

Break Legion:

A Player's Guide to Sonori



FOR ADULTS ONLY


GOOD COP WURMS



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MORT STOPS HIS EARS, BUT THE CHEWING CONTINUES. HOW CAN WORMS EAT SO QUICKLY? AND SO MUCH?

DINNER MOANS HOARSELY, THROAT CHOKED, NOT QUITE DEAD.

MORT WANTS TO CALL OUT FOR HER, BUT HE CAN'T. TOO MUCH HAS HAPPENED, I GUESS, AND HE'S GOT OTHER THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT, BESIDES.

AFTER ALL, IF THEY'RE DOING THAT TO HER, WHAT'RE THEY DOING TO HIM?

OH MY GOD...

IT'S AMAZING HOW BAD SOMEONE'S LIFE CAN GET IN ONE DAY.

HOW DID THIS BEGIN? AND WHY?

PERHAPS IT STARTED
LIKE AN ULCER,
A HOLE EATEN AWAY
FROM THE INSIDE.

FROM A LIFE GIDDY
WITH POSSIBILITIES...

TO UNPLEASANT
SETBACKS, STILL
MET WITH LOVE...

FALLING INTO AN ENDLESS
DOWNWARD SCREAM OF
MISSED CHANCES...

LOVE LIKE
BAD MEAT,
ROTTING...

AN ENDLESS GRIND OF
MISSED CHANCES,
COMMITMENTS, AND
HATRED LOCKED DOWN,
SIMMERING HATRED
FOR EVERYONE AND
EVERYTHING.

HOW DID IT BEGIN? WITH
HOPE SHAT OUT, EATEN,
AND SHAT OUT AGAIN.

LIKE CANCER, IT BEGAN INSIDE.



LADIES

DOES IT BEGIN WHEN LOVE DIES? OR WHEN HOPE DIES? DID THE WORMS COME FROM SOME INFECTION... OR FROM INSIDE?

EMPLOYEES ONLY

WELL, IT TOOK LONG ENOUGH!

SORRY, I'M JUST REALLY FEELING SICK, AND IT TOOK A LONG TIME TO GET THESE...

DON'T GIVE ME EXCUSES, YOUNG MAN! I'M PAYING FOR SERVICE AND FOR WHAT I'M PAYING, I EXPECT **GODDAMNED** SERVICE!

IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH, YOU KNOW, ONCE THINGS ARE MOVING, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME

LOOK, **FUCK YOU**, LADY! I'M NOT GETTING PAID ENOUGH TO PUT UP WITH YOUR SHIT!

YOU...

AM A GODDAMNED HUMAN BEING, NOT A SLAVE TO SOME OVERWEIGHT LEECH BUYING SLAVE MADE SHOES FROM SLAVE WAGE PEOPLE! I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF FUCK-UPS LIKE YOU!



WHEN HE'D EATEN ENOUGH SHIT TO FEED AN ARMY,

...OOH GODD...

HULF...

UHHGGH...

MAYBE THAT WHEN IT BROKE FREE.

WHEN THE WORMS IN HIS HEART CAME OUT TO PLAY.

WHAT DID HE WONDER,
DO YOU THINK, WHEN HE
SAW THE WORMS?

GET OUT.

I'M SICK, GARY. DOESNT
ANYBODY GIVE A SHIT
ABOUT THAT?

GET OUT, MORT.
GO HOME
BEFORE I
FORGET YOU'RE
SICK AND I FIRE
YOUR ASS.

HOW DOES IT FEEL WHEN THE PAIN GOES
AWAY AND ANGER TAKES ITS PLACE?

OH, HELL...

KRAK

IS THAT IT, THEN?
IS THAT ALL YOU
CAN SAY?

HLH?

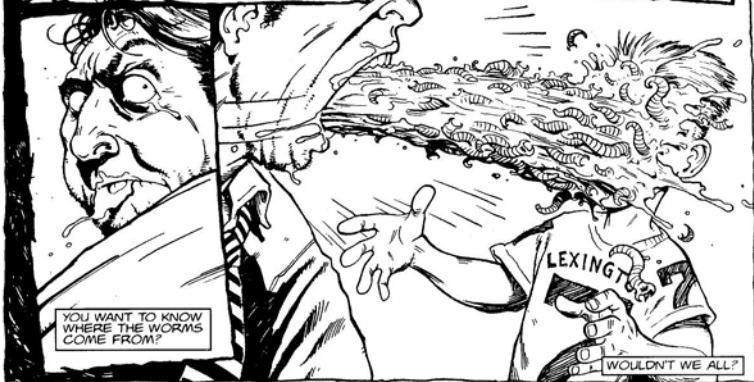
FUCK YOU, THEN, GARY.
FUCK YOU, YOU CAN
SHOVE THIS STORE
STRAIGHT UP YOUR ASS.

I QUIT.

FLUSH.

TOILET





SO WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE POOR MORT?

RUNNING, FREAKISH, PUKING
HATRED ON HIS LOVED ONES.

...ON HIS ENEMIES...

IF YOU CARE TO
CALL THEM THAT...

I GUESS THAT LEAVES THEM
WITH PEOPLE LIKE ME.

WHERE DOES
THAT LEAVE GUYS
LIKE MORT, WHO
DO WHAT THEY
CAN, FOR AS
LONG AS THEY
CAN STOMACH IT?

NO, PLEASE! I
DIDN'T MEAN TO.
I'M SICK. HELP ME!

I KNOW, MORTON. WE'VE
BEEN WATCHING YOU
FOR A LONG TIME, AND
WE CAN HELP YOU.

POOR BASTARDS.

Break Legion:

A Players Guide to Somori™

Revolt of the Flesh

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Break Legion:

A Players Guide to Fomori™



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MON 95



Introduction: Violations

*your god is dead and no one cares
if there's a hell i will see you there*
— Nine Inch Nails, "Heresy"

Reader Advisory


It is only fair to warn you that this book is gross. If you do not like gross things, such as poison tumors exploding on someone's body and spraying opponents with acidic pus, or someone's skin sliding off to run away down an alley, then don't come here. Put this book down. You have been warned.

But if this sounds...interesting...then read on. To be frank, this is a Black Dog book. That means for adults only. And that means we didn't hold back on the subject matter while making this book. When writing intimately about Wyrn creatures, there are some things normally left unsaid. Not here. We said anything we felt like saying, as long as it had something to do with fomori.

Now, this is not necessarily a virtue. Sometimes, leaving a lot up to the imagination is good. But this book isn't about virtues; it's about the lack of them. No table manners here. No subtlety, either. If you want subtlety, look elsewhere. Fomori are not subtle.

Got a problem with this? Too bad. The Wyrn did not ask your permission before making fomori. In fact, that's one of the bothersome and disturbing things about fomori: very few of them asked for what they got. Most of them just got it. And that's scary. The idea that the world might not run the way we always want it to. That all the happy, rainbow crystal light we may visualize still won't prevent Joe from getting possessed by a Bane and melting away into a stinking pool of ooze. Sometimes, bad things happen to good people.

And now's your chance to play one of these suckers.



What's a Fomor?

A fomor (plural fomori) is a person (or sometimes an animal) which has been possessed by a Bane (a Wyrm spirit). Once the transformation into a fomor is complete, that person is no longer human. He is something else entirely. The Bane is permanently wedded to his body and soul — two beings become one symbiotic whole. But this isn't a love fest. It's a horrible violation, a rape most vile. The Bane burrows into the deepest recesses of the victim's soul, becoming privy to all the person's memories, hopes, dreams and fears. And the victim feels the raw emotions of the Bane — poisonous, black thoughts of murder and destruction. Few souls can successfully remain humane, moral beings once fused with the Wyrm.

So what brings about such a possession? Many factors can lead to it. For one, the person must somehow attract a Bane. Many modern people do this without knowing it. Their hatreds and fears naturally draw the Wyrm's spiritual minions to them, like sharks to blood spilled in the sea.

While many Banes can possess someone through sheer force of will, most require a spiritual hole in the victim's soul that they can crawl into and snuggle up in, slowly melding with the victim, hidden by the victim's own dark emotions. Great anger hides them best, but simmering, tense hatred, fear, envy and other "sins" also serve to cloak the spiritual resident. In other words, the victim first invites the Bane in, although she is often ignorant that she does so.

Once allowed entry into a soul, the Bane begins the process of possession (by using the Charm of the same name). This takes a while. Anytime during this period, the Bane can be driven out, either through the willful repulsion by the victim (rare in this spiritually bereft age) or by the assault of an enemy such as a Garou.

Garou can enter the Umbra and physically attack Banes in the process of possession. If they kill the Bane or run it off, the process is over, the possession unsuccessful. But if it wins its way through to the center of the soul before someone can stop it, and completes the process of possession, then the result is irrevocable: the victim becomes a fomor.

These wretched mortals receive great supernatural powers from the Wyrm, but they also suffer horrible deformities in return. They are tainted with corruption, and will smell of the Wyrm to any Garou sniffing them out. While some fomori may still resemble their former selves, most grow ugly and abominable in appearance, as thick carapaces grow to cover their musculature or long, sharp barbs slide from their forearms. Fomori are nothing less than monsters.

Playing a Fomor

While fomori are powerful, they are also largely insane (many were so even before their transformation), or they quickly become so when they discover how short their lives have suddenly become. Playing a fomor should be an intense exploration of self-induced horror, not only in terms of what the fomor discovers it can and wants to do, but also in terms of how its life has been made a humiliation. Fomori feel violated, as if they'd been raped and mutilated but left alive. At the same time, they feel degraded and abhor themselves, having allowed and even invited their own ruin.

Moreover, the transformation from human to fomor doesn't necessarily cause the fomor to forget what it means to be human. The realization that it is less than human, that it is now a short-lived monstrosity, should occupy the fomor's mind and will. Even if it tries to do good (truly a rarity among these self-absorbed creatures), a fomor can do only evil; it is a being with a human conscience trapped within an evil will.

While fomori may think of themselves as being principled, the carrot of a cure that Pentex dangles before their noses is usually enough to shatter the few ethics that

remain. Imagine discovering that your touch reduces enemies to puddles of bubbling acid, and then that your own body is slowly eating itself away. With the choice between an ugly, ignoble death or the hope of a redeemed life, you may easily relinquish the vestiges of your humanity in exchange for Iliad's promises of a cure. After all, once you're cured, you'll have plenty of time to turn your life around and perform good deeds....

How to Use This Book

While this book is in the form of a players guide, giving all the information needed to create a fomor character, it is also intended for Storytellers. The information given herein can be used when running fomori games or to add extra detail to the opponents encountered in a Werewolf game.

One other thing: Do not take this too seriously. We had fun making this book, and hope you have fun using it. But it is just a game. And if you actually begin experiencing any of the symptoms described in this book, go to a doctor immediately.





Chapter One: Character Creation

*You know how to make me,
I know how to make you,
Watch you squirm
— Plasmatics, "Squirm"*

This chapter includes details on creating a fomor character. It is assumed that the players and Storyteller have access to the character creation rules given in the *Werewolf: The Apocalypse* Second Edition rulebook (or at least the *Vampire* or *Mage* rulebooks).

Fomori were born mortal humans (except for supernatural fomori, such as werewolves and vampires who have become irrevocably possessed by a Bane; see Chapter Three). As such, they have no special or supernatural abilities beyond the Powers and Taints they possess. For

instance, unless the fomor has bought the Power: Regeneration, he heals as a normal human — which could be fatal when he fights Garou.

Although mortal, fomori may not purchase Numina. The Banes now resident in their souls prevent the use of such powers. There are, however, a few exceptions to this rule (see True Faith, below, and *Brain Eaters*, in Chapter Two). Further exceptions should occur at the Storyteller's discretion only.

Character Creation Chart

- **Step One: Character Concept**
Choose concept, breed (if any), Nature and Demeanor
- **Step Two: Select Attributes**
Prioritize your three categories: Physical, Social, Mental (6/4/3)
Choose Physical Traits: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina
Choose Social Traits: Charisma, Manipulation, Appearance
Choose Mental Traits: Perception, Intelligence, Wits
- **Step Three: Select Abilities**
Prioritize the three categories: Talents, Skills, Knowledge
Choose Talents, Skills, Knowledge (11/7/4)
- **Step Four: Select Advantages**
Choose Secret Powers (5); Pentex-employed fomori receive Resources 1)

Choose Powers and Taints (Characters receive one Power point for every Taint point they take; see Powers and Taints, below)

- **Step Five: Finishing Touches**
Record Willpower (3)

Spend "freebie points" (21) (Characters may purchase Merits with freebie points. They may gain extra freebie points by taking Flaws)

Concept

Who were you before you became a fomori? Usually, a character's concept is a two- or three-word summation, such as "Unwitting Nerd" or "Vengeful Soldier."

Breed

Fomori come in two types: breeds and unique fomori. Breeds are groups of fomori who share similar Powers and characteristics (each group is usually possessed by the same type of Bane). Unique fomori are more common; their Powers are seemingly random. Pentex has few proven processes which will create exactly the fomori they want 100% of the time. Details on breeds can be found in Chapter Two. Unique fomori are just that; their details can be created by the player.

Nature and Demeanor

These Traits represent the foundations of a character's behavior, from her inner Nature to her outward Demeanor. More details can be found in *The Werewolf Players Guide*, or the *Vampire* or *Mage* rulebooks.

Backgrounds

The Backgrounds listed here are common to all Storyteller games or are new for this book. See *Backgrounds*, in this chapter.

- **Allies:** Your friends, most often fellow fomori from your Pentex division or First Team.

- **Consecrated:** You have sworn fealty to a Wyrms creature; it will provide occasional aid in return for your loyalty.

- **Contacts:** Describes the contacts you possess in various levels of society, from the black marketeer to the CEO of Burpsi-Cola.

- **Equipment/Fetish:** Describes the character's initial access to high-tech or mystical Pentex-issue items.

- **Favors:** Describes the number of favors you can call in, from getting yourself transferred to another mission to demoting your enemies.

- **Mentor:** A more experienced fomori or human who advises and looks out for you.

- **Rank:** Your security clearance and status in Pentex.

- **Resources:** Describes how wealthy you are; your belongings.

Taints

These are the horrible costs a fomori pays for her Wyrms gifts. Characters receive one Power point for every Taint point they take. See *Taints* below.

d100 Roll**	Taint	Worth
01-06	Addiction	varies
07-12	Atrophy	varies
	Balefire Curse	7
13-17	Bane Attractor	3
18-21	Brainwashed	3
22-25	The Crusties	3
26-29	Derangement	3/2/1
30-33	Disintegration	6
34-37	Doomed	varies
38-41	The Fading	5
42-45	Infections	4
46-49	Inner Volcano	5
50-53	Limited Mobility	2
54-57	Mental De-evolution	varies
58-61	Mutoid Cancer	4
62-65	Physical Wasting	varies
66-69	Rotting	6
70-73	Second Head	5
74-78	Severe Allergy	3/2/1
79-83	Special Diet	varies
84-86	Teledementia	5
87-91	Ugly as Sin	1
92-95	Walking Bomb	5
96-99	Worms	3
100	Roll again; double that Taint's effect or choose two of that Taint (i.e., choose two Derangements)	

** See the Taint: Balefire Curse

Powers

These are what make fomori different from their fellow beings. Characters receive one Power point for every Taint point they take. See Powers below.

d100 Roll*	Power	Cost	d100 Roll*	Power	Cost
01	Animal Control	2	59	Molecular Weakening	4
	Balefire Flux	7	60	Mouth of the Wyrn	4
02-04	Berserker	3	61	Nightmare Command	
05-06	Body Barbs	2-10	62	Nimbleness	2
07	Body Expansion	2	63	Noxious Breath	2
08	Brain Eating	6	64	Numbing	3
09	Cause Insanity	2 per die	65	Phoenix Fire	
10	Chameleon Coloration	varies	66	Plasmic Form	6
11-15	Claws, Fangs or Horns	3/5/7	67	Poison Tumors	3
16	Corrupted Visions	4	68	Procreation	4
17-18	Darksight	2	69	Prolonged Life	4
19	Deception	7	70	Rat Head	4
20	Ectoplasmic Extrusion	3	71	Regeneration	5
21	Enhancement	3	72	Roar of the Wyrn	4
22-23	Exoskeleton	2	73	Savage Genitalia	2
24-26	Extra Limbs	3 per limb	74	Scent of the Wylld (or Weaver)	5
27	Extra Speed	3/6			
28-29	Eyes of the Wyrn	3	75-76	Sense Gaia	2
30	Foot Pads	1	77-78	Sense The Unnatural	2
31	Frog Tongue	3	79	Shadowplay	4
32-33	Fungal Touch	4	80	Shapechange	varies
	Garou Gifts	varies	81	Size	2/4/6
34	Gaseous Form	6	82	Skittersight	2
	Hand from Beyond	4	83	Slither Skin	4
35-36	Hazardous Breath	varies	84	Slobber Snot	
37-38	Hell's Hide	2 per soak die	85-87	Spirit Ties	3
39-41	Hide of the Wyrn	1-5	88	Stomach Pumper	3
42	Homogeneity	6	89	Succubi's Veil	6
43-45	Immunity	varies	90	Tar Baby	3
46-50	Immunity to the Delirium	1	91-93	Toxic Secretions	2 per die
51-52	Infectious Touch	5	94-95	Venomous Bite	3
53	Invisibility	5	96	Voice of the Wyrn	4
54	Lashing Tail	3	97	Wall Walking	4
55	Malleate	6	98	Water Breathing	2/5
56	Mega-Attribute	varies	99	Webbing	5
57	Mind Blast	5	100	Wings	3/5
58	Mind Rape	6			

* See the Power: Balefire Flux



Freebie Points

"Freebie points" may be used to purchase Merits. Flaws may be chosen to add freebie points (maximum 7). Freebie points may not be used to purchase Powers; only Taint points can provide Power points.

Trait	Cost
Attributes	5 per dot
Abilities	2 per dot
Backgrounds	1 per dot
Willpower	2 per dot
Rage*	1 per dot
Gnosis**	2 per dot

* Only if the character has the Rage Trait (see the Power: Berserker)

** Only if the character has the Gnosis Trait (see the Power: Spirit Ties)

Willpower

The reserve of discipline, control and raw force of will that a character can muster. Characters begin with Willpower 3.

Merits and Flaws

Optional. Merits are advantages with which a character begins the game, while Flaws are disadvantageous to the character but give the player more points to spend. A player may purchase Merits with freebie points. Flaws may be taken to add to the character's freebie point total (maximum of 7 extra points).

Experience

Fomori characters can grow just as any other Storyteller system character. Use the experience chart from the *Werewolf* rulebook when raising Attributes, Abilities and other Traits. However, Powers and Taints are handled differently. Use the following formula for Powers:

Power point cost $x4$

Taints gained during roleplaying (see *Taints*, below) give the character experience points which may be spent on anything. The amount of points gained is figured according to the following formula:

Taint point bonus $x3 =$ experience points

Abilities

Skill

Indoctrination

You are skilled in the methods of indoctrination. This can include brainwashing a First Team into believing they aren't on a suicide mission, or convincing a new executive recruit that Pentex has the best interests of the planet in mind. Indoctrinating someone takes a long time of feeding them the information you want and leading them to mistrust contrary information. Indoctrination is a subtle skill, best used in a controlled-information environment. Its chances of success in a free market of ideas are little, but as the modern media machine has proven, it can still be quite effective. This skill can also come in handy in the field. It can be used to reinforce existing doctrinal beliefs in First Teams, bolstering them for coming combat. The subtle, friendly form of this skill (nightly newscasts) is paired with Charisma, but the forceful use (prisoner "re-education") is paired with Manipulation. This skill's uses are up to the Storyteller.

- **Novice:** You can sometimes get others to follow the party line.
- **Practiced:** You usually have no trouble convincing others that your version of the status quo is correct.
- **Competent:** You can turn friend against friend by raising doctrinal disputes.
- **Expert:** You can easily mold others' emotions and ideas into whatever form you desire.
- **Master:** Big Brother has nothing on you.

Backgrounds

Consecrated

The fomor has been consecrated (probably at birth) in a magical rite to a Wyrms creature of some power and influence. The fomor must serve her master faithfully; failure to do so has severe consequences. Even if the fomor becomes stronger than her master, she may not turn on it. In return for her service, the fomor may expect occasional help from the creature in the form of advice, power, or aid in battle. The type of aid depends on the nature of the creature. The creature is under no obligation to the fomor, but will send occasional help to ensure the fomor's continued enthusiasm.

The mere state of being Consecrated to a Wyrms entity may confer a degree of status on the fomor in certain circles. It may also create some animosity from her master's rivals. The more powerful the creature, the more remote it is and the less direct its aid. The Storyteller makes the ultimate decision about the form and frequency of aid (if any).

- A Bane Gaffling or a Wyrms servitor (rank 1-3 Black Spiral Dancer)
- A Bane Juggling or a powerful Wyrms servitor (rank 4+ Black Spiral Dancer, Seventh Generation leader)
- A powerful Bane (a Nexus Crawler) or a very powerful Wyrms servitor (Pentex Board executive)
- A Maeljin Incarna or Urge Wyrms
- One of the Triatic Wyrms (Defiler, Eater-of-Souls, or Beast-of-War)

Equipment/Fetish

Your character has jumped all the hurdles and cut all the red tape necessary to gain access to high-tech or mystical field equipment, such as silver bullets or a Bane Klaive. You begin the game with one or more Pentex-issue items, determined by the amount of dots you have in this Background. This is a one-time requisition, however; once that piece of equipment has been used up (in the case of bullets) or lost, you have to roleplay your way into getting more (Rank helps in this task). See *Equipment*, below, for a list of some items and the Ranks/Levels required to requisition them.

Note: Rank is used for equipment while Level is used for fetishes.

- One Rank/Level One piece of equipment
- One Rank/Level Two piece of equipment, or two Rank/Level one items
- One Rank/Level Three piece of equipment, or a combination of other Rank/Level items
- One Rank/Level Four piece of equipment, or a combination of other Rank/Level items
- One Rank/Level Five piece of equipment, or a combination of other Rank/Level items

Favors

Through your actions, you have earned the favor of certain individuals high up in the chain of command (First Teams, executive ladder, etc.). They are willing, and able, to intercede on your behalf. This is a powerful Background. A favor can be used to get you out of a lot of trouble (hide a body, transfer from a suicide mission, etc.). Favors are easy solutions to many problems and can be used to accomplish things that Allies can't or won't. Each favor may be used only once, however, and then it is gone. The Storyteller is the final judge of what a favor can accomplish.

- 1 favor
- 2 favors
- 3 favors
- 4 favors
- 5 favors

Rank

Unless this Background is purchased, the fomor is assumed to be of the lowest rank/position allowed in the Pentex division concerned (i.e. civilian, boot-camp First Teamer, intern lab tech, etc.). Pentex is strict in enforcing rank privilege; the player character with the highest rank will be in command of other player characters. Player characters who abuse this privilege may find their authority undercut, resulting in poor performance on the field. This may ultimately cause the character's transferal or demotion. The Storyteller has the final say on how high this Background may be bought; no character should begin play higher than fifth in command of a division.

- Novice: A private in a First Team; an associate executive; a white-level scientist
- Low Rank: A junior officer in a First Team; a junior executive; a green-level scientist
- Medium Rank: A captain in a First Team; a supervising executive; a blue-level scientist
- High Rank: A major or colonel in a First Team; a managing executive; a yellow-level scientist
- Command Staff: A general in a First Team; a directing executive; a red-level scientist

Merits & Flaws

The devil takes care of his own.

— old folk saying

With the Storyteller's permission, players may purchase Merits and Flaws from the new list given below or from any White Wolf game book. Especially useful are *The Werewolf Players Guide* and *Project Twilight* (adapt government-oriented Merits or Flaws to Pentex-oriented). The Storyteller has the final say whether a player may purchase a desired Merit or Flaw.

Hidden Power (2 pt Merit)

None of your Powers or Taints are physically obvious. You appear to be human (or whatever you were before becoming a fomor). If you have extra limbs or body bars, they are retractable and hidden under a sheath of skin. You seem to be one of the widden.

Banespeak (3 pt Merit)

With your transformation, you have discovered a way into your dark spiritual side and are able to speak with the Bane part of yourself. When you speak with your Bane, you appear to be talking animatedly to yourself. Your Bane whispers dark secrets to the tattered remains of your soul, and your soul withers a little more with each vile revelation. Your Storyteller will create the Bane, but will not reveal to you the extent of its knowledge or its secret powers. While your Bane will not guide you all the time,

at moments of deep urgency it may be able to provide you with clues or information about the Wyrms or Garou worlds which you would not otherwise know.

Pathetic Aura (3 pt Merit)

You are a truly needy person, or at least appear to be so; anyone with an ounce of compassion will feel so sorry for you that they will become your protectors, friends and patrons, and often remain so regardless of your behavior. These guardians will not die for you, but some may kill if the circumstances are right. This Trait does not equal an endless supply of Allies; your helpers will be purely mundane and will back off if the shit gets too thick. So long as you keep your obvious problems to tantrums, lies and debts, however, you will probably be forgiven. Although some normal-seeming fomori have this Merit, badly deformed ones can muster enough sympathy to outweigh a multitude of sins.

Stigmata of the Wyrms (4 pt Merit)

These are marks of the Urge Wyrms which sometimes commune with favored servants. To "win" one, a fomor must first understand the aspects of the Wyrms (which indicates some level of insanity to begin with), then contact her own inner corruption (to discover which aspect favors her), manifest that Urge in word, body and deed, and often undergo some hideous ordeal of consecration.

Seeking the Wyrms within often requires a perverted visionquest; this usually involves breaking away from all friends (including other fomori), and indulging in some excess related to the vision your character seeks until some truth appears. These excesses can include killing sprees, near-fatal drug binges, wanton cruelty (brutalizing homeless folks, children, animals, etc.), prolonged depressions, psychotic episodes, mad orgies and other deadly activities. At some point, a vision of the Urge Wyrms' Maeljin Incarna appears to the fortunate one and sends her through some excruciating test of loyalty; such ordeals are related to the Urge Wyrms involved — tests of greed, cruelty, deceit, etc. A fomor who survives the tests (many do not) receives the mark of favor.

Like the tests, stigmata marks relate to the Urge Wyrms the character serves: Pseulak, Lord of Lies, often gifts his chosen with forked tongues. Karnala, Desire's Urge, has more attractive marks, often hypnotically intriguing tattoos. Foebok gifts his followers with forever-open eyes, while Angu's mark consists of massive brands which never heal. The exact nature of the mark is left to the troupe's imagination, but it should reflect some appropriately deviant behavior.

Stigmata can be really useful in social situations with others who understand the mark; Black Spiral Dancers may reverse the chosen (or may kill her anyway — they are demented, after all!), and Pentex superiors and Wyrms-mystics will give her respect. Even mundanes who embrace the Urge Wyrms' principles will regard the chosen one with a measure of awe and reverence. Stigmata are usually good for one to three extra dice for Social rolls when dealing with

the Wyrms-tainted. Naturally, the character will stand out like a beacon to Sense Wyrms and other such Gifts, and must continue to serve the Urge Wyrms whenever possible.

Unpossessed (5 pt Merit)

A part of your soul still remains. The Bane has not fully possessed you, giving you hope of one day shaking off its hold. However, if this was discovered by your masters, you would either be killed or sent back for full possession. Where can you get help? Who can you turn to? You must tread very carefully — one wrong move and you will be destroyed.

