

#### GUMBEROO/THE LEGEND OF Bone-Squeezer Caverns

A squishy cryptid for Dungeon World and Monster of the Week

#### **SNAKES!**

A LARP about being heard within the twisting brood

PACK OF STRAYS

An original story game about misfit werewolves

#### GAUNTLET DADDIES #003 He gives love a bad name!

### THREE DOZEN UNIQUE VAMPIRES

Not your average, everyday blood suckers



A Dungeon World Monster by Daniel Fowler Illustration by Evlyn Moreau

bite and claw (d10+2 damage) 16HP solitary, large, terrifying

B

Special Qualities: tough rubbery hide, amorphous blob of teeth and talons

Instinct: To consume

Moves: Squeeze into improbable places Consume its prey whole Move and attack in several directions at once

A creature of nightmare and madness to soil the trousers of even the hardiest woodsmen, some believe the Gumberoo to be nothing but legend. This may be because so few have come across one and lived to tell the tale. While it has the features of a bear. and roughly thirteen bearlike limbs, it possesses no solid form and attacks its prey as a wave of claws and teeth. Axe blows that would split a man will often rebound or get entangled in its rubbery hide. Like a bear, this beast hunts in large woods and slumbers in caves. It is impossible to hide from a Gumberoo as it can squeeze into the smallest cracks and flow up almost any surface. Only fire will deter this otherwise relentless killer. Fortunately, the Gumberoo spends

many years in slumber, hidden away deep underground. *Unfortunately*, it awakens with a terrible hunger and will consume anything it can get ahold of.



A MONSTER OF THE WEEK MYSTERY BY DANIEL FOWLER

## CONCEPT:

1816 - Washington Courier reports seventeen lumberjacks and woodsmen missing over the course of three months.

1897 - Eight people go missing exploring natural caverns in Wenatchee National Forest. Town drunk blames legendary beast.

*1903* - Massive human bone pile discovered in unexplored section of caverns. Suspected dumping ground for serial killer still at-large.

1914 - Cave system, dubbed Bone-Squeezer Caverns by local tabloids, closed to public after more remains found in previously inaccessible chambers. Police suspect the killer dismembered the victims before dropping them through the cracks.

#### Present day...

The Gumberoo, a legendary fearsome critter from lumberjack folklore, has awoken from a hundred-year hibernation in Wenatchee National Forest. It will hunt and consume anything it can get ahold of for the next few weeks until it is gorged enough to return to slumber. Newspapers will show a recurring pattern of killings and hibernation surrounding its caverns. Local hunters or historians may also tell stories of an improbable legendary beast.

The situation is complicated by a police manhunt for an escaped killer. While Gregor Mclane is a psychopath, he is not responsible for all the killings taking place in the woods and may be totally unaware of the beast's presence. The authorities have no reason to suspect a mythical, thirteen-limbed, boneless bear when they have a real killer on the loose. Chief of Police Steven Donnelly will not entertain or encourage wild stories even after one of his deputies is found hacked nearly to death and raving of terrifying bear-monsters.

The National Forest is vast. Innocent hikers are still being rounded up and moved to a protected campsite while the police search. Mary Hatchel, a local gift shop clerk and historian, says this is not the first gruesome killing to happen near the caverns which she claims were used as an ancient burial ground.

## HOOK:

The hunters hear about the killings and the manhunt on the national news but descriptions of the recent mauling may lead to supernatural suspicions. Research will reveal a roughly one hundred year cycle of disappearances in the area. They may also hear tales of various fearsome critters passed between lumberjacks in the area. Stories of ancient burial grounds are present but have little credibility. (Note: this is meant as a red herring and not as any sort of slight on any people who may have lived or currently live in the area.)

## COUNTDOWN:

**Day:** The Gumberoo awakens from hibernation during a police manhunt in Wenatchee National Forest.

**Shadows:** The Gumberoo kills several hikers and armed deputies, leaving only one survivor.

**Dusk:** The Gumberoo attacks a news reporter and her crew. Some shaky, scream-filled footage is left behind. **Sunset:** Several police officers track the suspected killer, actually the Gumberoo, to Bone-Squeezer Caverns. They are killed and devoured by the Gumberoo.

**Nightfall:** The Gumberoo goes on a killing spree at a local campsite.

**Midnight:** Its hunger finally sated, the Gumberoo returns to the caverns to disappear without a trace for a hundred years.

### THREATS:

#### The Gumberoo

Type: Monster / Beast

**Motivation:** To eat all it can until returning to hibernation.

**Powers:** Thick rubbery hide: any attack that is not armor piercing or that lacks the stopping power to kill a large animal is simply ignored.

**Amorphous Body:** The Gumberoo can flow like liquid and squeeze itself through small cracks.

**Multiple Pairs of Limbs:** The Gumberoo is dangerous on all sides. It can stretch and deform its body in order to attack and pursue prey in multiple directions.

Weaknesses: Aversion to fire.

Attacks: Claws: 3-harm close; Bite: 4-harm close

Armour: 2

Harm Capacity: 15 harm

#### Gregor Mclane

Type: Killer

Motivation: To escape capture; to kill again.

Abilities: Impersonate a hiker or ranger.

Weaknesses: Paranoid and nervous.

Attacks: Knife: 2-harm hand

Armour: none

Harm Capacity: 6 harm

#### Police Chief Steven Donnelly

Type: Authority / skeptic

**Motivation:** To control the situation and squash rumors.

Abilities: Call for backup.

Weaknesses: Cowardly.

