of the Bunyip regardless of the cost. In their triumph, the werewolves may have assured Gaia's death in the now-inevitable Apocalypse.

## The War of Dragons

The Mokolé don't clearly remember the time of the Dragon Kings. The Mnesis gives them glimpses of grandeur, of prismatic crystal spires and impossible constructs pulled from the depths of dream itself. These details must be corrupted fragments from events that occurred long ago. Even the Mnesis isn't perfect.

The Mokolé are wrong. The nations of the Dragon Kings stretched across the world in shimmering empires of imagination and idea. Led by the most wondrous and powerful dragons in mighty magocracies, the empires explored and studied the Mnesis, and traded its secrets with each other.

The wondrous Dragon Kings' civilization endured for hundreds of millions of years — far longer than today's generation of shapeshifters can even contemplate. Unfortunately, in some ways the Dragon Kings were very much like the Changing Breeds who would follow. They suffered pride in their achievements, and grew jealous of what they didn't control. Empires clashed to control the dwindling resources of the only element worth possessing. The vast wars threatened to tear Gaia apart.

The age of discovery came to a close when Gaia herself cursed the Dragon Kings for their hubris. As the Dragon Kings fell from glory, hunted by the Rokea and Ananasi they had dominated, the Mokolé hatched from the remnants of their civilization.

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## The War of Tears

The Garou who would become the Bunyip fled from the first War of Rage long before recorded history. These werewolves lived apart from their cousins, inclined to measured solutions to their problems, rather than always resorting to tooth and claw. The other Garou hunted the perceived traitors, but fell behind as they found other targets for their Rage.

After countless years of staying one step ahead of the pursuers baying at their heels, the proto-Bunyip collapsed on the shores of the Australian continent, lost and alone. Fortunately for the werewolves, the local Fera took pity on the small Garou tribe and taught them the ways of the land, especially how to survive in the harsh and unforgiving conditions.

The Garou adapted to the land, eking out a shallow existence but keenly aware that they lived in a wolfless land. At best, they only had a few generations before they lost the wolf and their tribe ceased to exist. Their Garou cousins had doomed the tiny tribe as surely as if they had personally torn out their throats.



As the werewolves howled their sorrow to Gaia and Luna, the Mokolé took pity on them and taught them magic to change their essence to become the first – and only – weremarsupials. This magic tapped into the nature of the Bunyip totem, a unique hybrid spirit of mammal and reptile. The totem agreed to share a portion of his strength and adopted the tribe as his own. Taking their patron's name in respect, the Bunyip were safe for a time.

The Mokolé didn't offer this generosity from their compassion. Ngalyod the Rainbow Serpent had a purpose for these wolves-that-weren't. She was a spirit of shaping, who intimately felt the ebb and flow of the changing seasons and the movement of streams. She was a rare spirit who had awareness of time's flow as more than just a passenger in its current.

Gaia intended Australia to be a calming point for time's passage, where the myriad of pasts met the untold futures. This delicate work required a sentinel to safeguard it, and Ngalyod had this among her many other duties. The Garou's War of Rage complicated time's flow, so Ngalyod decided she needed servants to assist in her duties. She found a certain satisfaction in using Garou to help correct what other Garou threatened.

The Bunyip spread across the continent, living and breeding among the indigenous people of Australia. They

walked the songlines of the human tribes, tending the time streams that snaked alongside these pathways. As guardians, the Bunyip nurtured and smoothed the streams, but obeyed Ngalyod's instruction that they were watchers only – they weren't to interfere, no matter what events they saw in the streams. The Bunyip directed the Dreaming Tracks through the great structure of Uluru, a massive lens that shaped, twisted, and tuned the streams to the Bunyip's whims.

### *Transient Explorers*

Asian traders, Pacific Islanders, and European sailors came and went through this great Dreaming period. These outsiders mostly stayed near the coastline, observing the land after such long voyages at sea. Some camped for a while to rest and restock from what the land had to offer, before departing again for wherever their timeline led. Each visit brought intrusions of time, but the transient nature of the landfall meant that the ripples to the timelessness were quickly absorbed once the foreigners again departed.

Watchful eyes always witnessed these visits, although the intruders rarely realized it. Often the local tribal groups watched and avoided the intruders, and passed the information on to the Bunyip kin when they next encountered the wandering tribe. Sometimes the Bunyip themselves, or their Kinfolk, were present and noted the visit. When

human and Garou weren't around the land itself served as observer, with animal, plant, and rock telling the Bunyip what they sensed, each through its own unique lens.

Some explorers met with a more hostile, often violent, reception. The reasons for this varied. Most often the indigenous people took offense to the mannerisms or appearance of the intruders, who ignorantly broke social norms. Sometimes the hostility was as a result of interrupting important ceremonial periods. Other times the tribes mistook the Europeans for hostile spirits or ghosts, and acted in what they believed was self-defense. Whatever the reason for the hostility, the unwelcome intruders departed the Australian shores and moved on to find other, friendlier locations to rest and restock supplies.

The Bunyip mostly viewed these explorations with disinterest. Sometimes they noticed a variation in the time stream and studied it for as long as it took to reintegrate into the main songline, but the impact of these explorers was usually so minor as to be irrelevant. This general disinterest in the world beyond their land, and their focus on duty, was the key reason the Bunyip didn't pay heed to the significance of the ripples that moved through the songlines when James Cook's *Endeavour* reached the continent's eastern coastline in 1770.

### *A Closer Look*

Lieutenant Cook was more interested in the Australian land than the Europeans who preceded his explorations. In 1766, the Royal Society urged the British Admiralty to engage Cook and provide a ship in order to observe the expected transit of Venus across the sun in 1769. After some persuasion, the Admiralty agreed and Cook embarked on his scientific voyage across the Pacific Ocean in 1768. Cook successfully completed the scientific objectives of his journey from Tahiti in April 1769, but the Admiralty had included an additional, undeclared aspect to Cook's mission, to be attempted after recording the transit. Cook's orders instructed him to find the unknown southern continent of *Terra Australis* and claim it for Britain. He succeeded in locating the eastern coast of this land one year after watching Venus's transit, in April 1770.

Cook's orders weren't merely speculative, with a hope of finding a new land. The Wyrms knew of a faraway place, where the Wyld ruled the physical world and the Weaver knitted together past and future. These two aspects of the Triat worked together to deny the Wyrms access to the vast open plains, and prevented its decay and corruption from touching the people and spirits of the Dreaming. The Wyrms raged at its exclusion, but had no way of overcoming the limitation. It had tried time and again to simply enter, but the timelessness of the place somehow gave no toehold for the Wyrms to dig a talon into. It couldn't use its overwhelming

power or subtle mysteries to enter. It needed to be invited inside by a resident. The people and shapeshifters of the Dreaming were too resilient – and too protected – to even think of the Wyrms desecrating their home. To gain access to the Dreaming, the Wyrms fanned the flames of colonization and possession of distant lands within British hearts.

### *Early Days*

When European settlers arrived on Australian shores, they discovered a wondrous land, full of nature's bounty and seemingly untouched by time. The new country was home to countless strange creatures – familiar yet alien and unsettling.

For the Garou who arrived in those first fleets, the disquieting feeling went beyond lack of understanding. The land felt ancient in a manner the werewolves couldn't describe. It wasn't hostile to their presence – in some strange way, it welcomed them with a sense of familiarity.

The country lacked wolves, and should have been anathema to continued werewolf existence. The settlers from the first tribes that arrived developed plans to bring wolves to Australia, a contingency to safeguard against thinning of the bloodlines. They found some evidence of other shapeshifters, but had very few encounters with the elusive natives. When the Garou found the Bunyip – or more accurately, when the Bunyip revealed themselves to the cousins their ancestors had fled from so long ago – they couldn't accept them as werewolves. The Bunyip's ways were too foreign, their rites and Gifts were strange to the European tribes. Most gallingly, they bred with pathetic parodies of true wolves, fragile carnivores with no more than a passing resemblance to their superiors. Like many of the native animals of the continent, the not-wolf hopped when it should have run, lived exclusively on meat rather than taking all opportunities offered by Gaia, and gave birth by ejecting malformed fetuses rather than carrying strong litters to term.

The Garou felt their Rage rising as the Bunyip refused to yield to werewolf superiority and surrender territories as the werewolves demanded. The natives seemingly had no purpose under Gaia, and it was only by her grace – with no help from the Bunyip – that the vast landscape hadn't fallen to the Wyrms' corruption. The Garou knew they needed to take control of the land, to prevent the Wyrms taking hold. They considered Australia fortunate that the European tribes had arrived in time to prevent disaster.

### *Drawing the Battle Lines*

In what the Garou will later call the War of Tears, colonists from distant lands devastated a nation, a culture, and a people. Gaia's Australian warriors couldn't stave off their invading cousins' constant attacks, and were unable to

## SILENT SKINS

Indigenous Australians have a “skin” system for keeping families healthy. Each person is assigned a skin, which then dictates certain other taboos to live by, most notably whom someone may or may not have children with. These skin taboos keep lines of Kinfolk strong and prevent Metis children. The European Garou believe Metis Bunyip are physically impossible, but the truth is that adherence to the skin system makes them socially impossible.

Indigenous avoidance taboos dictate who may speak with whom about certain topics and thus the Europeans faced tremendous difficulty uncovering the details of secret skins and mating practices. Most simply assumed any lack of communication was deliberate insult or simple ignorance.

recover from losing their human and thylacine kin. Violent hunters with no desire to communicate or negotiate beset the peaceful Bunyip tribe.

The Garou involved felt neither regret nor remorse for this slaughter. At best they recognized the Bunyip as alien Fera, Wyrms-twisted mockeries at worst. Nor did they treat the individual battles as a unified conflict. Each tribe and each pack fought the Bunyip for their own reasons.

Only with the benefit of hindsight, long after the Bunyip have fallen, do the Garou recognize the enormity of their historical actions.

## Many Nations, One Land

The indigenous Australians inhabited Australia for untold millennia before the First Fleet’s arrival. Hundreds of tribal nations and thousands of clans and families populate the continent, from tropical northern jungles to arid deserts to snowcapped southern mountains. Despite significant geographic divisions, nations share many cultural touchstones, including legends, myths, and rituals, that help maintain peaceful relations with their neighbors. Full-scale warfare is rare — the land is vast and nomadic clans find moving on easier than risking combat.

Complex social taboos assign family members to “skins,” which dictate acceptable partners. These divisions keep Kinfolk lineages for all indigenous shapeshifters strong. Strict avoidance taboos surround the discussion of shapeshifter skins as well as dealings with shapeshifters themselves.

Those who break tribal laws suffer harsh justice. Payback killings are normal against those who injure or kill a tribe member. Those who break taboos must face the fearsome *kurdaitcha* men, who summon spirits of vengeance into themselves to pursue the guilty wherever they run. The *kurdaitcha* level powerful curses against taboo breakers — it’s no coincidence many *kurdaitcha* resemble the Bunyip.

## Bunyip Dreaming

Thylacines once inhabited the entire continent. By the time of European settlement they live only within Tasmania. The Bunyip call Tasmania sacred for being the only origin of their lupus tribemates, and most journey there at least once. Nonetheless, Gifts and Moon Bridges enable the tribe to have a presence almost anywhere at short notice. Homicid tribemates may be born to any Aboriginal family, so even the Aboriginal tribes of the far north or dry center tell legends of the Bunyip. The Bunyip consider Pararri-kurruwarri Caern at Uluru their spiritual home.

The dingo’s intrusion into the Dreaming revealed an unwelcome truth to the Bunyip: In their presence the Bunyip fell sick, and unstable of form. Aggression caused the Bunyip’s protean bodies to display the features of many creatures as if rejecting the thylacine and vainly searching for a replacement. Many Bunyip quested for answers to this curse. The Mokolé theorized the ancient ritual that replaced the wolf was imperfect — in the presence of a wolf-like creature, Bunyip struggled to retain the thylacine spirit. In time, the Bunyip learned to mitigate this condition by remaining calm.

This imperfection proves tragic around the European Garou as outbursts of Rage exacerbate and aggravate the cursed illness. It takes less provocation to suffer the effects, and longer to recover. The European Garou have no understanding of this strange condition, and none care to follow Bunyip taboos by remaining distant and avoiding direct communication to mitigate the effects. When afflicted, the Bunyip take on aspects of long-lost megafauna — every creature their ancestors tried replacing their wolf-halves with displays its mark upon their bodies, and fevers run through them.

The Bunyip’s refusal to talk openly and directly offends the Europeans, who all too often repay the perceived insult with violence. The Garou misinterpret such silence and reluctance to Rage. They come to consider the Bunyip paragons of the peaceful, noble savage archetype, without understanding the reasons behind this behavior.

The Bunyip are not numerous. Packs draw from Aboriginal nations across the continent, and their extensive territories contain many caerns, often shared with the Fera. The European Garou outnumber the Bunyip within a few decades, and concentrate their numbers in contrast to the sparsely-spread Bunyip. The Europeans quickly claim unattended caerns and defend them vigorously.

## PEACEFUL, WISE?

The Bunyip reaction to Garou stems from the ancient rite bonding them to the thylacine. Around a wolflike creature, the Bunyip's soul longs for its real match. This struggle manifests as every wolf substitute tried long ago alters his body. Among the varied forms that failed the ancient rite are carnivorous kangaroos, giant wombats, marsupial lions, cats, and rats, and even more unusual forms of flightless birds, echidnas, and reptiles. These features hurt as they manifest and may add one or two to all actions involving that feature at the Storyteller's discretion.

If the Bunyip spends Rage near a wolflike animal, the player makes a Gnosis roll at difficulty 6 (increasing to 7 for wolves, 8 for Garou, 9 for lupus Garou). Failure manifests one animal partial transformation, a botch manifests one per point of Permanent Rage.

In hindsight the Garou call the Bunyip wise and peace-loving, ignorant of the real reasons the tribe valued Gnosis and spent Rage only sparingly.

The Bunyip in the When Will You Rage scenario don't suffer from the chimerical affliction. Why? Because the timelines are so damaged that their lineage simultaneously did and didn't flee the War of Rage, did and didn't arrive in Australia, and did and didn't become weremarsupials. Basically, they're all kinds of messed up. Storytellers should consider introducing the affliction as players fix Nightmaster's damage, as the true timeline reasserts itself. This reinforces the cost that saving the future has — the Bunyip become increasingly unstable, and when the characters triumph, they're gone altogether.

After discovering the Bunyip use fresh water to traverse the continent, some Garou poison wells and billabongs. Sadly, this poison does more against the indigenous Australians. Hundreds of Aboriginal men, women, and children die agonizing deaths after drinking tainted water.

## The Fera

Indigenous shapeshifters share many cultural traits from their Aboriginal heritage. Each of the breeds follows its own customs inherited from its Aboriginal skin, and

## ANCIENT CUSTOMS

Indigenous culture includes customs for segregating men's and women's business, initiation rites, songlines, justice, and secrets. As well as these, each breed also knows their own secret "breed business." Kinfolk are included in many of these, though not all. Animal breed members get little leniency for transgressions — the laws and business already account for ignorance of human traditions. An important difference between human and breed customs is that none of the breeds differentiate between men and women when performing breed business — too few shapeshifters exist for this to be practical; all must honor Gaia.

settles into a loosely-defined role according to these customs and Gaia's wisdom.

## Ananasi

Ancient enemies of the Bunyip, the Ananasi hold a legacy of antipathy to the Australian Garou. Among the indigenous peoples the spiderfolk play the roles of tricksters, cannibals, and bogeymen, encouraging taboo-breaking behavior. More follow the Wyrms in Australia than anywhere except the Kumo lands of Asia, and all obey their Queen. They seek entry to the timeless Dreaming on her behalf.

The werespiders are as dispassionate and alien in mindset as their foreign kin. They don't fly into rages like the other Changing Breeds. They enact plans of intricate nuance and deliberate patience. They find crossing the Gauntlet difficult, and instead trick other shapeshifters into doing Ananasi dirty work in the Dreaming whenever possible.

Such activities put the werespiders forever at odds with the Bunyip. When the Bunyip first arrived in Australia, they burned the greatest Sylies ever created. Vast bushland webs, home to holy places honoring Queen Ananasa and billions of spiders, were destroyed by fire at the Bunyip's commands. The Ananasi have not forgotten this — the Aboriginal clans still control the environment by regularly burning large tracts of bushland.