True Faith (7 pt Merit)

The Bane within you has not been able to sever your faith. You can purchase the Numina: True Faith at normal cost. However, you are a being at war with itself. The Bane within you will try to thwart the miracles which your faith may bring forth. Indeed, your faith may even endanger you: if you attempt to exorcise an evil spirit, a botch may wrench the Bane from you instead. You will be cured of taint: but you will also be dead from the trauma to your corrupted soul. The Storyteller has full control of the use of True Faith by fomori.

Deformity (1 pt Flaw)

You find it more difficult to hide your Wyrms nature than others. In fact, if you have any unusual markings, such as a tail or body barbs, you cannot hide them. People run in fear from you due to your hideous appearance. This makes it very easy for Garou to distinguish you, and thus you are forced to move more covertly. This is a very common Flaw for fomori. More rare is the Merit: Hidden Power.

Scary Presence (2 pt Flaw)

The Wyrms rides you always; no matter how you act or appear, you're cursed to frighten people by your very presence. This Flaw has no physical manifestation — you scare folks simply by existing. Mundane humans will avoid you however they can, and may become violent if pressed. Even other fomori will sense the taint that infects your soul; they may not flee, but you won't be popular, either. Loneliness is your lot forever.

Equipment

Basic First Team Kit

All First Teamers are given the following equipment and perks. These items are free, and thus do not require the Equipment Background to acquire. Failure to properly upkeep equipment (leading to replacement costs) is routinely punished and the lazy First Teamer is often docked pay.

- An identity card, which serves as a security clearance to enter company buildings.
- Rank medallion, signifying the First Teamer's rank. Worn on the collar or over the left breast.



First Team Items

Below are some common First Team items, the Rank required to requisition them and the reason for their restricted access.

Rank	Item	Restriction
<i>Ammunition: Usually issued in magazines (number depends on weapon type)</i>		
0	Normal rounds	All First Teamers get these with their guns.
1	Armor-piercing rounds	More expensive.
2	Silver bullets	Too expensive to waste on lower echelons.
2	Dragonsbreath rounds	These incendiary shotgun rounds will destroy the gun, but ignite their target; destroys expensive equipment.
3	Exploding rounds	Only for assault operations in wilderness.
3	Silver nitrate hollowpoints	Extremely expensive.
<i>Armor:</i>		
0	Flak vest	Standard issue.
1	Kevlar vest	Slightly expensive.
3	Pus armor	Often deadly to fellow Team members.
4	Silver bodysuit	Extremely expensive.
<i>Poisons</i>		
1	Cyanide capsule	This is not a toy.
1	Ionone gas	Wear a mask.
3	Tear gas	Wear a mask.
3	Mustard gas	Wear a mask; assault situations only.
4	Nerve gas	Be protected; do not destroy own team; only in war situations (Amazon).
4	Kiss of the Wyrn	Highly experimental.
<i>Weaponry:</i>		
0	Automatic guns	Submachine gun, assault rifle, etc.; standard issue.
1	Shotgun	Don't hit your own men in tight quarter firefights.
	Laser sight	Expensive.
2	Pistol	Only officers (or retrievers) can carry pistols.
2	Smoke/Gas grenade	Assault missions only.
3	Automatic staplegun	Expensive.
3	Claw caps	Expensive.
3	Fragmentation grenade	Assault missions only; avoid damaging own team or equipment.
3	Heavy weaponry	Tripod-mounted machine gun, rocket launcher, etc.; only for wilderness or defense operations.
4	White phosphorus grenade	Use only in war situations (Amazon).

- A salary and a stipend for expenses, represented by the Resources Background (all characters begin with 1).
- An M-16 assault rifle (.223 caliber, difficulty 7, damage 7, rate 20, clip 20/30, conceal N, range 200) and three magazines of ammunition. (Retrieval teams are given pistols instead.)
- A combat/survival knife with a compass in the handle.
- A flak vest (retrieval teams are given kevlar vests instead).

Ammunition

Silver Nitrate Hollowpoints

Rank: 5

These are hollowpoint bullets filled with silver nitrate. Essentially, they act like regular hollowpoints, exploding inside the wound on impact and releasing the silver nitrate. Aside from the aggravated, non-soakable damage these do to Garou who are not in their breed form, silver nitrate is a poison in its own right, and spreads its toxin to affect the werewolf (regardless of form). The poison causes one Health Level of damage per turn for three turns to an infected Garou; this damage cannot be soaked. For those midnight werewolf hunts with the good old boys, these things can't be beat. Because they are so potentially deadly and would therefore draw considerable attention were they to be discovered by agents of the law, they are issued on a need-to-have basis only.

Armor

Pus Armor

Rank: 3

This loathsome item is somewhat like kevlar (affording the wearer an extra soak die), but when the outer part is pierced by claws, teeth or bullets, oozing, highly infectious pus sprays out in a two yard long arc. The pus causes one Health Level of aggravated damage if it contacts bare flesh, hairy werewolves, etc. Unless it is wiped off within the next two turns, it causes an ulceration, which can only be healed by magical means. Each day that the recipient fails to be healed, the ulceration digs deeper, causing another Health Level of aggravated damage. Unless healed, the victim eventually dies as it eats through him. Cutting out the ulceration is an option, but does as much damage as all the damage which the victim has sustained up to that point (i.e. if he has taken two Health Levels of damage, cutting it out causes two more). This armor is still in the Beta testing stage; any problems with the suits (and there surely are some) have yet to be discovered.

Silver Bodysuit

Rank: 4

First utilized by lab workers and guards in areas where Garou interference was likely, silver bodysuits have proven to be a great deterrent to werewolf attacks. The suit provides the wearer with three soak dice. However, it is made of woven silver and acrylic fibers which, when pierced, fracture into jagged edges that inflict aggravated, non-soakable damage on werewolves who hit it. Half the damage a Garou rolls against the suit wearer is also taken by the Garou as aggravated, non-soakable damage (round up). Silver bodysuits are very rare. They are only issued to an elite few who are engaged in or protecting vital work.

Grenades

Since grenades tend to cause comment in polite society and have a high incidence of causing sudden death syndrome, they are not usually issued as everyday equipment. They are reserved for those who need them due to the nature of their normal work, or they may be requested when a character takes on a special assignment in which the grenades might prove useful. The police tend to shoot anyone flashing these things around and ask questions later.

Fragmentation Grenades

Rank: 3

A fragmentation grenade has a damage Pool of 12 dice at ground zero (such as in a character's hand). For every yard between the grenade explosion and the character, reduce the damage Pool by one die.

Example: A 12 die fragmentation grenade detonates five yards away from a character. The damage Pool is seven dice of damage.

Smoke Grenades and Tear Gas Grenades

Rank: 2

Smoke grenades emit a dense cloud of white or colored smoke. Tear gas grenades emit a cloud of irritating gas (see Poisons, below). There is no blast from these grenades. The smoke is released through holes in the canister. The cloud will fill a ten yards square area in one minute and will last ten minutes in still air. Pentex troops firing into the smoke usually harm as many of their own as they do Garou.

White Phosphorus

Rank: 4

White phosphorus grenades generate a temperature of 2700° F when they explode. A WP grenade has a Pool of 12 dice at its point of detonation. Reduce the Dice Pool by one for every two yards between the character and the grenade.

This is aggravated damage because of the burning, although Garou can try to soak the damage. WP grenades will ignite most common materials that are even slightly flammable.

Poisons

Cyanide Capsule

Rank: 1

Vector: Ingested

Sensory: Bitter almond taste

Effects: The fomor has a small quantity of cyanide inside a hollowed out tooth. If the fomor is captured by Garou, he knows to expect the tortures of the damned. The cyanide is a quick and relatively painless escape. Fomori who are held prisoner by the Garou are usually considered suspect by most agents of the Wyrms and are often destroyed if they escape, anyway. This capsule will not affect those fomori who are immune to poisons (see the Power: Immunity, below).

Protection: Don't bite into tooth.

Jonone Gas

Rank: 1

Vector: Inhaled

Effects: The fomor has a gas extracted from the common violet. This extract contains a highly concentrated dose of the chemical jonone. Jonone completely short circuits the sense of smell of anyone who smells it. The effects of this gas last approximately an hour and can be particularly damaging to lupus Garou, who are very dependent on their sense of smell. This gas may also fully or partially prevent the Garou from using any Gifts that depend on smell (e.g., Heightened Senses, Scent of Sight, Scent of the True Form, etc.). This will not block the Gift: Sense Wyrms, which is not based on smell (no matter how much Garou noses wrinkle up when they use it).

Protection: Don't breathe it.

Tear Gas

Rank: 2

Vector: Contact/Inhaled

Sensory: Colorless (frequently mixed with smoke), distinct odor

Effects: Coughing, gagging, severe irritation of the eyes and mucus membranes. Subtract two dice from all Dice Pools until clear of the gas cloud for 10 minutes.

Protection: A gas mask will protect fully, a scuba mask or goggles will protect the eyes, and breathing through a wet cloth will protect the lungs. The Resist Toxin Gift will negate the effects of tear gas.

Mustard Gas

Rank: 3

Vector: Contact/Inhaled

Sensory: Faintly yellowish, distinctive odor

Effect: Caustic; causes blisters to exposed flesh. If inhaled, blistering inside the lungs may prove fatal. Subtract one Health Level per turn the skin is exposed to the gas. Victims lose two Health Levels per turn of breathing the gas.

Protection: Full-skin coverage and a gas mask are necessary for any protection. Ordinary clothing will protect for one turn only. The Resist Toxin Gift will negate the effects of this gas.

Nerve Agent (Sarin)

Rank: 4

Vector: Contact/Inhaled

Sensory: Colorless, odorless

Effect: Highly concentrated nerve gas inflicts one Health Level per turn; this cannot be soaked. At a low concentration, it inflicts one Health Level per minute with the same restriction. At a trace concentration, it inflicts one Health Level per hour.

Nerve gas causes nausea and disorientation, followed by death. It is important to realize that the lethal effects of Sarin occur at a concentration of 10 - 100 parts per million and that the effects are always lethal. (Chances of nonlethal but still symptom-inducing exposure are less than 1 in 10,000.)

Protection: Sealed NBC suit

Antidote: Atropine Injection Kit (hypodermic needles with atropine; must be administered before symptoms begin. Atropine taken without exposure to Sarin becomes a toxin). There are rumors that Pentax has engineered this poison so that atropine will only give the victim three to four more hours of life. The Resist Toxin Gift will negate the effects of the gas.

NOTE: It may be possible to protect oneself from Sarin by sealing a room in a high place. Israel used this approach to protect its population during the 1991 Gulf War, but the effectiveness was not tested (there were no gas attacks).

Atropine

Rank: 1

Vector: Injected

Sensory: Odorless, colorless liquid

Effect: Over a period of (Stamina + 3) hours, victims suffer nausea, cramps, vomiting, disorientation and congested breathing before they die.

Antidote: Blood transfusion, hospital care.

Kiss of the Wyrms

Rank: 4

Vector: Injected

Sensory: Yellowish liquid

Effects: This is a highly experimental toxin used in conjunction with a dart pistol or rifle. Its purpose is to create paranoia and bloodlust within the victim, causing the target to frenzy without provocation. It has been proven effective against Garou, but the exact amount needed for the optimum effect has not been identified as of yet.

The serum is placed into a capsule attached to the dart pistol or needle (the pistol required to fire it is Rank 1; the rifle is Rank 2). Upon impact, the capsule breaks, releasing the toxin into the target's bloodstream or muscle tissue. Once within the target's system, it begins to stimulate chemicals associated with paranoia and anger. A successful injection will send a Garou or Kindred into a frenzy, and fill mortals with intense anger and paranoia.

The victim may resist this toxin with a Willpower roll against a difficulty based on the amount of toxin that was used. A pistol load is difficulty 6; a rifle load is difficulty 8. The Gift: Resist Toxin will nullify the effect of the toxin. The toxin will eventually lose its potency, causing the target to fall into a deep sleep. A Rite of Cleansing is required to fully remove the effects of the Kiss of the Wyrms. Until this ritual is performed, the victim will find himself edgy, and suffering from mild paranoia.

Protection: Armor, Resist Toxin

Sensory

Sub-Dermal Radio

Rank: 2

The fomor has a small radio receiver and transmitter implanted in the base of her skull. This allows her to receive orders and send information discreetly. The range is limited (about 25 miles radius), so it is usually only of use within the fomor's immediate circle (First Team, etc.). The radio frequency automatically shunts up and down the bandwidth, making it difficult for enemies to eavesdrop. Those receiving the transmission can hear everything that the fomor does. The fomor can shut the radio off at will, but Pentex can reactivate it discreetly from a distance to guard against treachery. Several of these devices have been captured by the Garou known as Monkeywrenchers. This has worried Pentex, and they are constantly improving the radios to discourage Garou tampering.

Weaponry

Automatic Staplegun

Rank: 5

Pentex's latest creation looks little different than an ordinary staplegun, but the "staples" loaded in it are made from the leftover parts of dead Renitent fomorach (see Chapter Two) and have been thickly coated with the poison Alpha-Fomorol. When the trigger is pulled, the automatic staplegun sends out a spray of 100 staples which lodge themselves in the victim's flesh, injecting the poison. A single burst of staples contains enough Alpha-Fomorol to kill an ordinary human instantly. Targets take one level of aggravated damage from each burst plus seven dice of ordinary damage. The gun must be reloaded every three bursts.

Those who do not die from staple damage are infected by the Alpha-Fomorol introduced into their bodies. As Alpha-Fomorol instantly kills humans, victims of this sort are limited to Garou and other supernaturals. For every level of aggravated damage inflicted, the victim accrues one Taint point (Storyteller chooses the Taint), beginning the metamorphosis into a fomor. Moreover, Alpha-Fomorol, like Fomorol, is highly addictive; any victim who takes three levels of aggravated damage from these staples becomes addicted to Alpha-Fomorol and may die unless he either gets more Alpha-Fomorol or he removes all traces of the Wyrms' poison from his system. Less than three levels will cause lesser withdrawal symptoms, such as vomiting blood, as the victim heals.

The Taint can be removed within one moon by a Rite of Cleansing; alas, the addiction to Alpha-Fomorol remains. The Garou currently know no cure for the addiction, although it is rumored that an Umbral quest in Gaia's name might be efficacious.

Roll Dex + Firearms, Difficulty 7, Damage 7 + special, Range 12, Clip 3, Conceal J
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Claw Caps

Rank: 3

Claw caps are small explosive charges encased in pointed silver caps which are fitted over a fomor's claws (he must have the Power: Claws) and donned just before a fight. Embedded into the target's skin when the claws make contact, they are timed to explode after one turn, ripping away skin and muscle. Claw caps are wired to a silver base which remains on the fomor's claws after contact; the timing mechanisms in the caps are triggered when the silver on the cap no longer touches the silver on the base. In order



to embed the caps into Garou flesh, a fomor must first inflict at least one Health Level of damage with its capped claws. Because of technological limitations, caps have a 30% chance of failing to explode and a 15% chance of exploding while still being worn by the attacking fomor (roll once after being donned), which explains why most fomor wear claw caps only when absolutely necessary. Until they are used, they are kept in lightweight foam-lined containers.

When embedded in Garou, the silver in the caps causes one level of aggravated damage per turn. Additionally, the explosive charges cause three Health Levels of aggravated damage. Fortunately for the Garou, the explosion(s) usually also ejects the shards of silver from the skin, so after the caps have gone off the following turn after being embedded, werewolves stop taking silver damage.

Waldoes

Rank: 3

Initially intended for use in the space program, these are metallic arms which lengthen out on collapsible frameworks to grasp dangerous items or opponents up to three yards away. Their effective Strength and Stamina are each 5, and they can grip and cause crushing damage equal to their Strength. Some are coated with silver, others are made of cold iron to enable their users to deal effectively with Garou and changelings. Waldoes may also be used to grasp items and use them as weapons (utilizing the operator's melee combat abilities), such as thrusting wooden stakes at vampires' hearts or as helpers, by performing such actions as shoving a lit match into a volatile liquid from a safe distance. They are somewhat clumsy, however, and cannot be used to perform delicate manipulations (picking a lock, constructing a bomb). They are also bulky (add one to all Dexterity roll difficulties while wearing them) and hard to conceal (requiring at least a briefcase-sized container when not in use).

Fetishes

Most fomori do not have a Gnosis Trait. This makes it hard for them to use fetishes, which naturally attune themselves to the user's Gnosis. Instead, a fomor may roll Willpower to activate a fetish (difficulty of the fetish's Gnosis +1), or spend one Willpower to activate it automatically.

Fomoro

Level 3, Gnosis 5

This drug is actually constituted from the bodies of "recycled" fomorach (see Chapter Two). When injected into a fomor, it temporary boosts his Powers. However, it is highly addictive, and the fomor will crave more. After injection, the fomor rolls to activate the fetish. If successful, the effects of any Power he uses are doubled (i.e., claws and fangs do more damage, Mind Bending is easier to use, etc.).

After even one use, however, (regardless of whether it was successfully activated or not) the character will suffer from the Taint: Addiction (cycle: once per month), until he gets more Fomorol. Unlike a full-blown addiction, however, once a full cycle has passed without Fomorol, the character's need for the drug disappears — unless he uses it again.

Power Goggles

Level 2, Gnosis 3

Now you can have Power Goggles, just like your hero, Buck Racer! (See *Monkeywrench*: Pentex.) These goggles are a Bane fetish which allow the fomor to see Garou as they traverse the Gauntlet from the Penumbra to the physical world (roll Perception + Occult, difficulty 7, to be alerted in time). This may give the fomor that crucial, extra instant necessary to save his life.

Putty Buddy

Level 3, Gnosis 5

Putty Buddy is a Bane fetish distributed to fomori in the service of Pentex. What can it do? Oh, what can't it do!! It stretches, it bounces, it picks up cartoons. If molded over another person's face and then over the fomor's own it will allow the fomor to take on the other's appearance (face only, for one scene). One egg's worth can be stretched out to over 50' long, creating a rope for quick getaways, or to bind one's enemies. If thrown at any target not in the service of the Wyrn, it will entangle the victim (Strength 5). A thousand more uses. Putty Buddies can only be destroyed by fire. They scream as they burn.

Dibro-Blade

Level 3, Gnosis 5

This blade is the result of the fusion of a corrupted electricity elemental and a bladed weapon. These weapons are extremely experimental, and few in number. When the fetish is activated, the elemental creates a charge around the blade, causing a low hum and vibration on the knife blade. When thrust into a target, theoretically a discharge of electrical energy will occur, causing three Health Levels of aggravated damage in addition to any damage the knife inflicts.

The knife itself is still in an experimental phase. Pentex has had trouble fusing elemental spirits with the knives itself, and has found it works best on fighting knives or shortswords. Unfortunately, they have not learned to control the charge with 100% accuracy, and some unfortunate accidents have happened to those wielding the blade.

Roll	Difficulty	Damage	Conceal
By weapon	By weapon	+3†	By weapon
† Aggravated damage			

Powers

Now these sick souls who rape the entire land

Live in a world, for the love of gore!

— Brainstorm, "Born to Kill"

Below is a list of fomori Powers and their point costs. Beginning characters get one point with which to purchase Powers for every Taint point they take. Taints are listed after the Powers. Successive Powers may be bought with experience points (see *Experience*, above), at the Storyteller's approval. There should be some excuse for the new Powers, such as exposure to the Wyrn's Balefire, a strengthening of the Bane possessing the character, or some other story excuse.

Note: Most of these Powers require the fomor to spend a point of Willpower. However, if the fomor has Gnosis (Power: Spirit Ties), he may elect to spend Gnosis points instead. Also, at the Storyteller's discretion, fomori with Rage (Power: Berserker) may spend Rage points to activate certain physical Powers (such as Shapeshift or Hazardous Breath).

• **Animal Control (2 pts)** — Animal Control gives the user the ability to summon and control animals who are within range at the time the Power is used. If an animal is within the vicinity, it can be made to perform one specific task. The task must be something that the animal can normally do. Dogs might bite, rats might follow a target for a few blocks so long as the rats are able to remain hidden, and cats might jump on someone's back or wind around his legs to trip him up. However, birds will not take messages back and forth like carrier pigeons, and deer won't perform strange dances in front of people to distract them. Common sense should dictate what is reasonable.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower and rolls Manipulation + Animal Ken (difficulty 6). If successful, he can cause one animal per success anywhere within 120 yards of him to do as he bids. The effect lasts for one scene.

• **Balefire Flux (7 pts)** — Whenever the fomor is exposed to Balefire, the radioactive excretions of the Wyrn, he may undergo a transformation, gaining a new Power.

System: After the fomor undergoes five turns of successive exposure to Balefire, roll the fomor's Stamina (difficulty 9). At the Storyteller's option, particularly extreme exposure to Balefire may lower the difficulty of the Stamina roll. If successful, the fomor gains a new Power, chosen randomly (see below). This new "gift" from the Wyrn is instant — the character immediately undergoes a painful transformation for three turns, during which she can take no actions, not even to defend herself. Afterwards, her new Power will display itself (such as a new arm growing from her side, if she gained an Extra Limb).

If the roll is a botch, the character gains a new Taint instead, also chosen randomly (see the Taint: Balefire Curse).

This Power does not make the fomor immune to Balefire; unless she purchases Immunity (see below), she will suffer any normal damage from the toxin (see sidebar).

Random Powers: Refer to the chart at the beginning of this chapter. Each Power has a number listed by it on a range of 1-100. Roll percentile dice (2d10, with one die acting as the ones column and the other as the tens column; "00" equals 100) to determine which Power is chosen.

• **Berserker (3 pts)** — The fomor has been "gifted" with Rage — the renowned anger of the werewolf.

System: The fomor begins the game with three Rage points which he can use just like any Garou. However, the fomor is also susceptible to frenzy. He may purchase extra Rage points with freebie points (cost: 1 per point).

• **Body Barbs (2-10 pts)** — The fomor has sharp, blade-like bone growths on his wrists, elbows, knees or feet. The barbs' size, shape, number and placement vary from fomor to fomor.

System: The fomor may add one to five extra dice to his brawl damage (one die per two points spent on this Power, maximum 10). The damage is aggravated. The fomor must state where his barbs are located and state that he is attacking with them before rolling his attack dice.

• **Body Expansion (2 pts)** — The fomor can grow very large — up to three times normal height. While expanded, she can take giant steps, covering a great deal of ground, and grab human-sized opponents in her fist.

There are a few disadvantages to the expansion: Fomor may bump their heads on doorframes and have to bend over in low-ceilinged rooms. Their internal organs do not expand with them and they can become light-headed from lack of oxygen and too little blood in their veins.

Finally, giant-sized people usually have very brittle bones; the fomor may shatter her delicate bones without realizing it until she returns to normal size.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower and rolls Strength + Athletics (difficulty 6). Hand-to-hand attacks from the expanded fomor inflict Strength + 4 damage; the fomor can crush things for the same amount of damage by sitting on them. The fomor may also add 10 yards to her running speed per turn. If the fomor botches a soak roll, her brittle bones break, causing one Health Level of damage.

• **Brain Eating (6 pts)** — This potent Power literally allows the fomor to "chew up" a victim's mind, reducing a targeted Mental Attribute by one dot and absorbing it as one point for their own experience point pool. This does no actual physical damage to the target's brain, and is thus undetectable by scientific means.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower and rolls Intelligence + Occult (difficulty 6). The target may resist this with her Willpower (difficulty 6). The fomor must touch the target for this Power to be effective.

Example: The fomor touches a foe and targets her Intelligence. If successful, the victim loses one dot of Intelligence and the fomor adds one point to his experience point total. He may then use that point to buy anything he could normally purchase with one point of experience or he may save it and add it to other points. This Power may only be attempted against a single target once per scene.

• **Cause Insanity (2 pts per die)** — The fomor can twist the minds of others, dragging them away from the solid roads of sanity and into the rotting, fevered jungles of madness. The means used to cause insanity varies according to the fomor's personal twisted preferences. Some

Balefire

Balefire appears as greenish flame, yet has more substance than normal fire. It looks somewhat like wax (as in a lava lamp), except very fluid and liquid and glowing with its own internal incandescence.

Many arguments persist concerning the exact origin and nature of Balefire. The Black Spiral Dancers believe it is the feces of the Wyrn once the foul serpent has fed on pure Gaia energy. Some Pentex scientists believe it is corrupted ephemera, the "physical" substance which makes up the spirit world. Regardless, all know that it is dangerous, although the Black Spirals will often "sacrifice" themselves to it (i.e., expose themselves to its glare for hours) to gain mystical insights, believing that the cancerous tumors that grow in their brain as a result will give them corrupt enlightenment.

The etymology of Balefire is unsure. The fae also use the word Balefire to refer to their hearthfires, the fires of Beltane. The Fianna believe that the White Howlers, the Pictish tribe of werewolves from northern Scotland, knew the Beltane fires well and worshipped at them as did their Celtic cousins. However, once they became corrupt after dancing the Black Spiral, they worshipped at the feast fires of the Wyrn instead, and called their new hearth flames Balefire, in mockery of their pure cousins' ways.

Exposure to Balefire: This stuff burns, baby, and it does so even from a distance. A Balefire torch will irradiate anyone standing within three yards of it; a Balefire bonfire will irradiate anyone within seven yards; and a raging inferno of Balefire will irradiate anyone within 15 yards. Use the fire rules given on pg. 197 of the Werewolf rulebook to determine the damage based on the size of the flame. However, this damage cannot be soaked, takes twice as long to heal, and +10 is added to any resulting roll in the Battle Scars Chart (pg. 199, Werewolf rulebook). The Gift: Resist Toxin will prevent this damage.

fomori open Umbral windows in the target's mind overlooking Hellholes, allowing unsuspecting victims to view the horrors therein. Others revel in performances involving crazy gibbering and insidious conversation to eat away at sanity, while still others graphically transform their bodies into monstrous horrors.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls one die for every two Power points spent for this Power; the difficulty is the target's Willpower. The target must be in line of sight of the fomor. At the Storyteller's discretion, the fomor may have to relate to the target first in some way, whether through conversation ("Hey, got a match?") or combat.

Successes Effect

One or two The Storyteller determines the type of insanity caused.

Three+ The player may decide what form of dementia she inflicts.

The length and severity of the madness depends on the number of successes rolled as well; one or two successes might inflict a minor phobia, while five or more could ring in a full-blown freak-out. Such insanity can be cured with patient psychotherapy.

• **Chameleon Coloration (varies)** — The fomor can change color, blending in with her surroundings. It takes one turn to use this Power. Shifting hues within a single color (red, brown, etc.) costs two points, and changing to fit any color background costs four points.

A variation on this Power, **Shadowwalking**, lets the character darken her skin to blend into surrounding shadows. Shadowwalking costs three points.

System: Changing color does not require a roll. People trying to see the character, however, must roll Wits + Alertness (difficulty 7) to see her.

• **Claws, Fangs or Horns (3/5/7 pts)** — With this natural weaponry, the fomor may bite, gore or slash his opponents if he is so inclined. These appendages may be cybernetic implants, custom-built weapons or real fangs and claws, but they are not generally removable without injury (though they could be sheathed). These attacks inflict aggravated damage. For three points, the character may have one type of attack; for five points, two. Seven points will buy all three.

System: The fomor must roll Dexterity + Brawl to either bite, claw or gore:

Maneuver	Difficulty	Damage
Bite	5	Strength +1
Claw	6	Strength +2
Gore	7	Strength +2

(Strength +4 if the character has just moved 10 yards or more)

• **Corrupted Visions (4 pts)** — "I had to do it! God told me to!" By utilizing this gift of corruption, a fomor induces hallucinations in some helpless victim. Voices from God,



fleeting glimpses of something just out of sight, scoldings, mockery and other paranoid favorites are only a few of the possibilities. Although this Power works best when the fomor looks normal enough to pass for human, an especially deformed one can use it while hiding. Knowing your victim helps when using Corrupted Visions; a rational person would be suspicious if Jesus suddenly told her to go on a killing spree, while someone who was already disturbed might think it was a perfectly good idea. Of course, a seemingly-rational person could be driven crazy by subtle, well-chosen visions. After that, anything goes...

