

# Midwives

*"As if!"*

*"I heard that she was throwing up in the bathroom during third period. Must be the Plague."*

*"The best way to get in tight with the right people is to step on the wrong ones."*

They tell you that you are one of the fortunate ones. Your parents weren't in the highest echelons of the megacorp they worked for, but they were in the upper half of the business, and their position afforded them a good income and some privileges. You never lacked for anything as a child, and never experienced the uncertainty of not knowing where your next meal was coming from. Then, before Junior High, they sent you away for a year to finishing school. Under the loving tutelage of the nannies, tutors, life-coaches and stylists there, you grew to be confident, self-possessed and charming. While you might not be as wealthy as a Goldenkid or as beautiful as a Looker, you grew up with ambition and the desire for power and status.

The rules of the world you live in are simple: popularity is all that matters. With your popularity, you can control the social environment around you; shaping it to fit your desires. To become popular, however, you have to climb the ladder and depose those who are climbing above you while avoiding the sabotage of those who covet your place. People often accuse you and your contemporaries of being petty, insipid and shallow, but they don't realize all that goes into the Machiavellian world of teenage politics and esteem.

People hate you. They love you, but they really hate you. And, deep down, they wish they were you. This is what it is to be a Midwitch. Midwitch is a term mashed together from the novel, [The Midwich Cuckoos](#) (about mind-controlling children who all looked alike) and the term "witch." It's not the most appealing of terms, but Midwives take a perverse sort of pride in it. You are a Witch. You stir the cauldron, work your magic,

and the unwashed, pitchfork-wielding villagers would probably love to burn you at the stake.

Most people will tell you that what you're doing won't amount to a lot in a few years, when you leave high school to go to college, but what's the point of going to school at all if you just go through it as part of the nameless, faceless horde? Worse, what if you have to go through it as a lonely, self-loathing outcast, lamenting your entire existence to the point where you're tempted to dye your hair black and mutilate your body to feel better about yourself? Popularity may not get you everything you desire, and it doesn't make all of your problems go away, but being unpopular never got anyone anything worth having.

## What You Look Like

Part of being a Midwitch is knowing how to cast your spell. You don't dress like a model all the time, because doing so is completely impractical, but you know how to look good all the time. It's definitely a skill; not a quirk of good genetics and luck. You're beautiful, and not in the way where only Daddy says so, while secretly wishing that they still had paper bags so he could slip one over your face before hugging you goodnight.

You know all the many myriad secrets of makeup, hair care, body-shaping exercises, diet and good hygiene. You have been initiated into the mysteries of practical fashion, and you know what colors go best with your skin, hair and eye tones, as well as what styles and cuts of clothing will look best on your frame. Your hair is always soft, with a silken sheen and a lively bounce to it when you walk. Your face is flawless, even if you woke up from sleeping face-down on the pillow after a visit from the acne fairy. You are desirable and you had to work damn hard to be so.

Midwives turn heads, without all the theatricality of other yogangs out there. Whereas a Looker is paid to make expensive clothes, make-up and accessories look good, a Midwitch uses those things to make herself look good. You don't have to be rich to be a Midwitch. Plenty of Midwives make their way through life just learning to dress up and accessorize with chance finds

they make at thrift stores and a little sewing know-how. You don't even need designer make-up and perfumes when the bargain stores sell designer imposters so cheap. Nobody has to know you got your mascara from the same place that whores, trailer trash and televangelists' wives buy theirs.

You tend to sidestep genres of fashion. You do not follow the fads or styles that will identify you with any sort of subculture except your own. If you're in tight with a coven of other Midwitches, you will always call and confer with them what they are wearing so you don't choose to wear clothes that match too closely. You're all about maintenance, too. If you or a fellow Midwitch chips a nail, smudges your makeup or gets a run in your stocking, you are fully equipped to deal with it. The Midwitch carries at least enough makeup to rival the Facedancer's stash.