The Ananasi watched the Bunyip slowly die out, then quest for a new animal to replace the wolf they had lost. They saw the remains of unsuccessful attempts. They observed how the Bunyip barely survived, merging with the thylacine on the verge of extinction.

Many generations later the Ananasi welcomed new human explorers to Australia's northern shores. These

people brought tamed wolves with them — called dingoes in later years. In the blink of an eye, in the Dreamtime, these foreign people came and went. None stayed for long but their wolves found a new home and spread rapidly.

None foresaw the Bunyip reaction to the dingo. They became sick, as if allergic, and heightened emotions triggered uncontrolled shapeshifting. The Ananasi saw this, and remembered. Many Ananasi began using dingoes against the Bunyip, and encouraged the dingoes to spread across the continent. As the dingo spread, the Bunyip and their thylacine kin withdrew from their northern habitats, ever so slowly disappearing until the thylacine remained only within Tasmania.

When the Garou arrive the Ananasi find them more dangerous, but far more effective, than dingoes to use against the Bunyip. The tricksters masterfully direct European Garou against the Bunyip. They lead the Garou to Bunyip caerns, along songlines, and point them to Bunyip kin. After perpetual enmity, such revenge is sweet.

### **Camazotz**

The Camazotz were the Bunyip's closest allies until Bat fell into despair and madness. They had helped guard the Dreaming from the schemes of the Wyrms and the werespiders, and told the Bunyip what they heard exploring the darkest places. The Ananasi bore them no love for such indiscretions and their enigmatic schemes often ensnared the wary Camazotz.

Once Bat fell, the surviving Camazotz were distraught. Their patron passed on maddening visions of the future to those questing for answers. Prophecies mix strangely in the everlasting now of the Dreamtime. Kaleidoscopic images of past and future further broke the werewolves' minds.

The Bunyip hunted their broken allies with heavy hearts. The final twisted Camazotz fell into the webs of the Ananasi, who teased prophecies from his raving. This gave the werespiders an invaluable advantage over their enemies. The Bunyip uncovered evidence of Ananasi schemes in the 1880s. A hunting party sent to rescue the trapped Camazotz failed — it was too small, and the Bunyip could not spare more.

### **Corax**

The indigenous Corax vanished a long time ago. The other breeds remember them only in the Dreaming. Bunyip share legends of spiderfolk chasing the wereravens away — some flying into the sun, some drowning in mud, others getting lost in the Dreamtime, too curious to return.

Adventurous Tengu sometimes flew into Australian skies from Asia, but few stayed long. The timeless aspects of these lands made for dull viewing. Those who stayed drew the attention of the Ananasi — who trapped and feasted upon them — or disappeared into the Dreaming.

The first European Corax arrived in 1859 — uncharacteristically late for a breed known for inquisitiveness. Some introspective Corax wonder what the *real* reason for this is, rejecting notions of merely “hot, dry, and dull.” These mystery hunters explore land and Umbra with equal ease yet find the continent's secrets difficult to unravel. After weeks or months, each feels drawn to explore the Dreaming — an urge to leave friends and family, and fly headlong into the vast never-never. Most squash these urges, but those who surrender never return.

### **Mokolé**

Calling Australia home as they have done since time began, the Gumagan Mokolé doze, lost in dreams and Mnesis. Their languid forms guard waterways and billabongs; only the most desperate — or foolhardy — disturb their slumber. Younger Gumagan tread paths no human can follow across the continent following ancient songlines. These walkabouts remind them the land is alive in the now, and the shape isn't as Mnesis portrays it — and also reminds the southern people the Gumagan still exist.

When the Europeans come the weresaurians are unconcerned — foreigners have come and gone before. As the war against the Bunyip escalates they prove hard to rouse from their slumbers, leaving many Bunyip to face the Garou alone. By the time the urgency of the Bunyip deaths penetrates the Gumagan somnolence it's too late. Raging Archid forms protect wallows and caerns from encroaching humans and werewolves, but it's too little. The Garou use these encounters as more evidence the Bunyip are Wym-tainted.

### **Nagah**

The indigenous Australians came to know the Nagah as gods of rain and fertility, and punishers of taboos. When any of the shapeshifters failed their Gaian task the Nagah would appear and pronounce judgement to the accused's people. Few dared argue.

With the arrival of the European Garou the Nagah recalled the Wani's ancient warnings and hid from all shapeshifters. Some among them think they hid too long, others that they did not hide long enough. Either way, the Nagah Sings-of-Silence revealed himself upon observing the Garou butcher an Aboriginal family for smelling like thylacine in the 1850s. The Nagah begin looking for guilty parties too late. In their desire for justice they execute many Garou. The overzealous even punish Bunyip in a desire to overcorrect for years of absence — ignoring all pleas of extenuating circumstances. Unfortunately, the Garou blame the Bunyip for these Nagah killings, exacerbating the war.

### **Rokea**

The Rokea pay little attention to the conflicts on land, but hold ancient pacts with the Australian shapeshifters. The weresharks swim up rivers to meet and deal with the

other breeds many miles from the sea, and legends speak of the vast inland sea long lost to them. The Europeans' arrival barely registers — only the arrival of Wyrmtainted goods or personnel piques their interest, and their Rage. Many shipwrecks and coastal massacres have the Rokea to blame.

Fishermen and whalers often catch the weresharks' kin and waste no time slaughtering the animals. This too prompts deadly reactions. Some sailors make it back to land before the Rokea slaughter them. The Rokea attack the Garou with just as much ferocity. The Garou believe the Bunyip and Rokea are allied, and hold Rokea attacks against the Bunyip.

## *Dreams of Colonization*

The invading Europeans have mixed feelings towards the land and the indigenous people. Some are pleased to be free of the filth of civilized England, despite the local hardships. Governor Arthur Phillip himself demands peaceful dealings even after local Aboriginals spear him. The official stance of the British government is to refrain from needless aggression.

Others are less receptive to their new home. Many convicts resent their exile and the unfamiliar land. They look at the Aboriginals as little more than filthy savages, and exult in any altercation that reinforces the notion. More than a few soldiers feel this way — treating the indigenous as mere animals, or worse, convicts.

Some freed convicts and retired government officials choose to live in the growing penal colony, and a trickle of settlers flows in as families join their loved ones in the new land. The trickle becomes a flood after colonists discover gold in the 1850s, as fortune seekers rush to the colonies.

This influx aggravates existing tensions with Aboriginal clans. European concepts of property and land ownership clash with indigenous beliefs of custodianship. Settlers treat Aboriginal hunting parties caught on farmland as poachers, thieves, or worse. If the natives escape, the settlers inform colonial police of the natives' crimes. Reprisals come from both sides with the clans raiding farms in revenge and the police raiding camps in order to apprehend the criminals.

Several settlements establish a Native Police Force, consisting of Aboriginal men trained and incorporated into the local constabulary. They track Aboriginal criminals and reinforce British law among the clans. The Native Police often use their authority to strike at rival clans. In the Queensland Outback they are responsible for the massacres of dozens of families under the orders of their white commanders.

## *Hunting the Outback*

Every pack has its own reasons for coming to Australia, and for fighting the inhabitants. The Garou disrupt the Australian Umbra, anger Australia's spirit courts, and annihilate

the Bunyip. Pack tactics and strategies honed by countless wars throughout history make the Garou alpha predators. Constant reinforcements, multiple fronts, and intertribal cooperation make the Garou unstoppable.

The Bone Gnawers arrived first, shortly followed by the Fianna and Red Talons. In the 20s and 30s the Children of Gaia, Silent Striders, Black Furies, Silver Fangs, and Glass Walkers came to Australia as tales of the new land spread. The middle decades saw the Uktena, Wendigo, Stargazers, Shadow Lords, and Get of Fenris arrive late to the colonization. The Black Spiral Dancers turned up almost a century after the First Fleet, though the damage they wrought was no less. All the tribes played their part in the Bunyip's extinction.

## *Black Furies*

The first Black Furies to arrive in Australia are the Honeybee Sting pack who depart England for the newly established South Australian colony in 1836. They land on Kangaroo Island and help establish the town of Kingscote. They explore the island, reawakening an ancient, abandoned caern to claim as their own. When they learn the sealers and whalers already living on the island have stolen indigenous women to keep prisoner as wives and slaves the men die in agony. Then the pack makes a tragic error.

The indigenous Tasmanian woman Tanganuturra was the wife of the Bunyip Mokee. He had tracked his wife to the island only to find her kidnappers already dead. Reuniting with his excited wife he leads her to his boat. Here the Black Furies intercept the couple. The only translator is Tanganuturra, and communication deteriorates rapidly. In a few heartbeats of rage the Garou believe they have rescued Tanganuturra from her strange shapeshifting kidnapper.

As the colony grows more Black Furies come to Australia. Some search for pristine Wyld land to open new caerns, other come to protect indigenous women from the squalid conditions of the colonies. All too often, this leads to families torn apart by well-meaning, culturally-insensitive Garou.

## *Bone Gnawers*

The first Bone Gnawer to come to Australia is Charlie "Billyclub" Wilson. He was born in London's slums and hated every minute of it. He underwent the First Change at the onset of puberty, and hated every minute of it. He hid from friends and family until the Bone Gnawers adopted him, and hated every minute of it. He chose to take his chances in a new world and duly arrived in Australia in 1788 with the First Fleet after letting himself be transported as a convict.

Sick and tired of his supposed betters bullying and ordering him around, he is among the first convicts to escape into the Sydney bushland. Billyclub thrives in the

unfamiliar land, thrilled at the solitude and freedom of the wilderness. He raids the settlements for familiar tastes of rum and bread, but spends most of his time exploring.

The strange, dark-skinned people fascinate him. He considers them barely human, little more than the dancing apes displayed in circuses back in England. Finally, he has found people of lower station to kick, curse, and torment.

When the Aboriginal clan's Bunyip guardian comes looking for justice, Billyclub is astonished by the old woman whose flesh twists into a bizarre conglomeration of beasts. Her shrill, two-tone howl echoes through the bush. Horrified, he attacks the monstrosity. The fight is inconclusive — both withdraw to heal, neither wishing to pursue the other strange shapeshifter just yet.

Billyclub sends word to other Bone Gnawers in England and many decide to come to Australia in search of new homes. They laud Billyclub as a pioneer and shower him with honors and status. He leads his tribe through years of exploration and war against the strange native shapeshifters.

When the other tribes arrive the Bone Gnawers find themselves sidelined and ignored once more. Each tribe eventually relies upon the obstinate Bone Gnawers for local

information, though, and the tribe retains considerable power from these negotiations.

### *Children of Gaia*

Raymond Love-of-the-Goddess arrived in Sydney in 1826. A chaplain by vocation, he considered the voyage a mission to spread Gaia's word. He soon learns of the strange Australian Fera and determines to find them. Raymond joins the Bushwhackers pack to hunt the native shapeshifters — not to fight them, but to talk. Unfortunately the rest of the pack are Bone Gnawers and Fianna, and do not share the same idealism. They use Raymond's halting negotiations with a pack of Bunyip to ambush the allegedly-feral shapeshifters.

Though Raymond leaves the pack the damage is done. Future Children of Gaia struggle to gain access to the Bunyip or other shapeshifters. The Bunyip distrust the seemingly-friendly overtures, and talk of the peaceful Garou being no more than bait in a trap.

### *Fianna*

The Fianna find an easy home in the colony, the first of them arriving as a guard with the Second Fleet. They form packs with the Bone Gnawers, sharing rum and songs. Few



explore far from European settlements — often claiming it's too dry and too far from a public house. The garrulous tribe embraces those indigenous people who mingle with the Europeans in farms, towns, and growing cities.

The Dreaming and songlines intrigue the Fianna, and they pay for such information with booze, tobacco, and other small luxuries. This largess cripples the accepting indigenous people with alcoholism and disease. The Wyrms find easy footholds amidst such addictions, fueling more Garou violence against tainted souls. Those Aboriginals who refuse to elaborate on sacred rites and taboo secrets risk the dismay, and often Rage, of their Fianna hosts — more than a few Bunyip die beneath Fianna claws protecting hidden caerns, spirits, and Gifts.

### ***Get of Fenris***

The few Get of Fenris first come to Australia in 1862. The Wise-of-Gaia pack scours the mountains west of Brisbane with the Shadow Lords for several years until judging it clean. They scoff that the Shadow Lords are too weak to fight for the land by themselves. They boast of their Fera and Bunyip kills. They and their Kinfolk settle around Mount Tamborine, having taken two potent caerns from the Bunyip and Mokolé there.

### ***Glass Walkers***

The Glass Walkers arrive in Melbourne in 1836 with grand plans to build cities in harmony with Gaia, yet with all modern conveniences. They fail. The harmonious ideals of British Garou do not mesh well with the Dreamtime spirits. The colonials adopt some ideas, but never more than a couple influence the plans of any given town.

Locations designed to nurture Gaia die beyond the Gauntlet. Inspirational architecture instead deadens souls, and hides drunks, prostitutes, and the worst excesses of European life. The indigenous Australians find shelter among these places, and lose themselves to misery and anger.

Though the Glass Walkers rarely venture far from the growing urban centers and surrounding farmlands, the damage they cause to the Dreaming is just as profound as those Garou who explore further afield. Polluted waterways restrict Bunyip travel. British farming practices anger spirits the Garou then perceive as enemies. Fragile ecosystems, spiritual and physical, shatter.

### ***Red Talons***

The Red Talons first come to Australia in 1801, after hearing tales of pristine wilderness and strange native Fera. Packs range inland from every port, venturing further into the interior than most. They make no concessions to the indigenous Australians, butchering families at the slightest provocation — in many cases for simply being human. Packs

## ***SILENT TREATMENT***

The spirits' animosity applies a +1 difficulty to all Silent Strider social rolls against Australian spirits or ghosts. This effect becomes noticeable from the 1840s onwards.

make a point of mating with dingoes in order to out-populate the native Fera and provide the unspoiled land with true defenders against the Weaver and Wyrms.

The indigenous Changing Breeds defend their Kinfolk and clans, but the Red Talons fight with a savage tenacity. The Bunyip, though thinly spread, are obstinate foes. The Talons see every Bunyip victory as aiding the Wyrms, whether Wyrms-tainted or not. They call the Bunyip "false-wolves," whose very existence insults Gaia.

### ***Shadow Lords***

Few Shadow Lords see value in Australia, and even fewer make the journey of their own free will. Most settle in Queensland in the 1860s to seize territory before the other tribes. They lead vicious attacks upon the native Fera in order to subdue all resistance. The Shadow Lords find willing allies, and pawns, in the arrival of Fenrir packs. Between them the tribes clear southeastern Queensland of all enemies.

### ***Silent Striders***

Silent Striders set forth from every major city into the mountains, bush, and deserts. They follow rivers, scents, and spirits into the eternal Dreamtime. It captivates them with its austere beauty and ancient enigmas. Upon returning to civilization they readily share their hard-won knowledge with other Garou in return for further supplies for another heady journey.

The Bunyip welcome the first few explorers — seeing in them a certain kinship. The Silent Striders repay this welcome poorly. Their maps are all too accurate — telling the other Garou the locations of songlines, waterholes, caerns, landmarks, and tribal homes. The Garou mount expeditions into the outback better informed than their human kin. They ambush the Bunyip in their homes and among their people. They bind Dreamtime spirits into fetishes. They claim caerns and waterholes.

In return the Dreamtime turns against the Silent Striders, more so than most other tribes. The Dreaming spirits remember the betrayal keenly

## *Silver Fangs*

The Silver Fangs listen to reports from the colony with curiosity and consternation. At first they reject tales of fanciful Fera outright, but as Bone Gnawer rumors become Fianna stories and Silent Strider reports they attempt to wrest control of the colonization effort from the established tribes. The Fangs state that if the native Fera cannot save themselves from the Garou, they have no right to claim they serve Gaia.

The Silver Fangs send packs to the colony to govern the rough packs of ill-bred Bone Gnawers and Fianna. The Silver Fang packs discover that while colonial Garou nod their heads to motherland authorities, they only reluctantly follow orders. Country packs often flat out ignore the “city-side nobs” completely, claiming misunderstandings or changed circumstances invalidated the orders.

Those Silver Fangs who venture into the bush are quick to claim leadership over recalcitrant Bone Gnawers — sometimes successfully. They lead savage attacks against Bunyip caerns and pay top dollar for routes through the Dreaming and outback. If the native Fera show proper deference the Fangs make crippling bargains while expecting due recognition of their generosity.