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Manipulation + Subterfuge (difficulty 8). Each success allows him to torment his target for one turn. The potency of the visions also depends on the successes rolled — one success could conjure whispers or fleeting glimpses, while five successes might allow for a full-blown manifestation of God in the clouds. This can be used as often as the fomor desires; range is line of sight. These visions have no substance whatsoever, and can be seen by one victim at a time. A target who's aware that someone is messing with her can resist the effects with a Willpower roll (difficulty 6). A well-chosen hallucination (a whisper behind the target's back) might raise this difficulty by 1 or 2, while one that's hard to swallow (Mother Theresa with bloody hands) might reduce it the same way.

• **Darksight (2 pts)** — The fomor can see in the dark. This Power comes from an innate affinity with darkness, and it works in even the darkest of situations, where not even a sliver of light is present.

System: No roll is required. However, if the fomor is surprised by an extremely bright light, he will be blinded one turn for every dot he has in Perception.

• **Deception (7 pts)** — The fomor can hide the spiritual evidence of his Wyrms taint from others. The Gift: Sense Wyrms will not detect the fomor as Wyrms-tainted. The fomor can also use this Power on others, to cover their stain. For instance, the fomor can hide the evidence of a vampire's diablerie or even change a normal Garou's aura so that she appears to be Wyrms-tainted when in fact she is not. Fomori under the influence of this Power are also immune to mummies' Hekau (True Name) spells.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Wits + Subterfuge (difficulty 7). The effect lasts for one scene. When using this Power on others, the fomor must first touch the target.

• **Ectoplasmic Extrusion (3 pts)** — The fomor can create up to four ectoplasmic tentacles or arms which can be used to independently reach out and grasp objects, hit things or envelop targets and smother them. Their reach is five yards.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Stamina + Occult (difficulty 6) to create the tentacles. The fomor adds three to her Strength for lifting

purposes only. To attack with the tentacles in combat, she rolls Dexterity + Brawl (difficulty 8); the tentacles inflict Strength +2 damage.

• **Enhancement (3 pts)** — The fomor can become any living creature's ideal mate, by scanning their target's mind.

System: The fomor rolls Charisma + Empathy (difficulty of the target's Rage, or 6, whichever is higher). Success means that he has become that target's ideal mate in physical appearance. If the roll fails, he simply appears as an attractive individual. If the roll is a botch, the target will feel uncomfortable in the fomor's presence, sensing that the fomor desperately wants to be liked and needed.

• **Exoskeleton (2 pts)** — The fomor has a hard carapace-like growth all over her body. It is usually very bonelike, with many gnarls, veinlike tubes and odd shapes upon it. Its coloration ranges from a rusty red and dark brown to oily black (unless the Merit: Hidden Power is purchased, in which case the exoskeleton is internal, coating her bones beneath the flesh).

System: The fomor adds one die to both her Strength and her Stamina.

• **Extra Limbs (3 pts per limb)** — Fomori often have a number of extra limbs, usually in the form of tentacles or masses of tendrils. Such extra limbs often sprout from awkward places: for example, an extra arm growing from a fomor's thigh. Such a limb comes in awfully "handy" at times. This Power might allow the fomor an additional melee attack each turn (by splitting his Dice Pools), in addition to that extra hand to juggle the groceries, keys and wallet! Of course, the fomor does look a bit unusual and may have to hide his appearance from the easily startled humans that surround him. This Power can be purchased more than once, but costs 3 points for each new limb.

System: The fomor must declare how many new limbs he has and what kind. He can use these to attack, although he must either split his Dice Pool or have a Power which allows extra attacks (such as Berserker or Extra Speed).

• **Extra Speed (3/6 pts)** — The fomor can outmaneuver a normal human.

System: For every 3 points (up to a maximum of 6), the fomor may take one extra action per turn without splitting her dice pool. When moving, this allows the character to multiply a normal human's speed by x 1.5 for each three points spent.

Movement	Normal human	3 pts	6 pts
Walk	7 yds/turn	11	14
Jog	13 yds/turn	20	26
Run	20 yds/turn	30	40

• **Eyes of the Wyrms (3 pts)** — The eyes of the fomor are weird and can actually dilate, revealing images of the Wyrms' damnation.

System: An opponent who gazes into the fomor's eyes must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) or be frozen in horror (for five turns minus Wits rating; minimum one turn). The fomor itself cannot attack its victim, but its friends can.

• **Foot Pads (1 pt)** — The fomor has pads on the bottom of his feet, allowing him to move quietly.

System: The fomor subtracts two from all Stealth rolls involving moving quietly.

• **Frog Tongue (3 pts)** — The fomor can elongate her tongue and make it stick to surfaces. She can flick it out (to a distance of two yards) and use it to grasp things or inflict damage. However, the tongue can make the fomor's speech difficult to understand, and give its owner a taste for insects.

System: The fomor rolls Dexterity + Athletics to attack targets up to two yards away with the tongue. She can use grappling maneuvers with the tongue; damage is equal to Strength. The fomor can pull grabbed targets to her with a +2 bonus to her Strength Dice Pool.

• **Fungal Touch (4 pts)** — The inside of the fomor's body has been replaced by a foul-smelling fungoid substance. The fomor may infect an opponent by touching him.

System: The fomor must touch a target to infect him. The victim must make a Stamina roll (difficulty 7) or begin losing one point from all Physical Attributes, as well as Appearance, per day (as the fungus slowly covers him...). The infection may only be cured by supernatural means (such as the Gift: Resist Toxin or a healing fetish). Also, for two extra points, the fomor exudes the fungoid mucus over its body, causing all who attack in melee to subtract two from their dice pools because of the revolting stench.

• **Garou Gifts (varies)** — Some fomori Powers so directly mimic a Garou Gift that the player can purchase that Gift instead of creating a Power for it. In general, such a Gift costs one Power point per level of the Gift +1.

• **Gaseous Form (6 pts)** — The fomor is able to reduce her body into a gaseous state, taking only one turn to make the transformation. She can then glide through the air at her walking speed. While in gaseous form, she cannot be harmed by kinetic attacks (fists, swords, etc.), but electricity, fire and radiation will still affect her. Also, most mental and mystical attacks will affect her (except those involving eye contact; Storyteller's discretion). The gaseous form holds together well even in a strong wind, although the Gift: Cutting Wind will harm her. There is usually a horrible stench in this form.

System: The fomor must spend a point of Willpower to become gaseous and another to become solid again.

• **Hand from Beyond (4 pts)** — The fomor must have the Power: Umbral Passage. The fomor can enter the Umbra (using Umbral Passage) and then reach back into

the material world to pull others into the spirit world with him. He can pull more than one person as long as all the targets are holding hands.

System: The fomor must first enter the Umbra. He then spends one Gnosis point and pulls in one or more willing targets (the targets must hold hands); he may bring in one person for every permanent Gnosis point he possesses. If the target is unwilling, the fomor must make a resisted Gnosis roll against the target's Willpower (both at difficulty 6).

• **Hazardous Breath (varies)** — The fomor can blast out some sort of dangerous substance on command — fire, bullets, poison gas, acidic spittle, etc. The attack need not really be a breath weapon; any sort of long-range hazard will do.

System: For every two points spent, the character inflicts one Health Level of damage with a successful Dexterity + Brawl roll (difficulty 7). The exact specifications of the attack depend on its nature. A blast of flame will have a quicker effect than a gout of deadly goo.

For an extra three points, the damage can be caustic, inflicting an additional Health Level per damage level each turn until the stuff is washed off or the target dies. Napalm, caustic glop, gas and toxic waste are good examples of this kind of hazard. Either kind of damage can be soaked. Breath weapons usually cause normal damage unless the target is vulnerable to that attack (vampires and fire, for example). For one point more, the damage is aggravated.

Under most circumstances, this weapon can be used once per scene for every point of Stamina the character possesses. Range is the Storyteller's discretion and will vary from attack to attack (lightning bolts will carry further than acidic drool). If the hazard could potentially hurt more than one target at a time, assume that each success above the first allows an additional victim to be hurt if he is within range of the attack (roughly two yards or less from the initial target).

• **Hell's Hide (2 per soak die)** — This Power provides the fomor with a protective armor effective against heat, fire or radiation damage. The fomor's skin has a slightly red tinge.

System: The fomor gains one soak die for every two points spent on this Power. These soak dice may only be used against heat or fire-related attacks, or against radiation (which is normally non-soakable).

• **Hide of the Wyrm (1–5 pts)** — The fomor has a tough hide that is very hard and leathery. Some have huge knots, scales, lumps and other disgusting features to accompany the protection.

System: The fomor adds one to her soak dice for every point spent (maximum 5).

• **Homogeneity (6 pts)** — The fomor can cancel the powers of other supernaturals around her.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Manipulation + Intimidation (difficulty 7). Any supernatural within 5 yards of the fomor will be affected. Vampires may not use their Disciplines, Garou cannot use their Gifts, mages cannot use Spheres, etc. Targets may resist with Willpower rolls (difficulty 7).

• **Immunity (varies)** — The fomor can ignore the effects of some kinds of potentially dangerous things. Each kind of resistance must be bought separately; thus, becoming immune to everything is expensive.

Cost Immunity

- 1 One minor nuisance (poison ivy, common cold or flu, minor temperature changes)
- 3 One major threat (diseases, temperature extremes, hunger)
- 6 One terminal effect (Balefire, poisons, toxins, electricity, fire)

Example: Maxon is immune to fire and cannot catch the common cold. This costs 7 points (6 for fire immunity, and 1 for the common cold). However, if he had bought immunity to diseases (3 points), he would not have to buy specific immunity to the common cold.

• **Immunity to the Delirium (1 pt)** — Most fomori are immune to the Delirium. The Wyrms-taint has erased the Veil along with their humanity. Not all fomori are thus immune, and the degree of immunity seems to depend on the amount of Wyrms-taint possessed. Pentex injects its fomori with a special serum that destroys the part of the brain susceptible to the Delirium.

System: The fomor may ignore the deleterious effects of witnessing a Garou in Crinos form.

• **Infectious Touch (5 pts)** — The fomor is able to cause fever and sickness by her touch.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point, makes flesh-to-flesh contact with the victim, and makes a Stamina + Medicine roll (difficulty 7). The victim can resist the infection by making a Stamina roll (difficulty 7). For each success the fomor scores over the victim will take one Health Level of aggravated damage. This damage heals at the rate of one per week, during which time the victim feels miserable.

• **Invisibility (5 pts)** — This Power renders the fomor invisible to all means of detection. As long as he initiates no attacks, his body and aura are hidden from all forms of detection except the Gift: Sense Wyrms (although this Gift will not pinpoint his exact location, only his Wyrms-corrupted presence). Once he initiates an attack, he immediately becomes visible.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Wits + Stealth (difficulty 7). Anyone who is specifically searching for someone hidden may make a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 8), resisted by the fomor's Invisibility successes. This effect lasts for one scene or until the fomor enters combat.

• **Lashing Tail (3 pts)** — This is similar to an extra limb, but it cannot be used for precision work. (This Power can be combined with Venomous Bite to create a deadly, scorpionlike stinger on the end of the tail.)

System: The fomor rolls Dexterity + Brawl (difficulty 7). The tail inflicts Strength + 2 damage.

• **Malleate (6 pts)** — The fomor can secrete a venom which turns the victim's body into a malleable mass. It can be stretched like taffy, kneaded like dough or molded like clay. The pathetic flappings and indecipherable mewlings of a once proud Garou, as he begs for a fast death, is a sad sight indeed. Malleate only affects living tissue.

System: The fomor must inflict damage onto the target with a natural piercing attack (fangs, stinger, etc.) and spend one Willpower point. If the fomor has no such natural weaponry, his bite will do Strength -1 damage (difficulty 5). Each turn after being bitten, the victim will suffer one Health Level of aggravated damage which may not be soaked. This venom works its way into his system for one turn per point of damage the fomor initially inflicted (the amount rolled, not the number of Health Levels actually inflicted after the victim's soak). With the first level of damage caused by the venom, the victim's body becomes highly malleable. If the victim reaches Incapacitated, he may still move but he has no fine motor control. Once all Health Levels inflicted by the venom heal, the victim returns to normal. The Gifts: Resist Toxin, Doppelganger and Adaptation allow Garou to resist this Power.

• **Mega-Attribute (varies)** — The Wyrms has granted the fomor inhuman enhancements to his natural capabilities.

System: For every three Power points spent, the fomor may either add one dot to any one Attribute (may go over 5; maximum 8) or add one Health Level to the character's total (maximum three extra).

These effects are permanent; no roll is required. However, it is sometimes hard for the mega-altered fomor to hide his Powers: if he has Mega-Strength, he may have bulging, superhero-style muscles; if he has Mega-Intelligence, his head may be larger or he becomes colder, less emotional; if he has Mega-Charisma, he just can't stop smiling; etc.

• **Mind Blast (5 pts)** — The fomor sends a mental blast of energy into a target's mind, immobilizing him with pain.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Wits + Intimidation (difficulty 6). The target can resist with a Willpower roll (difficulty 6). The fomor can affect any one target within his line of sight. The victim may take no actions for one turn per success.

• **Mind Rape (6 pts)** — The fomor can wrest hidden thoughts from a target's mind. This is incredibly invasive mind-reading.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Intelligence + Intimidation (difficulty 6). The target can resist with a Willpower roll (difficulty 6). If the fomor is successful, he may read the target's mind, gleaning even the most hidden thoughts.

- | Successes | Effect |
|-----------|---|
| 1 | The target's surface thoughts may be read (current emotions, thoughts). |
| 2 | The target's deep thoughts may be read (recent memories). |
| 3+ | Anything the target thinks or remembers may be read. |

• **Molecular Weakening (4 pts)** — The fomor can tear apart the bonds which hold things together. This can be combined with hand-to-hand or ranged attacks.

System: The fomor must first successfully hit the target with her desired attack. He then spends one Willpower point and rolls Perception + Medicine if the target is organic, or Perception + Repair if the target is inorganic (difficulty 8 for both). If successful with this second roll, the damage inflicted on the target is doubled (before soak).

• **Mouth of the Wyrm (4 pts)** — This Power allows the fomor to swallow objects as large as a medium-sized dog or a small person. Of course, the object must be within the grasp of the fomor. If the creature serving as lunch is not dead when swallowed, it may suffocate if it cannot somehow get out. The fomor will digest the creature as food. All undigestible parts (bones, shoes, glasses, etc.) will be eliminated normally.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Stamina + Athletics to devour the target. If the target is still alive, he is treated as suffocating (see pp. 197-198 in the Werewolf rulesbook). If he has natural weaponry, he may try to cut himself free. All attacks are at difficulty 7; the fomor may soak as normal, but if he loses half his Health Levels from such an attack, then the target has cut a hole in his stomach big enough to crawl from.

• **Nightmare Command (3 pts)** — This subtle Power affects sleeping victims only; the fomor twists her target's dreams into night terrors. This requires some familiarity with the target — it's hard to get that far into a stranger's head — and a fair amount of time. Once successful, however, Nightmare Command can drive someone from sleeplessness to madness in a few short weeks. Lovers, children or parents and roommates are common victims — and perpetrators — of this obscene art.

The fomor must remain perfectly still and reach into her victim's subconscious to pervert his dreams. If she's interrupted, the Power fails. Once she's in the target's dreams, she can cause whatever mental havoc suits her fancy; like Corrupted Visions, this is most effective when she knows which buttons to push. This Power is not, however, without its cost: each night's use leaves the fomor tired and haggard the next day. While this means



little in game terms, going for too long without a good sleep will affect anyone's mind. Long-term Nightmare Command often turns into an endurance battle between the fomor and her subject.

System: The fomor rolls Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty 7). Each success creates a more vivid nightmare: one success might merely twist a dream down an unpleasant path, three would bring on a full-blown nightmare, and five would virtually trap the sleeper in a recursive loop of horrors. Only one roll can be made per night. The victim must make a Willpower roll to awaken from the twisted dream. The difficulty for this roll is 5 + 1 for every success the fomor rolls. A three-success nightmare, then, would demand a roll against difficulty 8; like the Power itself, this Willpower escape can be rolled only once per night, unless some third party interrupts the dream.

Each uninterrupted week of nightmares reduces the target's Willpower rating by one. If he reaches zero Willpower, he goes insane, and will stay that way until he receives some kind of treatment — extended therapy or a Gift-healing (see below) — or until his Willpower "heals" back (which takes one week per point, possibly longer if the fomor really did a number on him).

The Gifts: Calm, Fabric of the Mind, Head Games, Mindspeak or Ultimate Argument of Logic may all heal this Power's effects in days or even hours; Fabric of the Mind and Mindspeak, however, force the Garou to go into the victim's dreams and combat the horrors therein before he can heal. Spirit and physical healings do no good — the damage is within the subject's mind, not his body or soul.

- **Nimbleness (2 pts)** — The fomor is especially nimble and can easily keep her balance while performing feats which would cause another person to tumble.

System: The fomor adds two dice to all rolls associated with jumping, climbing and balance.

- **Noxious Breath (2 pts)** — The fomor can release poisonous fumes into the air which make those within twenty yards crave cigarettes. The fumes look and smell like cigarette smoke. In addition, the gas weakens the lung tissue of those who breathe it. Repeated exposure to the noxious breath over several weeks or months leads to the development of lung cancer in victims.

System: The fomor rolls Stamina + Medicine (difficulty 6). If successful, the fumes will cover 20 yards around the fomor. Anyone within that range must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6) or get an irresistible urge for a cigarette (this affects even nonsmokers). Those who touch their Willpower rolls suffer one Health Level of damage to their lungs. This damage cannot be soaked and is considered aggravated.

- **Numbing (3 pts)** — The fomor's body can become completely numb. She feels no pain. However, she is numb to all sensation. She cannot talk properly (her tongue feels permanently anesthetized) and she may cut herself and feel nothing, which may result in infected or

gangrenous wounds the fomor is unaware of. Many fomor with this Power end up missing toes, fingers and other small body parts they have damaged, then neglected.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Stamina + Medicine (difficulty 6). The effect last for one scene. The fomor suffers no wound penalties from Health Level losses and has three extra Health Levels. However, when this Power wears off, the extra Health Levels disappear; if the fomor is below Incapacitated, she dies.

- **Phoenix Fire (5 pts)** — The fomor can self-immolate, becoming a walking bonfire. The flames do no damage to the fomor, but will ignite any flammable item they touch (exploding ammo, anyone?), and may also set fire to any building the fomor is inside.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Stamina + Occult (difficulty 7). The flames are considered a raging chemical fire (three Health Levels of damage; difficulty 9 to soak). The effect lasts one turn per success.

- **Plasmic Form (6 pts)** — This is similar to Gaseous Form, but instead it allows the fomor to turn into a thick reddish-brown liquid which can move about of its own free will. The plasmic fomor can flow into extremely tight spaces (as the Power: Rat Head; see below). The liquid fomor cannot be harmed by kinetic attacks (fists, swords, etc.), but electricity, fire and radiation will still affect him. Also, most mental and mystical attacks will affect him (except those involving eye contact; Storyteller's discretion).

System: The fomor must spend a point of Willpower to become liquid and spend another point to become solid again.

- **Poison Tumors (3 pts)** — The fomor is covered in tumors filled with a noxious pus — whenever the fomor is hit with a claw (or other sharp weapon), the attacker is splattered with pus.

System: When the fomor is hit with a claw, the attacker must immediately attempt to soak three dice of aggravated damage as pus splatters over him. If the attacker bites the fomor, he must soak five dice. If the fomor is hit with a melee weapon, the attacker must make a Dexterity roll (difficulty 6) to avoid the flying pus, or take damage as above. Firearms are, of course, safe.

- **Procreation (4 pts)** — The fomor can transmit a Bane through blood and semen — any encounter involving bodily fluids can spread the Bane. The Bane will then attempt to possess the recipient of the fluids. The fomor may only pass on a Bane similar to that which possessed him (a Son of Typhon may only pass on one of Typhon's Brood; a fomori family member may only pass on the family Bane).

System: The fomor must spend a point of Willpower at the moment bodily fluids are passed to a recipient. The Bane will then begin the process of possession (as per the Charm: Possession, from the Werewolf rulebook).

• **Prolonged Life (4 pts)** — The fomor's natural life span is greatly prolonged. This is not true immortality, since the fomor will die of natural causes eventually (natural death amongst fomori is practically unknown). This Power has a price: the fomor has the Taint: Addiction (monthly cycle; see below).

System: No roll required; the fomor has extended life as long as he regularly assuages his given addiction at least once a month.

• **Rat Head (4 pts)** — This Power is named for the rat's ability to squeeze through holes much smaller than its body size. The fomor can wriggle through holes as small as 1/20th of his former circumference. A human-sized fomor can thus squeeze through holes smaller than a quarter.

System: The fomor rolls Dexterity + Athletics (difficulty 6). The effect lasts for one "slide" (until the fomor reaches an area wider than its original size). The fomor must wiggle like a snake in order to propel itself forward. A failed roll means that the fomor is stuck. It may make further rolls to dislodge itself but the difficulty for each additional attempt is increased by one (the Power Slobber Snort reduces the difficulty by three). The fomor may slide at one half his normal running speed.

• **Regeneration (5 pts)** — The fomor recovers from normal, non-aggravated damage in the same fashion as Garou. Aggravated damage, from fire or fetish weapons, cannot be regenerated (it is healed at the rate of one Health Level per day). The metabolic alterations necessary for nearly instantaneous recovery from even mortal wounds take their toll on the "human" system, however, and fomori who possess this Power usually die from cancer before their late 30s.

System: No roll is required. This Power mimics the Garou's regeneration ability. The fomor who wishes to regenerate in the same turn he engages in combat must roll Stamina (difficulty 6), or spend a Rage point if he has the Power: Berserker.

• **Roar of the Wyrn (4 pts)** — The fomor is able to strike terror into the hearts of all near her by issuing this guttural scream.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Charisma + Intimidation (difficulty 6). All who hear must make a resisted Willpower roll (difficulty 6) or run as fast and far as they can to get away from the fomor.

• **Savage Genitalia (2 pts)** — John Bobbit's nightmare; the fomor (regardless of gender) has genitals with some menacing feature. Male variations include excessive length (14" +) or hardness, thorns, sandpaper texture or curved barbs; female versions are infamous for teeth, ripping suction and internal meat grinders. This is obviously no good in combat, but devastating in bed.

Using this Power requires sexual contact; after that, the target is at the fomor's mercy. A determined fomor can even kill his victim with prolonged intercourse. By combining Savage Genitalia with Toxic Secretions, Worms, or Inner Volcano, some truly hideous torments may be devised; incorporating Extra Limbs into this Power can duplicate some of the weirder perversions of hard-core Japanese anime, like vaginal tentacles or gun-wielding phalli.

System: No roll required; sexually engaged victims receive one non-soakable Health Level of damage per turn. The "special features" are not usually evident until it's too late, and getting away without permanent damage is difficult — the fomor must often be knocked unconscious, and even that may not be enough. While Garou may regenerate this damage, normal people will have some... problems adjusting. Even a werewolf is liable to carry emotional scars from such injuries after the physical damage fades.

• **Scent of the Wyld (or Weaver) (5 pts)** — The fomor is able to mask his Wyrn nature by wrapping himself strongly in the aura of either the Wyld or the Weaver (the Power must be bought twice to do both). This Power doesn't eliminate the Wyrn taint, only overpowers it. Garou may still sense the Wyrn taint with the Gift: Sense Wyrn, but the difficulty is 10. Some Garou tribes are more difficult to fool with this Power than others. Glass Walkers may Sense Wyrn on fomori with Scent of the Weaver at their regular difficulty. Red Talons can automatically see through Scent of the Wyld.

System: The fomor rolls Charisma + Subterfuge (difficulty 6). The effect lasts for one scene. If he botches, he is unaware that this Power is ineffective, and may place himself in danger believing he is safe.

• **Sense Gaia (2 pts)** — The fomor can sense manifestations of Gaia in the nearby area. This Power requires active concentration.

System: The fomor rolls Perception + Occult. The difficulty is based on the strength and concentration of the "Gaia stench." Sensing an average werewolf would have a difficulty of 6. The range is 20 yards.

• **Sense The Unnatural (2 pts)** — Similar to the Garou Gift of the same name, this Power allows the fomor to smell any supernatural being present, such as vampires, werewolves, mages, wraiths and other spirits. (The Ragabash Gift: Scent of Running Water negates this Power.)

System: The fomor rolls Perception + Occult (difficulty 6). An additional roll of Intelligence + Enigmas (difficulty 6) may be required to determine what kind of supernatural creature has been scented. The range is 20 yards.

• **Shadowplay (4 pts)** — The fomor can manipulate the shadows about him, and pull them together into a globe. Most people will be unable to see through this dense

shadow. Minor use of this Power can add to the fomori's Stealth rolls, as well as Intimidation. The fomori is always able to see in his own shadows.

System: The fomori rolls Wits + Stealth (difficulty 6). The effect lasts for one turn per success, unless a Willpower point is spent; in which case, the effect lasts for one scene. The total radius that can be manipulated is 15 yards.

• **Shapechange (varies)** — The fomori is able to transform his body into the shape of a something else, such as an animal or even another person. These new shapes are always a corrupted version of the natural animal or person: many, misshapen, and Wyrms-maddened.

System: The fomori spends one Willpower point and rolls Stamina + Athletics (difficulty 6). Transformation usually takes one turn, although the nature of the change may dictate a slower or quicker shift. The fomori can shift back into his "natural" form at will. Any clothing, equipment or weapons should be discarded first unless the new form could carry them as well.

This Power only grants the ability to change shape. Any non-human characteristics of the new form must be purchased with the appropriate Advantages. If the fomori were to shift from human form into a white falcon, he would also have to purchase Wings, Claws and reduced Size, regardless of which form was his real one.

Cost Forms

- 3 The fomori has one alternate form.
- 5 The fomori can transform into anything within a certain group (people, fish, cats, mythic beasts, mind-shattering horrors, etc.).
- 7 The fomori can change into anything if he has enough Advantages that apply.

• **Size (2/4/6 pts)** — This Power is a permanent alteration in the fomori's size; he may not shift back to normal proportions (unless he has a Power which allows him to do so, such as Shapeshift).

System: Each size level adds or subtracts one Health Level to the amount of damage the character can withstand (note that a rat with four Health Levels is still a pretty tough rat!) and gives or takes one additional point of either Strength or Stamina. Although it seems like larger characters come off better than smaller ones at first glance, consider what inconveniences a massive being has when hiding, getting into cramped places, and evading attacks. Companions with two levels of size either add or subtract one from their opponents' difficulties to hit them or spot them; ones with three add or subtract two.

Cost Effect

- 2 A bit larger (pony, lion) or smaller (mastiff, cheetah) than human.
- 4 A lot larger (horse, tiger, boa) or smaller (poodle, housecat, barracuda) than human.
- 6 Considerably larger (rhino, great white shark, small tree) or smaller (mouse, goshawk, sea urchin) than human.

• **Skittersight (2 pts)** — This weird Power allows the fomori to pull out her eyes, twist the optic nerves into feet, and send the eyes scurrying down hallways and around corners in order to see things normally obscured. She'll have to be careful — if the eyes get squashed, she'll be forever blinded. (Fomori with Regeneration will grow new eyes in one month.)