Attacks: Revolver: 3-harm

Armour: none

Harm Capacity: 4

### Mary Hatchel

Type: Scholar

**Motivation:** To tell the history and legends of the area.

**Notes:** Believes and will tell stories of ghosts but is full of useful information if pressed. Works in gift shop.

### Deputy Phillip Ginsberg

Type: Witness

Motivation: To describe the monster.

**Notes:** Under observation in the hospital and restricted from the public and press. He wants this to all be a bad dream.

#### Dean Schusler

Type: Bystander

Motivation: To put himself in danger.

**Notes:** Literally the last guy to find out what is happening. He is still enjoying his vacation.

### Bone-Squeezer Caverns

Type: Location

**Motivation:** To harbor monsters; to contain hidden things.

## OTHER LOCATIONS:

The Woods The Campsite Police HQ Gift Shop

#### A LARP BY NOAH JAY-BONN. ILLUSTRATION BY EVAN ROWLAND.



The year, 2255: You've just come in contact with a new species in your galaxy–humans. The humans request an Ambassador to meet with them, so you've gathered your best and brightest. Just one problem: you're intelligent snakes who must link up to form a hive mind!

Your goal is to create a Brood of snakes to be your Ambassador to the humans. If you don't send an Ambassador by the appointed time, these seemingly violent creatures may turn hostile!

## A Snake Alone

Each player chooses a snake who represents a characteristic of your species. A snake alone cannot talk. Players may say their characteristic aloud, but are not permitted to speak in any other way as a single snake.

You may join with other snakes to create a Brood. Broods are how your species create intelligent beings. Alone, each of you is just a semi-intelligent snake, but when three or more of you link up, you become a conscious and aware being. To link up with another snake, lock one of your arms with another player's arm. When three of you link up, you become a Brood. Lock arms in a circle, all facing inward.

### **A New Brood**

The experience of awakening to consciousness is both shocking and exhilarating to a snake. As you become aware of yourself and your components, an inner struggle to define yourself occurs between the snakes. Choose one of your individual snake names to become your Brood name. Facing inwards with arms interlocked, have a conversation of who the Brood should be named after and why. Each snake can only speak one sentence at a time — if a snake breaks this rule,

the others may hiss to make them aware of their infraction. Snakes take turns speaking in a circle. Continue the conversation until a decision is reached. If a decision cannot be reached, any snake may decide to leave the Brood at any time.

Once your name is chosen, unlock arms and relock them with each snake facing outward. Declare in unison "We are \_\_\_\_\_!" The chosen snake is the dominant characteristic of your Brood. Play your characteristic towards theirs. Remember, you are a single intelligent being, together!

When communicating with other Broods, the chosen snake who the Brood is named after speaks first. Each snake may only speak one sentence at a time, with each snake speaking in turn. Feel free to hiss where appropriate. All snakes in a Brood speak one sentence before the next Brood speaks. Brood communication therefore tends to run in short monologues; each snake in a Brood contributing one sentence, and then the other Brood communicating back with one sentence per snake. As you speak to other Broods, rotate so the speaking snake faces the other Brood. Listening Broods may spin or stay still as they wish.

### **More Snakes!**

A Brood may take on new snakes at anytime. To take on a new snake, simply allow them to lock arms in your circle. Broods can discuss with themselves whether to take in a new snake or not, or can simply let a new snake in. When a snake is added, unlock arms and relock them with all snakes facing inward. The addition of a new characteristic to your personality is disorienting and leads to a momentary existential crisis. Who am I?! Hold a discussion as before about who your Brood is named after. Once a decision is made, relock arms with all snakes facing outward and declare in unison "We are \_\_\_\_\_!"

### **Fewer Snakes!**

Any snake may leave a Brood at any time. When you would like to leave your Brood, declare "(your snake name) leaving (Brood name)!", unlock your arms and wriggle free back into the room. This creates an existential crisis in the Brood and they must once again find their Brood name (see A New Brood).

## **Too many Snakes!**

A Brood can contain up to six snakes. Any more and the Brood consciousness becomes too cluttered. Once a Brood has six snakes, it cannot take on any new snakes. A Brood cannot kick any snakes out of their Brood, but each snake may leave its Brood at any time. If a Brood drops below three snakes, it dissolves and reverts back to a pile of snakes.

### An Ambassador

The game is over once all Broods have agreed who should be their Ambassador. The Ambassador goes to meet these new humans with the goodwill of all the snake species at their back. If an Ambassador is not chosen within the time limit, the humans probably declare war on your species.

Each snake was picked to become the Ambassador by being paragons of their characteristic. As such, all voices must be heard. All snakes must belong to a Brood when an Ambassador is chosen or the Ambassador is rejected by the snake species as not being a full representation.

### **Questions for Debrief**

After an Ambassador is chosen, talk about the game for a few minutes. How was your Ambassador chosen? Did everyone's voice matter? What characteristics did or didn't make it and why?

### Notes

Snakes! is meant for a minimum of seven players. Multiples of three are preferred; nine, twelve, or fifteen. A time limit should be set based on the number of players. Allow for an hour of play for seven snakes and two hours for fifteen snakes. Adjust accordingly. The idea of a snake species that becomes sentient when linked together is inspired by the novel *Chindi* by Jack McDevitt.

### Acraw

#### Confidenccce

A winning attitude will make our negotiations with the humans sssuccesssful!

### Tilamerixxx

#### Charisssma

We should win over the humans with our charming persssonalitiesss.

### Bill

#### Humour

A sssensse of humour is necessary in an Ambasssador.

### Portixxx

Indussstry

The oppurtunity to trade with the humans is too good to be passed up.

### **Sssiamadron**

#### Liassson

The negotiation with the humans should be ssstructured and cccivil.