## *Stargazers*

Stargazers have legends of ancient heroes venturing to mythical southern realms cloaked in dreams and lies. In these, the hero inevitably loses his wolf family amid storm-wracked jungles and burning deserts, before returning home, wiser for the journey. Some Stargazers journey to Australia seeking wisdom by following in the footsteps of these legends. Sadly, many who come to Australia in the 19th century seek material gain and wealth.

They hunt gold, silver, money, and other material goods to send home to their families. They also search for more spiritual acquisitions such as totems, caerns, and rites for their own enlightenment. The Enlightened-Dust pack searches the Dreaming, entranced by the time whorls and visions of past and future. They disappear into the Queensland outback in 1862.

Though the Stargazers don’t actively hunt the Bunyip, they take what they can, and each resource lost further harms the Bunyip cause. Should the Bunyip try to stop them, the Star Gazers are no strangers to violence.

## *Uktena*

Sings-With-The-Moon, an Uktena Theurge, comes to Australia in 1843, driven by curiosity about the Bunyip and the purity of its wilderness. He travels alone for years, tracking and spying on the Bunyip, before more Uktena arrive. He notes with interest certain commonalities in

rituals and totems — calling the Rainbow Serpent an aspect of great Uktena — and barter with the Silent Striders for knowledge of songlines into the arid interior.

Alone among the Garou the Uktena deal with the Bunyip as respected equals — they sense no Wyrmtaint upon the werethylacines and have greater tolerance for working with Fera. To the Uktena’s disappointment, the Bunyip share nothing secret with them. When other Garou hunt the Bunyip, the Uktena remain neutral. While the combatants rage, the Uktena use the chaos to enter abandoned caerns and sacred sites, searching for more tantalizing answers. The caerns surrender their secrets reluctantly, but the Uktena persevere, disregarding the boiling anger among each caern’s spirits.

## *Wendigo*

Very few Wendigo come to Australia. Their interests lie in protecting their own homelands rather than invading others. A rare few travel among Uktena packs. Here they supply valuable martial might against vengeful Bunyip and violent spirits.

## *Black Spiral Dancers*

The Black Spiral Dancers are latecomers to Australia’s shores. The first pack arrives almost a century after the First Fleet. They laugh at the strife among Gaia’s Warriors, and see an opportunity to ensure the Garou destroy the Bunyip. The pack race from city to outback inflaming relations between the tribes. To the Bunyip they appear as wantonly destructive as any other Garou — poisoning wells and befouling billabongs. To the Garou they pretend to be allied with the Bunyip.

Their greatest coup is framing the Bunyip for killing a renowned Red Talon hero. Her brother howls for Bunyip blood for the rest of his life, leading renewed attacks even as the other tribes begin seeking peace. In the span of a year, the Red Talons’ misdirected vengeance devastates what remains of the Bunyip and their Kinfolk.

## *Dreaming in the Shade*

The Australian Umbra is unlike anything the Garou have ever experienced. It is vibrant, beautiful, and addictive. It highlights to them how sick their homelands have become, and more than a few feel their Rage stoked upon realizing their own spiritual taint.

The Dreaming is the powerful Australian Penumbra. An immense weight of time disorients explorers. Distortions in the air ripple like heat haze to reveal flashes of forgotten ancestors and inconceivably distant history. These visions are ultimately ephemeral and fleeting, yet time’s powerful currents leave the unprepared breathless when they hit. Like stepping from cool shade to tropical heat, the transition sucks air from lungs and causes skin to prickle with sweat.

Paths meander through the Dreaming along routes the Rainbow Serpent followed when creating the world. Rarely physical, they instead follow mental markers such as landmarks, spirits, time eddies, and directions recalled in stories and song.

The Gauntlet is weak here. The Dreaming quakes as knots form within the Gauntlet when European colonists step onto Australian soil. Houses, towns, cities, and roads slowly harden the Gauntlet around them and many of the Bunyip's most powerful caerns wither from nearby mills and hotels. The Ananasi encourage this weaving. They delight in luring settlers to sacred sites in order to thicken the Gauntlet so they may crawl through with ease.

The Gauntlet remains weak in the outback, encouraging Garou explorers to venture further, faster. The Dreaming spirits notice these death-bringing explorers. They mourn each lost shapeshifter supplicant. They tremble in anger at clumsy attempts to petition their aid or bind them into fetishes.

Foreign spirits and totems follow the invaders, competing against the native courts who are slow to adapt. The Umbra quakes as spirits fight for survival beyond the hardening Gauntlet. The Garou enter these battles to defend their own spirits, declaring the native Umbra hostile and unreasonable for many years.

As the Bunyip disappear, the Dreaming surrounding their caerns becomes treacherous to the Garou. Penumbral landscapes twist and snap at intruders. Eddies of elemental forces and whorls of time lash out at them. These effects worsen over time. Captured Bunyip questioned about this tumult simply say the Garou "should've been here yesterday."

## ***Massacres and Misunderstandings***

Garou aggression proceeds along several fronts — each independently chipping away at the Umbra, the Fera, and the Bunyip — over the course of the century. Though each tribe came to Australia for different reasons, the result is the same: Gaia loses her most adaptable Warriors.

## ***First Contacts***

Along the Hawkesbury River from the Sydney Colony, Billyclub Wilson leads the Bone Gnawers. Every Aboriginal camp they find has been ravaged by diseases the Garou shrug off. The Europeans think little of this — it's just another reason to think the indigenous people inferior. None wonder at the indigenous population's thinness or consider what the population would have been.

The Bunyip blame the deaths upon the foreigners. Bunyip packs led by the Ahroun Gararrayung Tear-Catcher stalk the Garou in retribution. As each Bunyip channels Gaia's wrath attacking the Garou their bodies twist and burn. The Bone Gnawers shudder at the unnatural animal

## ***SICK WEBS***

The Ananasi listened to their captive Camazotz who foresaw the British arrival. With meticulous planning the Ananasi infected northern indigenous tribes with Asian poxes, which leapt from family to family until reaching the eastern clans, to coincide with colonization. The deaths of so many guaranteed little indigenous resistance to the foreigners. As Sydney grew so too did the Gauntlet, and the Ananasi rejoiced at the Weaver's influence spreading into the Dreamtime.

amalgams. The Bone Gnawers spread tales of the chimerical monsters of the Australian bush, mustering support to track and kill the Bunyip in return

Up and down the coast, from the mountains to the sea, the Bone Gnawers attack the Bunyip, taking charge when the other tribes inevitably arrive. Billyclub, proclaiming himself "Gaia's Governor," finds every excuse to belittle the indigenous Australians and provoke their bizarre shapeshifting kin. Each subsequent attack provokes another counterattack.

## ***Beyond the Blue Mountains***

It takes the British humans some 25 years to find a route through the Blue Mountains to the Australian interior. It takes the Garou much less. The Red Talons are the first to do so, searching for human-free wilderness. Discovering the Wiradjuri people dashes such hopes. The incensed Red Talons stalk the terrified Wiradjuri clans — hunting parties sent after the "giant dingoes" never return and only anger the Garou more.

The Bunyip divert their attention from the coastal conflict to defend their inland families, reluctantly ceding territory to the coastal Garou. The battles are fierce — each tribe is accustomed to surviving and fighting in the wilderness. The Bunyip suffer for their mystical allergy, losing conscious control of their shapeshifting near the Garou. The Red Talons seize every advantage, slaughtering Kinfolk, seizing caerns, and mating with dingoes to establish their own kin lines.

British settlers cross the mountains several years later, bringing Bone Gnawers and Fianna with them. The Aboriginals are wary, but friendly — glad to see humans (however strange in appearance) rather than ravaging monsters. Conflict blossoms over concepts of land ownership and property rights. Farmers claim tracts of land containing sacred sites and waterholes, and fight off the indigenous families

using them. The Fianna and Bone Gnawers claim caerns and cleanse the Umbra of native spirits that oppose them.

### *Demon's Land*

The British colonize Van Diemen's Land in 1803, and it isn't long before it becomes Australia's primary penal colony. With the influx of convicts and soldiers comes the Garou. The Bone Gnawers rise in influence until they dine with the colony's Lieutenant-Governor himself. To ensure their comfortable lifestyle they carefully remove any threats to their authority. The rugged bushland and brutal conditions hide many sins. They call themselves the Vandemonian Sept.

In 1828 a handful of British shepherds massacre several dozen families of the Pennemukeer Aboriginal tribe. The Bunyip demand payback, forming a war party to deliver justice to the white settlers they call *nouhummoe* — devils. The war pack terrifies the settlers for miles around the murder site, killing each man responsible in gruesome ways. The savage shapeshifters' temerity outrages the Vandemonians. They place bounties upon the war pack Bunyip, and hunt thylacines and Kinfolk to force the war pack to show itself.

The two tribes hunt each other for several weeks, and the Governor sets bounties for the capture of any Aboriginal adults and children to herd into camps for "safekeeping." Finally, the Vandemonians send for reinforcements from the mainland. Three packs of Bone Gnawers and Fianna leave the mainland using Moon Bridges for speed. The Bunyip see the packs arrive and set a trap. When the third Moon Bridge opens, the Bunyip graft the past of this moon bridge to an unknown fate, far in the future of the Garou nation. Such time manipulations violate the Bunyip's duty, but they are desperate.

With their help, the Vandemonians scour the island, killing thylacines and local indigenous families to force the Bunyip out of hiding. In 1830, the Garou convince Lieutenant-Governor Arthur to create the "Black Line" — a human chain of every able-bodied colonist, convict, and freeman. The line marches across the settled districts, driving the indigenous population towards the Tasman Peninsula where the Governor hopes to trap them. The Bunyip save some of their Kinfolk, escaping to the mainland, but most among the clans surrender, outnumbered and outgunned.

At the urging of the Child of Gaia George "Do-Good" Robinson, the Vandemonian Sept allows Lieutenant-Governor Arthur to resettle the confined people on Flinders Island. This camp quickly deteriorates once Do-Good moves back to the mainland; disease and depression take root, enticing Banes and other foul spirits into the people. By 1861 only 14 survivors remain. The government rehous them in Oyster Bay where they live broken, alcohol-addicted lives. The last dies in 1876.

### *LOST IN TIME*

The Garou caught upon the time-twisted Moon Bridge find themselves in the time just after the Apocalypse itself, when all is lost and the Gaia is naught but ashes. Even the Banes prey on each other as the Wyrms are the sole remaining member of the Triad, and its nature is unending corruption.

The Garou find the last bastion of hope — Gaia's heart, protected deep beneath the crust of the Earth in a protective cocoon of rigid stability in absolute chaos, manifestations of the death curses sworn by the Weaver and Wyld before their sibling tore them asunder. Only the Weaver can end the Wyld's chaos, and only the Wyld can relax the rigidity.

The Wyrms rage at the last thing preventing its ultimate victory. Now the glittering Moon Bridge lingers on, waiting for the Garou "heroes" to dismiss it or retrace its steps to where they came from. Do they close the bridge and accept their fate, fight the Wyrms to try and return to the past without it following, or succumb to the Wyrms' corruption and lead their new master back for Gaia's final destruction?

### *Southern Settlement*

The British designate South Australia a free (as opposed to penal) colony in 1834. The land charter even acknowledges the local Aboriginal tribes' land rights. The colonists — including Black Furies, Glass Walkers, and Children of Gaia — don't. The Garou blame the Bunyip for the deaths of sailors, squatters, and colonists.

The Black Furies destroy indigenous clans, rescuing the women and children from alleged patriarchal squalor, ignorant of how the millennia-old cultures defined specific, and arguably equal, roles for men and women. The Glass Walkers co-opt caerns and fund the removal of clans from valuable mining and farming properties. The Children of Gaia appoint themselves as mediators and arbitrators, punishing any Bunyip who seek indigenous justice.

The Bunyip defend themselves and their families with stalwart hearts, but conflicts around the other colonies distract them. When the Garou seek diplomacy, bitter experience from conflicts in the other colonies causes the Bunyip to distrust them.

## *Into the West*

In 1829 the British establish another penal colony on Australia's far west coast. At first the remote location attracts only a handful of Bone Gnawers. Three years later, a handful of Silent Striders arrive, intrigued by the timeless desert Dreaming.

The Striders venture deep into the arid outback and sublime Dreaming. Initially unperturbed by their strange shapeshifting, and recognizing a similar wanderlust, they befriend the scattered Bunyip. When they return to the colony, the Bone Gnawers pay handsomely for information about the interior.

Conflict rises between settlers and the indigenous tribes. The British ambush the warlike Aboriginal clans to prevent a vicious cycle of payback killings. Angry Bunyip blame the Silent Striders for revealing songlines and tribal lands. They hunt settlers in payback, which aggravates the Swan River Garou. War howls echo through the Darling Ranges for weeks.

## *Northern Storms*

The top end of Australia resists British settlement until 1869. Tropical cyclones, supply problems, and disease take their toll, but it's the belligerent indigenous tribes and the Fera who deal the fatal blows. Gumagan don't hesitate to feast upon British surveyors. Nagah summon potent storms as warning and punishment. The Ananasi kill incautious explorers with a myriad of painful venoms.

The Shadow Lords are the first Garou to claim territory in Queensland. The colonies further south distract the Bunyip who leave caerns ripe for the picking. The invading Garou enrage each caern's spirits, but the Shadow Lords are used to powerful, angry gods.

The Get of Fenris arrive two years later. They hunt the Great Dividing Range around the Tamborine plateau, killing the Fera and returning Bunyip. The Get work with the Lords to flush out the shapeshifters and secure the area for their own Kinfolk. Red Talons and Stargazers pass through this region heading west and north.

Each tribe explores for their own reasons, and disturbs the Dreaming spirits and the indigenous shapeshifters in their own way. The Garou poison wells and guard caerns to restrict Bunyip movement. They distribute strychnine-laced flour to murder whole families of kin. The Shadow Lords back the creation of the Native Police Force, which uses existing clan rivalries to brutalize indigenous families for decades to come. Striders and Talons map the land and spirit worlds, leaving the indigenous shapeshifters nowhere to hide. In 1884, settlers and Native Police massacre the Kalkadoon tribe at what they later call Battle Mountain.

## *Pointing the Bone*

Across the continent, colonial governments tear Aboriginal families apart, separating children from their parents to raise them as wards of the state "for their own good." Bunyip kin taken by force or coercion die in childless shame and sorrow. The colonies set bounties for dead thylacines.

The Bunyip population dwindles with each passing year and the remaining packs gather to find a solution. They see the webs of the Ananasi directing their demise and, in accordance with ancient laws determine a fitting payback for all the injustices, they and the Dreaming are suffering.

## *Calling Forth the Yahwie*

In the closing days of the 19th century the surviving Bunyip abandon their families for the dry heart of Uluru. Here within the Pararri-kurruwarri Caern they held a grand, if bitter, corroboree in honor of ancient Ngalyod and the Dreaming that has been their home for untold eons. Into this ritual they pour their rage, hate, and grief—dancing and chanting until the last of them collapses in exhaustion. The focus of their rage is not their misguided European cousins—it is their ancient enemies the Ananasi, who they believe orchestrated and manipulated every sorrow since the fall of the Camazotz.

Out of the swirling dust and choking smoke, out of the flames and shadows, and out of the Dreaming itself, steps death. The ghosts and memories of every Bunyip and kin ever harmed by the Ananasi flood into the apparition. The timelessness of the Dreaming empowers the summoning beyond all expectations. Millennia of pain and suffering, eons of experience, from ancestors long forgotten, lands long since drowned, and seas long ago burned, coalesce within the creature.

The Yahwie bursts from the embers. It bears the likeness of the Kurdaitcha men: Feet of feathers, blood and hair that leave no tracks, blood-matted kangaroo hair about its elongated, scaled body; emu feathers and spinifex cover its head, and its poison-dripping fingers are long needles of bone and wood.

This spirit is death to the Ananasi. It has only one goal: to kill them all. It knows their tricks and sees through their webs. The creature flawlessly tracks them once they've seen it, since it rides their minds. Most werespiders seek refuge within Crawlerling form but this merely helps their demise. The Yahwie needs only kill one spider to kill the whole.

Yet, its power has limits. It cannot see those who have not seen it, nor can it hear those who have not spoken directly to it. It cannot hunt more than one Ananasi at a time, and the further from Australia she runs the longer the Yahwie takes to track her. An enterprising Ananasi might survive for some time by sacrificing other werespiders, but eventually her time will come.