System: Pulling out your own eyes requires a Willpower roll (difficulty 8; 7 for frequent users). This does no damage, but hurts like hell. After that, the eyes may run up to a block away under their own Power, and anything they see will "appear" within the fomori's brain as if her eyes were still attached; this may be coupled with Darksight for extrasensory Powers. The eyes can stay separated from their body for up to an hour; after that, they decay completely within another two hours. Any damage the eyes sustain while skittering around will impair (or disable) the fomori's normal eyesight.

• **Slither Skin (4 pts)** — The skin of the fomori is a weapon and a useful helper. The fomori can shed her skin, giving it certain simple instructions (no more than five words). The skin detaches at the rectum and peels off over the fomori's head. It can walk, grab things or attack. If the fomori specifies that additional Powers (such as Body Barbs) are lodged in her skin, she has to pay for them. The fomori can live without her skin, but has one less Health Level. Her ghastly appearance will horrify all who see her, as she is a living anatomy lesson. The skin, meanwhile, stalks along like a hollow person without bones or eyes, chasing horrified victims into the arms of its skinless master. The Wyrms' use of such fomori in Ireland gave rise to tales of Nucklavee the Skinless, while the attacks on the Nodes in Haiti are remembered by the Wyrms-worshipping Cochons Sans Poil, a sect of Bata'a *barabbi* mages.

System: The fomori spends one Willpower point and rolls Dexterity + Athletics (difficulty 6). The effect lasts for one scene, at which time the skin must return to the fomori or disintegrate. The skin's Physical Attributes are all one dot each and it has one Health Level. The skin can walk any distance away from the fomori. If the skin is destroyed, the fomori will grow another one after one month.

• **Slobber Snot (3 pts)** — The fomori's skin is covered with small warts which excrete an extremely slick and runny slime. This slime renders the fomori's body virtually frictionless, making it almost impossible for opponents to grasp the fomori. The slimy gel also helps the fomori to squeeze through tight spaces. Slobber Snot dissolves almost instantly in direct sun light. Most fomori who take this Power are highly vulnerable to the *Crusties* (see *Taints*).

System: The fomori spends one Willpower point. The effect lasts for one scene. During this time, opponent's difficulties to grapple or grab the fomori suffer a penalty of

three. In addition, the fomor adds one to her soak dice against blunt weapons (clubs, fists, etc.). Opponents trying to track a fomor with Slobber Snout subtract three from their difficulties, due to the distinctive smell.

- **Spirit Ties (3 pts)** — The fomor has an innate connection to the spirit world which allows him a Gnosis score.

System: The fomor begins the game with one Gnosis point which he can use and regain just like any Garou. He may purchase extra Gnosis points with freebie points (cost: 2 per point).

- **Stomach Pumper (3 pts)** — The fomor is able to vomit forth all he has recently eaten covered in acidic slimy stomach juices. A single blast can cover a single foe.

System: The fomor rolls Stamina + Brawl (difficulty 7). The blast inflicts only two dice of damage, but the victim must expend a point of Willpower to keep from stopping whatever he is doing and start gagging. Only three such blasts may be performed between complete meals.

- **Succubi's Veil (6 pts)** — The ultimate Power of enticement. The fomor can enthrall targets, causing them to want nothing more than to be near him.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point and rolls Manipulation + Subterfuge (difficulty of the target's Willpower). If the roll succeeds, the target will be enthralled, wanting nothing but to be with the fomor whenever possible. If the roll fails, the target will still find the fomor attractive, but will not be enchanted by his beauty. If the roll is a botch, the target knows that there is something decidedly wrong with the fomor, something very dangerous about associating with the creature. For every scene in which the fomor is around his targets, he can attempt his roll again; if more than 10 cumulative successes are achieved, the target will be fanatically mesmerized by the fomor, and will desire to serve and protect the fomor at any cost.

- **Tar Baby (3 pts)** — The fomor's skin is made of a thick, sticky substance like molasses or tar. Anything that comes into forceful contact with the skin will stick to it like a fly on flypaper — this includes Garou or others who try to grapple, punch, claw or kick the fomor. Objects such as clothing that are slid slowly past the skin will not stick; only forceful contact activates the tackiness.

System: Anyone attacking the fomor in brawling combat gets stuck to the fomor. Treat this as if the fomor successfully grappled the opponent. The opponent may not use whatever limb is stuck to the fomor; he must make a resisted Strength roll versus the fomor's Stamina +3 to escape. If the fomor is hit by a melee weapon, he may make a resisted Strength roll versus the user's Strength to wrest the now-stuck weapon from the opponent's hands.

- **Toxic Secretions (2 pts per die)** — This Power turns the fomor's bodily fluids into toxic waste.



System: As promised above, the fomor's blood, spit, sweat, ejaculate and other fluids inflict damage on anyone coming into contact with them; a Garou biting or clawing the fomor would shower herself with the secretions, as would intimate partners, tormentors or anyone else in close contact. The damage is one die per two Power points spent. This toxic damage may be soaked, but it "clings"; on the first turn, it does full damage. After that, it loses one die of potency per turn, but inflicts damage until it "wears off" (there are no more dice). Each turn requires a new soak roll from the victim.

Toxic Secretions are often voluntary until something provokes an involuntary reaction—heat will make the fomor sweat, pain may make him cry, and obvious calls of nature will make him eliminate. At the higher levels of toxicity, the fomor begins to damage his environment; six points will dissolve clothing in one turn, nine will dissolve rope, 12, wood, and 15 porcelain or even concrete! Fomor with Toxic Secretions often suffer from the Taint: Disintegration, reflecting the damage the Power inflicts upon its "user."

• **Umbral Passage (5 pts)**—The fomor must have the Power: Spirit Ties. Umbral Passage allows the fomor to step sideways in and out of the Umbra just like a Garou.

System: The fomor rolls Gnosis against a difficulty equal to the Gauntlet of the area. Use the Stepping Sideways chart in the Werewolf rulesbook (p. 175) to see how long it takes to cross-over.

• **Venomous Bite (3 pts)**—The fomor's saliva is a pustulent blue, poisonous foam.

System: The fomor must first inflict at least one Health Level of damage on a target through a bite attack. The poison inflicts Stamina + 2 aggravated damage; this damage cannot be soaked. (The Fianna Gift: Resist Toxin will prevent the poison damage.)

• **Voice of the Wyrms (4 pts)**—The fomor's tongue is long and sluglike, and the fomor may speak in the Wyrms' own language.

System: When the fomor chants the vile syllables of the Dark Litany, all in hearing range (save Wyrms creatures) must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) or lose half their Gnosis points. This Power may only be used on a given victim once per encounter. The tongue may also lick opponents in close combat, inflicting two dice of damage.

• **Wall Walking (4 pts)**—The fomor's hands and feet are sticky, allowing him to run up sheer surfaces as easily as he can move on flat ground.

System: No roll is normally required to walk walls, but a Dexterity + Athletics roll may be required in combat situations, to retain hold on the surface. This roll may also be necessary if the surface is particularly difficult (e.g., wet glass). Certain surfaces (such as wet ice) are almost totally frictionless and cannot be climbed.

• **Water Breathing (2/5 pts)**—With this simple Power, the fomor may either breathe underwater or (for five points) need not breathe at all. This Power also

confers a certain degree of resistance to underwater pressures and decompression problems, although considerable depths or radical changes (going from 500 feet to 30 in less than a minute) will cause some damage.

• **Webbing (5 pts)**—The fomor has a special gland about the size and shape of a football over his abdomen. The organ has an orifice usually above the navel. The organ can be used to create massive amounts of webbing similar to that of spider. Fomori must learn how to utilize the webbing, making Webmaking a skill. The fomor may use it to seal off things, capture opponents, or to lower himself from high positions.

System: The webbing has six soak dice and three Health Levels. It is extremely strong and sticky, allowing the fomor to entrap his prey. Entrapped victims must make a Strength roll resisted by the web's Strength of 8. The webbing is thicker than a spider's, almost one inch in diameter, but it is very sheer and hard to see from a distance without a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 7).

• **Wings (3/5 pts)**—This obvious Power grants the fomor the ability to fly. The name is a bit misleading. The character does not actually have to have wings, though her player will need a good rationale to purchase non-winged flight. However she moves, she may hover, glide, soar or float about, depending on the nature of her Power.

System: For three points, the fomor may fly at up to normal human jogging speed (13 yards/turn). For five, she may cover 20 yards per turn. With effort, winged fliers may push their speed by adding their Dexterity score to their flight velocity for short bursts.

Taints

Massive infestation of the inner organs

External parasites feeding on remains

—Decomposed, "Eaten by Acid"

Taints are the horrible disadvantages gained from serving the Wyrms. Allegiance to the dragon of corruption comes at a heavy cost. Fomor must have Taints to gain Powers. Each Taint point gives the character one point with which to purchase Powers.

Normally, Taints are not gained through roleplaying; a character's beginning Taints are all she will ever have (thank Gaia!). But sometimes, an event of such hideous ramifications occurs as to enforce more horrors on a poor fomor. This can be as simple as standing in a Hellhole or Blight when a freak Wyldestorm comes thundering through. Or perhaps the fomor, while visiting Malfaeas, takes a wrong turn onto the Black Spiral Labyrinth. She may not exit the same way she entered—if she exits at all.

In these cases, the Storyteller may allow the character the option of choosing another Taint, providing more experience points to go with it (the Wyrms' deformities are often accompanied by new "blessings"). See Experience, above.

Some of these events are so sudden and cataclysmic that the Storyteller may make the character spend his points on the spot. The Wyldstorm may blow away, leaving the fomor shaken — and with an entirely new arm growing out of her abdomen! Or he may stumble from the Labyrinth with such a terrible insight into the Wyrms' nature as to allow him to psychically wrench secrets from others' minds. All this is, of course, at the Storyteller's discretion.

• **Addiction (varies)** — The fomor must engage in a particular addictive activity (e.g., shooting up heroin, drinking blood, human sacrifice to a given Urge Wyrms, etc.) or suffer great pain. See the chart below to determine the frequency with which the fomor must obey his addiction (the "cycle"). At the Storyteller's option, the player may choose one of his Powers as his Addiction; if he does not use the Power at least once a cycle, he suffers (i.e., Brain Eaters must engage in Brain Eating).

System: For every cycle the fomor does not assuage his addiction, he is overcome with wracking pain. He suffers a one die penalty to all his dice pools for each successive cycle he misses. When the dice penalties total more than his Stamina, he dies.

Points Cycle

- 1 Once per month
- 2 Once per moon (choose one moon phase; on the cusp of your phase — by the midpoint between waxing and waning — you must indulge in your addiction)
- 3 Once per week
- 4 Once per day
- 5 Once per hour

• **Atrophy (varies)** — One of the fomor's Attributes has atrophied, either completely or only to a degree.

System: For each point the fomor takes in this Taint, her maximum dot value in a declared Attribute decreases. For example, Jojo has one point of atrophied Strength; this means his maximum value in that Attribute is four (not the usual five). Under no circumstances may this Attribute be raised above its atrophied value (even Power bonuses, such as from Size or Mega-Attribute, will not raise it).

This Taint is only worth full points for the first Attribute chosen. The points awarded for second or third Attributes atrophied are halved (two dots are atrophied for one point). For example, Jojo also atrophies his Charisma. However, he must lose two dots from his maximum to get one point.

Health Levels are considered to be one Attribute.

Appearance may not be atrophied. Instead, the character may purchase the Taint: Ugly as Sin (see below).

• **Balefire Curse (7 pts)** — This is the reverse of the Power: Balefire Flux. Whenever the fomor is exposed to Balefire, the toxic excretions of the Wyrms, he may undergo a horrible transformation, gaining a new Taint.



System: After the fomor undergoes five turns of successive exposure to Balefire, roll her Stamina (difficulty 9). At the Storyteller's option, particularly extreme exposure to Balefire may lower the difficulty of the Stamina roll. If successful, the fomor gains a new Taint, chosen randomly (see below). This new "curse" from the Wyrms is instant—the character immediately undergoes a painful transformation for three turns, during which she can take no actions, not even to defend herself. Afterwards, her new Taint will display itself (such as an arm falling off, if she is inflicted with Rotting).

This Taint does not make the fomor immune to Balefire; unless she purchases Immunity (see above), she will suffer any normal damage from the toxin (see the sidebar, above).

Random Taints: Refer to the chart at the beginning of this chapter. Each Taint has a number listed by it on a range of 1–100. Roll percentile dice (2d10, with one die acting as the ones column and the other as the tens column; "00" equals 100) to determine which Taint is chosen.

- **Bane Attractor (3 pts)** — Banes hate you and they come to see you about it.

System: You will always draw the attention of any local Banes, and they will usually stop their normal tasks to harass you. They cannot possess you (you are already possessed by a Bane), but they will do what they can to screw you over short of directly harming you (they fear you may have friends to avenge you). For instance, a Sludge elemental may leave disgusting droppings for you to step on, ruining your shoes. This Taint may also attract Garou, who might come by to see what all the commotion is.

- **Brainwashed (3 pts)** — The Bane within has really done a number on your mind, forcing you to believe what it wants you to. This brainwashing comes in the form of a powerful, obsessive belief—the most common for fomori being a rabid loyalty to Pentex. These fomori are company men (women/things) to the death. Other beliefs can be a religious zeal for the Wyrms or one of its manifestations, a paranoid suspicion of "softies" (humans), a diehard belief that Garou are demons out to destroy the earth, or any other extreme conviction which may well lead the fomor into a dangerous, no-compromise situation.

System: Whenever the fomor's belief is questioned, he will usually go through three distinct stages: denial, anger and finally doubt. For instance, if a Garou were to try to convince a Pentex-loyal fomor that Pentex is bad for him and the world, the fomor would first scoff at such a thought. If proof were brought forward, the fomor would believe it was a trick, and might try to attack the bearer of such evidence. If the proofs pile up, undeniable, then the fomor may begin to doubt—and thus his world falls to pieces. Such fomori become suicidal, and usually try to destroy the former object of their belief.

- **The Crusties (3 pts)** — Think of the worst case of dandruff you've ever seen. Now imagine it over the entire body and multiply its severity a hundred times. That's the Crusties (aka the "Scrumpt Scritters"). The Crusties is a malady common to fomori with the Slobber Snout Power (see above).

System: For three to ten days every month (Storyteller's option) the fomor's skin dries out and is covered with a thick, crusty residue. This residue flakes off in large crumbly pieces. It leaves a trail of fine brown powder everywhere the fomor goes. The dust collects in clothes, lungs, and especially eyes (+1 difficulty to Dexterity and Perception rolls due to discomfort). No matter how much the fomor scratches, picks, or bathes (the very thought of bathing is enough to terrify many fomori) there seems to be no way of stopping it. There are popular folklore stories among the Freakfeet about Crumbly Eddy. They say he got the Crusties so bad that he is now fertilizing a Stargazer's Zen garden in Tibet. Shudder.

- **Derangement (3/2/1 pts)** — Many of the Wyrms' chosen return from their genesis twisted in not just body, but mind also. While it is rare to have more than one Derangement, it is possible. However, the second Derangement is only worth two points, and the third is only worth one. Below is a list of common derangements. Players and Storyteller should feel free to create their own.

Amnesia: You remember nothing of your life before becoming a fomor. Sometimes you can't remember what you did yesterday.

Choromania: You just can't stop dancing. You turn everything you do into a spontaneous dance (you are not necessarily good at it, though).

Delusions of Grandeur: You believe you are "chosen" by the Wyrms, and only you can perform the deeds necessary for its ultimate conquest. Why won't others recognize this?

Habromania: You have a constant morbid gaiety which other fomori may find sick. You don't necessarily crack jokes about it, but you do giggle at the most perverse times.

Hallucinations: You were so unbinged by the Bane possession that your very perceptions now reverberate with its meaningless madness. At random times, you will see and hear things which are not really there.

Homicidal: You want to kill, kill, kill and kill again.

Insecure: You are never sure where you stand with your First Team or even yourself. Insecure fomori usually have very little Willpower.

Klazomania: You have a constant compulsion to shout, rather than speak normally. This will drive those around you crazy; you'd better have the muscle to back it up.

Manic: Everything you do, you do to the hilt and with obsessive energy, which sometimes causes you to burn out with exhaustion before you want to.

Masochism: You love it when pain is inflicted on you.

Misomania: You hate everything.

Multiple Personalities: You have split personalities, many different "beings" inside you who seek expression. Sometimes you can control which one comes to the fore, but most times you cannot. Be creative — come up with names and backgrounds for each personality. No one knows where these split sides come from; they may be latent possibilities awoken within the fomor, or multiple possessing Banes.

Obsession: You fixated on something during your possession, and you cannot forget it. Every moment, it swims into your consciousness. You must pursue it till it ceases to haunt you....

Overcompensation: You recognized a weakness during your transformation. You have to hide it — it is your Achilles' heel. You will distract others from noticing by drawing their attention to another characteristic of yours, such as bullying, cleverness or stupidity.

Paranoia: You know that something even worse than your possessing Bane tried to get you during transformation, and it will be back. You don't know what it was, and you know it has allies — but who?

Phagomania: You want food, all the time, even when you're not hungry.

Phobias: You fear one thing greatly. But what? It could be: daylight, nature, technology, humans, wolves, snakes, closed spaces (tunnels), the dark, Banes, etc. Be creative.

Sadism: You love to inflict pain onto others.

Temperamental: You are prone to just freaking out and losing it. You may frenzy (with none of the benefits) if pushed too far (roll Willpower against a Storyteller-determined difficulty).

• **Disintegration (6 pts)** — This is paired with one of the fomor's Powers. This Power is almost as destructive to him as it is to others. Each time he uses it, he takes a Health Level of (non-aggravated, non-soakable) damage. Unless the fomor has Regeneration, this heals at a rate of one Health Level per hour and hurts like the devil. Using the fatal Power too often can and will kill the character. If he goes to Crippled, he'll begin to dissolve; these wounds require at least a day per Level to heal. Any damage that puts him below Incapacitated at this point turns the fomor into an icky puddle of protoplasm.

• **Doomed (varies)** — The fomor has only a certain number of years to live. At the end of this time, she will die a painful death.

Points	Years to live
1	5 years
2	3 years
3	1 year
4	6 months
5	1 month

Those doomed fomori who are also Consecrated (see Backgrounds) will suffer the "Call." The fomor will eventually be summoned to the site of her making to be devoured by the

Wyrms. This doom cannot be avoided; fomori who have tried to escape by distancing themselves from their genesis site always find some circumstance brings them back to it. Fomori with this Taint do not know when they will be summoned, and usually live their lives as if every day could be their last.

• **The Fading (5 pts)** — The fomor's psyche has only the most tenuous of footholds on reality. This is not merely insanity. The fomor's mind has an affinity with one of the aspects of the Triatic Wyrms (or one of the Urge Wyrms), and is actively trying to flee this reality, to "join" with that Wyrms. The Storyteller decides which Wyrms the character is connected with. The fomor has an insanity that is the equivalent of a Derangement (see above).

If the fomor is ever in the presence of her particular aspect of the Wyrms, or one of its more powerful servants (e.g., a Maeljin Incarna), her mind will be torn away to further empower that being (no roll). The only way this may be avoided is if that Wyrms decides to Taint the fomor for some reason (Storyteller's discretion). Such a pollution will permanently scar the fomor (add a Derangement and subtract two Willpower).

System: The fomor must struggle daily to keep her mind from fleeing this reality; upon awakening each day (or night, if the fomor is nocturnal), roll Willpower (difficulty 5). A failure means that the fomor loses a point of Willpower. When all the fomor's Willpower is gone, so is her mind.

• **Infections (4 pts)** — Choose a particular Power to pair with this Taint. Whenever something goes wrong with the use of that Power, the character suffers a gangrenous infection. For example, a fomor's Slither Skin is destroyed by a Garou before the fomor could put the skin back on. Without his skin, the fomor suffers a bad infection.

System: The fomor will lose one Health Level per day until he is Crippled. This damage will heal after one week, at the rate of one Level per day.

• **Inner Volcano (5 pts)** — Burn, baby, burn! Inside the Bane-ridden one, temperatures rise to unhealthy levels. She has a perpetual fever, strong enough to break most thermometers under the best of circumstances; when she's under stress or exertion, this fever literally cooks her from within. Death by this Taint is gruesome and unpleasant.

Each three turns of hard physical labor (combat, running, heavy lifting, etc.) painfully inflicts one non-soakable Health Level on the hapless fomor. Naturally, anyone who gets too close to the character during this stage shares her pain; a person who holds, carries, sleeps with or operates on the burning fomor before she cools down will take a Health Level of damage (soakable) unless he insulates himself somehow from the heat. In both cases, this damage is unusually painful, though not aggravated.

• **Limited Mobility (2 pts)** — The fomor cannot run as fast as a normal human. This can result from any number of reasons: he has lost a leg, his legs are shorter, he has no legs and must slither like a snake, etc. Halve the character's



normal running distance. This Taint can also be purchased for other modes of movement, such as flight if the character has the Power: Wings.

• **Mental De-evolution (varies)** — Choose a particular Power to pair with this Taint. Whenever that Power is used, the character may suffer a loss in mental capability. The loss is temporary, although the more frequently the Power is used, the more permanent the Mental De-evolution becomes.

System: Every time the Power paired with this Taint is used, the character must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6). If the roll is successful, there is no effect. If the roll fails, the character loses a number of dots from one of her Mental Attributes equal to the amount of points the player chooses for this Taint. The Mental Attribute affected (Perception, Intelligence or Wits) must be chosen when the Taint is taken. This loss lasts for one scene. If the roll botches, the character loses one dot of that Attribute — permanently.

Example: Lars has the Animal Control Power, which he pairs to Intelligence De-evolution (he takes 4 points for the Taint). Later, he uses his Power to control a bear. He must also make a Willpower roll to resist Mental De-evolution. In this case, he fails, and loses four dots from his Intelligence. The player explains this effect as Lars becoming more animalistic in his thinking, a side-effect of controlling animals.

If a character drops to zero in any Attribute, consult the following chart:

Attribute	Effect
Perception	The character suffers sensory deprivation (she is blind, deaf, dumb and numb to touch, nor can she taste).
Intelligence	The character thinks only on an animal level of instinct, and can perform no higher functions whatsoever — which includes speech.
Wits	The character is extremely slow. Actions take twice as long to perform, and complicated actions may not be performed at all. The character — regardless of his Powers (such as Extra Speed) — cannot split his Dice Pools, take extra actions or use Rage points for extra actions. The character always acts last in a given turn, even after other characters have taken all their multiple actions.

• **Mutoid Cancer (4 pts)** — This combined Taint (although it is almost a Power) is cyclical. Episodes last for about a month, and occur every other month.

System: In the first week of the cycle, the form is able to pass for human, and begins to exhibit definite physical changes. She will grow about a foot in size and gain +2 Strength, +1 Stamina and one extra Health Level. The form's skin can be politely termed as "blotchy" during this stage.

In the second week, the change is far more pronounced. Blotchy skin gives away to a seething, growing patchwork of scabs, running sores and rolling muscle (Appearance becomes zero). The fomor grows an additional foot, gaining two extra dots of Strength and another Health Level. The fomor also exudes a sulfurous stench.

In the third week, the fomor doesn't appear remotely human, even in outline. Additional limbs spring unbidden from the fomor's body and then resubmerge just as quickly. The fomor's skin is now a thick, blood red carapace. The carapace is partially solid, partially gelatinous in consistency and adds three to the fomor's soak dice. Black, virus-rich blood flows freely from the fomor's orifices. Those who ingest this blood (by swallowing it or through open wounds) must make a Stamina roll (difficulty 7) or become infected. Once someone has resisted this plague, she is immune to it thereafter. Although physically strong, the fomor is taking internal damage at this point. Blood flow to the brain is constricted; the fomor's Perception and Alertness are reduced by one. Her Intelligence is reduced by two. Her eyes are usually dead and crablike.

In the fourth and final week of the cycle, the fomor grows an additional few feet (+1 Strength; heights of 13-15 feet are not unheard of). This explosive growth spurt finally ends in a cataclysmic cellular explosion. The virus has replicated itself so thoroughly that the host is now essentially a walking virus bomb. The fomor's body falls apart in great clumps. Each part is now a walking extension of the virus and will wander off mindlessly until it dies, or replicates itself by finding another victim (whoever ingests it). This explosion can be brought on anytime in the final week if the fomor takes more than half her Health Levels from one blow (the attacker may be splattered by the flying gore).

The fomor's original form remains behind, unconscious, naked and with all Traits back to their original state. However, the fomor must make a Stamina roll (difficulty 7) or be permanently reduced by one point of Intelligence (brain damage). Once a fomor reaches zero Intelligence, he is a shambling monster under the Storyteller's control.

Pentex is careful about how it uses this virus since it can easily spin out of company control. Fomor exposed to this virus are often (understandably) furious with the company and occasionally rebel.

• **Physical Wasting (varies)** — Choose a particular Power to pair with this Taint. Whenever that Power is used, the character may suffer a loss in physical capability. The loss is temporary, although the more frequently the Power is used, the more permanent the wasting becomes.

System: Everytime the Power paired with this Taint is used, the character must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6). If the roll is successful, there is no effect. If the roll fails, the character loses a number of dots from one of her

Physical Attributes equal to the amount of points the player chooses for this Taint. The Physical Attribute affected (Strength, Dexterity or Stamina) must be chosen when the Taint is taken. This loss lasts for one scene. If the roll botches, the character permanently loses one dot of that Attribute.

Example: Emilia has the Ectoplasmic Extrusions Power, which she pairs to the Stamina Wasting Taint (she takes 4 points for the Taint). Later, she uses his Power to attack a Garou. She must also make a Willpower roll to resist Wasting. In this case, she fails, and loses four dots from her Stamina. The player explains this effect as Emilia burning her own body matter to create the ectoplasmic tentacles.

If a character drops to zero in any Attribute, consult the following chart:

Attribute	Effect
Strength	The fomor cannot move. She is too weak to even stand, let alone perform any physical task.
Dexterity	The fomor has no ability to control her movements. her nervous system is so exhausted, it acts randomly. If a character lifts her arm up, it may go to the right instead.
Stamina	The fomor bruises at any physical contact, and may contract a bad disease such as pneumonia.

• **Rotting (6 pts)** — The fomor is rotting away; over a period of months, his body will fall apart.

System: Every time the fomor suffers more damage from a single blow than his Stamina, he will lose whichever part of his body was hit (this might kill him if his head or heart are struck). In addition, once per month, the fomor will lose a part of his body. Early on, this might just be fingers and toes, but in the latter stages, this could be arms or legs. Eventually, he may begin voiding his internal organs through his bowels.

If the fomor has the Power: Regeneration, his lost limbs will grow back in one month, although he may lose them again.

• **Second Head (5 pts)** — The fomor has two heads. The head may be on the fomor's shoulders, side by side with his first head. It may be growing out of the fomor's stomach, or rear, or whatever. The second head is intelligent, can speak and doesn't like the first head very much. Fortunately, it has little or no control over the rest of the fomor's body, but it is still a major inconvenience. The head destroys almost any chance the fomor has of mixing with society. The second head has little in the way of survival instincts. It will do whatever it can to get the fomor in trouble (insulting superiors at Pentex, whistling "here, boy" while the fomor is trying to sneak by that Garou pack, etc.). The second head is temporarily silenced by gagging it, but it can eventually chew through any gag. Any attempt to silence it surgically (e.g., by cutting its tongue out) will also harm the first head in a similar manner.



The reverse of this is not true, however. The second head may survive the death of the first head for sometime, but will eventually die since it has no control over the body. The second head has the same Mental Attributes as the first head. It may also develop some Abilities as long as they are not dependent on having a body. (A favorite is the Skill: Ventriloquism.) The second head is under control of the Storyteller.