### **Krylliusss**

#### Peaccce

Comprimissse between partiesss leads to peaccce.

### **Sssylar**

#### Reasssoning

Both species have much to gain in these negotiationsss.

### Barlusssiac

Religiousss

The humans should bow to our Godsss!

### Loctoraxx

#### Scientissst

There's so much we can learn from a new ssspeciesss!

### Karsssax

Sssecurity

These humans seem dangerousss.

### **Skynarxxx**

#### Sssaboteur

More can be accomplissshed through conflict than playing niccce.

### Pliss

**Sssensuality** 

We should woo the humans with pleasssuresss of the flesssh.

### Orambo

#### Ssspirituality

All species are made from the same ssstardust.

### Lessstem

#### Ssstonewall

We should not give in to any human demandsss.

### Flixxx

#### Treachery

We can get what we want from these humans with deviousssnesss.

### Anaasssar

#### Wisssdom

Our past dealings with other species have much to teach usss.



#### by Phillip Wessels. Illustrations by Jesse Ross.

YOU'RE A STRAY OF SOCIETY—MARGINALIZED IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. You might've thought that was hard enough, yet now you're a werewolf. Your pack makes it all a little easier to live with. You've joined with other misfit werewolves under the leadership of ALPHA DARCY.

Now Darcy's missing and this DOGMAN RADIO podcast is turning up the heat in town. There's enthusiasts, cryptozoologists, and hunters armed to the teeth. Your life is so fragile; you already had problems. The beast inside you is clawing to get out. Will you keep control or be seeing red?

PACK OF STRAYS is a hack of LASERS AND FEELINGS by John Harper • onesevendesign.com with strings from MONSTERHEARTS by Avery Alder • buriedwithoutceremony.com Under a CC BY-MC-SA 3.0 license • creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/us/ Thanks to the Big Bad Con & Gauntlet Community playtesters!



# **BEFORE PLAY**

Make sure everyone understands the following about this game:

**CONCEPT:** This is a story game about marginalized people struggling to get by in their complicated and often antagonistic community, while finding purpose and support with the chosen family of a werewolf pack.

**AIM:** To do justice to social issues, to play real people, to explore support and leadership within the pack, and to have fun playing awesome and horrific werewolves!

**TONE:** Intimate and messy, with emotional blows and endearing if sometimes competitive pack dynamics. Some characterizations may be tropey, exaggerated, and humorous.

SUBJECT MATTER: This game is intended for mature audiences. (H) Horror (BH) Body Horror (DH) Discrimination & Hate (GL) Graphic Language (GV) Graphic Violence (DA) Drug Abuse (N) Nudity (SSC) Strong Sexual Content

Player discretion and safety tools are advised. NOTE: The reasons why characters are strays are NOT weaknesses; we will see their marginalization but their experiences being marginalized give them strength (they literally get a bonus). Also, the subject matter of this game is not an excuse to make players uncomfortable in an unwelcome way. Broadcast your intentions.

## PICK A CITY OF TERRITORIES

Twilight Bay is the original setting. Mercy Falls and Gauntlet City are included here as well. You can also make your own city. Aim for at least twelve territories which can correlate to lots of different skillsets.

## PLAYERS: CREATE WEREWOLVES

Follow the instructions below; if it's a list, circle something.

1. The pack gave you an affectionate alias

such as Skipper, Duke, Max, Charlie, Coco, Lulu, Zip, Buster, Missy, Roxy, or Boomer.

2. **Pencil in your self control**, from two to five. Low control means you're better at **FERAL** stuff (letting out the beast; terror; wild passionate action). High control means you're better at **SMOOTH** stuff (manipulation; slick moves; stealth; calm, precise action). Your control changes during play, raising as high as six and falling as low as zero. If it does hit zero, you'll be seeing red.

3. You stray for poverty, substance abuse, awkwardness, queerness, ableness, or race/ ethnicity. Make your character marginalized in a real, everyday way.

4. **It's your impulse to** Get Revenge, Be Alpha Bossy, Be a Good Wolfy, Run Play RAWR, Spread the Love, or Brood and Smolder.

5. **What territory is your home turf?** Highlight it yellow.

6. **You became a werewolf** by puberty, by request, traumatically, by a used needle, by unprotected sex, or as a rescue.

7. **You owe your Alpha, Darcy,** for taking you in, making love to you, giving you resources, trusting you with responsibility, teaching you the way, or saving your life.

Each werewolf starts with one Alpha String and one Saved Die to use whenever.

## WEREWOLF POWERS

Werewolves can run as fast as a car, crash through walls, leapfrog buildings, shred steel, chomp through bone, smell a mile away, and turn people on with their beastly pheromones.

You have total control over your transformation **unless you are seeing red**.

Silver and wolfsbane will block a werewolf's powers and transformations.

## STARTING OFF: PILE INTO A PACK

**Playing a one-shot?** Ask your players: would they rather focus on exploring this world, or cut to the chase with Darcy's disappearance or trouble from Dogman Radio? Ask: who's with who? Get pack members together, cross paths, and create relationship triangles.

While this game leans on mechanical elements from Lasers & Feelings, get emotionally invested and explore pack life through extended play to experience the full game.

## ANSWER IN PLAY:

- What do you look like?
- How do you struggle in your straying from society?
- What's your home turf? Why?
- Who do you know here? Are they hot?
- What smell triggers a brief flashback of why you owe Darcy?
  - Include a new detail or two about Darcy: pronoun, age, look.
- You smell each other coming. What do you smell like?
- What do you envy, adore, or just not get about another's relationship with Darcy?