## *Federation*

By the time the six British colonies came together as an independent Commonwealth in 1901, the Bunyip had already lost the War of Tears. The European Garou circled the continent, hiding among the cities and roaming the land, sniffing out any pockets of Bunyip resistance. Though they hadn't yet conquered the inhospitable central deserts, the new Australians had driven across the land, connecting the north and south extremes with telegraph and remote settlements. These beginnings of communications and supply chains meant the Bunyip's end was only a matter of time.

The displaced Bunyip tried to carry on with their duty to Gaia as best they could, though managing the Dreaming tracks was more difficult from lack of easy access to the land. The new land owners were hostile and intolerant of dark faces, and those Bunyip who tried to reach the songlines were chased from the area. At the beginning of the War, the marsupial shapeshifters replied to such hostility with ferocity of their own. After the turn of the century, they retreated and held council with each other to decide their best course of action.

## *Desperate Times*

In the early years following Federation, the entire Bunyip tribe once again came together in a grand conclave in the hidden caves of Uluru. This time they didn't meet in anger or retaliation; this meeting was held in sorrow and desperation. In the heart of the country the Bunyip held their last gathering in the timelessness of the everlasting Dreaming.

The few remaining tribe members argued for days over the choices still available. Their priorities were continuing Gaia's sacred duty, protection of their remaining kin — human and thylacine — and the survival of the tribe. No one aspect took primacy, as without these three pillars the tribe had no future.

The Bunyip agreed that the coastal areas of the physical world were all but lost to them. The European Garou had displaced or murdered the indigenous tribes, and claimed these territories. The Bunyip also agreed that they couldn't simply retreat to Australia's center and defend Uluru. They needed to maintain access to the thylacine, and the invaders had ensured that the only place remaining for the marsupial wolves was in Australia's most southern state of Tasmania.

The logistical constraints of fighting these two fronts were almost overwhelming. The convergence of Dreaming tracks at Uluru and the breeding grounds of Tasmania were separated by almost 1,500 miles of inhospitable terrain—and hostile Garou territories—as well as 150 miles of rough, threatening seas across what the Europeans called Bass Strait. The Bunyip still had Moon Bridges joining caerns, but using them risked their discovery by other tribes as the Bunyip moved through the Aetherial Realm. The weremarsupials also had secret ways of moving along the songlines to reach distant destinations. These pathways were slower than Moonlit Airts, but were more secure. The Bunyip couldn't use songlines for rapid tactical deployment, but could use them for rapid retreat, as long as the retreating packs weren't required elsewhere in a hurry.

### *Smoke and Mirrors*

The tribe agreed that it couldn't fight both fronts with the dwindling resources available. To survive, the werethylacines needed to disappear to where the Garou couldn't follow.

The two remaining battlegrounds couldn't be more dissimilar. The spiritual lands at the center where the songlines met were hot, dry, endless stretches of red, sticky dirt. The breeding grounds on the southern island were cool, mountainous, and covered with thick, lush forests. The central desert offered hostile terrain to the Europeans, but the Bunyip's supply lines were similarly sparse. The werethylacines could easily find food and water, and concentrate on staying ahead of their enemies. The open, flat land also offered few options to which they could fall back if the Europeans gained an advantage. If necessary, the Bunyip would retreat to Kata Tjuta, before making their final stand at Uluru. They refused to let their most sacred place fall to the invaders.

The forests of Tasmania were more familiar to the European Garou, who could move through the woodlands and find sustenance and shelter almost as easily as the Bunyip, but the Bunyip could more effectively lose themselves between the trees. They could lure the enemy into ambushes and then disappear. The indigenous werewolves could work to keep the Garou away from the territories of the rapidly-dwindling thylacine breeding population.

Faced with these two choices, the Bunyip decided that they would use Tasmania to lure the Garou's hostile efforts, while simultaneously working in the center to protect their long-term interests. The tribe chose those packs most effective at hit-and-run tactics to gain the attention of the Garou, and draw them to the Tasmanian forests. While the Garou were focused on eliminating the damage in the south, the rest of the Bunyip tribe would be able to focus on the great work at the center.

### *Genocidal Intent*

The Bunyip's gambit succeeded in gaining the attention of the Garou. The Bunyip used secret paths to access several caerns stolen from them by the Europeans. They attacked the invading spirits and upset the rededicated sanctity of the holy places. The Bunyip fled before the Garou could counterattack, but they made sure that their enemies knew who was responsible.

The Garou searched for the Bunyip, angered at the aggression of the defeated tribe. They found the spoor of the werethylacines leading through the Umbra and along Moon Paths south towards the island state. The Garou believed that the Bunyip's final stronghold was in the Tasmanian forests, and that the native werewolves thought the distance would save them.

Though working as intended, the Bunyip could not have known they made a tactical error that would signal their final days. The other tribes considered the conflict won, and had banished the native tribe to areas of hostile wilderness that none of the European Garou desired. As long as the Bunyip stayed away from the territories of other werewolves, the Garou considered them beneath notice. As far as the Europeans knew, they'd broken the Bunyip strongholds and wrested control of territories away from the indigenous shapeshifters. The Bunyip had retreated and barely ever encountered Garou, and were no longer a threat, or even a nuisance. In many ways, werewolf history had repeated itself. Garou attitudes were similar to what they were at the end of the War of Rage. When the Fera disappeared from Garou awareness, the werewolves assumed they'd died out, and turned their attention to the ever-present threat of the Wurm. Disregarding that which was no longer present was a common Garou mindset.

If the Bunyip had stayed in central Australia, or in the wilds of Tasmania, they may have survived. Without the Garou harrying the dying tribe, they may have delayed the conflict and given the Bunyip a chance to secure their future in peace. As it was, the Bunyip's strikes also reignited the werewolves' anger. The Bunyip proved that they were still a threat, and the wolves refused to tolerate the risk to their (newly claimed) territories and caerns. The werewolves reengaged the war with howls of fury and bloodlust, with most tribes dispatching their swiftest packs in pursuit of the indigenous werewolves. The Garou mission was simple—find the Bunyip and destroy them once and for all.

Though the Bunyip had experienced the European aggression and lust for territory, they had little idea of the depths to which Garou vindictiveness and aggression could sink. At that time of prehistory, the proto-Bunyip's cousins had no lack of enemies to hate. As long as the tribe kept moving, the

Garou always found something else to hunt and kill. Now, the tribe had nowhere left to run. They had experienced suffering before, but now they witnessed the horrific ends the Garou would pursue in their misguided wars for purity.

## *A Dwindling Race*

Australia's early entry into the Great War gave the Bunyip a slim chance for survival. The global war reached Australian shores through the bonds of empire and loyalty to the British crown. Many Australians were descendants of British settlers and still thought of themselves as British subjects. Many of the current generation of werewolves retained a strong sense of loyalty to their European tribes and the kin their grandparents had left behind. The call to arms energized a patriotic nerve in human, Garou, and Kinfolk populations.

Kinfolk enlisted to fight Australia's national enemies, while the werewolves saw the Wyrms' touch in the cascading political strings that dragged nations into conflict. Garou fought both sides of the conflict, killing for national interests, while fighting the inhuman drives behind the conflict. The werewolves weren't prepared to stand idle while the Wyrms devastated Gaia.

Garou stalked Moon Bridges to allied caerns and joined battle in the northern hemisphere. Kinfolk enlisted in the armed forces and spent long weeks and months on ships to reach the same shores. The tribes weren't willing to leave their hard-won Australian caerns untended; they relied on a force of mostly elderly or injured Garou to protect their homeland holdings. These small, protective details were duly occupied with keeping threats away from the sacred places. They stopped searching for the Bunyip, and the tribe enacted the first half of its great work.

While the Europeans were absent and distracted, the Bunyip devoted considerable effort to protecting their last thylacine populations trapped on Tasmania. They couldn't move the marsupials—they'd adapted to the specific climate too well—and the Bunyip's goading of the Garou had led to the werewolves cutting off most means of escape from the island.

The Bunyip did what they could, encouraging more frequent breeding and bending the rules about manipulating the time streams as far as possible, but the birth rate of new joeys was still too low. The tribe couldn't devote any more effort to their animal kin, as they still had their duties to attend to. With ever-fewer Bunyip, tending the time streams was an ever-increasing difficulty.

Human farmers continued to malign the marsupial wolves as a threat to livestock, and hunters tracked the last thylacines for the bounty and their pelts. The Bunyip bargained with native spirits to confound hunters, masking

the thylacine spoor and hiding signs of their presence. They crafted fetishes that cast scent trails far from their actual location, or that changed the tracks of the thylacine into those of other beasts. It was all too late.

History recorded that the last thylacine died in captivity in 1936. This wasn't true; a few small family groups survived in remote Tasmanian wilderness, alongside Bunyip sent to protect them, for nearly another decade. The tribe's soul shattered when these last few kin died. The tribe now had only one duty left to live for.

## *The Dreaming Moves*

The Bunyip paid a heavy price for their strategy of drawing the Garou to Tasmania, but it worked. The distraction ensured the tribe had time to prepare a great rite that would move the spiritual heart of Uluru from deep within the monolith's physical form. The Bunyip redirected the time stream convergences from the physical world to Uluru's spiritual reflection deep in their Umbral homeland.

The rite required months of cleansing rituals and the collection and preparation of countless fetishes hidden or previously lost across the country. The ritual's huge Gnosis cost was more than the surviving Bunyip could muster. They needed to ritually destroy the spirit vessels, releasing their bound captives and harvesting the outburst of spiritual fuel in the process.

The rite began on the night of the new moon, and lasted until the full moon hung enormously in the deep black sky. This moon was the color of red ochre, and mystics across the world marveled at what it signified.

The shifting songlines left great scars across the Australian Penumbra. Leaks from ages long past spilled into the Penumbra, forming what European Garou called the Dreamtime. Prehistoric and extinct animals coexisted with modern creatures and the Bunyip ancestral spirits. Moon paths to Pangaea and the Legendary Realm opened as sympathetic connections formed between these lands out of time.

Concerned at the unintended damage to the spirit worlds, but satisfied with the success of the rite, the Bunyip tribe relocated to their Umbral homeland. From now on the remaining Bunyip would use the homeland as a safe base of operations, and would move back to Australia to repair the damage to the Penumbra, avoid disconnection, and tend to their remaining duties.

## *Stolen Kinfolk*

The Garou couldn't find any trace of the Bunyip. As far as they could tell, the werethylacines were dead, and had somehow inflicted grievous wounds on the Penumbra with their passing. With seemingly no competition, the werewolves turned their attention to the Bunyip's human Kinfolk.

The Children of Gaia were determined to salvage a future for the indigenous kinfolk who supported the strange native werewolves. The normally peace-loving tribe had been horrified at the pogrom against the weremarsupials. They were still pragmatic enough to see the value of a population accustomed to breeding with shapeshifting outsiders.

For years, the Australian government had run a program to force indigenous Australians to abandon their culture and accept a life shaped by white Australian culture and prejudices. Soon after Federation, the government primarily targeted children of mixed heritage who were raised by indigenous communities. Authorities took these children from their families – using force if necessary – and relocated them to homes and missions. Here they were educated in a ‘civilized’ manner and taught necessary skills to someday become servants and laborers serving white employers. These children lost vast aspects of their indigenous culture and heritage, and many were subject to abuse, exploitation, and sexual assault.

The Children of Gaia went even further than human authorities. Leading the other tribes, they kidnapped children and young adults suspected to be Bunyip kinfolk, regardless of the purity of their human heritage. The werewolves’ actions devastated entire family groups, stealing away their future by removing the mothers and fathers of the next generation. The Garou moved these victims as far from their homelands as possible, throwing them together regardless of the region, indigenous nation, or culture they came from. They intended to contain the last of the Bunyip line until they died out, and cultivate breeding rites with the untarnished humans left behind.

## ***Transformation Unravels***

Among the kidnapped victims were pregnant women possibly carrying the last seed of the Bunyip. The tribes were divided on what to do with these women. Some wanted to kill them, or force the abortion of their fetuses, to ensure the Bunyip were gone forever. Others counselled patience, that the Garou should wait and see if the children became weremarsupials. With the bloodshed of the war fresh in memory, and the beginnings of doubt and guilt starting to seep in to the Garou’s minds, those suggesting patience and peace won out.

When the pregnant mothers came due, the Garou received another violent shock. Without Uluru’s spiritual hub to serve as a focus for the ancient Dreaming magic, the harmonious merger between mammalian werewolf and marsupial thylacine was broken. The mothers experienced difficult, deadly deliveries, as each of their children underwent the First Change during birth. The dying mothers screamed with hundreds of ancient voices from somewhere deep within the Dreaming, cursing the Garou for their ar-

## ***THE STOLEN GENERATIONS OF OUR WORLD***

A word of discretion – the stolen generations were real, devastated families, and created a rift between Australian cultures that lingers to this day. Many of the children who were taken from their mothers and siblings are still alive today. Many never saw their parents again.

This was a dark time in Australian history, and it was more insidious in the World of Darkness. We acknowledge the history and use it here to cast parallels between human-inflicted misery and that inflicted by werewolves. No matter how much the perpetrators were misguided by their ‘good intentions,’ we don’t condone their actions, even if we sometimes present their fictitious counterparts in a kind light. When you use these aspects in your games, please take a moment to reflect on the events of our world that provided the framework for this fiction, and treat the subject matter – and the victims – with the respect and discretion they deserve.

rogance and folly and naming them kin slayers. The infant Garou clawed their way free of their mothers’ wombs, filled with unthinking instinct and Rage.

The werewolves who witnessed these births, those who had tried to restrain or soothe the delivering mothers, could immediately see these bloodthirsty infants had no trace of thylacine features about them. They appeared to be perfect Garou in Crinos form, born much like the Metis of other tribes but bearing no mutations or deformities. They had no distinguishing features of any tribe, but each carried the strongest scent of the pureblooded Garou.

The mystery of these births, and the loss of Bunyip features, furthered the unease spreading through the Australian Garou. They began to see a glimpse of the horror they had wrought. Though the Garou had made excuses to themselves about the reasons for this war – including the obvious corruption of the Bunyip, doubts that the Bunyip were werewolves and not simply a type of Fera, and the lack of Gaia-given purpose for the Bunyip – the werewolves finally began to understand how self-deceptive these imaginings were.

These first post-Bunyip children were adopted into other tribes, and never knew the full truth of their heritage,

history, or culture. They learned the ways of their adoptive tribe, and didn't experience any difference to their fellow wolves. But each one radiated a purity that made other werewolves uncomfortable, even as they instinctively felt the need to defer to the purity of lineage. Their presence was a constant reminder of the Garou's victory, and its cost.

Though the Garou had declared the Bunyip strange and different, they found Bunyip kinfolk to carry strong werewolf bloodlines with a high chance of producing pure Garou children. This didn't prevent the spirit world from being incredibly hostile to the Garou. Even these new generations experienced the anger of the Australian spirits, as if they carried the sins of both parental lines.

### *Despair's Curse*

Following Uluru's great migration, the Bunyip worked tirelessly to soothe and heal the Penumbra of the wounds they'd inadvertently inflicted. They were powerless to act when the Garou stole away the Bunyip kinfolk – their numbers were too few, and their duty to the Dreaming was more urgent than breeding. Rather than die in a pointless last stand, the Bunyip watched and tracked the Garou, ready to recover their kin.

While the loss of the thylacine shattered the Bunyip's souls, witnessing the birth of the next generation as pure-blooded Garou broke their hearts. They'd not foreseen that the transformative rites, performed so many thousands of years ago, relied on the heart of Uluru being present in the physical world. The tribe was finally broken. They had no future to live for, and no one to mourn their past. A great Harano overwhelmed the last Bunyip. In bottomless grief, they abandoned their duties and used their remaining energies to curse the Australian Penumbra, caerns, and Moon Bridges against the hated Garou. The Bunyip stood on the dry land one last time before abandoning it to fade away in the Umbra.

The Bunyip were finally gone. The Garou had won. Over the coming decades the Garou would slowly unravel some of the history of the defeated tribe, and sink further into realization and despair at what their victory had cost Gaia.

### *Revelations*

The alternative lifestyles and hippie movements of the 60s and 70s encouraged a new interest in indigenous cultures around the world. Australia was no exception. Both indigenous and white activists collaborated for native rights and representation. Full acceptance, recognition, and integration of indigenous culture remained a distant dream, but the first tentative steps had begun.