- **Severe Allergy (3/2/1 pts)** — The fomor is very allergic to some one thing. This thing causes the fomor damage, although it may be perfectly harmless to others. In addition to breaking out in disgusting rashes, each turn the fomor is exposed to it, he suffers one non-soakable Health Level of damage. This damage is not aggravated, but it will not heal as long as the fomor is exposed to the allergen. The first allergy is worth three points, a second is worth two and a third is worth only one. Some possible allergens are: animal fur (including Garou), grass (or other "natural" phenomena), gun oil, cotton (those damn itchy uniforms), the Crusties (see the Taint above), etc.

- **Special Diet (varies)** — The fomor cannot gain sustenance from normal food sources. He requires food of a different sort, the sort that is dangerous to get: blood, freshly-killed flesh, human flesh, fomor flesh, etc. This is not an Addiction (see above); it is simply the only food source the fomor can survive on.

Points

- | Points | Dietary Object |
|--------|---|
| 1 | Easily obtained food (freshly slain meat, freshly drawn milk) |
| 3 | Dangerously obtained food (blood, human flesh, children) |
| 5 | Suicidally obtained food (fomor or Garou flesh) |

- **Teledementia (5 pts)** — The fomor is a powerful telepath, or at least she thinks so. The reality of Teledementia has been confirmed by Iliad scientists, but its usefulness is questionable. Fomori with this Power (sometimes called Psychonauts; also Psycho-nuts) are receiving telepathic messages, but the content is garbled, sick and deranged. Psychonauts believe the world to be a living hell. They are bombarded daily with only the vilest of thoughts around them. These thoughts are further twisted and increased in intensity. Everyone in the world is either a worthless victim or a sadistic brute. There is no middle ground. The Psychonaut may revel in this, but she also perceives everyone to be plotting against her. Since the information from this kind of telepathy is so distorted, information gained through it is usually worthless. (The Storyteller may let an occasional truth slip in, but the fomor shouldn't be able to tell the difference.)

System: Psychonauts must make a Willpower roll every day (difficulty 5) or become trapped in a harrowing psychic loop where reality is completely altered. Fomori caught in these loops often go on killing sprees. They will attack allies, as well as enemies and innocent bystanders. Pentex often gives other fomori the authority to put Psychonauts down hard and fast if this occurs. Psychonauts have short life spans, even by fomor standards.

- **Ugly as Sin (1 pt)** — The character is horribly ugly and has a zero Appearance score, which cannot be raised through experience or freebie points. This can be because of a facial disfigurement or because of another Power which makes the fomor unable to pass among humans without eliciting an extreme reaction.

- **Walking Bomb (5 pts)** — Pentex has implanted a safeguard in you to protect themselves — a bomb in your head. They can activate it anytime they want, and they can do so at any distance. Only they can disarm it, but this must be done in person by a bomb expert. When activated, the bomb will explode in the fomor's head for 12 dice of non-soakable, aggravated damage. If he survives, Pentex may send First Teams out to finish the job.

- **Worms (3 pts)** — This foul Taint personifies the Wyrn's influence; the character hosts parasitical worms. These worms cause him endless pain and periodically emerge from his mouth, ears or other orifices. Unless he vomits them up at least once a day, the worms will swell his

belly, clog his internal passages, and begin to eat his organs. If some circumstance (jail, a gag, etc.) keeps him from purging the worms from his system, he will sustain one Health Level's worth of damage per day until the worms consume him utterly. This damage cannot be soaked, for obvious reasons.

Attacks which include the worms (see the prelude) must be bought with Hazardous Breath or Stomach Pumper.

Example of Character Creation

Chris decides to make a **Freak Legion** character. With a copy of the character creation outline in front of him, he sets to work.

Step One: Concept

Chris must first develop a concept for his character. He decides he wants to play a pencil-pusher, a lonely, downtrodden office worker who despises his job and his boss. He envies the perks the executives receive but hates the vicious cycle of brownnosing required to get there. He calls his concept "Angry Peon."

Next, Chris decides to be a unique fomor, rather than choose from the known breeds. Whatever was in that soda pop his character drank was certainly not FDA-approved.





For his character's Nature he chooses Rebel, figuring that his character wants to be free, to throw off the chains of 9-to-5 oppression. For his Demeanor, Chris chooses Penitent, since his character puts on a mask of lies for his employers (including his new ones at Pentex), hiding his deep-seated, seething contempt under the guise of a loyal flunky.

What about a name? Chris thinks for a bit, knowing that the name should somehow represent his character's position in life as a faceless cubicle worker. He chooses Filbert Peenuckle.

Step Two: Attributes

The next step is to prioritize Filbert's Attributes. Chris chooses Mental as the primary Attribute category. He decides that Filbert is a smart, educated young man, but he has been railroaded into a hateful, meaningless job by the "system." Chris selects Physical as the secondary Attribute category and Social as the tertiary (Filbert is not the most sociable of people).

Chris first divides the six primary dots among Filbert's Mental Attributes. Chris puts three points in Intelligence, giving Filbert a score of 4 (remember the one free starting dot in every Attribute Trait). Filbert is pretty self-absorbed with his own hate, so he doesn't always notice what's going on around him; he only puts one dot in Perception, giving him a score of 2. Chris places the remaining two Mental points in Wits, giving Filbert a score of 3.

The secondary Attribute category is tackled next. Chris turns first to Stamina. Here he places two points, making Filbert a fairly fit guy (Stamina of 3). The remaining two points go into Strength and Dexterity (scores of 2 each).

The tertiary Attribute category of Social is easy to settle. Chris places all three points in Manipulation to reflect Filbert's ability to convince others that he likes them (when he really hates them). Chris reasons that ratings of 1 in Charisma and Appearance fit the character concept.

Step Three: Abilities

Chris must now prioritize Filbert's Abilities. Instead of doing this right away, Chris scans the character sheet and starts checking off Abilities he thinks Filbert should have (he does not have a free starting dot in every Ability Trait as he does with Attribute Traits). It soon becomes clear that most of the points are going to be spent in Talents, so Chris chooses it as primary.

Filbert has 11 points to spend. He's taken karate classes at the "Y," so he puts three points into Brawl. Filbert actually scares some of his co-workers with his attitude (they all whisper about him "going postal" someday), so three points go into Intimidation. He's a wary person, so one point goes into Alertness, the better to see what's

coming at him. He watches a lot of movies about the seedier parts of modern culture ("You lookin' at me!!"), so one point goes into Streetwise. Chris also spends a lot of time masking his true motives and feeling from others, so three points go into Subterfuge.

Chris chooses Knowledges as his secondary Ability category. He has seven points to spend here. Since his job is in a modern office, Chris decides that Filbert is an expert computer whiz. Three points go into Computers. He's also well-educated; two points go to Science. Filbert is also nosy, silently spying on those around him; two points go into Investigation. (All these Abilities will serve him well in his new line of work for Pentex.)

There are only four points to spend in Skills. Filbert's waiting for the day a burglar will break into his house, giving him an excuse to blow someone away. Two points go into Firearms. He also likes to spy on his fellow workers, and listen outside others' offices; two points go into Stealth.

Step Four: Advantages

Filbert has five points to spend on Backgrounds. He is good at saving money, so he puts three into Resources. He's just waiting for the day when he can use this money to burn all his enemies. He puts the remaining two points into Equipment; he'll decide later just what item(s) he gets.

Chris then moves on to Powers and Taints, the quintessential Traits that define a fomer. Since he only gets one Power point for every Taint point he takes, Chris has to choose carefully; he doesn't want to create a character who'll buy the farm on his first outing.

For Filbert's first Power, Chris chooses Berserker (3); he figures that the Wyrn has granted Filbert an outlet for his hatred. He also chooses Immunity to the Delirium (1), because he doesn't want Filbert to freeze up or lose his

mind when confronted with a Garou assault. He also chooses Corrupt Visions (4); Filbert wants to get even with his enemies (his bosses) by making them take the fall seemingly on their own. He wants to be able to get close to his victims before they know it, so he chooses Invisibility (5).

His Powers total up to 13 points. He needs to now choose Taints to offset these points. He first chooses Addiction; Filbert is addicted to the soda which turned him into a fomer (there was a Bane in it). Pentex promises to supply him more — if he works for them (3 pts; weekly cycle). Next, he chooses a Derangement, which he calls "Hit List" (3). Anytime someone pisses Filbert off, he adds them to his mental hit list of enemies. He must get revenge against everyone on his hit list at some time in the future. He also chooses another Derangement: Misomania (2 pts for his second Derangement). Filbert hates everything. He chooses Stamina Wasting (3 pts), which he pairs with his Power: Corrupt Visions; everytime he uses this Power, he risks weakening himself drastically. Finally, he chooses Doomed (2 pts) — he'll surely be dead in three years.

Step Five: Finishing Touches

Chris records his initial Willpower of 3.

Now Chris gets to spend Filbert's 21 freebie points. First, Chris spends 2 points on the Merit: Hidden Power; to all outward appearances, Filbert is perfectly human. Next, he then spends five points to raise his Manipulation to 5 (for when he corrupts minds). He then spends six points to get a Stealth of 5 (for when he's invisible). Four points are spent to raise his Willpower (total 7). Finally, four more points are spent for four Rage points (Filbert has the Berserker Power).

Normally, more detail could be added to a new character, but Chris thinks he has a pretty good idea of who Filbert is and what he wants. Now, he's ready to play.



Chapter Two: Breeds

*In my violent rage they say I'm a criminal
There ain't no Labels within the human animal
In this world of bigotry and pain
The violence spreads and the terror reigns
— Biohazard, "Human Animal"*

Given here are some of the more well-known fomori breeds. Storytellers and players should feel free to create their own. The number of different breeds discovered by Pentex is somewhat small, since it is very hard to create a fomor exactly

as desired. Even when breeds develop some unwholesome or dangerous traits (by Pentex's standards), they are often kept around, since they are at least consistent in their overall traits, and thus predictable for Omega Plan purposes.

• **Breed Prejudice (varies)** — This Taint is available only to members of fomori breeds. Each breed suffers some degree of prejudice from their own kind, Pentex scientists, Black Spiral Dancers, or even Garou (who may single out members of a particular breed to kill first). Many factors add up to make this prejudice: traits which cause them to be shunned by others (maybe they smell bad, like Freakfeet) or feared by others (Feretoi cannot be trusted). They may simply creep others out (Hollow Men) or have betrayed other fomori in the past (Shadowfiends). It is up to the Storyteller to award the value of this Taint for any new breeds he or she players create. Examples are listed below with each breed. Another factor which applies in determining the value of this Trait is how well-known the breed is. Everyone knows about Enticers, but few are aware of Brain Eaters; thus Enticers have a higher value even though Brain Eaters are a scarier lot.

Bane Children

Traits

Powers: (Required) Immunity to Delirium (1)

Description

Bane Children are created by Conceptual Services, Ltd. See Chapter Four for details. Each Bane Child is unique.

Brain Eaters

Traits

Powers: (Required) Brain Eating (6), Immunity to Delirium (1), choose one: Corrupted Visions (4) or Mind Rape (6)

Taints: (Required) Addiction (3); Brain Eating; weekly cycle, Breed Prejudice (4), Derangement (3); Delusions of Grandeur, Physical Wasting (1-3)

Numina: 3+ dots in Psychic Phenomena (see Project Twilight or The Hunters Hunted)

Description

Image: Brain Eaters look just like anyone else. They could be anywhere. Anytime.

Genesis: Brain Eaters are created under the aegis of Project Aeneid, the newest offering from Pentex's Special Projects Division. Combining Project Iliad with Project Odyssey (which awakens psychics' mental gifts), Project Aeneid binds a special type of Bane known as a Mind Feeder into the psychic. The newly created fomor gains

power in his psychic abilities and is able to force hallucinations onto others' minds, but must feed upon normal human brains at least once a week or begin to suffer (Taint: Addiction to brain eating). Using her mind powers also comes at a cost, often draining her physical capabilities (Taint: Physical Wasting).

History: Brain Eaters are the newest project undertaken by the Special Projects Division, and as such, they are completely untested. Psychics are rare to begin with and those who can tolerate the change into a fomor are rarer still. Pentex has no desire to waste all its psychics on a project that may prove to be a failure. The first fomori from Project Aeneid are just now becoming ready for field testing.

Roleplaying Hints: No one can stop you now. Your mind has been subjected to terrible tortures to awaken it to your full psychic potential. It was painful, but worth it. Now you can read others' thoughts or see things others try to hide from you. You can make them do what you want them to do with but a thought or you can fool them into harming themselves if they annoy you. What they know, you can steal. Bwah ha ha ha ha.

Enticers

She was lovely, more beautiful than any woman he had ever seen. Larry stared at her, unable to look away and not caring if he was spotted. Beside him, Annette was talking and he tried to focus on her words but the vision that was approaching made all rational thought fall away from him. She was coming his way, moving through the smoky air of the night club and ignoring the men that stared at her.

Annette wondered for a moment why Larry was ignoring her, then she looked over towards her right and followed his eyes. Annette's voice faded away as she saw the stunning man walking towards the table. Her annoyance at Larry dissipated, unable to withstand the raw sensuality that was approaching her. Larry? Larry who?

The Enticer approached the table, content in the knowledge that the werewolf and its Kinfolk were too busy staring at its form to think about each other, or why they both felt desire for the same creature. It smiled, certain that the teeth seen by its prey were nothing like the barbed fangs it bared as it walked casually towards the couple. Soon they would all leave the bar together, and then its true form could be seen. Then the death dance would begin anew....

Traits

Attributes: minimum Charisma of 3

Backgrounds: Resources 3

Powers: (Required) Enhancement (3), Fangs (3), Succubi's Veil (6); (Suggested) Berserker (3)

Taints: (Required): Addiction (4); Siren Cosmetics, daily cycle, Brainwashed (3; Pentex loyalty), Breed Prejudice (5)

Description

The Enticers can effectively seduce any creature that lives. Pheromones secreted constantly from the Enticer's skin stimulate the pleasure centers of its prey while it pulls images of perfection from the prey's mind.

Enticers are not creatures that like to fight. They will avoid physical confrontation if at all possible. Enticers prefer to lead their prey into conflict with each other, often by starting a fight over who can be with the Enticer, or by simply leading them into an ambush of other fomori. What Enticers enjoy more than anything else is leading Garou, and other minions of Gaia, down the road to complete corruption by the Wyrms.

Image: Without powers, these fomori appear as normal humans but for the row of barbed teeth in their mouths. However, they are rarely perceived except through the veil of their Wyrms powers, which make them appear intensely alluring.

Genesis: Enticers are a form of fomori rumored to have been created by Siren Cosmetics, a subsidiary of the Pentex Corporation. The process is simple enough, and involves giving away a special "hypoallergenic" supply of makeup or cologne to the winners of a yearly contest. The winners of these contests each receive a one-year supply of cosmetics that are guaranteed to attract the opposite sex. The truth is, the cosmetics change both the physical and mental perceptions of the "winner," seducing the individual into a false sense of happiness; the human wearing these cosmetics will indeed attract the opposite sex, but only due to the unique glands that start covering the wearer's body within a matter of a few days. The cosmetics also produce a chemical reaction in the skin of the wearer, one that stimulates adrenal glands and pleasure centers, making the wearer feel happy without really knowing the reason.

The unique addictive qualities in the makeup will normally have the lucky contestant wearing makeup throughout the day, and special facial creams and skin lotions to bed each night. By the time a month has passed, the transformation is so far along, that the victim could stop wearing the products entirely and still become an Enticer.

By the end of the metamorphosis, the winners of the yearly contest are completely different from what they used to be. Physically they are addicted to the cosmetics, not only for the pleasure they continue to bring, but as their very life's blood. The transformation makes the Enticer dependent to a level that they will do anything at all to get more of the cosmetics, and that is where Pentex is happy to oblige them — for a cost. Enticers are constantly sent out on negotiation missions with smaller companies that have resisted being purchased. They are also used to lure enemies of the corporation into traps.

Mentally, these creatures are so dependent on Pentex that many would willingly kill all of their family members slowly and painfully to ensure the continued supply of Siren Cosmetics. There are plans in the near future to increase the number of "prizes" awarded every year, but the cost of the cosmetics is prohibitive, and further market analysis of the usefulness of Enticers is still needed before a final decision is reached.

Ferectoi, the Larvae of the Wyrms

Macintyre slipped carefully through the long grass. This damn jungle was beginning to get to him. He was already sick of point duty, and especially with that Johnson. He was a weird bird alright. The kinda guy who probably tortured his neighbor's cat as a kid. But, he had to admit, Johnson was good in a fire fight. Sort of like he was born to it.

He was about to ask Johnson how long they were gonna have to be out there when the air exploded with the sound of gunfire and bees buzzed past him faster than the eye could catch. But no sting. He hadn't been hit.

He looked over at Johnson, who was still just standing there. He yelled to Johnson to hit the ground. What was he, a fool? He was just standin' there, starin' at his chest. Oh, jeez, maybe he'd been hit.

Macintyre jumped up and ran over to Johnson, intending to throw him to the ground before he could be hit again. But he stopped dead in his tracks, staring at Johnson. Johnson laughed. He was exulting in the sweet pain as the carapace grew from his chest. The bullets poked out and fell to the ground. His wrists twisted and bony knives slid from their fleshy sheaths, dripping with strange fluids.

Macintyre just stared. Johnson was turning into a monster before his eyes — and he was enjoying it.

Johnson turned to Macintyre. "Rock and roll, buddy. Rock and roll..."

Traits

Backgrounds: (Required) Allies 3-5 (Wyrms toadies); (Suggested) Favors, Rank

Powers: (Required) Immunity to Delirium (1). Choose at least 4 pts of powers (each Ferectoi is unique)

Taints: (Required) Breed Prejudice (5); (Suggested) Derangement (3; inner struggle)

Merits/Flaws: (Required) Hidden Power; (Suggested) Stigmata of the Wyrms

Description

These creatures are the unnatural offspring of the mating of a Breeder Bane with a human. They are super-human beings with full understanding of humankind and an overwhelming passion for destruction.

Image: While the Larvae of the Wyrms appear mortal in most every respect, they are far from it. Even the fomori Powers that betray their Wyrms-taint are concealable (extra limbs are retractable, etc.).

Genesis: These creatures are the spawn of a Breeder Bane (see the Appendix). The Ferectoi look and act human, but they are far from it. Most hold humanistic interests and live like any other rich and powerful human. However, they are constantly at odds with themselves, enduring an inner struggle between their humanity and their Wyrms-nature. The Wyrms almost always wins out. They slowly become less humanlike in their thoughts and actions, though most of their deeds revolve around the destruction of the planet as well as those who oppose this destruction.

Roleplaying Notes: You are totally evil. You exude corruption and vileness. Few can match you in your inhumanity. However, sometimes you have doubts; a voice within you struggles against this evil. You can be suave and debonair when necessary, just as you can also be savage and gross. Personal power is very important to you. You are served by any number of Wyrms-creatures and Banes, to whom you are a harsh and uncompromising overlord.

Fomori Families

You better stay away from Copperhead Road.

— Steve Earle, "Copperhead Road"

If you go up t' Snakepit Cove, you're like to run into one of the Gorstall clan. You'd be advised to stay clear of 'em, cause they're one ornery bunch. I'm talking pure meanness. The Gorstall men 'ud soon kill you as look at you, and their womenfolk aren't much better. Some sez they done pacted with the devil. Others claim they're haunted. Me? I don't rightly know what's wrong with them, but it's for certain got somethin' to do with that black slimepit of a river that runs back o' their trailers. It ain't natural. They ain't natural, neither, come to think of it.

— Willis Cotley, storekeeper, Tuckowee, North Carolina

Traits

Knowledges: Area Knowledge (local habitat) 3

Backgrounds: Allies 1-3 (depending on size of family), Consecrated 2

Powers: (Required) Immunity to the Delirium (1), one "family gift" (one power common to all family members; see below. Suggested are Berserker, Regeneration or Shapechange)

Taints: (Required) Breed Prejudice (2)

Description

In the Appalachian and Ozark backwoods, the dense forests of upper New England and the American Northwest, the Louisiana bayous, the Florida Everglades, and other regions around the world where small communities exist in

remote isolation from the world's mainstream, Banes or groups of Banes sometimes claim entire families. Those "creepy Shankshell cousins down in the cove" and the "degenerate clan of Fillimores over by Skunk River" may, in fact, belong to the ever-increasing numbers of fomori families.

Image: Fomori family members appear to be (and often are) normal individuals until their Rite of Making (see below). As full fomori, males resemble the legendary "wild, hairy men" of the mountains and backwoods. Women judged fitting to undergo the rite sometimes appear as either hags or incredibly lascivious sirens. Fomori families living near swamps take on the fish-eyed, slimy-skinned characteristics often portrayed in B-movies, while those near toxic dumps or chemical waste sites resemble survivors of nuclear disasters.

Genesis: Fomori families are made, not born. When they reach a certain age — in some cases the onset of puberty, but usually full adulthood — eligible males (and sometimes females) are initiated into the "family mystery." The adults — themselves already fomori — take the candidate into the wilderness, to the Hellhole or Blight which houses the Banes who have claimed the family as their own. There, a ritual takes place which transforms the initiate into a fomori.

The Rite of Making

This rite results in the creation of a fomori from a normal member of a family marked by Banes as suitable for possession. It is always performed upon "unholy ground," deep within the Banes' territory: a stagnant pond, a polluted bend in the river, or a chemical dump hidden in the backwoods. The rituals differ from family to family, but they usually involve a great deal of physical as well as emotional pain. Similar in intent to the Garou Rite of Passage, the rite strips away the vestiges of normal human feelings and endows the individual undergoing the process with fomori powers. In most cases, members of a fomori family receive a unique "family gift" (see below) in addition to whatever other special abilities are conferred by the rite. These gifts sometimes serve as identifiers for fomori families ("Those Laramie boys seem to heal up real quick," or "Them Robisons are all of 'em slippery as eels; seems they can skinny in an' out of just about any place you set 'em."). Each gift, however, has its price.

Family Gift

Although the Rite of Making endows individual fomori with unique powers, most fomori families eventually develop a "family trait" — a Power that crops up in all the individuals of a particular family once they become fomori. These family-specific powers are usually linked to a related Taint. Most common among these are Regeneration, Berserker and Shapechange, but the player and Storyteller should feel free to create their own repertoire of family gifts and drawbacks.



History: Lands forever spoiled by strip mining, clear-cutting, soil erosion, toxic waste dumping, landfills or nearby water pollution become Blights or Hellholes in the Umbra, attracting numbers of Banes who thrive on the surrounding corruption. Ever in need of vessels through which they can spread their foulness, these Wyrmspawned creatures often latch onto nearby humans, luring them into their grasp with promises of power or pandering to other base instincts. In some cases, extremely powerful Banes have made pacts with heads of families living near these Wyrms-tainted areas, ensuring that succeeding generations will provide more or less willing hosts for the lesser Banes under their control. Thus are "fomori families" born.

Besides providing a steady source of host material for these spawn of the Wyrms, infected family members further the goals of the Wyrms by giving substance to the belief that wilderness areas contain "violent and dangerous people." The perpetuation of this stereotype serves a multitude of purposes. The possibility of encountering psychopathic killers and rapists in these wild places discourages visits by vacationers and others who might want to get closer to nature. For them, the possibility of paying with their lives for a chance to enjoy the natural world isn't worth it. The reputation for violence such areas garner also weakens the case for wilderness preservation. Why preserve a place notorious for its dangers, when

damming a river, draining a swamp or clearing a forest to make room for housing developments will solve the problem? (It doesn't, but that's another story.)

Ironically, the same reasons that keep some people away from these high-risk areas draw other people like a magnet — thrillseekers, danger junkies, loners, misfits and other fringe elements. Often prone to violence themselves, these individuals find exactly what they were looking for (sometimes more) as they become candidates for corruption or feasts for the corrupted. Fomori families, despite their reputations for being unfriendly toward chance intruders into their territories, are often more than willing to bring strangers into their houses for "dinner and a good time."

Since most fomori Powers often result in such extensive dehumanization of their hosts that normal sexual relationships become difficult or impossible to maintain, most members of fomori families do not actually become fomori until late adolescence or early adulthood, thus giving them time to create offspring. Frequently, female members of these families are excluded from the possession "loop," since they are more valuable as breeders of future fomori hosts. This is not always the case, however, and many fomori families require all their members, regardless of gender, to undergo the "family ritual" which results in the creation of fomori.

Children born to fomori families lead miserable, joyless lives. Raised around adults who suffer from various degrees of Wyrn-taint, these young victims endure everything from casual neglect to hideous physical, emotional, and often sexual abuse. As a result, they are so broken in spirit that few of them are able to resist the inevitable Rite of Making which lies at the heart of their family. Female family members, unless they are themselves fomori, are also subject to gross abuse by their husbands, fathers, uncles, brothers and cousins.

Some fomori families, particularly those who live in the deep backwoods, operate a family business — brewing moonshine, growing marijuana or opium poppies, or collecting and bottling "spring water" for sale to dealers or distributors. Since the raw materials for these home industries are grown or collected on lands defiled by the presence of Banes, these products are tainted. Some fomori families sell fruit, honey, hot boiled peanuts and other Wyrn-befouled produce from roadside stands. In this way, fomori families do their own small part in spreading their corruption to the general public through the insidious process of gradually eroding their spirits with Wyrn-poison.

Garou encountering fomori families face more than just a physical challenge. If they are fortunate enough to defeat the fomori members of the family, they must then decide what to do about the "non-combatants." In some cases, salvage is possible, but many Garou insist on complete elimination of the tainted family.

Roleplaying Hints: All your life you've been kicked around by your dad, your granddad, your uncles and the other grownups in the family (exceptin' the womenfolk). Now you know the family secret. You've gone to the secret place and done the secret thing and come away different. Now it's your turn to kick around anyone who pisses you off, and it's about damn time. You've heard your Uncle Ezra talk about rippin' faces off of jerks who come wanderin' across your lands. He says it's even better when they bring their women along, though there's lots of things you can do with either sex. You can't wait to get in on the fun. Funny, though, you can't seem to stop coughing up that blue-black stuff and you feel like a boll weevil is borin' its way through your gut, but daddy says it'll pass. Course, daddy don't look too well himself...



Freakfeet

Amadeus Blitz-Schwein snorted in disgust. He had battled the Black Spirals this day. They had launched a sneak attack on his pack. He was victorious but three of his friends lay dead. Would the treachery of the Wyrms ever end? At least now, here in his own bathroom, he was safe. Here he could sit, and maybe catch up on his reading. After five minutes on the toilet his hackles suddenly rose. Something grabbed him from below! He tried to leap up, but he couldn't move. Something was pulling him into the toilet! Impossible! Aaargh! The accustomed muscles rippled like water as he changed into his warrior form. Skin and bone rippled in a most unaccustomed manner as his body cascaded like boiling wax, downward against his will. Claws clacked desperately on porcelain. The last thing he heard was the toilet flushing and the chattering of demented weasels.

Traits

Powers: (Required) Fangs (3), Malleate (6), Rat Head (4); (Suggested) Slobber Snot (3)

Traits: (Required) Breed Prejudice (6), Derangement (3; fear of open spaces), Infections (4); (Suggested) The Crusties (3), Severe Allergy (3)

Description

Image: Grotesque, yet oddly humorous in appearance, Freakfeet are often underestimated because of their appearance. From the waist up they are generally human in outline. The only difference is that they have abnormally long, muscular arms with oversized hands and callused knuckles. They have little or no neck. Their legs, however, are extremely short (6"-12" long) and generally useless. At the end of these are huge feet that taper into long, dexterous, prehensile toes. Their skin has an amphibian quality to it and usually glistens with Slobber Snot. Their coloring varies wildly and they display a wide variety of markings (of which they are inordinately proud). Their eyes are large and luminescent, also coming in a wide range of colors. Because of their stunted legs they are rarely more than four feet tall. They lope, using their knuckles to propel them forward. Despite the seeming awkwardness of their gait they can move at astonishing speeds. The vast majority of Freakfeet are male, though every hive has a queen, who is hideously large and obese. The queen has a small but very sharp stinger protruding from the base of her spine, through which she lays her eggs.