# ROLLING THE DICE

When you do something risky, take **1d6** +1d if it involves your straying from society +1d if it's your impulse

**+1d** if you pull from your home turf You may also have saved dice.

To find out how it goes, roll your dice and compare each die result to your number.

If you're doing something **SMOOTH** you want a roll **under your control**.

If you're doing something **FERAL** you want a roll **above your control**.

**O**. **If none of your dice succeed**, it goes wrong. The GM says how things get worse. They may force you to lose one control and let out the beast.

**1.** If one die succeeds, you barely manage it. The GM inflicts a complication, harm, or cost. They may force you to lose one control or let out the beast.

**2**.job! **If two dice succeed**, you do it well. Good

**3** If three dice succeed, you get a critical success! If you're being too smooth and the others call you on it, let out the beast now or else you lose an Alpha String and gain a control.

### If you roll your control exactly on any die,

• you have ALPHA STATUS. Whether or not you succeed, you do something to assert your superiority. Maybe you should be alpha. **Gain an Alpha String on the pack.** 

# ALPHA STRINGS

#### Aside from ALPHA STATUS, gain an Alpha String by pointing out that:

- You led the entire pack in a course of action
- You received howling praise

### Spend an Alpha String any time to:

- Ask someone a question (GM included) and they will answer you honestly:
  - What is \_\_\_\_ really feeling?
  - ♦ How could I get them to \_\_\_\_\_?
  - ♦ How does \_\_\_\_\_ feel about \_\_\_\_\_?
  - What should I be on the lookout for?
  - ♦ What's the best way to \_\_\_\_\_?
- Help someone let off some steam in a pack territory to grant one control
- Give someone 1d6 for submitting to you (Dangle 1d6 when you want them to do so. The 1d6 can be saved for later.)
- Bark or bite to remove 1d6 before a roll (Even down to no dice, so they fail.)

# LETTING OUT THE BEAST

Sometimes your monstrous side bubbles up and you've got to let it out. Either **wreak havoc, eviscerate life, revel in filth, gorge excessively, dominate physically**, or **drip your sex**.

These things might make some

uncomfortable. If it's too much just flash forward and imply it with evidence or context. You can even let Dogman Radio cover it.

## MARKING TERRITORIES

When the beast comes out it's rarely without a trace. **If the GM says, mark the territory you're in.** If you would mark a territory already marked, ask if it will bring too much attention to this place. If so, **cross it out**. You'll have to figure out if this place can be safe again.

# SEEING RED

At zero control you are seeing red. While in this state, you and the GM narrate how the beast (and only the beast) is out and at its worst. At any time, anyone at the table can say you black out, yourself included.

#### In order to come back under control $\boldsymbol{a}$

pack member will have to spend an Alpha String and let out their beast to meet yours. Gain one control and roll a die. If you roll at or under your control, you are no longer seeing red.

**If you black out** you're found naked, stinking, but in control in the GM's choice of a hidden territory. Dogman Radio interviews a guest over what happened; for each control you want (one minimum), choose one:

- You cross paths with a real threat
- You mark a marked territory (cross it out)
- You target a familiar face



# GM: RUN THE GAME

**Have them smell what's coming.** Color it all with characterizing scent. Give wind of trouble.

**Intrude with NPCs.** Ask how they smell. Have them clash with or indulge in deviations. Ask if/how they know them. Cross lines and force players into closets with secrets.

Ask them for color or feeling; work with the answers. "Something's off. What do you smell on Joker?" "Pratta comes over and snakes her arm around you. How's that make you feel?"

**Pain, arousal, addiction, anger, jealousy, fear, or anxiety can't be ignored.** Have them roll to keep their cool as a **SMOOTH** move.

**Call for a roll when they do something risky.** Let them tell you their approach. Say whether it's **SMOOTH** or **FERAL**. The situation always changes after a roll, for good or ill.

#### Cut between characters frequently,

sometimes before resolving dice rolls, as a cliffhanger. At times, jump in with a bit of coverage from Dogman Radio.

#### Make them feel cryptid with Dogman Radio.

Ask uninvolved players to play guests. Traumatized guests hesitate. Enthusiasts fabricate and exaggerate. The host empathizes and queries. Obscure werewolves as dark enigmas.

**Push in the right direction for failure.** If they have low control, push them to be **SMOOTH**. If they have high control, push them to be **FERAL**.

**Use failures to complicate the situation.** Press harder with the NPC intrusions. Turn the situation to shit.

**Highlight chances to spend Alpha Strings,** such as if someone's control is low. Someone with a string should get together with them in pack territory. Keep the pack dynamics spinning.

## THIRTY-SIX NPC SMELLS

Smells come like sight for werewolves.

Lemon Mildew Soap Cheese Coffee Pizza Curry Menthol Piss Cocaine Roses Honey Garlic Cocoa Weed Brisket Dirt Beer Gunpowder Sriracha Grass Newports Cherry Chapstick Iron Buttered Biscuits Ocean Pina Colada Shit Peanut Butter Spunk

Fish Bile Cardboard Cinnamon Champagne Bacon

## 36 TERRITORIES TO MARK IN TWILIGHT BAY

Established in the Pacific Northwest in 1692, Twilight Bay is a religious haven turned fish industry hub turned tourist trap being gentrified by techies.