## Sub-Culture

Most people think you and your friends are shallow, snobby bitches. Guess what? They're right, to some extent, because you don't waste time with introspection and contemplation. Those are for the people who earnestly believe that inner beauty is more important than outer beauty. Try telling that to people you're not meeting in an anonymous flap room. The ones who aren't anonymous 40 year old dredgerunners looking for a jailbait thrill.

Deep down inside, you have very low self-esteem, are extremely unsure of yourself, and are deathly afraid of rejection. Who knows where it came from? Maybe your parents didn't seem to love you enough, maybe they left you in the care of a creepy uncle, or maybe they just seemed to be disappointed in you a lot. Nobody gets to see that side of you, however. Honestly, you don't know how the heck you've managed to have them all fooled for so long. When you look at yourself in the mirror, you don't see the perfect, pretty princess (or prince) that everyone else claims to see. You see a fat, ugly loser who dies a little more inside each day. Looking into a mirror is, for you, like looking down deep into the very heart of darkness. That darkness rises up whenever you feel good about yourself and tells you that you're not good

enough, that you fail to measure up in every single category by which you will be judged in this life. So, yes, you are shallow and avoid introspection at all costs, because the ones who try too hard for approval are everyone's doormat, suckup and plugtoy.

Makeup and fashion are your armor, and popularity is the sword you wield to keep people from stabbing you in this most vulnerable of places. Other Midwitches are much the same. Even when they're tearing you a new one, they will only attack your veneer -- not stab you gleefully through the heart like so many other yogangers might.

Alliances and friendships among Midwitches have a certain degree of mercuriality to them. You can quite literally be best friends one day and worst enemies the next. However, no matter how bad the relationship sours, there are certain depths to which you will not sink when attacking a sister Midwitch. You aren't likely to expose their most fatal flaw to the world for fear that they will do the same to you. It's like Bushido to those who live and die by the lipstick. No other juves will get this sort of preferential treatment, and that's because you don't anticipate to ever want to talk with one of them after you've torn them a new one. Your fellow Midwitches, however? Well, they're just like the fashion business. You never know when something that's unpopular and unsightly now will come back into vogue.

Midwitches use a lot of arcane and occult terminology in their everyday activities. They're not just applying eyeshadow, they're "invoking the darkness to lend its allure to their eyes." They don't plait their hair, they "interweave the strands of their destiny." It may seem to be a rather insipid affectation, but it is, in fact, a ploy that plays upon the superstitions of others. Likewise, Midwitches have a tendency to choose tags based on ancient mythological goddesses and heroines to add to their air of mystery.

## Belonging

Midwitches form covens of 3 - 8 members in their schools, and there can be many rival covens in a school. Being initiated into a coven of Midwitches is

never easy, because they are, by their nature, very discerning and critical. There are usually two ways to approach. The first way is to dress down when you're just coming out of finishing school, and gravitate towards an established coven. The Midwitches expect this, and will welcome it. For the next few months, you get to be their whipping girl. You will bear their insults like they're good-natured jibes, run off to fetch them sodas only to be told that you got the wrong brand, and be used as an example of how not to dress. Eventually, you'll start phasing in your own sense of style, and the hazing will begin to lighten up as the coven warms up to you. The younger members will take you into their confidence as the older members graduate, and next year, you'll be one of them! It's the Jane Goodall approach to popularity, but it's the safe approach to popularity.

The faster, riskier way to join a coven is to be noticed with a favorable eye. This is usually done by drawing in one of the more attractive and desirable people in school. Usually a Golden or a Looker. You cast your spell over them, make them want you and evade them like the winsome witch that you are, until they are almost mad with desire, and then you tear them to pieces in a public forum. Humiliate them in the Cafeteria and make them cry into their lunch. If you succeed, the Midwitches will seek you out, and if you play your cards right, you'll be one of them the next day. It's a high risk approach, but it's the sure path to fast advancement.