Australian Garou looked to their history and found more questions than answers. Every tribe had tales of the

### *SHAMEFUL DREAMS*

Not all Garou follow Amber-Dreaming's lead for the same reasons. The prestige associated with calming the Australian spirits becomes clear as interest in her quest grows. Sept leaders across the continent sponsor similar quests in a race to find a reliable method of appeasement. Collaborative parties share their information to the benefit of all, but many keep their discoveries secret. As evidence of murder and atrocity mounts, more and more Garou find less shame in covering up the truth than exposing it.

bizarre shapeshifters who opposed them for more than a century. Curious Theurges wondered at the uniquely antagonistic Australian Umbra. Aboriginal Garou looked to their ancestors and family histories to uncover their true origins and found historical gaps and dead ends.

In the 1980s, the Child of Gaia Galliard Amber-Dreaming treks into Australia's remotest regions to record indigenous stories. She hopes to discover some clue to understanding the lost Bunyip tribe and thus find a way to appease the wrathful spirits. She leads her pack on a journey to septs and caerns across Australia, and inspires other packs to join her cause. Together they seek to thoroughly document every legend relating to the lost shapeshifters.

Many Aboriginal Garou doubt her motives. The Uktena of Kata Tjuta refuse to share the masculine halves of their myths with a woman, citing numerous taboos. The Red Talon packs of Cape York attack and kill her packmate, Jumps-the-Fence, for violating their sacred ground. Other tribes are more open. The Mount Tamborine Get of Fenris boast of their accomplishments, and the Wiradjuri Fianna are happy to share their stories.

The quest leads the Galliard to remote caerns where she meets the Corax Jane Drinks-Dry. Amber-Dreaming's collection of stories fascinates the Corax. After cautious tale swapping, the two women grow comfortable with each other and the Corax leads the pack to the Gumagan Ced Booming-Fire-Laugh.

The intrigued Garou follow Drinks-Dry through miles of dense rainforest to the Gumagan's wallow. Awed, the pack listens to the werecrocodile for hours as he shares ancient myths mingled with modern history. He tells them his words are a songline to what they seek, if they are brave enough to follow.

## TIMELESS SONGS

In the tribe's final years Bunyip explorers search desperately for a new home. Violently twisting time vortices play havoc with the broken Dreaming paths. The Bunyip exit the trails at their destinations, but untold years in the past or future. The confused explorers rarely stay for more than a few days to get their bearings before disappearing again. If the Garou could discern a pattern to these appearances, be lucky enough to spot one in person, or be fast enough to hunt one down, these accidental visitations may be the best hope for the Garou to contact a true Bunyip. The Bunyip are unlikely to be friendly towards their enemies, however.

Ced's songline leads the Garou to some of the remotest reaches of Australia and deep into the dangerous Dreaming. The pack speaks with ancient spirits through the ever-now of the Dreamtime. They find caerns hidden in remote valleys and the remains of Bunyip and Garou locked in violence even as they died. They see art painted upon rocks as old as the Dreaming itself and the remnants of the Bunyip's struggle to replace the wolf.

The pack records it all, and the subsequent analysis takes years. When Amber-Dreaming presents her thesis she is certain: The Bunyip were Garou.

## Tears

The news divides the Australian Garou, who debate the discovery and what it means for them. Some proclaim that if the Bunyip were Garou they were obviously unworthy of their role as Gaia's Warriors. Others deny the truth completely, accusing Amber-Dreaming of falsehood and bias due to her packmate's death. Several claim heavy hearts but deny taking part in the slaughter. More argue they had nothing to do with it, and the tribes are wrong to think they should apologize for the deeds of their ancestors. Some are aghast at the role their tribe played and fall into deep Harano. The Children of Gaia support Amber-Dreaming as she defends her research, yet even they are torn on the matter.

The Australian Garou dub the Bunyip's destruction the War of Tears. Petitioners brave the furious Australian Umbra to contact Bunyip totems. Some wish to beg forgiveness, others to demand it. Neither makes any difference; the spirits remain hostile.

Packs search the outback for Gumagan, theorizing that the weresaurians must know more. Few succeed in finding any. Those that do discover most Gumagan aren't friendly or talkative, and new battles disturb the shattered Dreaming.

The Black Furies and Children of Gaia unite in search of Bunyip Kinfolk. Though the Australian government declared thylacines officially extinct as of 1986, sightings in remote bushland prompt Garou trackers to scour lands from Papua New Guinea to Tasmania. Others turn to new scientific methods to recreate thylacines from old DNA.

## The War of Dragons

Long before Garou, long before humans, the Dragon Kings ruled the Earth. The fractured Mnesis of the Mokol  tells them the Dragon Kings were the first of Gaia's shape-shifting children, but the Rokea claim earlier origins, and the Ananasi can argue to have been contemporaries of the weredinosauers. Regardless of who came first, the Dragon Kings controlled the Mnesis through the magic of the Wonder-Workers, and through this they had the power to force the other shapeshifters to yield.

## The Changing Mesozoic

The Mesozoic era was a period of experimentation for Gaia. Life was constantly changing and adapting, with seemingly-limitless possibilities. None of the earliest shapeshifters know for certain if Gaia's attention was intended to create Changing Breeds who could take many forms. They have faith that the Earth Mother had plans for Her earliest children, but they could have been a happy accident that She would adapt time and again to serve Her needs throughout history.

In the early centuries of the Mesozoic, what would later become known as the Triassic period, Gaia gave five animals the gift of adapting their form as needed to confront the challenges of survival. The arachnids, dinosaurs, plesiosaurs, pterosaurs, and sharks were each the focus of Her attention. She took the form they had evolved into and improved upon it from within Her dreams.

Each shapeshifter had forms for camouflage, aggression, and manipulating the environment. The camouflage form was simplest; the shapeshifter's existing animal form let her blend in with those with whom she shared a common legacy. The aggressive form was more challenging. Gaia kept the natural endowments of the base animal and added increased weaponry, power, and durability. The form for manipulation was a strange concoction born from Gaia's dreams of what could be: a gracile biped with delicate, dexterous fingers with which to grasp and move the environment to suit itself. This form retained key

features of the base animal — scales, a hard exoskeleton, or gills and webbed limbs for propulsion — but included unparalleled ability to surpass those animals in creativity and manipulating their environment.

### *Drachid*

The new form was a marvel to the dragons. The other Bête were less enamored with its potential. The Rokea were dismissive of the relatively weak form. It was a slow and clumsy swimmer, and ill-suited to their predatory marine lifestyle. To the weresharks, the humanoid form's only purpose was to parlay with other land-dwelling shapeshifters.

The Ananasi explored the form with interest, but were disdainful of its abilities. They were already cunning manipulators and crafters in their arachnid forms, and the monstrous hybrid shape gave them strength and size when needed. Much like the sharks, the werespiders found the new forms most useful while dealing with other shapeshifters in a form somewhat similar in appearance to the others.

The dragons disagreed. The new form — that they called Drachid — was lithe and versatile. It had cunningly-constructed fingers that were superior for controlling and moving objects than even the most adroit claws. The Drachid gave uniformity and a common understanding to the dragons. Regardless of how diminutive or enormous the dragon's animal form, they were all approximately the same size and

shape in Drachid. Some variation remained, and characteristics of the Saurid animal form helped individuals identify both one another and the lineages they came from. Now all dragons could meet and converse as equals.

### *A New Breed*

The Drachid form didn't just give the dragons better communication; it eventually changed life and civilization across the globe. With Drachid, the dragons became one race. Dragons born from different animal stock formed friendships and relationships. People from different backgrounds could physically express love and affection as equals. In these earliest days, the Bête had no concept of the risks such mating would produce millions of years in the future. The clutches of eggs produced by these pairings were fertile and tended with great care by the parents, who were keenly interested to see which Archid would hatch from each egg.

The dragons were amazed at what emerged from the shells. In addition to the young dragons born of the species of one of their parents, a new offspring emerged. These new dragon children had the natural appearance of the humanoid Drachid form. Some of these spawn later experienced the First Change and joined the ranks of dragons, but most lacked their parent's fluidity of shape. Over several generations family groupings of dragons, Drachid, and Saurid roamed the land. They lived in harmony, each using his or her talents to serve the clutch, and offered deference to the shapeshifting dragons.



## WAR OF DRAGONS LEXICON

**Archid:** The Dragon King's war form. It combines different elements of Saurians to create a unique expression of the character.

**Bête:** All shapeshifters. Mostly used by the Dragon Kings.

**Clutch:** A family grouping of Dragon Kings. Important for imperial politics of the period.

**Drachid:** The toolmaker form of the Dragons. It appears as a reptilian humanoid and is effective at manipulating the Mnesis. Dragon Kings gave birth to non-shapeshifting Drachid offspring, giving rise to a unique, unifying breed for all dragons.

**Dragons:** Dragon Kings before they tamed the Mnesis. In modern times, it is a derogative term for those Dragon Kings unskilled in crafting Memetics.

**Dragon Kings:** Shapeshifters from dinosaur, pterosaur, and plesiosaur stock, who controlled the Mnesis and carved advanced empires across the world.

**Memetics:** Pseudoliving artifacts native to the Mnesis; incapable of leaving it without the magic of the Wonder-Workers.

**Mnesis:** The realm of imagination and idea, cosmologically separating the physical realm from the Penumbra and beyond.

**Saurid:** A Dragon King's dinosaur, plesiosaur, or pterosaur animal form.

**Streams:** Schools of Mnesis workings. Each teaches different techniques and has different specializations.

**Wonder-Workers:** Historically, those Dragon Kings who learned how to stabilize Memetics and draw them out of the Mnesis. Used as an honorific in modern times for those who have mastered the Gifts and rites controlling the Mnesis.

As years and generations passed, the Drachid bred as true as the dinosaurs. While the dragons were the nexuses around which society – and eventually kingdoms – grew, the Drachid made the societies work.

Gaia was pleased by the development, and would remember the miraculous Drachid that bridged the differences

between dragons. When She birthed the Changing Breeds of modern times, She remembered this unity and sought to replicate it with humans as they became more dominant in the fortunes and fate of the world.

## The Mnesis

The shapeshifting breeds weren't the only difference between the Mesozoic and latter ages. The boundary between the physical and spiritual worlds was similarly alien to what modern shifters know. The Gauntlet didn't exist until late in the Mesozoic era, when the empires of the Dragon Kings fell. In its place, nestled between the physical realm and the Penumbra, was the Mnesis.

The Mnesis was a realm of imagination and idea. At this time it wasn't the repository of memory connecting the Mokolé to the past. It was a realm that responded to the consciousness and imagination of living creatures. Beings with the power to travel between spiritual and physical did so through the Mnesis. This naturally included spirits from the Umbra, and it was another blessing Gaia gave to Her new mercurial children. She wanted them to experience the totality of existence, and overcome the limitations of their physical nature as surely as they had overcome the limitations of flesh defined in a single shape.

The pathway between the physical and spiritual, and the reverse – what would later be known as “stepping sideways” – was an actual journey through this realm of thought-given-form. For those gifted with the potential, the Mnesis was always a small act of thought and will, and a step away from the physical and Penumbral realms. From this step, the traveler moved through the Mnesis, running, flying or swimming as desired, from one border to the next, where a second act of will pushed her through into her destination.

The Mnesis was alive with possibility waiting to be inspired by conscious minds. While on the journey, the traveler's concepts and thoughts gained tangibility and would follow or swarm around their creator. Over time, those moving through the Mnesis learned to control their thoughts, lest they be seriously inconvenienced by the memetic creatures. Memetics couldn't leave the Mnesis and would stop at the border, lingering for a time, in some ways analogous to the memory of an idea. These strange forms of pseudo-life lacked impetus of their own, merely clustering around their creators – or other thinking beings that passed nearby – waiting to be used.

## Wonder-Workers

Though all spirits and shapeshifters endured the chaos of thoughts-given-form when they journeyed between the spiritual and physical, the realm was much more to the dragons. To the dragons, the Mnesis was a place of wonder, where idea and physical existence met. Within its boundaries,

the Dragons saw the world's potential, and a future where they could shape their dreams into reality.

The realm reacted to thought and idea but, once formed, the shaped ideas were difficult to change. Each iteration of an idea spawned a new creation, which would compete with its siblings for the creator's attention. This cavalcade of wonder was an irritation to most travelers, who hurried through the journey, eager to leave the annoying thoughts behind.

The dragons soon discovered that the Drachid form was particularly suited to the realm. The form's dexterous hands could grasp the dream spawn and shape them through a combination of intent, desire, and physical effort. Where previously dozens or more ideas would spontaneously coalesce from the Mnesis, somehow using Drachid helped stabilize the eruption of ideas. The dragons learned how to enter the Mnesis and spawn a raw thought, a basic shape that would be the seed of creation. Like clay, the dragons could then grasp the memetic with their hands and work it to the specific needs of their imagination. Color, texture, function, and intent all came together at the worker's need. These wonders grew larger as needed, bringing together more dream stuff as commanded.

Over centuries, the dragons learned how to bring together multiple memetics in more complex creations, with each part forming the basis of Wonder-Works of Mnesis-formed and Essence-fueled machinery. The dragons lost themselves in this realm of imagination, and despaired at what they lost each time they needed to move through to the Umbra, or return to the physical realm.

Sometime between the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods, the dragons unlocked the secrets of stabilizing these memetics by binding them with spirits of the Umbra. The Gifts and rites that forged the memetics also unlocked secrets that led to the fusion of spirit and physical item in the creation of fetishes. These dragons were masters of imagination given form, and now they knew how to sustain the form and remove it from the Mnesis Realm. They gave themselves the title of Wonder-Worker, in recognition of their glory.

## *The Time of Kings*

Harnessing the wonders of imagination given form was a massive technological leap for the dragons. The Wonder-Workers forged their kingdoms, bringing other dragons to them in the hope of learning the secrets. The Wonder-Workers were willing to teach promising pupils as long as they swore fealty and obedience to their masters. In less than a century, dragon society had changed from cooperative family units and tribes to cities and kingdoms, all sustained through the wonders of the Mnesis. The Dragon Kings were truly masters of everything Gaia provided.

This was an age of enlightenment for the Dragon Kings. Soon, virtually all Dragons knew at least the rudiments of

how to forge the Mnesis. Each specialized in their imaginative field of interest, helping to build and maintain the vast cities of living dreamstuff. The Drachid thrived in these cities, breeding and working for the Kings, providing service in exchange for comfort. They listened in awe to the teachings of the Wonder-Workers, each dreaming of undergoing the First Change and joining the ranks of the Dragon Kings.

## *Rise of Empires*

It was perhaps inevitable that Dragon Kings of different philosophies and skills would clash as their kingdoms grew. Armies of Drachids clashed at the command of the Dragon Kings. The higher the rank of the soldier, the more elaborate and impressive the memetic armor and weaponry she used. When Dragon Kings joined battle themselves, most relied on the natural superiority of their Archid or Suchid forms. Some fielded elaborate weapons forged from the darkest parts of their imagination that inflicted massive casualties on their enemies, and untold destruction on the environment, as their dream- and spirit-fueled payloads exploded with huge eruptions of spiritual and physical energies. These battlefield memetics were the first weapons of mass destruction, and they precipitated an arms race between Wonder-Workers of improved protection and countermeasures versus ever more powerful weaponry imaginings.

Smaller kingdoms united for mutual protection, or pledged loyalty to more powerful kingdoms to prevent their own destruction. The most powerful Wonder-Workers soon commanded the lesser Dragon King rulers in empires that stretched across the globe. For a time, peace fell across the face of Gaia, as the empires worked to develop more effective weapons, armors, and war machines from the Mnesis. Direct aggression gave way to plots and politics, as the rulers tried to improve their positions and undermine their enemies without risking the certainty of Mnesis-fueled mutually assured destruction. It was only a matter of time before the ever-increasing tensions between the proud Dragon Kings erupted into war.

## *The Rise and Fall of the Dragon Kings*

The Age of Kings truly begins with the founding of the first city, El-Khaataar. Said to be the place where Gaia shaped the very first dragons, it is the site of the Wonder-Workers' greatest project: a monument built without stone or tools. Deep in the jungles called T'Kash a shimmering ziggurat of living glass grows, rising taller than even the oldest trees. Drachid and dragons alike come from far and wide: first to stare, then to pledge allegiance to its mighty creators.

Soon, the Empire of El-Khaataar is born. Armed with fearsome memetic weapons and driven by an almost-religious

fervor, it swiftly conquers all of the T’Kash. Its rulers, the Eclipsed Suns, welcome all who wish to join their great work, and mercilessly cull any who resist.