## 1. RURALS

- 1. Shooting Range / The Buckin' Cowboy Bar 2. Research Lab / Greenhouses
- 3. Mt. Moon / Werewolf Woods / Lover's Point
- 4. TB State University / Old Military Base
- 5. Motel 69 / The Pit Stop / Trailer Park
- 6. Ranchlands / Cornfields / Tree Groves

## 2. SOUTHSIDE

- 1. Promises Pawn Shop / XXX Pleasure Shop
- 2. Club Sploosh / Steam Baths / Sex Clinic 3. Trainyard / Riverrun Park / Homeless Camp
- 4. Greenlife Dispensary / Grande Pizzeria
- 5. Projects / Corner Market / Laundromat
- 6. Warehouses / Shipyard / Taxi Company

## 3. MIDTOWN

- 1. XL Chinese Buffet / Exotic Imports
- 2. Fighting Dojo / Climate Control Storage
- 3. Order of Egypt Museum / Rose Park
- 4. Retail-Mart / Public Parking Garage
- 5. Hospital / Chapel / Pharmacy
- 6. Jimmy's Hot Rod Garage / Auto Shop

# 4. DOWNTOWN

- 1. City Hall / Courthouse / TBC News Station
- 2. Rapid Transit Station / Convenience Store
- 3. Construction Site / Rosa's Taco Truck
- 4. Casino / Hotel / Cocktail Lounge
- 5. Tech Museum / Hackerspace Cafe
- 6. Goldlife Bank / Yatta! Sushi & Karaoke

## 5. HISTORIC DISTRICT

- 1. Parker Place Public Market / Graffiti Alley
- 2. Beach Boardwalk / Theme Park / Arcade
- 3. Meat Packers / Butchers / Fishmongers
- 4. Twilight Bay Zoo & Aquarium
- 5. Curiosity Shop / Museum / Old Cannery
- 6. Bearded Viking Blacksmith & Leathercraft

## 6. HILLSIDE SUBURBIA

- 1. Mortuary / Cemetery / Crack House
- 2. Airport Mall / Movie Theater / AVA Stadium
- 3. Country Lodge / Golf Course / Vineyard
- 4. High School / PawPals Pet Care
- 5. Church / Private School / Townhomes
- 6. Library / Yoga Studio / EggsRise Eatery

## HIDDEN TERRITORIES

These are only discovered by someone who's blacked out after seeing red.

- 1. Wolfbane Grove
- 2. Silver Mine
- 3. Moonlit Pond
- 4. Abandoned Cabin
- 5. The Underground
- 6. Bayshore Crag

## 12 MERCY FALLS TERRITORIES

Jason Cordova's setting from Gauntlet Hangouts! This Oregon Trail camp town is surrounded by forest. A main road cuts through the brush and buildings, continuing towards Twilight Bay. The Mercy Falls Trailblazer, a local newspaper, claimed in its early history that German immigrants brought the werewolf curse to Mercy Falls. It's been pretty quiet since, although a woman in the late 80s swore a biker gang called the Moon Hounds was actually a pack of werewolves. There's something weird about Mercy Falls.

## 1. CHEROKEE LANE

The Egyptian Palace used to be a small hotel and bar. Mercy Falls High is the home of the Big Horns.

- Egyptian Palace Museum of Local History
  Community Church Grounds / The Hospital
  Mercy Falls High / The Old Schoolhouse
- 4. Cahill Antiques / Tea Garden

## 2. FREIBERG WAY

The Double Q Diner is a 50's-style diner. 1. The Great Pines Resort, Bar, & Grill

- 2. MFPD / Fire Station / Gooch Gas & Propane
- 3. The Double Q Diner / Five & Dime Market
- 4. The Gem Theater / Yellow Star Art Gallery

## 3. COPPERHEAD TRAIL

The Nail Roadhouse is a biker bar.

- 1. The Nail Roadhouse / The Lumberyard
- 2. State Park Campground / Ranger Station
- 3. "The Trepidation" River / Sawmill Bridge
- 4. Lake Mercy Falls / Cabins / Bait Shack

## HIDDEN TERRITORIES

Werewolves who see red, with no will of their own, are steered toward these places by . . . something else. Shaman's Island is in Mercy Falls Lake and its trees' branches have hand-like growths. The North Wood has dead and shriveled trees radiating from a Black Warehouse. The Forbidden Clearing is surrounded by petrified trees, has a formation of three huge, black canopic jars, and is close to an ancient and foreboding cave.

- 1. Mercy Falls / Dead Drift Gorge
- 2. Shaman's Island
- 3. North Wood / Black Warehouse
- 4. Black Galley Pond
- 5. Forbidden Clearing
- 6. Overgrown Graveyard



## 40 GAUNTLET CITY TERRITORIES

Rich Rogers's setting from Gauntlet Hangouts! Gauntlet City is an urban center located in the midwest, far east of Twilight Bay and Mercy Falls, but not far from the I-90 if you're up for a thirty-hour road trip.

## 1. DOWNTOWN

- 1. St. Thomas Cathedral
- 2. Main Street
- 3. Karlock Morris Medical Center
- 4. Cordova Plaza

## 2. HERMAN'S VILLAGE

By Jason Cox. Herman's Village is increasingly the place the *avant garde* go in Gauntlet City, with old warehouses reborn as communes and clubs. The hospital was formerly a mid-twentieth century insane asylum.

- 1. Matthew Spann Hospital
- 2. Rocket Pawn Shop / Gravy Jackson Bar
- 3. Silver Screen Theater
- 4. Jerry Art Studios / Mia Abbot Studios

## 3. VALLEY HEIGHTS

By Paul Edson. On the edge of the city, near the Municipal Water Reclamation Plant. Yeah, we keep our windows closed when the wind's coming from the west. The old church has an odd architecture. The commissary is a kitchen for food trucks.