Once you're in the coven, you can never relax, though. There is popularity to be bartered and won, there are hearts to be won and broken and there are spells to be cast.

## **Allies and Enemies**

Midwitches have a long list of enemies and few allies. You have no great love of Golden, Glitters and Lookers for all that they have had handed to them on a silver platter, but you occasionally need to put them to use to raise your popularity. You have little use for the sweaty, combat-gearred Yogangs, although you might end up with Guardian or Streetfighter hangers-on looking to become your bodyguard. Mallbrats,

Tinkertots and FaceDancers can be your allies, and you can occasionally befriend fringe Goths, but only if they don't damage your reputation too severely.

You are actively targeted by Beaverbrats, who come from the same social strata as you do. Maybe you were once childhood friends with them, but that was a long time ago, and all you have for each other now is disdain. Arcos and Vidiots are always trying to catch a glimpse in your window, but you know that you could destroy them with a few cutting words. You have a surprising amount of sympathy for Squats, maybe because they look and smell how you feel inside, and will occasionally pay them for information.

## **Slang**

**Casting your Spell** - Working your charms and beauty to your advantage.

**Initiation** - Being taken into the confidence of others or learning something new.

**Besom** - Your motorcycle.

**Glamour** - Your overall appearance.

**Coven** - Groupings of Midwitches.

**Seeming** - Making yourself up to blend with another subculture.

## **Yogang Skill: Witchcraft (ATT/COOL)**

You're a witch. But unlike the green, long-nosed, warty, cackling hags of old, you're attractive, and people fall under your spell quite easily. You are subtle and winsome and to most people watching you, you move in an entrancing, slow-motion sort of blur. But this isn't about physical beauty, it's about knowing how to dress, how to accentuate and how to move. Each swish of your skirt as you walk, each soft percussion of your high heels, and each bounce of your ebullient hair is calculated to bewitch the ones around you. Every word you whisper can make a crowded room fall silent.

## **Specializations**

Toil and Trouble = +2 to Enchanting

Cauldron Bubble = +2 to Cauldron Stirring

## Mirror, Mirror = +2 to Glamour Casting

**Enchanting:** This is the ability to make people like you to the point that they're apt to agree with everything you say if it will gain them your approval. It's not really hard to do; their eyes have already fallen in love with you, you just have to get their mind to follow. Depending on whether you're just using body language (ATT) or some impassioned words (COOL), you roll your stat + Enchanting vs. their INT + Human Perception or Get A Clue to leave them so stunned by your looks or words that they will be at a disadvantage against you (-4 to ALL rolls against you) for however long they remain in your presence. This disadvantage goes away once they've had some time to recover their composure and analyze the situation critically, but that doesn't mean you can't enchant them again if they come back.

**Cauldron Stirring:** This is your ability to receive, start and interpret rumors. You're always in on the best gossip (Easy). Likewise, when you start a rumor, even if it isn't true, people have a tendency to believe you (Medium). If you care to go digging, there's a lot that you can uncover about people (Difficult). Want to investigate further? You can track a rumor down to its source. (V. Difficult). You can even, based solely on intuition and the nature of the rumor, discern whether it is true or not. (N. Impossible).

**Glamour Casting:** You know how to look good at all times. You can cover up acne, hexite and other blemishes with the right makeup (Easy), sew your own clothes (Medium), adapt your look so that you can make people from other subcultures (like Goths or Tribals) drool over you (Difficult), make a prom-ready look on the fly (V. Difficult) and manage to make yourself look good after having been thrown from a speeding truck into a muddy ditch (N. Impossible).

## If you're a Midwicht:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-trodes, pick four different things from the list below that you have or are currently carrying:

- Portable Make-up Kit
- Apple 520 V-term and a deck of V-cards for trying on makeup and clothing in virtuality.
- DataTap
- Snoopbox
- Fabric8 - Home garment design mini-fac.
- Nunchaku Cyberbike
- Black-handled dagger