Genesis: Despite their apparent variety, Freakfeet are (on a cellular level) exact duplicates. The laboratory that created them used advanced cloning techniques to combine human and amphibian DNA. It then infused the mixture with a H'ruggling Bane (Sludge Elemental; see **Book of the Wyrms**). The result was supposed to be a homogeneous, hive-mind culture in the service of Pentex. Things went very wrong indeed. Due to their efficient method of recruitment (see below) Freakfeet are one of the most prolific of the fomor races.

History: Freakfeet were created by the Magadon subsidiary Panacea in the late 1970s. Panacea's president, Harold Hines (himself a fomor; see **Monkeywrench: Pentex**) desired a race of cheaply produced, self-replicating, subterranean fomori who could compete in the same ecological niche as the Bone Gnawers and Nosferatu. The Freakfeet seemed, at first, to fit this need. Unfortunately a "freak" explosion at Panacea's Berlin plant allowed many to escape before being properly indoctrinated by Pentex. Within a decade they, and their many descendants, were everywhere. They now live on most continents. These escapee Freakfeet are considered renegades by Pentex and are exterminated whenever possible. Due to their profligacy, they are swiftly becoming a sizable presence in the sewers of many major urban areas. The Freakfeet who still work for Pentex are tightly controlled. They are considered the lowest rung on the fomori ladder and are treated with contempt by most other fomori.

Although the first generation of Freakfeet was created in a laboratory, subsequent generations have been self-perpetuating. Victims of the Freakfeet breeding process are stalked and then abducted (often by being dragged down through their own toilets). Freakfeet use their Rat Head Power to slide through sewer pipes (called "sliding"). Three or four Freakfeet can fit through a toilet at the same time with ease. Freakfeet who get stuck on a slide are roundly humiliated by their peers.

The victims' bodies are rendered elastic by the fomor's Malleate power. Freakfeet drag their victims through the sewer pipes to the Freakfeet hive, where they decoratively stretch the still living bodies into bizarre and grotesque shapes. There the victim stays, conscious but paralyzed, until the hive queen lays one of her eggs in the unfortunate's body. The gestation period is two weeks, after which an adult Freakfoot will hatch from its human chrysalis. (The Garou Rite of Cleansing will destroy the fomor embryo in its earlier stages.) The fomor will have some of the traits of its surrogate "parent" (similar facial features, character quirks, etc.). Only one fomor can come from a victim, but the victim may survive the process (Stamina roll, difficulty 8), becoming a permanent feature of the Freakfeet hive.

Freakfeet have their own language. It is a guttural, chattering noise and is understandable only by H'rugglings and other Freakfeet.

Roleplaying Hints:

Renegade Freakfeet: Despite their escalating hostilities with Pentex, Renegade Freakfeet serve the Wyrms in their own way. Many are religious fanatics and serve the Maeljin Incarna, Collum (Lord of Sludge; see **Book of the Wyrms**). Renegades are usually boisterous, bloodthirsty, and perverse. Many of them are alcoholics or drug addicts. Renegades live furtive lives in the sewers of major cities and run frequent raids on Garou, the Nosferatu, and Pentex. They will only attack when they think the odds are in their favor. Freakfeet hives are also the sites of major H'ruggling activity.

Pentex Freakfeet: Freakfeet in the service of Pentex are closely monitored and tightly controlled. Most of them are still laboratory created and thus appear more similar to each other than their cousins in the wild. They are also fewer in number. Collum worship is strictly forbidden by Pentex, which views it as a dangerous distraction. Pentex Freakfeet are thoroughly steeped in Pentex propaganda, but are still more likely to go AWOL than any other type of fomor. For this reason they have tracking devices implanted in their skulls. Freakfeet who escape from Pentex usually seek out renegade hives, thus making excellent Judas goats for the company. Since most Freakfeet can be easily outsmarted by the average houseplant, this has not been difficult to do.

Gorehounds

"Deer Jason, i am your biggest fan. i've seen all your moves. You kick but. I wanna be just lik you. I found this new vidio "Blood the impaler". i have seen it ten times already. yor not in it, but it's cool anyway. This Conan-type guy impales all these sluts on big spikes. you wood like it.

"I wanted to try it out, so i took my naybor's cat and stuck it on a stick. It screamed real loud and it was neat. I bet you start the same way. Lik i said, i wanna be just like you. Is this a good start?"

"Yours in Blood; Dr. Pain"

Traits

Powers: (Required) Berserker (3), Immunity to Delirium (1), Regeneration (5)

Taints: (Required) Breed Prejudice (4), Derangements (5; homicidal and sadistic)

The Banes which create Gorehounds inhabit the products of Slaughterhouse Video. Disturbed viewers who watch these films risk possession by the Banes, who turn their victims' sick fantasies into a sadistic lust for real blood. The possessed person becomes a Gorehound, a slasher maniac fomor.

Image: Usually a large, hulking human with a mask, stripped sweater and household weapon (kitchen knife, chainsaw, pitchfork, etc.)

Genesis: One viewing allows the Bane in the video to attempt a Possession. Each successive viewing adds success to the time it takes the Bane to achieve full possession. Once possessed, the viewer will become a fomor and will begin to act out his sadistic impulses, most likely beginning with small animals but soon deteriorating into acts of cruelty against human targets. The viewer, probably not the most stable of folks to start with, will become obsessed with torture and death, and will dream of becoming a masked killer, a figure of fear like his slasher film heroes.

Such a victim is usually a loner, picked on by other kids, possibly from an abusive or neglected home environment. The Bane taps into its host's rage, granting him dreams of slashing



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his tormentors into bits. A particularly gruesome possibility is the possession of a homid pup who has not yet reached his First Change. An unknowing Garou from a difficult home would make an ideal subject for Gorehound corruption.

Gorehounds are suicidal killers; much like the "heroes" of slasher films, once engaged in combat, a Gorehound fights until utterly destroyed.

Gorehounds often display a cunning that belies their youth. They usually conceal their homicidal actions fairly well in the beginning, but become more reckless as they continue. After ten human deaths or so, the possessing Bane usually goads its host into a killing spree, gleefully riding the fomor into oblivion.

The Hollow Men

Warner Gates, Regional Manager of O'Tolley's restaurants, stands on the cliff's edge in the rain. His hands are bound behind him and his pants are around his ankles. Below him is the pounding ocean and a narrow, rocky beach.

"Tee, hee, hee," the old hag cackles behind him. The pain in his posterior is worse than ever. "Don't worry, deary. You'll only be dead a little while and there are better ways of serving the Wyrms than by working for those Johnny-come-latelies at Pentex. Better, purer, and oh-so much more juicy ways. Besides, you deserve it for serving up those terrible burgers of yours. Ugh."

"Please..."

"Oh, don't beg. It ill suits what you're about to become. Tee, hee. Now, as you see, I've shoved this barbed hook up into you and attached it to your lower intestines. The hook's connected to a rope tied to that tree. I push you off this cliff and... Well, I'm sure you get the rest. Bon-voyage, burger boy!"

A push, the beach below rushes up at him. A sharp, pulling pain stabs at his bowels, accompanied by the sound of tearing canvas. The rocks don't kill him, though. His blood-limned eyes dimly register the rocks around him. They are spattered with his internal organs, which have landed separately, a few feet away. No pain, but the emptiness... "Oh, God. Why can't I die?" So desolate, so empty, so lonely.

The ocean wind whistles through his emptied carcass. Suddenly, he is aware that he isn't alone. Rats, dozens of them, stare out at him from the rocks. Strangely, he isn't afraid. At least they're company. King Rat approaches him, regarding him with its beady eyes.

"Yes."

It comes closer.

"Oh, please. I am so empty."

King Rat's snout pushes its way through his teeth. Its wet, furry body skitters down his throat.

"Oh, yes. Lovely. To not be empty."

The others follow their king. Each one a welcome guest to the temple that is his body. He senses their gratitude for the shelter that his body gives them.

"My children..."

Something dark and wet rustles inside him. His body begins to move...

Craits

Powers: (Required) Colony Powers (10-12; see below), Disposition (4; see below); (Suggested) Prolonged Life (4), Regeneration (cost 4; only if animals matching the colony type are in the area; they are summoned to replenish damaged colony members), Scent of the Wyld (5)

Taints: (Required) Breed Prejudice (6), choose more Taints to equal total Power cost; (Suggested) The Fading (5), Rotting (6)

Description

Image: Hollow Men are sagging bags of human skin, animated by a colony of corrupted Wyrms animals (see Scavenger Packs in the Appendix). Although they can pass for human under certain conditions, this guise cannot withstand any real scrutiny. Hollow Men (or Women) move in a manner reminiscent of their animating colony (i.e., those who are possessed by a snake colony move in a serpentine manner, speak in sibilant tones, etc.). The fomor's skin ripples and undulates with the movements of the colony. Hollow Men usually wear concealing clothing to hide this (trenchcoats, hats, sunglasses, etc.). Hollow Men perpetually have an empty, terrified look in their sunken, bloodshot eyes. Individual members of the colony constantly boil to the surface to look out of the fomor's mouth (or other orifices if they are small enough). They may crawl over the fomor's body before returning inside. The Hollow Man may spend a Willpower point to temporarily prevent them from doing this (they will behave for a number of hours equal to the fomor's permanent Willpower). Many other fomori do not like to deal with Hollow Men because they are "too damn creepy." Freakfeet, however, like to hang around them for some reason. (The real scoop: Freakfeet eat vermin and look at Hollow Men as a free meal ticket. Roaches, yum.)

Genesis: Hollow Men are humans possessed by Scavenger Pack Banes. In order for the Hunter Pack to possess someone, the person must first be physically hollowed out. Although this may occasionally occur naturally (in the case of rotting corpses), the Scavenger Pack usually prefers fresher meat.

History: The Hollow Men are one of the oldest fomor breeds. Although no one is sure of their exact origin, they were first noticed by the Fianna in Roman Britain. Fianna tales of the time relate that they were created by Wyrms-corrupted druids. Individual Hollow Men may live for a long time (Power: Prolonged Life); some of them are truly ancient. Over the centuries the Hollow Men have become a driving force behind the Wyrms' plans to corrupt Gaia. They have a particular affinity with the Defiler Wyrms and some hold positions of power in the Seventh Generation (see Rage Across New York). Despite their prolonged lives they are relatively rare.



• **Colony Powers (varies)** — The powers of a colony depend on the type of creature making up the colony. Some examples:

Poison Spider Colony (12 pts): Venomous Bite (3), Webbing (5), Wall Walking (4)

Rat Colony (10 pts): Foot Pads (1), Infectious Touch (5), Rat Head (4)

Constrictor Colony (11 pts): Mega-Strength (3+), Mouth of the Wyrn (4), Rat Head (4)

• **Dispersion (4 pt)** — The fomor may, at will, temporarily evacuate the entire constituency of the colony from her body. The individual colony members act as a Materialized Scavenger Pack Bane (see Appendix). These components are directly under the fomor's mental command and may act as spies, or even attack enemies (though this is very dangerous to the fomor). If the colony leader is killed, the fomor cannot reform.

If the Hollow Man is reduced to Incapacitated, Dispersion will occur automatically. The colony will then retreat as quickly as possible. When it is safe, they will return to the body and reenter it (providing it hasn't been destroyed; few Garou know about this power and will usually not think to destroy the body). The colony's return will heal the fomor slightly (to Crippled), allowing him to limp away.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower point to disperse and one to reform again (if reduced to Incapacitated, he does not need to spend the point to disperse, although it must be spent to reform). A dispersed colony is particularly vulnerable to area-based attacks, such as the Gifts: Cutting Wind or Invoke the Spirits of the Storm. The Gift: Call of the Wyrn will slow their retreat.

Colony Types: Each Hollow Man is possessed by a Scavenger Pack Bane of a specific type (e.g., rats, vipers, tarantulas, wasps, etc.). Each of these Hollow Men species has its own set of powers. Several of the more common Hollow Men types are listed below. The player and the Storyteller may create other colony types. The Storyteller has the final say on what is permissible. The main reason for the rarity of Hollow Men is that some like colony types tend to kill each other on sight (e.g., two scorpion colonies will attack each other).

Roleplaying Hints: The Hollow Men are one of the most tormented, and hence the most sadistic, of the fomori breeds. They tend to hate everything and everybody. The original possessed human's relationship with the possessing colony is both symbiotic and parasitic, a sort of love/hate relationship. The Hollow Man is desolate and empty (and immobile) without the possessing colony, but they are poor company at best. Their presence isolates the fomor from other living beings and is thus often a source of

resentment by the fomor. Some Hollow Men, who were decent human beings before the transformation, may resist the pack's desires and retain something of their humanity, but this is very rare. Most of the colony is of only an animal order of intelligence, but their leader (e.g., King Rat) is the center of the bane's consciousness. It may, over time, gain ascendancy over the original host. Whether the fomor has a cooperative or adversarial relationship with the colony leader is up to the player. The Storyteller plays the colony leader. Some Hollow Men work for Pentex, but others (especially older ones) have their own agendas. Hollow Men are particularly hated by Red Talon Garou, who can spot them no matter how well they disguise themselves.

Normalites

Traits

Powers: (Required) Homogeneity (6), Sense The Unnatural (2), Venomous Bite (3)

Taints: (Required) Breed Prejudice (6), Derangement (5; homophobia and hatred of supernaturals)

Description

Image: These ghostly fomori are truly creatures of nightmare. Their once-human bodies are hideously distorted in order to allow them to run on all fours. They are completely sexless, their blank, neutered bodies testimony to the transforming power of Homogeneity Incorporated. Even their faces are featureless save for their gaping mouths. Many Normalites are completely hairless and wear no clothes, although sometimes their masters may mockingly equip them with a studded collar or leash. Even the boldest Garou would tremble, confronted by a pack of these faceless, howling things.

Genesis: As noted in Chapter Four, Normalites are created during the hypnotic sessions of Homogeneity Incorporated's homosexual cure. Audio tapes, supplied courtesy of Pentex's Project Iliad division, contain the appropriate Banes, which possess the victim while they are hypnotized and the tape is being played. Weak-willed individuals may be possessed immediately; stronger victims might need several sessions of hypnosis before the Bane possesses them.

Roleplaying Hints: After the initial possession, you feel positive and self-confident for the first time in your life. The unwanted, abnormal sexuality which has plagued your existence for as long as you can remember is no longer a problem. Soon you discover that you have no sexuality at all. The grief this may cause you is rapidly submerged in a welter of new feelings. You feel stronger, healthier, and also...angrier.

You begin to manifest an intense dislike for other homosexuals. You have been cured — why do they continue to flaunt their perversity? In the months before your body begins to warp and change, this dislike expands to include anything you perceive as vaguely abnormal — punk rock, body piercings, men who don't wear suits, women in trousers. You become

hypersensitive to normality's absence in others. Your friends on the Homogeneity Recruitment Drive take great interest in the freaks you detect with this new sensitivity of yours. Especially those freaks who look normal on the outside.

As the final, terrible transformation into a Normalite warps your body, you become gripped by a passionate hatred of anyone or anything vaguely individual. These feelings of rage and anger swamp your other emotions, even as your sense of self is swamped by the pain of transformation, and you become a mindless brute with a single aim. Stamp out the unnatural. Normality rules!

Serpent Brothers (the Serpent Brotherhood)

Kevin stood trembling in line with the others.

"The Brotherhood of the Serpent is the highest honor that a scout can aspire to," the scoutmaster said. "Many senators, congressmen, and company bosses are brothers of the order. You have all served long and loyally as scouts. You have passed the trials that we appointed for you. Now you are ready for the final secrets." He gestured to the snakey image on the card table. The scoutmaster drew a knife, its blade glittering in the firelight. "No one may reveal what he learns tonight, for the good of his soul. There is no turning back." He advanced to Michael. "Are you ready to enter the Serpent Brotherhood?" The boy nodded.

Kevin had heard about the stage knife. Strange, it didn't look like plastic.

"Will you shed blood for your brothers?" Another nod. The knife slid across Michael's arm. Good fake blood, Kevin thought. Then his turn came, and the knife descended. When it rose again, he was not human.

Traits

Abilities: (Required) Animal Ken 1, Survival 2, Medicine 1

Powers: (Suggested) Darksight (2), Immunity to Delirium (1), Hand from Beyond (4), Mega-Intelligence (3+), Mega-Stamina (3+), Sense Gaia (2), Spirit Ties (3), Umbra Passage (5)

Taint: (Required) Breed Prejudice (1)

Merit: (Required) Hidden Powers

Description

The Serpent Brotherhood is ostensibly an order of merit earned by service projects (activities such as building campgrounds in unspoiled wilderness or repairing roads to allow access to remote areas) in a boys' scouting organization. The kindly old men (wealthy Pentex execs, Nephandi, and a pederastic vampire or two) who fund the kids are themselves brothers of the order and more than willing to help an aspiring lad with college tuition and work opportunities.



Genesis: The Brotherhood targets youths who feel abandoned in a society that shatters families, who feel betrayed when TV's illusions don't manifest in their daily lives, who seek a camaraderie that schoolmates and skate pals can't provide.

The Brothers are high school age males with high intelligence and wilderness-camping skills. They remain physically normal as long as possible (into college), and do dirty work for their masters which requires articulate and winning young men. Their powers make them strong to serve the Wyrms and hard to spot. As decay progresses, the brothers withdraw from society more and more. Finally Pentex swallows them whole.

The initiation is a weekend campout in Pentex-owned parkland, during which the kids go through a series of ghastly hazing rites. The finale is a fireside ritual in which the new members are scarified with a knife. This introduces a Bane into their systems that soon takes over the body. The resulting fomori are at the peak of aggressiveness and physical development and are highly intelligent, with many wilderness skills. The Bane even enhances them physically and mentally.

Of course, any corporation would love to hire such bright and dedicated young men. Pentex offers work-study programs for deserving college students — with foreign travel opportunities! Some use Umbral Passage to take younger scouts on "camping trips," or to carry out caern-wrecking and glade-burning for their masters. Another strategy is to trash the environment under the guise of

"community service" — things such as destroying forest undergrowth to make a campground. The brothers make excellent Garou killers; a scout troop from two years ago are taking their college vacations in the Amazon....

All the members of one troop will be possessed by the same Bane, but it may choose to manifest different powers in each one. Serpent Brothers are dangerous to Pentex, as their high intelligence renders them liable to understand what is really going on. They may realize they are being used and try to seize the reins of power for themselves. Unlike the majority of renegade fomori (these that don't do as they're told), the Brothers have human intelligence and a support system (each other). If they repudiated the Wyrms, what would become of them?)

Shadowfiends

Toby stopped to catch his breath, heaving and puffing as he leaned against the dumpster. He looked around warily, watching for pursuers. None. He calmed down and chuckled to himself. The Monkeywrenchers succeed again, he thought.

He pulled a videotape from his side pouch and examined it. The label read: "O'Tolley's, the Family Place." Toby chuckled again. Yeah, let's see just how many families eat yer Wyrms-tainted food once this gets out! He suddenly froze. What was that noise? He turned slowly around but saw nothing. Just shadows all around him in the alley.

Toby shook his head and walked forward, putting the videotape back in the pouch. He walked right into the silver knife. It sank into his gut and he coughed up a gout of blood. What the hell!! he thought as he hit the ground.

The shadows around him moved and a figure coalesced out of them, clutching the knife now dripping with Toby's blood....

Craits

Backgrounds: Equipment 1-5, Rank 1-3

Powers: (Required) Immunity to the Delirium (1), Shadowplay (4), Shadowwalking (2; see Chameleon Coloration); (Suggested) Foot Pads (1), Gaseous Form (5), Hide of the Wyrn (1-5)

Taints: (Required) Brainwashing (3; loyalty to masters), Breed Prejudice (4)

Description

Image: Shadowfiends always possess a very lithe frame; their bodies are more athletic than muscular. All Shadowfiends have slightly darker skin than they were born with, and completely black eyes.

Genesis: Unlike many fomori, potential Shadowfiends require one thing before undergoing the possession process — acquiescence. Targets who desire this process travel to Washington, D.C. and are met by Iliad agents. The agents take the subject to their laboratory where the subject is given every luxury for the night. After undergoing another interview, the corporation decides if this individual will truly be loyal to the company. If the decision is yes, a serum is injected into the target's skin before he sleeps.

The process is a painful one. The serum allows the Bane, usually a Scrag, Scryer or Cunning Bane, to slowly take over the mind of the target, fusing the Bane's desires and lusts with the target toward one goal — the assassination of "undesirable elements." While undergoing the process, the target feels the sensation of white hot lances searing through his skull, fusing the essence of the Wyrn to his soul. The process is complete when the Bane is fully fused with the target and the target's eyes turn completely black.

History: The 1960s brought many problems for Pentex subsidiaries — not just from the Garou, but from humans also. Many of Pentex's smaller companies came under the scrutiny of such organizations as Greenpeace. Once they discovered some of Pentex's less savory solutions to problems, they cried wolf.

Shadowfiends were created specifically to deal with these minor nuisances. Pentex discovered they could no longer send mindless killers after political and social dissidents, but rather needed a new type of fomor that could be quiet and operate with stealth. After several attempts, the process was perfected, and the Shadowfiends were set loose.

Shadowfiends are used today to assassinate political or social figures who go against Pentex projects, or who learn too much. The Shadowfiends have evolved enough physically and mentally to be able to theoretically kill a Garou if the situation arises.

Roleplaying Hints: You are completely loyal to the Wyrn. You will let nothing short of your own personal death interfere with the completion of your latest assignment. You do not talk very much, and find those who ramble distasteful. Your killing is an art; it is nothing like the horrible slicings of many of the other fomori.

Sicklungs

Craits

Powers: (Required) Noxious Breath (2), Immunity (3; airborne toxins)

Taints: (Required) Breed Prejudice (1), Doomed (1; five years), choose 3 more points of Taints

Description

Image: Sicklungs look just like anyone else. They tend to come from middle to upper income brackets (the program which creates them is a bit steep; see Chapter Four) and dress nicely. They are usually bright, upwardly mobile people who just don't have the willpower to stop smoking. One could be your neighbor — or your wife.

Genesis: Sicklungs are created from participants in Project Iliad's Smoker's Bane program. Banes known as Lunghuggers are introduced into the recipients' bodies through drinking a non-alcoholic toast to their success.

History: The genesis of Sicklungs reaches back several years to the ban on cigarette advertising and stretches to the present as more and more public buildings become smokefree. Furious that her newly planned campaign to introduce Lunghuggers to an unknowing populace through placing them within cigarettes would be jeopardized through lack of advertising and marketing opportunity, Dr. Nicola Tregar determined to have her revenge. Targeting the better-than-thou attitude of nonsmokers, she swore to loose a smokefree lung cancer agent among them. The result was her cultivation of Lunghuggers and the Smoker's Bane program. Her second generation of Sicklungs are just reaching their five-year term limits, but hordes of former smokers are poised to follow in their dying footsteps.

Roleplaying Hints: Life is good. Thanks to that self-help group you joined to stop smoking, you've gained confidence in yourself and taken up light exercise. You enjoy being with people, and it shows in your work. In fact, you got that promotion you wanted. You don't understand it when people say they can't stop smoking. Look at you.



You did it and it was easy. You can't wait to attend your meeting and drink that toast to success each week. Everybody ought to know about this! Well, there is that twinge in your side every now and again, but it's probably nothing.

Sons of Typhon

Traits

Backgrounds: Allies 2 (fellow frat brothers)

Powers: (Suggested) Procreation (4), Regeneration (5)

Taints: (Required) Breed Prejudice (1)

Description

America's college campuses are places for young people to grow and develop, to learn and to transform. The Sons of Typhon are more than happy to help. Come to the pledge party!

The Tau Upsilon Phi fraternity has branches on most major college campuses, and its brothers are well financed by older members of the fraternity. Although preference is given to legacies (sons of members) and to scouts of the Serpent Brotherhood (the ones who haven't sprouted tentacles yet, that is), any young man of good character is welcome to apply. In fact, the bidding process is a careful screening by the most powerful of the brothers in the house, as prospective recruits are scanned to ensure that their souls

have the empty places that the Wyrms loves to fill. Typhon, the demonic Wyrms-beast of Greek mythology, is their patron spirit. The myths describe Typhon as a giant covered with wings and snakes; the wings are his attendant Banes, while his snake heads are the fomori who do his will.

The fraternity hazing is a Wyrms-ritual far too disgusting to describe. Stomach pumps, enema bags, and beer bong full of Bane-ichor all have their place ("Drink this!") and by the end of "Hell Weekend" the pledges are fomori. The transformation process is slow, however, and many beer-sodden, stair-diving, vomit-soaked parties are required to seat the Bane in the pledge's soul. If he withdraws at any time, the process must be restarted. For each time that the pledge becomes unconscious from battering in fights, from drinking or drug use, or from Wyrms rites, the Bane gains Willpower, Rage, and Gnosis. When it achieves full power, the young man is a fomor.

The Banes which attend the hazing rituals are numerous, and so the brothers have a variety of powers. Of course, those who are already fomori will keep what powers they have, but powers such as Procreation and Regeneration make for a real bunch of party animals. A typical Bane will be one of Typhon's Brood (see the Appendix).

Once the first year of fraternity membership is finished, the members are fomori in earnest. Their bent for violence, vandalism and rape is harder to control or hide, and their possession of fomor powers makes them more de-

structive. No one ever notices how few Tau Upsilon brothers graduate, but the brothers know that Magadon Pharmaceuticals, OmniTV and Vesuvius, Inc. have special work-study programs for them....

Throwbacks

*Pulsating steel protrudes from my thighs
She who spreads is she who dies
Long as my arm and five times as thick
You'll die on the end of my iron dick*
— Coven, "Iron Dick"

Traits

Powers: (Required) Enhancement (3), Mega-Strength (3+); (Suggested) Regeneration (5), Savage Genitalia (2), Sense Gaia (2)

Taints: (Required) Derangement (3; misogyny), Mental De-evolution (3+; Mega-Strength)

Description

Image: Hulking muscle-bound prettyboys with perpetual erections. Many seem far more attractive in person than their looks would indicate, but their manners leave a great deal to be desired.

Genesis: These "advanced students" of Dr. Veridian (see Chapter Four) begin as insecure guys who wanted to enhance their manhood. Dr. Veridian's Bane-poisons and their own frustrations bring out all the worst male tendencies and exaggerate them to a homicidal degree. Vanity, violence, pointless anger and sexual aggression warp these poor guys into virtual cavemen who care for nothing but fighting, fucking and pumping steel.

The mutations begin with strong pheromone emanations and intense muscular growth. Mood swings accompany the change. As the possession digresses, the fomori's weirder powers manifest. Extreme cases grow massive phalli, gigantic muscles and a rabid hatred of women (an unconscious rebellion against Gaia). These types rape and kill without remorse. Their tempers and criminal behavior often lead them to seek jobs at Pentex subsidiaries, where many work as bodyguards, spies and PRD specialists. Along the way, Throwbacks cause a lot of misery. Though many of these fomori come in pretty packages, those who stray too close to them get hurt. Badly.