- 1. Municipal Water Reclamation Plant
- 2. St. Dismas Catholic Church
- 3. Valley Heights Commissary
- 4. Ember Morgan Skatepark

## 4. COLONIAL VINTAGE TOWN

By David LaFreniere. AKA "the Township of Gauntlet" or "Ye Olde Gauntlet Towne". An artificial tourist trap that's not actually a colonial town but is nevertheless full of pretentiousness. The General Store has car charging stations, The Soda Shop's nickel banana splits are subsidized, and The Old Town Hall was built less than a decade ago.

- 1. Ye Olde General Store
- 2. Pinkman's Barber Shop
- 3. The Soda Shop
- 4. The Old Town Hall

## 5. ZOLA VILLAGE

By Lowell Francis. This suburb is located north of downtown. Karlock Morris is a small, prestigious university with a strong but somewhat sinister reputation in sciences and engineering. The Grim Unicorn is a used pop lit bookstore, disorganized and cashonly. Roun'-the-Clock is a weird bodega that runs the entire length of a block.

- 1. Karlock Morris University
- 2. The Grim Unicorn Book Store
- 3. Roun'-the-Clock Bodega
- 4. Crab Your Destiny Takeout

## 6. COLLOP'S WOLD

By Slade Stolar. The raised plain that is the top of the hill is known as "The Wold Herself" and is a dense cluster of churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, pagodas, shrines, and religious schools. The Western Cemetery is full of high schoolers playing hooky. The Southern Dormitories are converted housing. Quacker School is a tall blue church with birds and rodents in the walls.

- 1. Wold Herself
- 2. Western Cemetery
- 3. The Southern Dormitories
- 4. Quacker School

## 7. VELA

By Fraser Simons. AKA the Dig, the Drop, the Fall. The tallest building in the area is Fattige Beti Tower, an old commercial building turned into a housing complex. There's lots of graffiti by the rebel youth.

- 1. Fattige Beti Tower
- 2. The Freestand Vela Market
- 3. Ms. Robot Computer Repair
- 4. MC Clamour's Ice Cream & Beats Parlour

## 8. BENNING'S BRIDGE

By River Williamson. Named after a Confederate general, with no actual bridge. A petition to rename the place always fails. Many of the main roads are cobblestone with weather-warped rails, vestigial relics of the streetcar days. Nowadays you need a car or you're screwed.

Benning's Bridge Community Center
 Blue Avenue Boutique Brownstone

Businesses

- 3. St. May's Church
- 4. Oleander Park / Bike Paths

## 9. BASSETTVILLE

By Pamela Alexander. AKA The Kennels or Dogland. Businesses have flipped old houses on the main street for shops and offices. Most residents have bars over their windows. It's not a safe area, especially after dark. At the center is Bassett Park, the largest park in Gauntlet City.

1. The Eye of the Dog Pub / Man's Best Friend Cafe

- 2. Wright Street Shops & Offices
- 3. Bassett Park / Lake

4. Starshine Street / Cat Cafe

## **10. WUPPER VALLEY**

By Gerrit Reininghaus. A southern area of Gauntlet City dips steeply into a valley known as "The Wup".

1. Gauntlet City Zoo

2. Retirement Home / Wupper River / Train Tracks

3. Abandoned Textile Factory / Converted Loft Housing

4. Wupper Valley High School / The Wup Market



# **GAUNTLET DADDIES #003**

#### Illustration by Fabrissou

**Name** He-Wolf

**Favorite animal companion** Bear

Favorite Ranger move Called Shot (Chest & Face)

Favorite pick-up line "I've got a magical shaft that will make you quiver."

**Favorite punch line** "Strider? I hardly know her!"

Best life advice he ever received

Make sure your scabbard is big enough for that twohanded sword.

# THREE-DOZEN *Liniaue* VANPIRES

Nyx doesn't just drink blood, it is blood. When it inhabits a host, it absorbs and replaces their blood — and ultimately their thoughts — with its own. It can flee a host, leaving a dead husk behind and violently inhabit a new body. However, it's reluctant to do so at this time, as it has managed to inhabit a prominent world leader.

Walter Dunsmith has worked for the company for over sixty years without writing a single line of code. He has hypnotized management with meaningless jargon and worthless advice. All successes might have been inspired by his presence. All failures were in spite of his generous offers of assistance. He is very clever in his ways, burrowing deeply into the company and collecting many followers. Only fire or a parking lot hit-and-run are likely to end his reign.

Mordina Strake is the most charming person anyone has ever had the fortune to spend time with. Her jokes are the best, her beauty is unmatched, and she tells the most engaging stories. Everyone has the best time until the party is over and they're alone with their doubts. How could they ever compare? How could one such as her ever care for them? She leaves an impressive swath of violence and suicide in her wake.

Aisha Derry, formerly Constance Derry, is over two-hundred years old, but appears as a twelve-year-old black girl. Through a network of lawyers and other servants, she has managed to acquire valuable real estate all over the city, but her favorite lairs are the orphanages, where she lives and hunts until the other children start to get suspicious. Candace Singer: a seventeen-year-old riot of black hair, amateurish mascara, thriftshop clothing, and a vocabulary that would give a hooker the vapors. She's a dedicated volunteer at the local Neuro ICU, where physicians have yet to learn that there's a numinous bridge connecting the self-thatwants and the flesh-that-walks — and that it's a delicacy.

Tempest Morgan believes that blood is just a metaphor for whatever makes a person get out of bed each day. To that end, she "feeds" on her victims by formulating and enacting elaborate plans to take away the things they cherish most. Her weaknesses are the small things that help people get through their day, such as cat videos and mobile phone games.

Subsystem "Wdoyo23. PS" just sits quietly in the back of your machine, never interfering with your work. Instead it waits until your computer lays idle, then begins sorting through your social media feeds, stealing pieces of your typing style, your posts, all in search of the perfect algorithm to get maximum likes and replies from your friends. It's all about the attention, isn't it?