## *The Early Days*

For a time, El-Khaataar reigns supreme. Soon enough, however, rivals rise to challenge the First Empire’s power. On the coast of the Tethys Ocean, a plesiosaur Dragon King gathers an army to fight off the Rokea raiders that plague his village. Emboldened by success, he proclaims himself the Feathered Emperor of Alsepéak, which claims land and ocean alike. Soon his own wonder — the Palace of Shining-Waters — rises from the deep, a massive crystalline egg held aloft by great coral tentacles. A ring of glowing ammonites surrounds it; as barely-sentient memetic creations, they serve as a living alarm system against the furious Rokea.

Other kingdoms rise and fall, but the two Dragon Empires repel or absorb all challengers and dominate for thousands of years. Eventually, a new force arises far to the south. The Living Kingdom of Sails is an amazing sight: a city of multicolored sails, tents, and walkways, carried on the backs of a herd of Mnesis-born colony beasts. It treads the massive savannahs of Gondwana in a constant search for trade, entertainment, and Wonder-Workers. Eschewing territory for opulence, the fat and mirthful ruler Nomad-Sun promises wealth and prestige to all who join his grand experiment. Many heed the call.

## *Dangerous Work*

The Wonder-Workers build the Empires, but their great power comes at a price. The most impressive creations require powerful spirits to incarnate them, and many Dragon Kings die attempting to hunt down or negotiate with the Greater Jagglings the work requires. Lone Wonder-Workers combine their knowledge and strength into Streams; schools where they perfect their methods and seek ever greater glory. While hatchlings thrill to tales of bold clutches bringing Incarna to heel, the truth is much less glorious; the Streams are hotbeds of intrigue, and many would-be Wonder-Workers throw their lives away to gain admittance or please their superiors.

Other dangers wait within the Mnesis itself. Long-forgotten memetics linger in its deepest reaches, waiting for living minds to revitalize them once more. Some of them are so alien — so vast and incomprehensible — that they may not even come from the minds of dragons. Could they be echoes of an age *before* the Age of Kings? The Streams will not speak of such things. Though they warn students away from the deep places, patience does not come naturally to young dragons.

No one realizes the greatest cost, however, until it’s too late. Unlike the Umbral realms that lay beyond it, the Mnesis is *not* infinite. Every time a Wonder-Worker shapes part of it, they lock away that portion of its essence or life. In the natural order of things, these creations would eventually

## *STORY SEED — KEYS TO THE KINGDOM*

Like many others, the characters have dreamed of undergoing their First Change. Only when it comes — when they realize their birthright and are whisked away to a life of power and prestige — do they begin to understand a Dragon King’s lot.

The new Kings must learn firsthand the dangers of visiting the Mnesis, the bloody demands of the Imperial Armies, and the even bloodier politics waged by the Royal Lines. Yes, they have the power to shake (and to shape) the world, but what will they do with it?

fade away and return to the potentiality of the Mnesis. But if the construct enters the physical or the Umbra, if it truly dies there, that portion of the Mnesis is lost forever. With each dream-wrought treasure the Dragon Kings destroy, the Mnesis dies a little more.

## *The March of Progress*

Unaware of their effect on the Mnesis, the Dragon Empires continue to grow at an incredible rate. Such a pace unsettles many Dragon Kings, so used to seeing few real changes in their long lives, but they can do little to stem the tide. As the old Unshading hermit No-Eggs-Mother says: “The stampede runs where it will.” She leads a number of dragons to eschew civilization and live among their dinosaur cousins, but the vast majority of Dragon Kings — and Drachid — are taken with dreams of glory and power.

Many Drachid find life in the Dragon Empires far from satisfying. Without royal blood or mastery of the Mnesis, few can aspire to a life of more than labor, hunting, or herding. In a society without written language, the Mnesis is the primary vehicle for communication, education, and public life, not to mention the revered practice of Wonder-Working. While society advances in leaps and bounds — socially, technologically, and politically — many Drachid are left behind. The Dragon Kings’ cousins find themselves trapped at the bottom of a rapidly-growing heap.

Many find a home among the Imperial Armies. Their great numbers, alongside a deeply-ingrained culture of deference to the Dragon Kings, makes them the perfect foot soldiers. The armies themselves promise purpose, power, and recognition — in return for complete obedience. Some eventually manage to climb the ranks into positions of leadership; White-Bark — a conscript from a nameless village

on the El-Khaataari border — becomes one of the empire's longest-serving generals.

## **Cold War**

As the Dragon Empires grow, tensions between them grow as well. Peace — never really a matter of political will, but of practicality — grows ever more fragile as borders loom closer. For centuries they prey on weaker and less-organized foes instead: wild beasts, independent Drachid settlements, and the strange and alien Ananasi. The beasts of the earth quake before them. The Drachid are all but conquered. While many Ananasi scuttle away and hide, some pledge their loyalty instead, serving as viziers, shamans, spies, and assassins.

With total domination seemingly on the horizon, the Empires' rulers begin to consider what comes next. What will they do when there are no other foes to point their eager armies towards? Or, perhaps even more pressing: What will the *other* Empires do?

## **Proxy Wars**

If the Dragon Empires are a powder keg waiting to explode, the village of Colors-Under-Sunlight is the spark. An unremarkable settlement on the edge of El-Khaataar's territory, its elders live in fear of the empire's inevitable approach. Desperate, they look to the Living Kingdom of Sails for help. If Nomad-Sun cares more for trade than territory, they reason, perhaps they can buy their freedom?

They secretly send an envoy, Vermillion-Tail, to the Living Kingdom's travelling city. She weaves a tale of relentless warmongering, of desperate villages overwhelmed and consumed. She pleads for reinforcements and — surprisingly — Nomad-Sun agrees. He sends her home with a troop of soldiers and a shadowy Wonder-Worker, the cunning strategist Waits-in-Mire. When El-Khaataari troops finally arrive, high walls and a well-prepared, well-armed militia await them.

The rebels slaughter the would-be conquerors. At Waits-in-Mire's urging, they send gifts to nearby settlements: the severed heads of their common foes, paraded on shimmering memetic spears. News spreads, and soon the T'Kash is awash in talk of revolt. Would-be rebels flock to the Living Kingdom to seek further supplies. Nomad-Sun is happy to help — for a price.

El-Khaataar's rulers are stunned. Years of barely-contested expansion have made them proud and, by the time they react, redirecting forces from other provinces towards the southern flank, the damage is done. They have shown weakness.

## **Treachery**

On the other side of El-Khaataar, the Empire of Alsepéak faces its own problems. The current Feathered Emperor,

## **STORY SEED — THIS LAND IS MY LAND**

The characters' home — a village, tribal hunting ground, perhaps even a wild Dragon King wallow — lies right in El-Khaataar's sights. Will they roll over and let the Dragon Empire annex their land, or will they fight? Will they submit and join its ranks (perhaps even helping to conquer their neighbors) or will they Rage?

Canny rebels may attempt to bargain with the Living Kingdom of Sails, but can they pay Nomad-Sun's price? Or at the risk of trading one master for another, they may seek an alliance with New-Spring, the upstart of Alsepéak. Perhaps, if they are even more daring, they can play all three sides against each other.

Old-Dreams-New, grows weary of the crown. After toiling for centuries to build his mighty kingdom, he dreams of spending his final years in peace. Instead of choosing a single heir, he entrusts the empire to all his Dragon King children, the Many-Colored Masters. Although he doesn't realize it, he sows the seeds of his legacy's demise.

The Masters are fractious and inefficient. They cannot agree on anything until news of El-Khaataar's troubles reaches them. New-Spring, a young and ambitious Master, pushes to attack while they're distracted, but the eldest of the clutch — a Gathering named Many-Words — insists on remaining uninvolved. A gifted orator, she ruthlessly cuts down her younger brother's every attempt to rally support, and forbids him from moving against their neighbor.

Ever impetuous, New-Spring defies her and launches a surprise raid without his siblings' support. Leading from the front, tearing through shocked soldiers in his monstrous Archid form, he pushes deep into El-Khaataari territory. His victory is as impressive as it is outrageous, and wins him the support of many of the Masters. When El-Khaataar declares war in retaliation, New-Spring is the obvious choice for warleader. Many-Words, her power greatly diminished, swears revenge.

## **Total War**

Even besieged on all sides by rebels, conspirators, and opportunists, El-Khaataar's Eclipsed Suns remain supremely confident. The First Empire boasts the largest, best-equipped armies, and is patient enough to see its massive war machine slowly grind its enemies down.

## *The First Empire's Revenge*

El-Khaataar's mighty war machine descends on its rebellious outer provinces like a hammer. Wonder-Workers release experimental Siege Dragons — mighty, lumbering tyrannosaurs covered in brilliantly reflective memetic armor — to crash through jungle and fortress alike. The spirits bound within the beasts give some measure of control, but even so, they are unreliable. Most Wonder-Workers merely point them at their enemies and hope for the best.

Following closely behind, the Imperial Armies are eager to make an example. They tear down every village they come across. They feed vanquished enemies to their beasts. They even slay the precious herd animals that feed rebels and imperials alike, hoping to starve their enemies into submission.

The warchief Waits-for-Sun pushes his army relentlessly towards Colors-Under-Sunlight. The rebels' stronghold has expanded since the uprising: a mighty memetic fortress looms above its original stone structures, but it cannot stand before his massive ankylosaur-like Archid form. Standing in its ruins, roaring his victory, Waits-for-Sun fails to notice a strange quivering in the Mnesis. It is like a shudder, or the echo of a silent scream.

A world away, a Wonder-Worker in the Living Kingdom of Sails watches in horror as his creation — a self-replicating crystalline flower — melts into nothingness in his hands. Elsewhere, a strange wasting disease inflicts the Mnesis-born ammonites that line Alsepéak's ocean borders. Shining-Waters' defense system begins to break down, unbeknownst to anyone — for now.

## *Unlikely Allies*

The tide slowly turns. As El-Khaataar crushes each revolt, Nomad-Sun prepares for the day the First Empire turns its attention to him. Despite his public claims of neutrality, the Living Kingdom's involvement with the rebels is an open secret. When El-Khaataar regains control of the T'Kash, he reasons, its revenge on the Living Kingdom will be swift.

Nomad-Sun wants to delay that day. He sends a messenger — a cunning werespider named All-Eyes-Beast — to propose an alliance with the Alsepéaki empire. The warchief New-Spring is busy on the front lines, however, and it is instead Many-Words who answers his call. While her brother is busy, she uses word of "her" new alliance to gather support among the Masters and overthrow her upstart brother.

## *Titans Clash*

Oblivious to behind-the-scenes machinations, El-Khaataar and Alsepéak's Imperial Armies fight single-mindedly. Dragon Kings battle Dragon Kings, gouging holes in mountains and crushing villages in their colossal Archid forms. Legions slam into each other again and again, slaughtering

Drachid by the thousands. El-Khaataar's terrifying Siege Dragons face off against Alsepéak's newest weapon. The Shield Beasts are heavily-armored behemoths somewhere between stegosaurus, ankylosaurus, and a mobile weapons platform. Wonder-Workers twist the Mnesis without rest, too busy shaping new creations to notice their increasing fragility. Wherever the war touches, devastation follows.

## *Lonely-Peak's Flying Terrors*

The Alsepéaki Lonely-Peak leads a clutch of pterosaur-aspected Dragon Kings behind enemy lines. Swooping from the skies without warning, she targets enemy leaders directly and cuts the El-Khaataari armies off at the head. When the First Empire's advance slows to a crawl, she claims all the credit.

## **STORY SEEDS — CHASING LONELY-PEAK**

What became of Lonely-Peak, the assassin who brought low her own Empire?

Many factions hunt for the blasphemer: El-Khaataari bent on payback, Alsepéaki desperate to clear their names or avenge their shame, and many others who want the truth — or maybe just her cache of Curse Stones.

Stories say that Lonely-Peak sought sanctuary among her mysterious benefactors in the depths below Shining-Waters, or that she tried to buy a new life in the Living Kingdom. Can the characters find her before she disappears forever, taking the truth of the Curse Stones with her?

Alternatively, what if Lonely-Peak wasn't just one figure, but a group of warrior-spies — perhaps even an entire Stream of poison-wielding assassins. Perhaps they lurk at the Dragon Empires' edges, playing their enemies against each other, until they are finally revealed to the world.

The characters are part of this once-secret cabal. Hunted across the known world, hated by all, what will they do? Will they start a new life? Will they claw back their old power one assassination at a time? Or will they see the error of their ways and reject the Curse Stones once and for all? If so, how will they make sure no one can wield them again?

Her impressive career ends in shame, however, when she attempts to assassinate the general Waits-for-Sun. Though her “Flying Terrors” catch him unaware, the grizzled war hero manages to fight them off. He collapses as soon as he leaves Archid form, bleeding from horrible, sizzling wounds. As the old lizard breathes his last, he warns his soldiers to beware the Sun-Metal.

### *The Curse-Stones*

Dragon Kings the world over are shocked and furious. The Curse Stones — gold and silver — are more than merely dangerous; they are forbidden. Weaker than Mnesis-forged materials, they are useless for anything except murder. Furthermore, they’re rare. If Alsepéaki warriors wield them, then, the Dragon Empire must have worked hard to get it.

El-Khaataari messengers spread the word far and wide, whipping up even more hatred for Alsepéak. Rumors abound of secret experiments performed beneath the seas, where miniscule Mnesis-spawned creatures secrete gold and silver. They speak of secret clutches tasked with eliminating threats to the empire, both within and without. It is hard to tell truth from fiction, but in the end it doesn’t matter. Alsepéak is shamed.

Soldiers abandon the war effort in droves. Some disillusioned dragons stake their own claims on the warzone, carving out fiefdoms away from the capital’s apparent corruption.

Many Drachid follow these would-be emperors; others, emboldened by their cousins’ weaknesses, strike out on their own.

Back in Shining-Waters, blame for the Empire’s woes falls squarely on New-Spring. Many-Words proclaims him a traitor both to the Empire and to Gaia, and calls for his execution. In the political upheaval that follows, she persuades many of her siblings to pull their soldiers back from the frontlines. Not all the Many-Colored Masters agree, of course — some refuse to believe the rumors, while others cheer New-Spring’s pragmatism — but it is enough to greatly weaken her brother’s forces. Enough, even, to make him an easy target for El-Khaataari reprisals.

### *New-Spring’s Last Stand*

Facing enemies on many sides, with most of his troops dead or gone, New-Spring still refuses to surrender. He makes his stand at Cut-Rock-Den, an old town conquered and reconquered more times than anyone can remember. He fights off wave after wave of furious El-Khaataari warriors, who level the village itself just to flush him out. The fearsome general fights on through the dust and the rubble.

On the verge of death he finally gives in to his mighty Rage, falling upon a legion of Drachid warriors without any support. They eventually bring him down, stabbing him to death with diamond-sharp memetic spears. The victors carry his massive tyrannosaur corpse back to El-Khaataar amid celebrations.



## The First Empire Falls

El-Khaataar's victory celebrations are short lived. Though she orchestrated his defeat, Many-Words uses her brother's death to galvanize the troops and push them ahead — towards the city of El-Khaataar itself. Gone is the pragmatic peacemaker of years past; if her late brother taught her anything, it is that the only way to get what you want is to take it.

Honoring their secret alliance, the Living City of Sails leaves its trading circuit for the first time in many, many centuries. Crossing the border into El-Khaataari territory, the Colony Beasts' appearance terrifies loyal subjects even as it rouses rebels of years past back into action.

The El-Khaataari armies are ill-prepared for two concerted strikes, and scramble to act in time. The Drachid general White-Bark is quick to act, racing his armies back to defend the capital. Many balk at conceding territory so readily. Though they mutter about "half-breed cowardice," they still run to obey.

Another leader, Joy-Hunter, fights a running battle against the Living Kingdom. Though she and her rangers pick off many soldiers around the edges, they cannot slow its advance. Eventually, the unthinkable happens: The enemy reaches the gates of El-Khaataar.

### The Siege of El-Khaataar

Panic fills the Holy City. Armies clash outside the gates. Siege Dragons hurl themselves at mighty city walls. Self-proclaimed prophets cry out in the streets, declaring Gaia's judgement on the Dragon Kings' arrogance. Memetic ordinance sends fires sweeping through the city, razing buildings and killing thousands. As wall after wall comes down, El-Khaataari forces fall back towards the center of the city. Still, the worst is yet to come.