History: Very little as of yet — Dr. Veridian's miracle workout program has been on the market for less than three years, and has just picked up steam in the last 15 months or so. Comparatively few advanced Throwback mutations exist; most are somewhere along the line, working their way into full-blown fomorhood.

Roleplaying Hints: Think of every rotten jock you're ever known; now act that way.

Fomorach

The light that burns twice as bright burns half as long.
— Tyrell, from the film *Blademanner*

Although fomori on the whole are not the most illustrious of beings, they are at least better off than their tainted counterparts, known to Iliad as fomorach. Twisted fomori so degenerate that they are good for little but recycling, fomorach provide the raw material for Pentex's pet projects and Iliad's horrifying genetic experiments. Not content with the uncontrolled vagaries of fomorach production, Iliad's Section C scientists seek, but have not yet found, a stable process through which they may create these sad products of the Wyrms' sick humor.

Genesis: The Recycling Program

Eight years ago, Iliad discovered that a small but increasing number of humans in their programs were mutating into horribly deformed but very "talented" fomori. At first they were deemed unacceptable; while powerful, they nevertheless had extremely brief lifespans — a day to a week after their transformations at most — and they were difficult to control. Because of these first failures, a number of Iliad scientists were transformed into fomori as punishment for wasting Banes, and the rest were set to the task of discovering why this was happening and whether or not these creatures could somehow be used.

Threatened with a fate similar to that of their colleagues, Iliad's remaining scientists quickly made breakthroughs. They discovered that fomori candidates with the greatest psychological flaws attracted the most powerful Banes. These Banes, in turn, both corrupted and empowered them beyond the levels of average fomori. And, while their lifespans approximated those of gnats, they were still viable resources even after their deaths. Iliad could use the substances into which they degenerated, depending upon breed, for projects as various as fomori creation and control, polluted materials for oceanic dumping sites, building components at construction sites, and durable parts for high-tech products. The possibilities so intrigued Iliad that it quickly instituted the Recycling Program, a program intended to discover and implement new ways of using "expired" fomorach.

Among the current uses of fomorach, fomori creation and control is one of the most popular; Iliad has even devoted a department of the same name to it, with an attendant staff. The Creation and Control Department has discovered a number of things:

- Fomorach can be converted into a "medicine" called Fomorol and injected into fomori to temporarily boost their powers. Fomorol, however, is highly addictive and thus Iliad uses the promise of Fomorol injections to control

addicted fomori's behavior. It is speculated that prolonged addiction permanently boosts fomori powers, but it also shortens their lifespan and/or horribly mutates them.

- When used on humans, Fomorol catalyzes their metamorphosis into fomori. In this manner, Fomorol may be added to recruitment program products to create fomori quickly ("Sure, that diet chocolate malt tastes funny, but it'll produce a whole new you!").

- Project Iliad now has the Fomorach Generation Program (FGP) firmly in place, with Pentex's approval to intentionally create fomorach. While Iliad's scientists have made some progress in determining how to tip the balance of the fomori creation process in favor of fomorach production, the process is still largely random. These scientists speculate that the Wyld may play an integral part in "polluting" the transformation process, unpredictably boosting and diminishing base fomori characteristics, sometimes resulting in these genetic freaks. While still largely unreliable, FGP has nevertheless greatly benefited Iliad and Pentex, which employ the short-lived fomorach as "shock troops" as needed. While alive, fomorach form elite troops of such raw power that they are often capable of standing against a caern of Garou; when dead, fomorach are equally useful as raw sources of Fomorol and other materials, whereas their fomori counterparts are generally too impotent to be used in similar fashion. Iliad uses fomori to gather up fomorach remains and transport them to the labs where scientists "recycle" them into Fomorol and other substances that later serve as some of the Wyrm's most effective pollutants and carcinogens.

Breeds

Additional duties of Iliad's Recycling Program scientists include research and implementation of other applications for expired fomorach. These scientists have discovered some interesting trends concerning breed groups, fomorach generation, and Fomorol. Just as there are breeds of fomori, there seem to be breeds of fomorach. These include the Fomorols, the Colliquators, and the Renitents.

Fomorols

Powers: (Suggested) Fungal Touch (4), Infectious Touch (5), Poison Tumors (3), Immunity (5; poisons)

Taints: (Required) Breed Prejudice (3), Derangement (3; create one), Doomed (4-5)

Flaw: Deformity

Named after the drug they produce, the Fomorols are those fomorach whose bodies are best suited to produce the drug after death. Generally, this group includes fomorach that are highly toxicogenic (creating toxic molds, venoms, proteins, carcinogens, and so forth), leprous, and/or who carry air- or water-borne wasting diseases.

Colliquators

Powers: (Suggested) Gaseous Form (5), Numbing (3), Plasmic Form (5), Slobber Snout (3)

Taints: (Required) Breed Prejudice (3), Derangement (3; create one), Doomed (4-5)

Flaw: Deformity

The Colliquators, a medical term for those fomorach whose bodies become soluble in water or other liquid substances, are used to pollute oceans, rivers, streams, and other bodies of water. This group tends to include fomorach that are goopy, fluid, viscous, slimy, pulpy or purulent.

Renitents

Powers: (Suggested) Claws/Fangs (3+), Extra Limbs (3+), Hide of the Wyrm (1-5), Mega-Strength (3+), Regeneration (5)

Taints: (Required) Breed Prejudice (3), Derangement (3; create one), Doomed (4-5)

Flaw: Deformity

The Renitents are those Fomorachs whose powers leave them in a solid state. Generally, their powers center around their physical enhancements. After death, Renitents are usually used to create structures or high-tech products — some to create the actual concrete or steel used to support a building, others to create security systems or anti-Garou weapons. It is whispered that, even after death, these structures retain some form of malevolent sentience, but none of Iliad's scientists care to pursue this angle for evidence.

While these breeds are particularly suited for certain tasks, they may be used for any of them. For instance, with some extra preparation, a Colliquator can be used to create Fomorol, or a Renitent may be used to pollute a pond.

Live fomorach may be used to create potent batches of Fomorol, called Alpha-Fomorol. Thus far, however, injections of Alpha-Fomorol have instantly killed fomori and humans. Also, the process used to create Fomorol from live fomorach is extremely unpleasant and usually results in a dead fomorach or a dead scientist or both. Alpha-Fomorol injections into fomorach are currently being tested. On the other hand, Alpha-Fomorol is useful in creating degenerate Garou and/or severely injuring healthy Garou (two non-soakable aggravated wounds per injection).

Based on the evidence they have gathered, some of Iliad's top-ranking Recycling Program scientists hypothesize that the more degenerate fomorach — degenerate, that is, even for fomorach — become Banes when they die. These fomorach-Banes are attracted to and especially well-suited for creating new fomorach. With each new generation, approximately one percent become Banes. Iliad's scientists speculate that, given this increase in fomorach-Banes, the overall strength and power of

fomorach, and the fomori to whom they are fed, is increasing. They estimate that in seventy-five years, all else being equal, fomorach will outnumber fomori two to one.

Playing a Fomorach

Only humans with severe psychological flaws may be transformed into fomorach. Because of their inherent instability, Pentex wants to ensure fomorach remain silent according to the tenets of the Omega Plan. If the experiment gets out of hand, it will not hesitate to dispose of the fomorach; thus, it hardly needs to be said that individuals who buck Project Iliad's authority in the short term are immediately slain.

After saving them from their wards (see below), Iliad informs all fomorach of their looming mortality, then promises them immortality in exchange for loyalty. For characters, this threat, as well as Iliad's promise of immortality, should throw into even greater relief their monstrous struggle for life, health, and normality.

Once entirely Iliad's project, recently fomorach have been springing up outside of Iliad's laboratories, in small towns and backward communities. These uncontrolled fomorach are targets for capture or unrelenting extermination. With the Storyteller's permission, you have the choice of playing a fomorach from Iliad's labs (who have longer lifespans, such as they are) or from these villages (who are unlikely to survive for more than one day). Although village fomorach are not long for this world, at least they have some freedom and a chance to organize others of their ilk against the forces of Pentex (even so, they are not likely to last long).

Once you have determined which type of fomorach you would like to play (Iliad or Village), create your character. All fomorach characters have two or more visible and rather disgusting physical deformities and at least one major psychological flaw. They must take the Flaw: Deformity and the Taint: Doomed (either 4 or 5 points).

Fomorach Preludes

The metamorphosis itself differs depending on whether or not you are an Iliad or a Villager. Many Iliad fomorach enter Project Iliad-run mental hospitals and rehabilitation programs as humans and exit as fomori or fomorach. Others are taken from among the unstable homeless, the drug addicts, and underage correction institutes (Iliad scientists favor the moldable minds of the young). For a month, your wards—unbeknownst to you, Iliad scientists—inject you with Fomorol until you start to feel yourself changing. At this point, your wards move you to a high-security pen where you are strapped down and left to complete your transformation in utter darkness. If not already there, many humans cross the threshold into insanity at this point. You are given no one to talk to

(assuming you can still talk) and no one to listen to. Your food is laced with trace amounts of Fomorol and only comes once a day. The darkness keeps you wondering about the extent of your change (for instance, some fomorach feel sores developing on their bodies, but cannot see them, which exacerbates the growing apprehension). The anxiety of not knowing what is happening to your body as it mutates, coupled with the stress of your own innate psychological flaws, becomes overwhelming and eventually you crack. Typically, Project Iliad sends some fomori to help you "escape" from this nightmare, thereby winning your trust and perhaps your loyalty, and the game begins.

While fomorach Villagers are not quite as debilitatingly insane, they nevertheless have serious psychological flaws. As a Villager, you may come from a rural Lovecraftian town where a sort of spiritual malady has set in, making it a playground for Banes. Or you may be a city person addicted to some black-market drug (actually Fomorol) which makes you feel powerful. Or perhaps you're a suicidal upper-class suburban housewife with a penchant for attracting Banes. Whatever your background, when you find yourself changing, you convince yourself it's for the good; like Seth Brundle in *The Fly*, you feel energetic, alive, better than you've felt in years. But then you start oozing, or sprouting wiry hair, or growing a long, horned proboscis from your hip, and you begin to wonder if everything is as OK as it seemed....

Obviously, fomorach are not meant to be played as characters for lengthy chronicles. However, they make ideal one-shots and are great if used for a brief, intense dip into the real horror behind the concept of fomori.

Few fomorach have heard of Garou. Since you'll be living for only a few weeks or months at the most, you'll probably only hear of them when you meet them. You'll be told to guard some Pentex outpost or scout the forest nearby, and then you'll find out pretty quickly....

Do any fomorach live more than six months? A very few, but because of the nature of their powers, surviving fomorach mutate once a week for the rest of their lives, picking up new diseases or painful alterations of their body's unnatural structure. If they live, they can become more powerful than even Garou, but they must endure extreme pain and discomfort every waking moment.

The oldest fomorach on record, from its date of first full metamorphosis, has lived for two years. When not engaged in Iliad projects, it is kept in a cryogenic tank to prevent it from ending its agony by ripping itself apart with its hooked stumps. When taken out, it is pumped with morphine and set loose as a one-"person" army. At least twenty fomorach are required to get it back into the cryogenic tank each time. They are then used to create more Fomorol....




Chapter Three: Supernatural Fomori

Ugliness is not a power.

— Rex, "After Xavier: The Age of Apocalypse" in *Weapon X*

As horrific as normal (normal!?) fomori may be, they can't hold a candle to the utter repulsiveness and power of the supernatural creatures who choose to join or are forced into servitude by Banes. Vampires, Garou, changelings, mages, psychics and mummies may all be Bane-ridden. Wraiths may

not, as they have no corporeal bodies to serve as hosts for these Wyrm-corrupted spirits. Instead, wraiths may at times manifest within a host body, as may Spectres. This is not the same as Bane possession, and is not covered here.



Supernatural Character Creation

Supernatural fomori characters begin with whatever character creation process their particular game entails. Thus, vampires are created and receive their regular Disciplines according to clan, and their other attributes (Blood Pool, Virtues, etc.) based on their generation. Garou receive their Gifts, changelings select Arts and Realms, mages choose their magical Spheres, psychics buy Numina and mummies generate their Sekhem. Everything is created as if the character were going to be a normal member of her race. Becoming fomori is all in the Powers and Taints (and the prelude).

Delirium Immunity

A Power which almost all supernatural fomori possess without having to pay for it is Immunity to the Delirium. They are immune by virtue of being supernatural, and they don't lose it when they change into fomori. The exception to this is the psychic character. Psychics must have at least three dots in any one Numina in order to be immune to the Delirium. Otherwise, they must pay for the Power just like all other fomori.

Powers and Taints

Once the character has been created, the Storyteller and the player should decide together what Powers and Taints the individual will have. Better still, the player should step aside and let the Storyteller get really creative. Not all fomori should be aware of every power they may manifest in a stress situation. Nor should they necessarily have a clue what the drawbacks are to those wondrous new powers they've acquired through dealing with the Wyrn — until it's too late. You asked for it, powermonger. These are bought with a purchase system like that used to gain Merits and Flaws. Powers are purchased by taking Taints to offset them. Funny how that old catch-22 sneaks up on fomori, isn't it?

Of course, the character is free to take regular Merits and Flaws as well (go ahead, the more the merrier), but none may be used to offset or control any Powers or Taints the character takes. Take as many as you want (hey, that's the cool part about being supernatural), but remember, the more Powers you want, the more Taints you have to take. Eventually, you have so many Taints, you're non-viable for any length of time. Poof. Your head falls off when you stand up. Time to create another character. How about a reasonable one this time?

How and Why

When all has been decided, Storyteller and player should generate a prelude which includes the circumstances under which the character became a fomori. In general, it is far more difficult for a Bane to possess a supernatural individual, as most of them have ways to fight off such an invasion. Garou can step sideways to battle Banes in the Umbra, while mages with the Spirit Sphere might hold Banes at bay or dismiss them. Mummies have several parts to their souls and are thus quite difficult to best in a spiritual battle, and psychics can often protect themselves from spiritual assaults. Most vampires have no such protections. Though they are ostensibly helpless to prevent Banes from possessing them, they have their own method of dealing with it.

Banes that try to possess unwilling supernatural hosts must therefore make a successful Gnosis roll versus the prospective host's Willpower +2 to attempt the takeover. If the Bane wins, it then must spend 24 hours undisturbed while it manifests inside the host. If this is successful, the Bane permanently expends a point of Willpower to solidify its hold on the victim. This permanently lowers the resulting fomori's Willpower as well. Because so many supernatural entities are able to fight back, most Banes that attempt such possessions do so under the guardianship of others of their kind who fight for them and try to keep the victim from throwing off the possessor's influence.

If the character is an unwilling host, some thought may be given to how he might be freed of the Bane — usually an impossibility. Death is always an option, but immersion in the Silver Lake (for Garou) or committing suicide (for changelings) before your faerie nature is utterly destroyed so that your faerie soul may return in a clean new human body are also options. Kindred might be able to burn out the Bane if they can withstand the sun's burning rays for a few minutes, and mummies might be able to foist the Bane off on their Ka, effectively ceasing to be mummies, but living out a final, mortal lifespan.

Willingly surrendering is another story altogether. If the Bane was welcomed in by the host, regardless of the reason, it is utterly impossible for the Wyrn-spirit to be removed from the creature short of killing both host and Bane. The creature has effectively joined together with the Bane to become something completely new: a supernatural fomori.

Though theoretically it is possible for each of the supernatural hosts detailed below to be possessed by any sort of Bane which can corrupt a human carrier, in practice, certain types of Banes tend to manifest within each type. Specific Banes are detailed in the Appendix and are the types most likely to succeed in possessing a supernatural character. Each creates a fomori breed with specific Powers and Taints characteristic of that breed. This is by no means an exhaustive list. Feel free to tweak things as much as you like to create the character you want. Go ahead, we dare you.

Vampire Fomori

Cannibalistic depravity

Bereft of all humanity

A fitting feast of abject insanity

A dark curtain before the last calamity

— Gwar, "Crack in the Egg"

Garou believe that vampires are creatures of the Wyrn anyway, so why not go whole hog? Vampires should provide the easiest targets for Bane possession as many are themselves corrupt. They're arrogant. They've beaten death and established themselves at the top of the food chain; they're faster and stronger than humans, can compel obedience from lesser beings, and can change into bats or wisps of smoke at will. They control the police and the press, hold court among the literati and artists of their cities, and oversee vast fortunes. If she acquires an enemy, a vampire may destroy her opponent — or simply outlive him. Why should vampires believe that they won't have the upper hand against Banes?

Whether it is this belief or the blood of Caine which protects them, most vampires surprise the hell out of a Bane that manages to possess them. Much like the roach motel, Banes go in, but they can't get out. Nor are they the ones in control. A Bane that successfully possesses a vampire finds itself trapped in a relationship in which its host retains her own mind. The vampire, not the Bane, is the senior partner in the arrangement. When they discover this, many Banes seek to flee the flesh of the undead, and that's when they discover that they are trapped inside — permanently. Welcome to your own nightmare, Bane buddy. For this reason, vampiric fomori are extremely rare. Only the boldest and baddest or the clueless losers of the Bane world seek to possess vampires.

Two Bane breeds which do not have such difficulties with Kindred are Blood Banes and Psychomachiae. They take no penalties when attempting to possess vampiric targets. Because of their respective connections to blood and frenzy, these Banes are able to best their hosts and take control. Even then, vampires maintain partial control over their own minds, at least part of the time.

Some Kindred actively welcome Banes. Whether tempted through Project Iliad or weird rituals gone awry, these vampires seek easy power. While Sabbat might seem to be the perfect hosts, it's actually the independents and the Camarilla Kindred who most often fall prey to Banes as they seek some newer, greater weapon to help them in the Jihad and in their ongoing political machinations. Those who are too smart to be caught committing diablerie (since it shows up in your aura) are actually the most likely to succumb to Bane temptation.

Project Iliad, under the watchful eye of Harold Zettler, the Malkavian *antiribi* board member of Pentex, has recently begun actively recruiting Camarilla Kindred for experimentation in creating supernatural fomori. Their most successful bonding to date has created a being they call a "Blood Hound."

Blood Hound Powers

• **Blood Sniffing (2 pts)** — This power allows the fomor to track anyone she has come within 50 feet of within the last 24 hours. Essentially, she can return to the place where the person (or creature) to be tracked was and can use her recollection of that individual's blood scent to track him. Even if the person got into a car and drove off, the fomor can accurately follow him thanks to her attunement to his blood. If the quarry is not found within 24 hours, the scent fades away.

Like any bloodhound, however, a vampiric fomor with this Power is very susceptible to olfactory overload. Red pepper, really stinky fish, and such things which cross the trail the fomor is following tend to overwhelm the blood scent, causing fits of sneezing and great discomfort for the next half hour. The trail may be picked back up after that time if 24 hours have not elapsed. Additionally, the evocative smell of the blood being followed blots out blood which is closer to the fomor. She can not notice any other blood during the time she is actively hunting her first quarry, and thus she may not hunt or drink other blood. This could lead to a frenzy if the fomori starts on the trail hungry.

System: The fomor doesn't need to roll to activate this Power; once purchased, it is a natural ability. However, Perception + Alertness rolls may be required to distinguish the quarry's blood from other smells in the area. Only one target may be hunted at a time. The character can smell the scent from 20 yards away. If more than 24 hours have elapsed since the scent was left, this power is useless.

• **Blood Vomit (4 pts)** — This Power is exactly what it sounds like. The vampiric fomor may elect to vomit up a gout of blood (equivalent to one Blood Point) at a target no more than two yards in front of her. The regurgitated blood has been changed by the fomor's Wyrn-tainted body and is now more like napalm or liquid fire than mere blood.

System: The fomor spends one Blood Point and rolls Dexterity + Athletics to aim the blood spray. The target must be within two yards of the fomor (and may attempt to dodge). If the attack is successful, the target receives two levels of aggravated damage which cannot be soaked (except by Fortitude). This power may be used as many times as the fomor chooses, so long as she has the blood to fuel it. Blood drained from a target takes at least one turn before it can be vomited up.

Taint

• **Diseased Blood (4 pts)** — The vampiric fomor suffers through recurring cycles of illness from the diseases carried within her blood. She may experience chills, raging fever, headaches, nausea, grinding pain or terrible weakness. She breaks out in spots, rashes or ulcerations, or develops Kaposi's sarcoma, which is characterized by malignant bluish-red skin tumors. Normal animals tend to shy away from her (even if she has Animal Ken), sensing the rottenness of her blood. Additionally, those she feeds from have a 90% chance of becoming infected by some sort of wasting disease such as AIDS.

Imagine how much fun it is for her to bite and feed from a werewolf. Yes, even those mangy curs can be infected by this brand new, supernaturally-incubated disease. Yum. If those affected are the vampire's regular herd, feeding from them after she has infected them causes a recurrence of the disease within her.

System: Due to the tremendous stress this disease creates, a Blood Hound loses a dot from Strength and Stamina and one Willpower point every month. This can be offset by a special treatment, requiring a complete blood transfusion vampire-style (via mouth after draining), available from Project Iliad. Naturally, Harold Zettler's blood is used as the base for the treatment, meaning those vampires who sought greater power by becoming fomori have instead become Blood Bound to the Malkavian *antitribu* and must turn to him to preserve their unives.

Blood Hounds

Traits

Powers: (Required) Blood Sniffing (2), Blood Vomit (4)

Taints: (Required) Breed Prejudice (2), Diseased Blood (4)

Description

Image: Blood Hounds may appear as normal humans (if the vampire possesses the Merit: Baby Face), or they may seem to be terribly ill, with lesions and obvious sores spattered across their skin. Since the disease runs in cycles, the vampiric form may seem fine one night, but look like a bubonic plague victim by the next night. Blood Hound breath is incredibly foul, as though the character had been swishing decaying blood around in her mouth.

Genesis: Blood Hounds are created when a Blood Bane, a spirit which serves the Eater-of-Souls, possesses a vampire. These Banes are highly attracted to Kindred, entering into the vampire's bloodstream and infecting her with a variety of blood-borne diseases. On the good side, merging with the Bane gives the vampire an extra three points in her Blood Pool and allows her to use one extra Blood Point per turn. It also provides her with the Powers: Blood Sniffing and Blood Vomit (see sidebar). Other Powers are also possible, but vary according to the individual.

History: Blood Hounds have only been around for a short time. A brainchild of Harold Zettler, the parent program is intended to force Blood Bonds upon Camarilla Kindred and place them into positions of trust within that society. Since the fomori created by Zettler can pass on their diseases to other supernatural creatures, Zettler hopes they will weaken both the Camarilla and the Garou. Additionally, their ability to follow a blood trail makes them perfect "hounds" for leading assassins to the lairs of those they track. The program is still in the experimental stage; only a few Kindred have been changed as yet.

Roleplaying Hints: You don't feel very good. This was supposed to make you powerful and intimidating; instead, you feel wretched. In between bouts of nausea and futile attempts to cover those disgusting sores all over your face, you manage to feed and go about your business. The blood vomit deal is pretty cool, and you like having extra blood, just like an elder. Nobody better mess with you (while you're feeling healthy).

Psychomachiae and the Single Vampire

Psychomachiae have a field day with vampires, usually catching them by surprise and slipping in unnoticed during a frenzy. They roil about, causing the new fomori to engage in wild killing sprees (Masquerade? What Mas-



querade?) characterized by the most sickening violence and mutilations imaginable, interspersed with periods of profound melancholy paranoia. Many vampires **never** know they've been turned into fomori; most don't remember what they do while under the urging of the Psychomachia. If not caught by vampire hunters or eradicated in a Blood Hunt, the fomor eventually succumbs to utter madness. Though such fomori often exhibit incredible cunning and cruelty, once they have lost touch with reality, they usually don't last long. Those who do survive are extremely dangerous opponents. Vampiric fomori created from Psychomachiae can have just about any combination of Powers so long as they are offset by Taints which cause the vampire to experience killing rages and take insane actions (such as a Derangement).

All vampires suffer mental derangement to some degree when possessed. Their psyches cannot adjust to playing second fiddle to a Bane. Eventually, if nothing else gets the vampiric fomor, she will drift further and further into insanity. Many fall prey to catatonia and die when the sun rises upon them; others go out in a killing frenzy. Some become so paranoid they lock themselves away, afraid to venture out even for blood, and enter torpor. Woe to the poor slob that accidentally wakes them up.

Garou Fomori

One of the most horrendous fates most Garou can imagine is to be possessed by a Bane. Many otherwise brave and hardy heroes of Gaia tremble at the thought of becoming Wyrn-tainted, and for this reason, they fear Blights and Hellholes as they fear nothing else. For their part, Banes delight in overcoming and corrupting Gaia's defenders, and many hold contests to see which Bane is powerful or clever enough to ride a Garou. Because Banes and Garou are anathema to one another, the new fomor is at war with himself. There is a constant struggle between the Bane portion of the fomor and his Garou side. The more he struggles, however, the greater a Garou's Rage becomes and the less able he is to control his Gifts.

The spirits who teach Gifts to the Garou will not teach those who are Wyrn-tainted and refuse to approach them if summoned. Garou fomori can learn no other Gifts except those known to the Black Spiral Dancers. If Gifts or rites are used to summon spirits, only Banes appear. Of course, the new fomor does gain two permanent points of Rage immediately (unless this would push him above ten points).

Anyone who uses Sense Wyrn on the corrupted Garou can tell that the character is Wyrn-tainted unless the fomor has the power Deception, which hides his true nature under a false aura — and very few Garou fomori have access to this potent power. Even with Deception, the fomor's actions will eventually give him away. The

spiritual rot within can only be hidden so long before it bursts forth, and the radical personality change which accompanies a Garou's transformation into a fomor will certainly cause suspicion even after a check for Wyrn-taint shows no problem. This assumes, of course, that the fomor even remains with his pack.

Garou are hardly helpless when it comes to fighting off an attacking Bane. With their knowledge of Banes and the ability to step sideways into the Umbra, Garou have an advantage neither mortals, nor most supernaturals have — battling Banes on their home turf, where they can be destroyed. Rather than waiting helplessly for the possession to take effect, Garou may directly attempt to kill their would-be possessors. The difficulty arises when the invading Bane brings along several dozen friends to keep the Garou occupied while it slips in and starts rearranging the werewolf's mental furniture.

Then there are the foolish Garou, who are twisted by jealousy or hatred of a pack member or angry at their lack of promotion to higher ranks or simply not wise enough to earn a higher place in the sept. These Garou sometimes betray Gaia and their sept, inviting the Wyrn to enter in exchange for the power they think will enable them to rule. Banes of Corruption eat these guys for lunch, and the Garou realizes only when it's too late that he has just permitted another to master him — an unclean alien spirit that now controls and manipulates him in the service of the Wyrn. Eventually, the struggle against the Bane's primacy, the guilt which inevitably surfaces as the Garou realizes what he's done, and the savagery of the frenzy that the fomor repeatedly falls into take their toll. The once-strong body of the Garou fomor becomes riddled with corruption, his thoughts muddled and incoherent. If his former packmates don't rip his throat out for him, one of his newfound friends among the Black Spiral Dancers probably will. Should no one care enough, he'll soon die anyway from the cancers infecting his body and brain, and he doesn't go back to Gaia — in fact, sometimes he gets back up and goes on even after he's dead and falling apart. Hey, don't say we didn't warn you.

Like vampires, almost any type of Bane may attempt to possess Garou, but only a few are particularly adept at it.

Howling Shamblers

Traits

Talents: Expression (howling) 5, Intimidation 3

Powers: (Required) Howls of Horror (3), Numbing (3), Sense Gaia (2), Scent of the Wylde (5), Shambling (6; see sidebar)

Taint: (Required) Breed Prejudice (2), Doomed (4; 6 months), The Fading (5), Limited Mobility (2), Rotting (6)

Howling Shambler Powers

• **Howls of Horror (3 pts)** — Howling Shamblers can emit a horrible cry which invokes different reactions from other werewolves depending on the pitch and timbre of the howl. A corruption of the howls which Garou use for communication, these cries are used as lures and for psychological warfare.