Kip spends most of its time living on the streets, and has done so for untold millennia. Kip resembles a small, brown-skinned child, though its gender is obscured in its prepubescent body and usually a few weeks worth of grime. It often has a dog of some sort and runs with train hoppers to protect itself. It only feeds on the ailing and pained members of the homeless; it drinks their memories and trauma as an act of mercy. Kip's main weakness is wifi, which leaves it weak and susceptible to harm. As modernity creeps into the world, Kip moves further into the margins, likely to its end.

Joy feeds off sadness. She doesn't make people sad, manipulating situations to spread misery; she doesn't have to. She just finds somebody who is sad, licks the back of their neck, and all the sad is in her belly. Sounds nice, right? Well, not for Isaac Henderson. He lost his son in 1978 and has been a constant meal for Joy. Over the decades, Isaac no longer has any motivation to search for happiness, he just sits at home, alone, no family or friends, not even a pet, waiting for the next time Joy will show up to lick the sad away.

Grinning Pete, a homeless "local character" known for his constant gummy smile. He claims he pulled out all of his teeth with pliers to stop himself from feeding on the blood of the living.

Billy Hwang is the apotheosis of male beauty. With each cosmetic surgery, he becomes younger, stronger, more intoxicating. His thralls are a cabal of doctors and nurses who spend their entire careers contemplating his physical appearance and how it can be improved upon. Each year, he selects one of them to sleep with, after which he commands them to commit suicide, which they happily do.

Dr. Umberto Chais is not a vampire, but he has found a rather novel use for the vampires he stakes: highly efficient dialysis machines. Side effects may include: drowsiness; nausea; prophetic nightmares; swelling of the hands, feet, or abdomen; depression; thoughts of suicide; thoughts of homicide; itchiness; and dry mouth which can only be slaked by human blood. You should not operate heavy machinery or sunbathe until you know how CVD Dialysis affects you. Please consult your doctor if you have been to Romania or places where certain blood disorders are common.

The Eteren takes on the appearance of an impossibly wizened woman. They feed on the age of the elderly, sucking years and memories out of the old, reversing their lives to mere babes. They grow older, wiser with experience that is not theirs, for every year feasted on. Look after those who lived particularly adventurous and exciting lives, for their memories are the most sweet to the Eteren. The victim's vacant, tearful stare on dozens of beautiful yet harrowing selfies, captured moments before death, are the only sign that the Vak'ayu has recently fed; his hunger, birthed in a baroque age of aristocratic restraint, now reigns unabated in the modern world; his victim's narcissism, like a pulsating vein, leads to the self-loathing that gives this fiend his eternal life.

The notion that vampires have no reflection is a corruption of the legend of Lydia Deville, who may *only* be seen in mirrors, peering over your shoulder in reverse in the seconds before you feel her fangs on your neck.

Adelaide Morgan is a broker: she finds the commodities that others desire and makes an offer on them. The core part of her work is finding unique "dishes" for her vampire clients: when they have a sudden craving for identical twins, a half-Mongolian/half-Brazilian grandfather, or an Olympic rowing team, she makes all the necessary arrangements. The first price she ever charged for these services was to be turned into a vampire herself.

Moses Green is proof that vampirism and drugs don't (shouldn't?) mix. He can't drink "straight" blood; he always needs to kick it up a notch with booze and dope. He runs a number of popular nightclubs in the city to keep his herd properly buzzed.

Humphrey Doddart is a paunchy, middleaged retail manager with balding hair who often laments that he wasn't turned in his golden years as a high school football quarterback. His meal of choice is the milky-white, copper-scented pus of his pubescent seasonal employees' pimples and acne. He reacts very strongly to acid, even mild sources like vinegar and lemon.

Viccer Scythe feeds on the moment of death. He's not sure what he's actually feeding on, but you can often find him working in old folks homes or making his way to wherever a natural disaster is about to hit — he has a sixth sense about such things. A side effect from his feeding is he gets the final thoughts and memories from those who die near him.

Who says all vampires are human? Armageddon is a massive vampiric German Shepherd, a true hound of hell who has had decades longer than the average dog to learn to obey and please his dark masters.... masters who reward him well with "treats" whose final scream, however earsplitting, only ever seems faint against the thunderous growl and bark of Death itself, red eyes glowing in the darkness.

Rockabye lives in the moments between focus; that second you drift off imagining what would happen if you won the lottery, or when you go on autopilot folding laundry. Rockabye lives on the sweet breath from an infant's lungs, suckling it so gently from tiny pink nares. So if you don't want to untuck a pretty blue blanket to find cold blue cheeks, all you have to do is never stop giving your baby your full, unwavering attention. Easy.

Franklin of the Underground stands eight feet tall when all six joints in his legs are fully extended (although he would have to get his black velvet suit re-tailored). Even with his legs folded to mimic human gait, Franklin can move through the sewer system with incredible speed. He feeds only on blood that's been lost because of a dispute, such as a barroom brawl, which is why he can be seen lapping at puddles in alleyways behind nightclubs. The longer the feud, the longer the blood sustains him. Finding a juicy vendetta is his long-term goal.

Dick's colleagues resented working with such an emotional vampire in a corporate environment. He has since set up his own therapy office, and everyone is much happier for it. The only draining part for him is the bleed. It might appear as the classmate who suddenly starts sitting in your preferred chair, the co-worker who starts parking in the best spot, or that twoman who always lingers at your favorite park bench. The spirit we will call ClingMineNowForever hones in on your first experience of frustrated denial and then systematically pursues all your favorite things until your temper explodes or you just stop caring. It disappears as soon as you call attention to it, but just letting go will cause far less embarrassment.