Dreams-Strong, the Living Kingdom's greatest Wonder-Worker, leads a mighty rite. Aided by a dozen fanatical students, the Shading drags a hail of stone and ice from the Mnesis and rains it down upon the royal ziggurat itself. It is the work of a lifetime — and a multitude of bound spirits — but it is even more effective than anyone could have expected. It is a fatal blow not only to the enemy, but to the Mnesis itself.

The Wonder-Workers cry out in shock and pain. The Mnesis quakes like the fluttering of a panicked heart, then collapses. An invisible wave washes through the city, dissolving nearly every Memetic creation for miles. Buildings, weapons, and even living creatures born of the Mnesis melt like hot wax and crumble into nothingness.

This is beginning of the end of the Age of Kings.

## The End of Wonders

The Mnesis' death cry echoes all over the globe, spreading from El-Khaataar's melting ruins like an ephemeral infection.

### STORY SEED — THE FIRST APOCALYPSE

It's the end of the world. Empires that have stood for centuries are no more. Figures that once strode the world as gods are dead. Slaves and warlords rise in their place, scavenging for the lost world's scraps. The world itself has changed, broken by the Dragon Kings' hubris.

The characters are survivors. Whoever they were before the fall, they now stand as one to face this new and dangerous age. They will be hunted by Drachid and spirit. They will suffer Gaia's curse. But if they can survive, they will carry the memory of the Age of Kings beyond this cursed time. Maybe they — or their descendants — can rebuild what was lost?

Cities crumble and collapse. Memetic creatures sicken and die. Treasured possessions melt in their owners' hands. The infection spreads erratically, and some better-made creations last longer than others, but its advance is relentless. Over the space of a few horrifying months, the Mnesis dies. In its place, something never before seen rises.

### The Gauntlet Forms

As far back as the Dragon Kings remember, the myriad worlds have been intimately connected. The Mnesis — the gateway between flesh and ephemera — offered no resistance to those with the will to master it. But like a corpse settling down to rot, the murdered realm settles into a new shape: a wall of spiritual scar tissue. The open gateway closes over.

As weak and fragile as it is, the Dragon Kings find they cannot cross the newly-formed Gauntlet. When the change comes, those on the wrong side find themselves trapped in the Umbral realms, and at the mercy of confused and angry spirits. By the time their allies can develop rites to pierce the Gauntlet, the lost clutchmates are long gone.

### Chaos Amid the Ruins

The Dragon Empires crumble as fast as their creations. Waves of people flee the collapsing cities, but there is nowhere to run; the destruction is *everywhere*. Violence and starvation kill millions of people. Without the Mnesis, thousands of years of technological and social growth disappear in an instant. Desperate survivors seek shelter in caves and in the jungles' depths, hiding from the beasts they once ruled. Still,

the dinosaurs aren't as dangerous as the other survivors; some kill for supplies, while others kill for food.

The Dragon Empires' glorious cities lay abandoned. Nothing grows in the blasted, desolate land that once was El-Khaataar; it is as if the very idea of creation has been ripped from the soil itself. Alsepéak fares even worse: when the hated Rokea finally burst through Bright-Waters' weakened defenses, the Alsepéaki are too terrified and disorganized to put up an effective fight. By the next morning, nothing remains of Shining-Waters except blood-dimmed tides.

### ***Hated and Hunted***

Months pass, then years. Everyone struggles to survive in this new, harsh world, but none more than the Drachid. For many, the only thing that keeps them going is determination to outlive those who destroyed their world: the Dragon Kings. They remember the Kings' haughtiness, their arrogant meddling with things they didn't understand. They blame them for everything.

The first taste of revenge comes in a tiny camp called Many-Cares. The survivors that call it home take in a trio of wounded wanderers, only to discover that they are Dragon Kings. While others argue over what to do with them, an old woman — her name lost both to history and Mnesis — bashes one of them to death with a rock while he sleeps. The murdered dragon's companions lose themselves to frenzy, fleeing amid a flurry of bloodshed. Furious, the people of Many-Cares give chase. They hunt their quarry for three days, killing them in a desperate, bloody battle.

Echoing the rebellions of earlier centuries, the people of Many-Cares parade their victims' heads on wooden pikes. Soon, similar purges range all across the T'Kash. Though the hunts fuel even greater fear and distrust among the scattered survivors, they kill many of the dwindling dragons. Soon, extinction looms near for the dethroned Kings.

### ***The Last Kingdoms***

Not all Dragon Kings are content to hide. A few still cling to scraps of power any way they can. Grand-Maw claims to be lost Alsepéak's rightful heir; though she rules the ruins of Long-Stream with an iron first, her poorly-fed, roughshod soldiers are a far cry from the old Empire's mighty armies. Other dragons attempt to establish themselves — Clutch-Rend the Lord of Rotted-Hill, or the Poison King — but they all fall soon enough. Not even their Gifts, rites, or Archid forms can stand up the increasingly-powerful Drachid.

Every now and then, rumors surface that the Living Kingdom of Sails survived the fall. Occasional sightings of what could be a Colony Beast add fuel to the fire, but they are never confirmed. To be sure, some memetic artifacts survived the death of the Mnesis (mere trinkets, mainly, even if people gladly kill for them) but surely not a living,

breathing memetic creature? Unless it consumed a vast amount of Essence every day, such a beast would melt away to nothingness. With the Umbral realms now so far away, such a bounty is rarer than gold.

Rumors of The Garden catch the attention of many a desperate dragon. This paradise was built long ago by the followers of No-Eggs-Mother. Eschewing the Dragon Empires' arrogance and lust for power, the hermits built their sanctuary by hand instead of using the Mnesis — meaning it could still stand today. Many hermits search for this refuge, never knowing for sure if it ever truly existed.

### ***The Long Sleep***

The Dragon Kings are lost, and very nearly extinct. Many fall to despair, throwing themselves at their many enemies and waiting for death. Others retreat, weeping, to Gaia's hidden places and lose themselves to sleep. Some do so hoping to one day awaken to a new and better Age. Others simply long to escape the current one; this world is too painful by far.

While they sleep, they dream. They relive the destruction they have seen. They remember the lives they've left behind. But they also dream of other lives: their parents', and their parents' parents'. Their night visions stretch back over lifetimes, centuries, then thousands of years. Millions of years of evolution, growth, war, and death all crash together in waves and fragments. For many, it is too much to bear.

In the millennia to come, these dragons' descendants call this ancestral memory "Mnesis." They will not know that the *real* Mnesis was not a realm of memory, but of possibility. They will call the Memory a gift of Gaia, a sacred duty to see and record the lives of Her children. But these sleepers know nothing of that. They see it for the curse it is: for their pride, the Mother has decreed that they must remember their world in all its glory — and their part in its destruction.

### ***After the Age of Kings***

The worst is still to come. While the dragons slumber, the world suffers another great cataclysm: the Wonder-Work of the Wyrn. Future generations will argue about it for millennia: was it massive deep-sea lava flows, or a comet? Was it Gaia's punishment, or the first terrible act of a Dissolver gone mad? Or worse: Was it the death of the Mnesis that unleashed such carnage? Did the Dragon Kings break the physical world, too?

No one knows for sure; none who faced the disaster lived long enough to tell the tale. In the great tapestry that is the Memory, this is one glaring hole.

So the dragons sleep, while the skies burn and the earth is drowned in ash. They sleep through the long, bitter cold that follows, haunted by their memories.

## FADED MEMORIES, JUMBLED HISTORIES

Why doesn't this history match Mokolé memories of the ancient past? Simply put, the Mnesis is not as perfect a record as many Mokolé would like to believe.

All memories fade, even the Mnesis. This is especially true of the Age of Kings, with so few witnesses to remember it. Very few Dragon Kings even survived the fall, and fewer still ever dared to pass their Mnesis on. For many, the pain was too great to remember or share. Some took the shame with them when they died; their part of the legacy was lost forever. As for the others — the first Mnetics appeared in this era, full of despair and desperate for any solution to ease the pain.

Still, some Mokolé do remember the Age of Kings, or at least fragments of it. They paint a clashing, jumbled picture slashed through with contradictions and impossibilities: one insists that his ancestors fought great wereammonite monstrosities atop crystalline towers, while another remembers nothing more than empty plains and the long, slow march of time. While they both remember the splendor of a lost city, they find that neither can actually picture it.

The truth is that while the Dragon Kings have kept their promise — the Age of Kings will never be truly forgotten — its details are already lost to time.

## Kings No More

The millennia pass slowly. Occasionally, lone survivors awaken, whether by accident or design. Blinking sleep from their eyes, they emerge from deep and hidden wallows to find a world in flux: Drachid kingdoms rise and fall, forgetting the glories of the past, until they too are no more. Coastlines move and change, and the hated Rokea reign where the Dragon Empires once stood proudly. Then, for countless awakenings, the world is nothing more than ice and silence. Many fear that Gaia has abandoned them entirely.

But all is not lost. Eventually, the survivors awake to find a world without war, ash, or ice. It teems with life again. Some of the near-bald mammals even show signs of intelligence, making tools and communicating in strange tongues. It is all so similar to the old Empires, yet also so different.

Individual survivors find each other. They discover whole new Changing Breeds as well, who have never heard of the Dragon Empires, the Mnesis, or even the Drachid. Even more shocking, the survivors realize that they too have lost something of the time before: the Drachid form itself. In its place is the Homid, a thing of warm blood and hairy flesh. As strange as it is, many see in it a message from the Mother: a call to re-enter her world, and to entreat with her newest creations.

They are no longer dragons, just as they are no longer Kings. They are now the Mokolé: Gaia's Memory.

As the centuries flow by they watch, and remember, and finally come to accept their place in the Mother's new world. Yet while they chronicle the rises and falls of their younger siblings, they vow never to forget the Age of Kings: the days when the earth was young and full of possibility, and when they ruled it.

## Playing in the War of Dragons

In the War of Dragons, characters can be Dragon Kings, Rokea, or Ananasi. These Fera use the same rules as their modern counterparts in **W20** and **W20 Changing Breeds**, except as described here.

- No shapeshifter has access to the Homid form.
- Delirium doesn't exist.
- Shapeshifters may enter the Mnesis at any time by spending a point of Willpower.

### Ananasi

- All Ananasi are arachnid breed.
- Ananasi may use the Lilian, Pithus, and Crawlerling forms.
- Ananasi may pass through the Mnesis in whatever form they choose, and aren't restricted to Crawlerling form to enter the Umbra.

### Dragon Kings

- Dragon Kings can be born from Drachid or Saurid, and must decide if they descend from dinosaur, plesiosaur, or pterosaur bloodlines. Both breeds begin with Gnosis and Rage 4.
- Dragon Kings receive Auspice from their role in society, and it can change over time. Only the most powerful rulers and Wonder-Workers may be Eclipsed Sun Auspice.
- Dragon Kings may use the Drachid, Archid, and Saurid forms. A Dragon King's base Attributes represent his Drachid form.
- The Archid form follows the rules in **W20** (p. 413). After a Dragon King's First Change, her Archid form is mutable and manifests random characteristics whenever she



takes the form. She fixes her idealized form by entering the Mnesis and spending a point of Willpower while she chooses her characteristics. A Dragon King may change her Archid form by entering the Mnesis and spending another point of Willpower, but she may only change a single characteristic once per lunar cycle.

- The Saurid form's modifiers depend on the character's bloodline. Characters select one Archid Characteristic (W20, p. 413) from the list below, and may choose two others not limited by this list, but appropriate to the source animal.

### Rokea

- All Rokea are squamus breed.

- Rokea may use the Glabrus, Gladius, and Chasmus forms. The smaller sharks that give rise to the Squamus form don't exist in this era.

### The Spirit Worlds

The spirit worlds of this era are generally similar to those of the later times. The primary differences are the Wurm and the Mnesis. Additionally, few of the Umbral realms, except the Aetherial Realm, exist in this era.

### The Wurm

The Wurm has yet to become the Corruptor; the Destroyer is a natural part of Gaia's balance. Wurm spirits' natures are destructive. They're not reviled for it, but neither

### SAURID FORM MODIFIERS

Bloodline	Str	Dex	Sta	Archid Characteristic
Dinosaur	+3	+1	+2	Armor, Huge Size, Terrible Claws
Plesiosaur	+1	+2	+3	Fins, Gills, Huge Size
Pterosaur	+1	+3	+2	Grasping Hands, Terrible Claws, Wings (allows flight in Saurid form)

are they summoned for tasks that don't require breaking something. Banes don't exist in this period.

## *The Mnesis*

The Gauntlet doesn't exist. The Mnesis is the passageway between physical and spiritual. Though it is no barrier to shapeshifters or spirits traveling between the realms, they must endure the spawned thoughts and fancies while they travel. As the Mnesis responds most strongly to those of great potential and strength, these individuals usually take longer to pass through its borders.

**System:** Characters travelling between the physical and spiritual worlds, or vice versa, must roll Gnosis (difficulty 6). The number of successes indicates their minimum travel time within the Mnesis, measured in hours. On a failure, the characters travel for Gnosis hours before attempting the roll again. Characters can take longer than this if desired. Characters can return to their plane of origin at any time, but must begin the Mnesis journey again upon reentering. Once a character begins traveling, the original roll stands until that number of hours has passed or the character has completed the journey, whichever happens first. Groups travel at the speed of the most powerful character. Roll the highest Gnosis in the group — this result stands for the entire party. A botch indicates the character can't leave the Mnesis without someone guiding her.

## *Mnesis Technology*

Non-Mnesis technology is limited to levels similar to that of the Paleolithic era (p. 47). The only limits to Mnesis-derived technology come from the imagination and skill of the Wonder-Workers, but even that imagination has limits. The Dragon Kings have no concept of the written language or the wheel. Each memetic item is self-powered (or draws additional power from the operator) — Dragon Kings never conceived engines or generators that would power other items.

Storytelling traditions moved directly from oral tales to memetic displays that cast images into the air akin to modern video. Entertainment, step-by-step instructions, or current events are trivially imparted into thought crystals and displayed on imagination screens. The Dragon Kings never thought to invent a more limited way of conveying messages, such as through the written word.

Regardless of their imagined form, basic memetic weapons, armor, and vehicles have equivalent values to their modern-day equivalents, as per **W20** (primarily pages 302-303). It doesn't matter if memetic ranged weaponry fires gobs of acidic phlegm, crystalline shards of sunlight, or bolts of pure Essence. Walking, swimming, or flying vehicles appear as headless memetic creatures with comfortable seating and built-in storage.

The Dragon Kings have no computers. Devices work through touch, speech, and motion. Wonder-Workers experimented with Gnosis-controlled devices for a time, but abandoned these because they were vulnerable to their controls being hijacked by spirits or other shapeshifters. They also couldn't be used by the Drachid, who lacked the Gnosis to be able to interact with these devices.

Memetic creations tend to endure as long as the spirit within is content to remain. If the physical form of the device is cracked or damaged, the item dissolves in a burst of Essence and light as the spirit escapes and the Mnesis fades into nothingness.

Memetics can be more powerful than these basic guidelines by installing stronger spirits, much like more powerful fetishes, as outlined below.

## *Crafting Memetics*

The Mnesis spontaneously spawns memetics from the surface thoughts of visitors to the realm. Wonder-Workers focus this effect to deliberately draw concepts from their imaginations before shaping them into precisely what they desire. This calls for a Craft (Mnesis) roll with the difficulty determined by the Storyteller. Simple objects (blades, plates) are difficulty 4. Intricate, delicate workings or massive towers of the imagination are difficulty 10. Most items fall within these extremes. Character may reduce the difficulty by spending one Gnosis per point of decrease in difficulty.

Once the Wonder-Worker is satisfied with the memetic, she spends a point of Willpower to temporarily lock its form in preparation for the spirit-binding. This act also attunes the character to the newly-crafted work. The character uses a variation of Rite of the Fetish (**W20**, p. 213) to bind a prepared spirit and permanently stabilize the memetic. This version of the rite doesn't require cleansing the potential fetish — the Mnesis is a pure and willing vessel.

## *Altered Traits*

Although the time of the Dragon Kings is vastly different from the other time periods in **Shattered Dreams**, the Abilities used by characters remain largely the same as for modern eras. In the War of Dragons era, replace Computer with Blazonry. The Animal-Ken, Crafts, Drive, and Firearms Skills keep their names, as do the Science and Technology Knowledges, but each is very different from its modern counterpart.

Characters without access to Dragon Kings technology (mostly Ananasi and Rokea) use the Ability changes for Paleolithic and Neolithic eras on p. 52.