Mei Se, a gorgeous Chinese man, longed to be adorned in robes with every color in the universe. He hunts for abandoned, discarded canvas paintings and incorporates them into his heavenly garment, each claimed work filling its respective creator with self-doubt. Only by taking ownership of their talent can the artist free themselves and re-claim their work from Mei.

Ashley Tumberger thrives by taking up space and inconveniencing others. She gradually fills out shared apartments and occupies multiple rows of bus seats with her accumulated possessions, accessories, and pets. She secretly owns whole blocks of housing and parking lots filled to near-capacity by her own vehicles. She is sustained by each frustrated roommate, glaring plane passenger, or foot-tapping pedestrian stuck in line behind her. Strangely, offers of assistance moving furniture, carrying bags, or helping her along seem to sour the experience and she quickly flees.

Lord Valenti's life was defined by his obsession for the lover he couldn't have. On the night of the murder-suicide, he was transformed into a silvery mist. Over the ages, he has drifted into the bodies of young men and used them to dominate the lives of anyone who resembles that long lost lover in any way. The pink hammer is a cordless personal massager which can occasionally be found at seedy hourly hotels. It never needs batteries or charging. It lives off the victim's future orgasms. For every mind-shattering moment of pleasure it gives the user, another intimate moment in the future will land with a thud.

What museum isn't adding Abigail Fray's paintings to their collection? Her massive, haunting, crimson portraits have swept the modern art scene and are drawing teeming audiences to newly overflowing galleries. Abigail may be a vampire, but she knows that blood makes better paint than drink. Besides, who needs blood when you can feed on the rapt attention of millions?

Ketcha and Keetin are conjoined twin vampires, sharing a spine. Ketcha abstains from feeding on humans and does not kill. Keetin is a thirsty human hunter. They spend most of their time arguing and trying to convince the other of the merits of their respective lifestyles.

Vampires bring people down, man. Chase is a bro's bro. He was a big dude in high-school and for most of his afterlife, but a vamp-doc version of gastric bypass has made him fit AF, and he's totally been lifting to get that six-pack. He knows Pitbull's entire catalog by heart, but usually gets the "Mexican" parts wrong. He's rarely seen without a tall-boy of Coors Light, but no one's ever seen him drink from it. He can extend the miasma from his Axkxeks scented body wash and body spray (Cocky Desperation scent, to be exact) to gag any crowd and

Michael G. Barford Jason Cordova Paul Edson Jennifer "Moonpoison" Erixon Daniel Fowler Logan Howard Oli Jeffery Jason Li Maezar Rudy Mangual Lauren McManamon James Mullen Ferrell Riley David Rothfeder Dylan Ross Jesse Ross

mesmerize potential bros to join his cause with a single mis-quoted lyric.

Alex Jones is an odd creature; he feeds on disbelief of the truth. It used to be that a well-timed ghost story would spin off a conversation that would satiate him for a month. But when conversations on werewolves and pixies died out, Alex turned to politics. Now he runs a conspiracy internet show and has grown corpulent over chem-trails, vaccines, and Obama.

Grung big. Grung strong. Grung tear truck for fun. Grung suck stuffing out of teddy bears. Grung hungry, bring Grung bear.

Lucarda is a vampire's vampire. Most vampires want to be him; others long to be bitten by him. He is the most interesting vampire in the world. He doesn't always drink blood, but when he does, he prefers AB Negative.

Help! I've been targeted by an idestophage: they look like us but they feed on the meaning of our worms. Slowly, they crane the moaning from our forts, taking aweigh their stupefy dance until nothing is sinister but random fashionable scar garden round connectivity bubble.

In public, Franz Trekmen appears like most everyone else. (He's even mildly famous in many vampire circles for creating Red Bites, one of the earliest blood-sucking techniques.) But, in the shadows, he hunts women who won't bend to his will and threatens to destroy their lives and reputations with his masculinity and notoriety. He is a dominance vampire, without remorse.

> Mendel Schmiedekamp Christopher Sniezak J Stein Slade Stolar Matt Stuart Todd Zircher

# CODEX KEEPERS

Aaron, Keeper of the Child Upon Whom We Dare Not Look Rob Abrazado, Keeper of the Purple Falsehood Acritarche, Keeper of the Diary of Sanguine is the Eye Joaquin Aquirrezabalaga, Keeper of the Blood of Lursiss Vendevogel Alain, Keeper of the Omegatherion of Fasar Zach Alexander, Keeper of the Weeping Cells Dustin Andrews, Keeper of the Egg of Existential Dreaming Vincent Arebalo, Keeper of the Dolm Sarcophagus Daniel Backus, Keeper of the Thousand Year Cocoon Chad Bale, Keeper of the Chimes of Misery Joe Banner, Keeper of the Pedigree of Two-Faced Demons Michael Barford, Keeper of the Eternal Chime Lyndon Baugh, Keeper of the Trial of the Second Birth Robert Baxter, Keeper of the Living Wick of Gautama's Candle Joe Beason, Keeper of the True Name of Ashmedai Rick Beck, Keeper of the Five Limbs of Acolla Dan Behlings, Keeper of the Iridescent Ungulates Mathias Belger, Keeper of the Spectral Hounds Patrick Bethke, Keeper of Tarnat's Song for Battle Al Billings, Keeper of the Dun Spirit of Disobedience André Bogaz e Souza, Keeper of the Refined Rose Dust of Daar

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Allonde

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Kyle Simons, Keeper of the Tome of Heroes

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