## *Animal-Ken*

This Skill varies depending on the character's origins. The Dragon Kings' version applies to dinosaurs, plesiosaurs,

and pterosaurs, the Rokea version focuses on fish and other (non-plesiosaur) marine animals, and the Ananasi version concentrates on arachnids, insects, and the early small mammals of the period. Characters suffer a +2 difficulty to use Animal-Ken on unfamiliar creatures — they can take a Specialty for each additional version to remove this penalty.

### *Blazonry*

While talent, dedication, and achievements are very important to Dragon King society, so too are ancestry and education. A Dragon King's standing in the community depends heavily on her family, bloodline, and Wonder-Working Stream. Characters with this skill know how to decipher the colors and insignia of ancestry, Stream or empire affiliations, and political leanings. These details are often lost on non-Dragon Kings, but are carefully studied by those interested in acquiring power within the empires.

### *Drive and Firearms*

The Drive Skill allows characters to pilot any memetic air, land, or water vehicles. Firearms allows characters to use any memetic ranged weapon. Though each vehicle and weapon is a unique work of art, their controls are designed so that anyone skilled in using one can usually figure out another.

### *Crafts, Science and Technology*

Dragon King Crafting, Science, and Technology almost exclusively focus on the secrets of the Mnesis. This is incompatible with understanding how these Skills apply to the physical world. Characters in this era must purchase these Skills a second time if they also want to understand and shape the physical world. Non-Dragon King characters can study the Mnesis, but they can't draw memetics from the realm — this is the province of the Dragon Kings alone.



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 Tommy svensson  
 Travis Carpenter  
 Trevor Stamper  
 Tristan Valentine  
 Tronoth Sarum  
 Troy Essmann  
 Tshonka  
 Tyler Wirth  
 Tyson 'Daji' Pink  
 Victor "Priest heir of Tanith"  
 SaintOn  
 waelcyrge  
 Walter Soto  
 Weeping Heart  
 Wes C.  
 Will Inskip  
 Will Sayart  
 Willard "Speaks-Softly" Nations  
 William "Fox" Coleman  
 Xochipilli Sleeps-with-Spirits  
 Zita - for Emily, Matt, and Laura  
 Ziv Ragowsky

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(un)reason  
 AB Bright  
 Adam Shadowfox Tullett  
 Adrienne "JJ" Dawley  
 Akela "Claws-Like-Ice" Hohnihohkai-yohos  
 Alan Orr  
 Albert Lenowicz  
 Alec McClain  
 AlyCat  
 Amanda "Hyena" Johnson  
 Amy "Yee Tsun" Morgan  
 Andrea Migone  
 Andreas Reck  
 Andrew "Onyx Bana" Oleniach

Andrew Hauptman  
 Andrew Laliberte  
 Andrew Waterfall  
 Angelborn  
 Anonymous  
 Anthony "Selketh" Dennetiere  
 Anton Shishkin (Grenadine)  
 Arthur "Torakhan" Dreese  
 Arthur Boff  
 Aruessá  
 Ben "Spinner" Neilsen  
 Ben Bogaerts  
 Ben Lyons  
 Ben Treeby  
 Benjamin "eSca" Reed  
 Benoît Primeau  
 Bentley W. Chism  
 Black Lion  
 Blood-On-Snow  
 Bowie Sessions  
 Brently Thomas Divine  
 Brian McCloesky  
 Cara Kennt-Das-Vergessene  
 Carl Paquin  
 Carlos "ChecaWolf" Checa Baram-bio  
 Carlos Vergara  
 Cason Snow  
 Chad & Christine Geraghty  
 Chevauche-Nuées  
 Christian Topp  
 Christopher A Bell  
 Christopher Bertell  
 Christopher Gunning  
 Cierra "Zombie" Bruggeman  
 Clarissa Two-Moons  
 Contributor: Eiji Tsukino, Deed name: Aerwyn Shadow-Stealer  
 Cory "Shadow's-Example" D'Aiuto-lo, Legendary Shadow Lord Theurge  
 Cuetlachtli  
 D. Lacheny  
 Dale 'Clayton' Millward  
 Damien Starlurker  
 Daniel "Hunting Moon" Weber  
 Daniel K. Lundsby  
 Daniel Morita Asayuki White Khan

Dante Laughing-Coyote  
 Dares-Death  
 Darren Buckley  
 Darryl "He-Is-Strong" Johnson  
 Dashekita Brooks  
 David "JustDave" Talboy  
 David A. Cuneo  
 David Rose Fraser  
 David Weidendorf  
 Davin Wärter  
 Dawid "Dievas" Wojcieszynski  
 Dennis "Rampage Rick" Müller  
 Devin & Linny  
 Dineen Thornton  
 Dolan Ross Scherfel  
 Donnie "Lord Aludian" Roos, Jr.  
 Doug Atkinson  
 Drake "Eagle-Eye" McCoy  
 DreadLime  
 Edouard Contesse  
 Eduardo Oliveira Ribeiro de Souza  
 Elijah Kautzman  
 Eric Pensman  
 Erik Bergesen  
 Evan "JabberWokky" and Sarah  
 Edwards  
 Fallen Petal  
 Fedir Kyrylo  
 Ferdinand von Schenk  
 Flies at Night Unseen  
 Frankie Mundens  
 Gabriel Soulshatter  
 Geb's Call, Weight of the World;  
 Athro Ahroun of the Silent Striders  
 Geoffar  
 Gobbos  
 Gordon Gordon Gordon  
 Greg Phillips  
 Guido Gerritzen  
 Harald Hellerud  
 Iain MacPhee  
 Ian Smith  
 Ishcar  
 Jacob Guldbrandsen  
 Jan "Helm" Richter  
 Jason Berteotti  
 Jason Dickerson

JayAngryProphet  
 JAYSON "the14thguest" TURNER  
 Jeremy "Walks On Clouds" Cue  
 Jeremy A. Mowery  
 Jeremy Brown  
 Jessica Lilith 'Stormdanser' Darke  
 Jessica Schultz  
 John "Wolfe" Kelley  
 John Carnathan  
 John Doe  
 Joshua Jenkins  
 Julia Asagao  
 Julián Navarro  
 K+S Love Brandon Boyer  
 Kai Schiefer  
 Katarenka  
 Katie "Seren" Reilly  
 Kerr "Alpha-kun" D'Ercole  
 Kevin L. Tapper  
 Kevin Miller  
 Kim Dong-Ryul  
 Kimberly Morris  
 Kirilee "Moonlost" Lester  
 Kristoff Williams of the Bagheera  
 tribe  
 Lance Hosaka  
 LeAnn 'Ellyham' LaFollette  
 Leath Sheales  
 Lifestealer  
 Lindsey Douglas IV  
 lordkillmore  
 Lori Krell  
 Louis  
 Luca Sacchini  
 Lucas Aubrey Paynter  
 Lukasz Korzen  
 M. Pond  
 MacKenzie Coker  
 Marc Kuczborski  
 Marco Klomfas  
 Marcos Almeida Leite Bomfim  
 Marcos Dacosta  
 Mark Bussey  
 Mark Lazure  
 Mark S  
 Mathieu Guittard  
 Matthew Dames

Matthew Finco  
 Matthew Sanderson  
 MaTTThias Svensson o  
 Sara Törnström  
 Maurice  
 Maxime Bouchard  
 Mehmet Ortaç  
 Michael "ik trap die deur in" Brosens  
 Michael Lenzo  
 Michael V. Roberts  
 mirko a. mitta  
 Nicolas Villatte  
 Nik Caruso  
 Nikika Giovanni  
 Nikolai Steen  
 Olaf Wilzing  
 Olivier Jobin  
 Owen Milton  
 Patrick "Yellow Behind the Ears"  
 Hutchison  
 Per "BloodHowl" Nyrud Kaas  
 peter peretti  
 Pieta Delaney  
 Preston Lee Bobo  
 Randall Crawford  
 Rebecca Sappington  
 Regina "Onyx" O'Reilly  
 Rena an Roarak Quicksaber  
 Rio Yanez  
 Rob Gatlin  
 Robert "Luca" Tucker  
 Roger Robinson  
 Russ Trippett  
 Sandra Anderson  
 Scott Forward  
 Scraps  
 Sean Lockhart  
 Sebastian N. Behrndtz  
 Sees the Ways  
 Sethreich Ardestahdt  
 Shan "Shanathan" Morris  
 Shane Rose  
 Simon Darkstep, Nuwisha  
 Somalucard  
 Spi  
 Stefan "LoomChild" Axelsson  
 Stefan Lundsby-Thomsen

Steven Lau  
The Mordak  
The Wildfire Clan  
Thiago Henrique Righetti e Silva  
Thomas Maund  
Tiberous Khan  
Tracy Cook  
Tristan Hyora  
Truth-From-Stone  
Ulrich  
Vent-du-Changeant  
Virgile "Mafalda" Gaspard  
Wakuwa, Ghost-of-the-North  
Walks All Paths  
Wayne "Stalks the Silent Night"  
Myers  
Whispers In Darkness  
Willy Kaceres  
Xanya Volkova "Luna's-Venge-ful-Claws"  
Yukana Sanada  
Zak & Anne Becker

Adrian Silvers  
Alex Chimento  
Anthony Jennings  
Brian & Mike Goubeaux  
Chris "Shallow-Tracks" Shaffer  
Cintain 昆游龍  
Daniel Cohen  
David Doucey  
Ghost Tiger  
Jacob Greyfang  
Jaime M Garmendia III  
Jakob "Song of Thunder" of the Fenrir  
Jaleen and John Wallen  
Jeremy "Fangs of Vengeance" Miller  
Jeremy Miller  
John Yngve Fredrik Lundgren  
Jon Koenig  
Klimt Silverpeak  
Lilavati Chandraka  
Marc-André Laurence  
Matthew Lynn  
Paul Jonathan Tio  
Paul 'Ogrebear' Baker

Pheobe "Tree-Finder"  
Phoenix Silvertongue  
Raphael Bressel  
Rebecca Taldeer "Xochipilli Tsa-wa-ke"  
Riseon Priestly  
Robert "Crossroads" Johnson  
SelenaMoonlights Purple Mane..  
AKA Shreads the Spiral  
Storm Dancer, Fianna Galliard  
Zach "Seeks-the-Balance" Soohy

Acrodon  
Adam Whitcomb  
Adrian P. Ortiz  
Alain Manguy  
Anonymous  
Azrael Von Braunschweig  
Benoit Devost  
Bill Shaffer  
Bob Stauffer  
Brad Munn  
Brian "Plays-with-Fire" Lynch  
Carol Darnell  
Chris Eggers  
Christopher "Walks A Beat" Greer  
Christopher Clark  
Christopher Sturges  
Cold "Snaps at Fear"  
Cora Anderson  
Corey Alambar  
Crushes-Gaia-Beneath-His-Boot  
Damien Eneas  
Dane Winton  
Daniel H. Spain  
Darksheer  
David Blackman  
David Futterer  
Dawn Hammett  
Deke Reisig  
Edwin Miller  
Eric Davis, Stalks-the-Shadow  
Erwin Burema  
Fabio "Wolfen" Machado  
Frédéri "Volk Kommissar Friedrich"  
POCHARD  
Garron Lewis  
Greg "Windchaser" Meyer

Heinrich Krebs  
Helaina "Flies with Ghosts" Forster  
Hot Brazilian Boyfriend  
Ian Hamilton  
Issar  
J. W. Bennett  
Jason Robinson  
Jason Van Pelt  
Jeffrey S. James  
John R. Trapasso  
Jonathan Crow  
Julia and Jason Barnes  
Keith "Walks-with-Wyrm" Ellis  
Keith E. Hartman  
Keith Reynolds (William Furhie)  
Kevin Butcher  
Kimberly Renee Burgess  
Köter  
Landi Garcia  
Lars Holgaard  
Leviathan VII - Greg D -  
Lily Marin  
Lyrics-of-War  
Marcus and Leslie Arena  
Matthew Wasiak  
Michael Bach Kristensen  
Michel Foisy  
Nat Kisa "Kizna"  
Nicholas A. Tan  
Nicholas Faust  
Nick Brunskill  
Nick Nigro  
Nik 'Woohoo!' May  
Nona Nova Fenris  
Patrick Pocher  
Paul Ryan  
Peter George Coulthard  
Peter Merkel  
Richard 'Vidiian' Greene  
Robert Biskin  
Robert Lee Brewer  
Robin E. Burns  
Ron "Screenmonkey" Barnes  
Ryan Weir  
Ryan-O, Lord of the Thunderbats  
Sam Wong  
Sean and Eleanor Deschenes

Sean O'Reilly "Two-Claw-Humps-the-Litany"  
Shimon Klein  
stewart "Silent Rage" Roland  
Tawiscara Blackwing  
Tom Depoorter "Jimmy Looks twice"  
Warren P Nelson  
Watches the Wind  
Willam "Falcon's Templar" Delmar  
Withers of Flame  
Zach Hodge  
Zylo-Kills-the-Foe

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Aaron Jacob Kelly & Eleanor Mae Kelly  
Bloodseeker and Bloodsurfer  
Daniel "Illuminos" Persson and  
Adam "Boman" Persson  
Dragos "Howls the Legend Song"  
Faolan and Godbiter the Wyldbreaker

Joe Doherty, Stephen Fleetwood,  
Gregg "Britpop" Workman  
Josée "Stand-in-the-Sun" Deschênes,  
Dominic "Old Fool" Parent  
Luciana Nogueira Soares, Carolina Voigt  
Matthew Payton  
Mikkel Lund & Andreas "ESSO"  
Jensen  
Nicholas D. Dragisic, Tim Prisching  
Raul Urbina,  
Ronald Ile and William Schebler Jr  
Sean "Sunchaser" Ashcraft, Scott  
"Roamer" Bollhoefer  
Toxic & Noxious

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Bradley Yesko  
David "Dogboy" Ferrantino  
Earnan 'Scotchy' Kinkaid  
Erica "Vulpinfox" Schmitt

H. Alexander Perez  
Jaysen Courmac  
Justin Haynes  
Kristopher Steavens  
Michele Marie Arko  
Samuel Gordon Mitson  
Sharon and Jake  
Thomas Grim  
Vilesh Darothar

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Exaula Calm Wind, Ami Comi Games  
Krayn; Charles Trécourt; Louis Trécourt; Yannick Peyrède; Trollune

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Stefan Schramm, Sven-Sibylle Langrock, Mannika Krause, Christian Klinkewitz, Alice Black Mender of Bandaiyan  
Zenith "One Eye Dry" al'Nazir, Gage!

## *Veteran Warrior*

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Colin Urbina  
Henry R Moore III  
John "Molten banisher"  
Kokopelli GrrBrool "Bites-the-Tail"  
LaTrans  
S. Snyder  
Uniform Two Six

Christie Craig  
Dhaunae De Vir  
Joe 'Irish' Kilcarr  
Karl Sell  
Nickolas Fank

Ryan Porter  
Sahara-Sandstorm  
Sunshine Edwards  
William Rodrigue  
Zachary Thomas Tyler, Gharial varna  
Zarad Makara

# SHATTERED DREAMS

## *The Wars of Rage*

In the mists of prehistory, the werewolves worked alongside the other Changing Breeds to safeguard Gaia against the many threats to Her existence. The werewolves' pride and their great Rage drove them to murder their cousins, leaving two Changing Breeds extinct and Gaia's children forever broken. Millennia later, the twin lures of colonialism and conquest once again brought the shapeshifters into conflict, leading to the death of the Camazotz. Nobody knew quite what happened to spark the Wars of Rage, or what life was like when the Changing Breeds worked together, until now.

## *The Past Laid Bare*

**Shattered Dreams** presents an in-depth look at the prehistory of the Changing Breeds, including both the threats they had to face before circumstances drove them to war and the War of Rage itself. Rather than one answer, it showcases many time periods and many ways in which the War could start, so that players and Storytellers can make prehistory their own. It also presents the circumstances surrounding the Second War of Rage, giving players the chance to take part, either as Garou Conquistadores or as the Fera desperately trying to fight off an invasion. Finally, the included chronicle structure allows modern characters to visit these crucial moments of history in an effort to stop the Wurm's most powerful minions.

## *Shattered Dreams contains:*

- The first ever look at the World of Darkness before the War of Rage.
- The ways the Wars of Rage could start, and how enterprising characters could change what happened.
- Two chronicle frameworks that bring modern characters to the past, replete with new Abilities and new Storytelling tools that make the players the center of much larger stories.

*Shattered Dreams is a non-canon exploration of a wild and crazy vision of the ancient past of World of Darkness.*