The howl can cause whomever hears it (except for agents of the Wyrn) to become paralyzed with confusion for one turn. They can take no actions, not even to flee, fight or defend themselves. The fomor may instead emit the howl of fear, causing non-Wyrn creatures who hear it to flee in terror.

System: The fomor spends one Willpower and rolls Manipulation + Expression (difficulty 7). To mimic a particular Garou howl (i.e., the Call for Succor), the fomor must make a Intelligence + Rituals roll (difficulty 7). Otherwise, the Garou who respond may be suspicious and wary of a trap.

• **Shambling (6 pts)** — When a Howling Shambler dies, whether from his own internal corruption or from injuries received, he remains down for only one turn. Then he climbs back to his feet, rotting, dripping blood and slime, the epitome of corruption, and resumes his last task. If he was fighting, for example, he continues as though he never died, howling ghoulishly and moving on to the next opponent and the next until there are no opponents left. He then moves off in search of new victims, killing anyone who gets in his way and dining on their flesh, if possible. If he was engaged in some mundane activity such as fixing dinner, he goes through the motions of cooking and eating, then begins a search for Garou to fight, howling challenges as he goes. Naturally, as his body is dead, he is only able to shamble along at half his normal speed. This allows many potential victims to escape simply by running away. Of course, sooner or later, they'll have to sleep...

The body is not preserved from the ravages of death; it oozes pus and bile and cancerous-looking sores develop on it. Blowflies may take up residence in the dead flesh. Eventually, the body decays to the point where it can no longer remain animate. Before that point, only fire or acid can stop the rotting fomor. Lost arms and legs continue to crawl alongside and attack with the rest of the body, and lost heads roll along trying to fasten their teeth into anything that moves.

System: The fomor spends all but one of his remaining Willpower points at the moment of death. One turn later, she will rise again.

Taints

The less attractive part of being a Howling Shambler should be obvious. They must purchase the Taints: Doomed (within six months, they get pretty ripe), Limited Mobility (dead folks can't run too fast), Rotting (hey, they're dead!) and The Fading (their own howls drive them mad). In effect, the Bane so corrupts the Garou that his insides are eaten away by cancers and his brain is turned to jelly by the mental tortures he goes through, knowing that he's either willingly surrendered himself or been taken over by one of those who destroyed the White Howlers. If that were not enough, his own incessant howling shatters his nerves, making him susceptible to insane rages.

Description

Image: One type of Howling Shambler looks like the sort of crazy person your mother warned you about. Insanity shines in their eyes and is painted across their faces, their hair is matted and filthy, and their clothes grimy and ripped. Another type seems perfectly normal. In Crinos form, all Shamblers look like bedraggled metis. Their fur is a sickly greenish-gray, their eyes glow with a feral, crazed light, and they howl incessantly.

When Howling Shamblers are killed, they reanimate the next turn, wounds gaping, and resume the activity in which they were engaged at the time of their death (usually combat). Chopping pieces off a "dead" Shambler is a bad idea; this won't stop the Shambler, since the pieces just attack independently. Only immersion in acid or being consumed by fire will stop the Shambler (and parts thereof). Once killed, the Shambler's body goes through the inevitable decaying process and becomes more and more hideous as time passes. Wounds ooze pus, greenish bile drips from the creature's lips, and the smell is gut-wrenching.

True to their name, once slain, the creature can only shamble along with a semblance of life. If they have not been destroyed before then, within six months the body is so far gone that it falls apart and decays into a puddle of ooze. New Howling Insanities are spawned in such ooze.

Genesis: One particular breed of Bane makes corrupting Garou their life's work. Many of these work alongside Black Spiral Dancers, some serve more powerful Banes, and not a few of them exist to merge with Garou to create fomori. They are known as Howling Insanities, and they take no penalties when attempting to possess Garou. Werewolves who are successfully possessed by Howling Insanities become Howling Shamblers.

History: Howling Insanities have existed for a very long time. These crazed Banes were among those who helped to destroy the White Howlers long ago. Hoping to create more Black Spiral Dancers, the Insanities began trying to merge with normal Garou. The few successes they achieved were so effective in creating horror among other Garou that Project Iliad stepped in and standardized the process so the results would be predictable in each fomor. The few



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Howling Shamblers which Project Iliad have field tested bested the Garou pups they were sent to kill. Plans are underway to bring enough to take over whole caerns.

Roleplaying Notes: Uh, the Garou gotta die. The nice doc said so. Ahrooo! They will kill you if they can. Ahrooo! So you gotta get them first. Ahrooooooo!

If you already died, shamble a lot and don't forget to howl.

Mage Fomori

Mages are more likely to fall to Banes due to ill-advised journeys into blighted areas of the Umbra than other supernatural types. Those who seek power or new knowledge may bargain with Banes, little realizing what they are actually throwing away. In some cases, Banes may hide their true natures, fooling unwary mages into believing they are good spirits willing to teach the mage new Spheres of magick or impart information that the mage may use to rise in power. Some simply befriend the mystick one, perhaps guarding her from harm while she travels in the Umbral realms, only to attack when the mage lets her guard down. Other practitioners may invite the Bane in, thinking that they can control it with arcane rituals, forgetting that once inside, the spirit is no longer a Bane but part of a new being in which the mage has a vested interest.

Dancing on thin ice to the tune of a new piper might even be exciting for awhile, and those Banes who inhabit mages tend to let the mage have a lot of control and

leeway. At first. Long enough to commit herself and discover just what kind of bargain she's made. Once she accepts the powers the Bane grants, the mage has doomed herself to an ever-deepening downward spiral.

For every three points worth of Powers the mage purchases, she loses one point of Arete. Rather than gaining wondrous new powers to add to those she already had, she sacrifices part of her ability to use magick. Since a mage's access to higher levels of magick is limited by her Arete, she drops whatever levels she had gained as a result of her former Arete. For example, if the mage had an Arete of three and could therefore gain up to three levels in her magickal Spheres, when she loses a point of Arete, her access to those third levels of the Spheres disappears. In effect, she has stripped herself of the higher levels of knowledge and attunement to her Avatar which allowed her to use magick to change the world and replaced it with a few, limited parlor tricks. That those tricks bring with them some fairly hefty drawbacks merely compounds the problem.

Whenever the mage realizes that her magick is dying, she usually grasps frantically at anything that might restore her waning power. Guess what's available? More fomori Powers! Of course, if she acquires three more points worth, down goes the Arete again. Eventually, the Bane aspect gains ascendancy, corrupting her Avatar completely. Even if she manages to get back on the cosmic wheel and try again (not terribly likely), her Avatar may

still be corrupted in her next lifetime, or it might have been damaged enough that she can never use magick again.

In addition to her other problems, a mage fomor sticks out like a Nephandus at a church social. Other mages can sense something wrong with her and a look at her Avatar reveals it to be covered in suppurating wounds. Every magical working she attempts has a chance of attracting Paradox as if it were viewed by a nonAwakened mortal, as the mage herself is an insult to the natural order of things. Lucky girl, at least she has a chance of making a new start next time, however slim.

Changeling Fomori

Changelings who are in their mortal guise, particularly those who have fallen to Banality and temporarily forgotten their faerie selves, are highly susceptible to possession by Banes. Those who are in their faerie aspects at the time of the attempted possession are more protected and may try to call upon their Glamour to shield themselves. Should they fail to hold off the possession, they may make one attempt at rolling their Glamour against the Bane's Willpower to expel the Bane before it merges with them. If this is unsuccessful, they have become merged and are now fomori.

Changelings who become fomori are completely lost. The transformation utterly destroys their immortal faerie soul, rendering them wholly mundane and Banal. This is a gradual process, taking several months. Though they retain their faerie Glamour, they become more and more deadly to other changelings, as they exude both Banality and corruption wherever they go. Changeling fomori retain (or in some cases, gain) a compelling beauty, but it's like covering a cesspool with a fine oriental carpet; the rot inside seeps through everything they do. When they at last succumb to their Taints or die in battle, they die forever, their faerie souls irretrievably lost.

Psychic Fomori

There have long been horror stories about mediums who opened themselves to spirit guides only to find themselves possessed by malevolent entities. Psychics are, by their very nature, susceptible to possession because they must open their minds in order to utilize their powers. That's like hanging out a vacancy sign for Banes. Many never even realize that they've been invaded, attributing

their strange new emotions and powers to a broadening of their own psychic abilities. Those who know suffer terribly if they try to fight, while those who embrace their new identities often accept the Bane's tutelage and convince themselves that they are far too important to be allowed to go mad or perish in some minor engagement with the Wyrms' enemies. And they do profit. Bane possession seems to enhance psychic powers, giving the psychic one extra dot in his primary psychic ability (or providing him with one dot in a second ability if his primary one is already at level five). Whether they are in the know or not, psychic fomori eventually burn out; most end their lives through suicide.

Project Aeneid

Pentex has recently begun a new project which combines Project Iliad with Project Odyssey (their psychic program). In Project Aeneid, they have exposed psychics to Bane possession in order to create psychic fomori. Thus far, they have had their best success with Mind Feeders, who combine with psychics to produce fomori known as Brain Eaters (see Chapter Two).

Bane Mummies

Created through a corrupted ritual formulated in ancient Egypt, there are only seven known Bane Mummies in existence. Set created the Bane Mummies and named each one. They exist to serve him and to assist in his eventual return. It is possible that suitable candidates might be found to become Bane Mummies and that the ritual might be rediscovered. If the character were willing to die, trusting that the ritual would be performed accurately and that her body would be preserved correctly, a new Bane Mummy could be created. She would of necessity be weaker than her brethren and would have to seek them out and petition them to teach her their magics, as she would have no knowledge of such nor any other way of acquiring it. Assuming that they saw the advantage in having another servant of Set, they might teach her some minor workings. Of course, whatever Bane possessed her might have a few goals of its own.

Aside from her fomori powers, the Bane Mummy would presumably have the advantage of knowing that when killed, she'd eventually return to life. Of course, if that happened sixty years from now, that would kind of limit her participation in current events. And who knows what they'll be wearing in 2135?



Chapter Four: Recruitment

*There I was, completely wasting, out of work and down
All inside, it's so frustrating as I drift from town to town
Feel as though nobody cares if I live or die
So I might as well begin to put some action in my life
— Judas Priest, "Breaking the Law"*

Below are just some of the many groups who do the Wyrn's duty of recruiting more suckers for the tainted cause. Next time you hear some guy ranting about weird corporate or government conspiracy theories, give him a

little credence. Who knows? Maybe flouridating our water really is a trick of the Wyrn. In the war against corruption, purity of essence is everything.

Action Bill Tattoos!

You've seen Action Bill on TV! You've read Action Bill Comics!! You've played with Action Bill Danger Squad Figures!!! Now, join the Squad with Action Bill Tattoos!!!!

— Commercial aired during OmniTV's Saturday morning Cartoon Carnival

Victims targeted: Children ignored by yuppie parents, warehoused in daycare childbarns, and addled by 4.7 hours of violent kidvid per day.

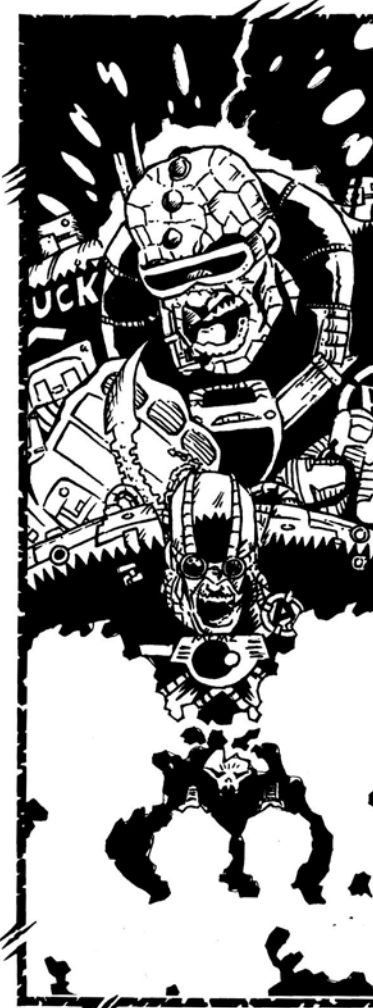
Public Facade: A harmless plaything for high-spirited kids!

The Real Story: These tattoos are part of the same attempt to destabilize human society while blaming the Garou that spawned the whole Action Bill mythos. A rough, tough, werewolf-killing hero, Action Bill is the star of endless turgid TV and movie adventures. Pentex's OmniTV network shows this program, as well as the popular kids' program "Braney," featuring a lovable purple dinosaur (actually a Wyrm-corrupted Mokole).

These are children's temporary tattoos that are sold in toy stores and department stores. They are usually stocked with other Action Bill™ products, and designs include Bill himself, his helpers Atom Sergeant™ and Hero Worm™, Squad insignia, and the Squad mascot, Wolf Skyner™. There are also tattoos of the Team Track™ Action Mobile, and of the enemies Bronto Beast™ and Wulf Kommandarr™, deadly and awful minions of W.O.L.F. They are applied to typical tattoo places such as the shoulder by licking and rubbing the paper.

However, each tattoo contains a fragment of a Bane. When the tattoos are applied to a single human body (usually some screeching seven-year-old), they won't come off. When enough tattoos are applied (usually three to five), the Bane fragments can reassemble. The Bane begins to corrupt the child as the other Action Bill toys do, urging crime and antisocial behavior. The designs grow and change, staying hidden as long as possible. By the time they are visible, they are generally impossible to remove. The human whom they control becomes a child fomori, with a variety of unique Powers. Some suggestions are: Nightmare Command, Shadowplay and Wall Walking. Taints could include the Derangement Temperamental, Special Diet (picky eaters) and Severe Allergy (such as to soap or broccoli).

Fomori: Child fomori tend to stay out of sight until the Bane that made them is in complete control, then use their monstrous powers and the trust of people around them to do heinous evil. For example, a fomori child would annoy its parents into abusing it, then when abandoned to an orphanage, corrupt all the other children and liberate them by making the staff into kielbasa. Many Garou who rescue "abused" children are in for nasty surprises. Eventually the child will begin to manifest freakish physical powers such as horns and scales, and will withdraw from human company.



Conceptual Services, Ltd.

Victims Targeted: Those infertile couples who desperately want children are the primary targets of Conceptual Services, Ltd., although people seeking pregnancy counseling and artificial insemination are secondary targets. Conceptual Services offers guaranteed pregnancies or your money back. Clients accepted by the clinic are those who refuse to consider adoption as an alternative to having their own children.

Public Facade: Conceptual Services is quite adamant about billing itself as a fertility clinic engaged in helping infertile couples produce children. Such clinics have become commonplace, almost invisible to the public eye. Occasionally, they are tagged with their practice of artificial insemination and are sometimes mistakenly lumped in with abortion clinics, but such "bad press" is quickly overturned by soothing family values-oriented news releases emphasizing their main function. Most people ignore the company altogether. Those who know of the clinic because they desperately want children consider it a godsend.

The Real Story: In actuality, regardless of whether the clients are seeking artificial insemination (supposedly from a bank of distinguished sperm donors) or treatments to increase their fertility, they both receive the same thing: Bane. Instead of normal frozen sperm, women seeking artificial insemination are treated with sperm laced with sperm-sized Banes known as Banelings. The sperm seeds the egg and begins to grow. Those seeking fertility treatments get actual drugs designed to increase their fertility, but they are also treated with hundreds of Baneling-infested sperm as well. The chances are approximately 75% that the women will become pregnant with the first treatment, and there is a 55% chance that those treated with fertility drugs will produce multiple births.

Each case is different, however. The unaffected sperm may reach the egg instead of that which holds the Baneling, resulting in a normal child. Because of their closeness to Banes during their conception, however, these otherwise normal people are often more susceptible to Bane possession later in life. Pentex keeps files on these individuals and tracks them wherever they go in case they are needed someday for further experimentation. If the Bane-possessed sperm reaches the egg rather than the normal sperm, the result is a Bane-baby.

Bearing a fomor child isn't easy. The mother is plagued all through her pregnancy by horrible dreams and feelings that something isn't right with her baby (or babies). She can feel malevolence pouring out of the thing in her womb, hating her, waiting to kill her, and wanting to hurt her every chance it gets. She is alone in her torment, for no one believes that any unborn child is evil. The more

the mother insists that something is wrong, the more that people perceive her as being insane. Should she try to harm the child, the baby causes such internal agony to her that she is rendered unconscious. The same happens if she attempts suicide. The Baneling incubates within the mother, merging with the egg and becoming a full-fledged fomor by the time the child is born. When it is time for the birth, if the mother has tried to kill her baby, the fomor child emerges in such a way that it kills or cripples the mother.

All Bane Children are lovely or handsome. Even as babies, they have a compelling beauty which dazzles everyone around them. If the mother has survived the birth, she probably doubts her own sanity, since the Bane Child does nothing publicly that might give it away.

Trapped within a helpless body for its first few years of life, the fomor bides its time, but eventually the child will begin to show signs of the bad seed that created it. Such fomori are cruel and uncaring, but often quite clever at covering up their behavior and acting innocent and sweet. Siblings of such Bane children, unless also fomori, rarely survive childhood.

Bane Children torture their pets, poison their grandmothers, beat up other children and steal their possessions, and create mayhem wherever they go. Because they never do anything in front of witnesses or in such a way that anything can be proved against them, they can literally get away with murder. And if one Bane Child sounds scary, imagine mama trying to deal with quintuplets.

Fomori: The most common type of fomori created through this program are the Bane Children. Possessed while in the womb, literally half Bane themselves, these fomori have the potential to become unimaginably powerful if they survive long enough. Though they may have Bane powers, these do not take a toll on their bodies or give outward signs physically until the child reaches puberty. At that time, treatments available from Project Iliad can forestall the appearance of unwanted physical changes. Outwardly, the young adult seems physically normal. Internally, the fomor is ravaged, but the damage is held in check through the treatments and the toughness of their half-Bane physique.

So long as treatments continue, the fomor can continue as if nothing were wrong with him indefinitely — or at least until he would otherwise die from old age. Of course, this does tend to put the fomor into Pentex's debt quite heavily and he is unlikely to go against whatever the company wants.

Banelings can carry just about any Bane powers, and the children created through them may evince different powers. One power which they all bestow is Immunity to Delirium.

Dr. Veridian's Workout Program

In just seven days
I can make you a man

— Frank N. Furter, "I Can Make You a Man" (Rocky Horror)

Victims Targeted: Insecure guys who want to become "real men." His treatments work on women, too, but not as well.

Public Facade: Dr. Veridian is a hero; he's discovered a way to increase your muscle mass by 25% in just 30 days, without steroids or personal trainers! If you've got the dedication, Dr. Veridian will make you a god! At least, that's what the advertising claims. Comic books, soundzines, tabloids, media-hype rags and muscle mags extol the virtues of Dr. Veridian's miracle workout plan. Cynics dismiss the ads, of course, but in this case the cynics are wrong.

The Real Story: The plan works, of course — it's a Bane-enhanced power-training program featuring "megavitamin supplements" which actually contain Wyrminfected growth hormones. Though not technically steroids, the effects these pills have are, in the long run, far worse.

The initial effects are amazing: after 30 days of dedicated exercise (which stimulates the Banes as well as the body), the sucker — uh, *customer* — experiences extreme muscular growth and increased pheromone production. He becomes not only bigger, but more attractive. To avoid legal complications, the pills themselves are not physically addictive in any way. The combination of exercise, confidence and vanity, however, encourages *psychological* addiction. As the subject grows bigger and cockier, the Bane influence feeds his nastier tendencies. He becomes aggressive, irritable and perpetually horny. Many customers stop there, satisfied, a bit short of actual possession. The initial rush is so invigorating, however, that some continue into the "advanced program" — Bane habitation.

A victim interested in "advanced training" receives larger and more powerful doses of the Bane-hormones. Over the next six months, he undergoes severe mood swings and inner battles as the Bane drowns whatever decency he might once have had. Increased narcissism, violent tendencies and constant sexual arousal become his new friends. The host's "magnetic" new personality and bedroom prowess compensate for all the friends he loses as he descends into asshole country. This stage corrupts not only the host, but those he comes in contact with — the people he hurts grow angry, bitter, jealous or vengeful of their own accord, with no Banes necessary.

Within a year (which, by the way, is just about the length of time Dr. Veridian has been so popular), an "advanced" trainee undergoes a nasty transformation into a Throback fomor (see Chapter Three). So far, very few "fine upstanding young men" have devolved to this state, so the workout program seems perfectly harmless. In time, the authorities will catch on to the connection. Until then, Dr. Veridian (a non-mutated scientist with a penchant for pumping iron) continues to rake in the bucks and crank out a growing army of muscle-bound fuckheads.

Fomori: Throbacks; women sometimes become Enticers through the advanced program, but Dr. Veridian's chemistry doesn't really mesh well with female chromosomes.

The Fellowship

Victims Targeted: Children of any age.

Public Facade: The Fellowship is a paragon of child care agencies. In a time where child abuse and bad foster homes are prevalent, this organization has an amazing success rate for placement of the children that come through these centers. Their children vary in age from infants to teenagers, and come from every walk of life. Whether their parents passed away, were killed, or if the child is on the street, The Fellowship opens their arms to everyone. Working quickly and efficiently, The Fellowship places children in the best possible home for each child.

The original building is located in downtown New York City. It was founded in 1964 by a joint effort of Chester R. Van Gelding and SimTech. Since then, The Fellowship has opened branches in many major cities, including San Francisco, Chicago and Arlington, Virginia.

The Fellowship is run by a board of directors seated in New York City. Each center is situated in a large house, with an area for the children to run and be active (an integral part of Fellowship philosophy), and houses anywhere from 50 to 100 children. They have a large staff, including at least three doctors per community, several nurses, teachers with very fine qualifications, ten social workers, a groundskeeper and many counselors to assist the children in any problems they may have in adjusting to their new environment. The communities regularly receive gifts from their benefactors. They run their own inclusive school to allow the children an opportunity to establish a feeling of community within themselves. This allows the child to, more often than not, mainstream into public schools with little to few difficulties.

The Real Story: The Fellowship is a Wyrmin-run organization. Originally initiated by the Seventh Generation (see *Rage Across New York*), it has spread throughout the nation as one of the leading methods of creating young, new fomori. The Seventh Generation created this organization to further the Defiler Wyrmin's desires.

Each caste of the Pentarch has influence in this organization. It was originally created by Chester Van Gelding with a business run by the Pentarch; the board of directors consists solely of other members of the Business Caste. They insure that the centers never have any need for money, and can pay top salaries for each professional. Many of the children are acquired through the Snatchers, and many members of each graduation class find themselves returning to work for the Foundation in that aspect. The Government Caste maintains the security of the centers. It makes sure that each center passes the rigorous federal standards, while also working to lower those standards. The Medical Caste sends "professionals" to organize and run laboratories at each facility where new drugs are created, and tested on the children. Due to the animosity between the other castes and the Warrior Caste, the warriors do nothing directly to help this program.

The Fellowship introduces children into their system through a variety of means, many state-assisted. These include having each community maintain a foster home status, as well as being known as one of the top child care agencies in the nation. Once within the communities' grasp, they are brought into the internal school system.

Children soon learn that they are "dumb" or inadequate for not following the rules exactly. Any infractions result in corporal punishment in front of the class or a trip to the principal's office. The teacher quickly starts and maintains the facade of being the lost child's best friend, punishing her only when the child makes a mistake. After all, it is the teacher's job to assist the child in becoming a worthwhile human being — and children need all the help they can get. More often than not, corporal punishment, plus key negative phrases ("Are you stupid?" "Why don't you answer the question?" "Are you being fresh?") only facilitate the creation of festering internal wounds and feelings of inadequacy — a hole in which a Bane can more easily invade the child's body.

The second step of the program is to introduce certain Wyrn toxins into the children's food. These toxins take the form of candy or spices created by the Medical Caste, but function to weaken the child's mental barriers. Once this treatment is started, the children usually find themselves having strange nightmares of horrible monsters and evil vampires. A select few are chosen to receive the attentions of a Psychomachia.

The final step of the program is to place the child in a "Well Chosen Home." These homes are either abusive, alcoholic, or contain fomori parents. The Fellowship prefers to place children in unacceptable homes riddled with alcoholism. The family watches over the child, bringing her into the circle of pain quite naturally. The end result of this process is a child who is emotionally weak, and has low self esteem. The Fellowship invites all their children back for a graduation ceremony; their diploma — a Bane.



Homogeniety Incorporated

The world today is a simpler place. We've taken out all the complications. All the square pegs and the painful and the strange. In our utopia, lacking cultural reference for deviancy, all are happy with their lot... Everybody is exactly the same. Isn't it sweet?

— Neil Gaiman, "From Homogenous To Honey"

Victims Targeted: Homogeniety Incorporated is a subsidiary of Pentex. The organization preys upon homosexual men and women who seek to "cure" themselves of their sexuality. Believing themselves sick, unnatural or evil as a result of constant indocrinization by a heterosexual society, these unhappy gays and lesbians all too readily sign up for Homogeniety Incorporated's ten week, \$2000 course.

Not all homosexuals fall prey to self-hatred. Well-adjusted homosexuals are targeted by Homogeniety Incorporated's Realignment Division. This branch of the organization funds antigay groups such as the USA's Moral Majority, and in England, the neo-Nazi group C-18, in order to further an atmosphere in which pro-gay laws will be repealed, and gay-positive images will be stamped out. The fewer happy gays and lesbians who exist, according to the Realignment Division's twisted strategy, the more unhappy homosexuals there will be for Homogeniety Incorporated to recruit.

Homogeniety Incorporated promises its potential members that they can be converted into happy, fully functional heterosexuals. Hypnotherapy, group counseling sessions and aversion therapy are elements included in the organization's "cure." By the time recruits have completed the course, the majority are completely asexual. Many of them are no longer even human.

Public Facade: Homogeniety Incorporated advertises in religious magazines and newsletters, periodicals, and on late-night cable television stations such as OmniTV. Its brochures are often distributed to doctors, psychotherapists and other health-care professionals, obtaining their mailing addresses from other Pentex-owned conservative organizations. Fundamentalist church groups provide Homogeniety Incorporated with some of its richest pickings. The organization is fronted by the charismatic Jim Fowler, a blonde and hearty Southerner. He personally endorses the company's "cure," claiming that it saved him from a loveless homosexual life of sin and debauchery.

The Real Story: Homosexuals already prey to willpower and negative self-esteem provide Homogeniety Incorporated with easy marks for Bane possession. During the regular hypnotherapy sessions which are scattered throughout the course, individuals are exposed to Pentex-supplied Banes. While not everyone who signs on to Homogeniety Incorporated's homosexual cure course be-

comes possessed, those who do not are permanently disturbed by the process. Their sexuality is stunted, their personalities corrupted by the indoctrination process. Many non-possessed survivors commit suicide in the months following the course, so ravaged are their feelings of self-worth. The lot of those people possessed is little better.

Once signs of Bane infestation are apparent, Homogeniety Incorporated approaches its ex-clients, attempting to sway them into working with the organization as volunteers and recruiters. Door-to-door campaigns by Homogeniety Incorporated are usually staffed by just such volunteers. Other fomori may accompany the recruiters. If Garou, Kinfolk or other "undesirables" are sniffed out during door-to-door campaigns, they are targeted for immediate attention by other Pentex subsidiaries.

Jim Fowler, the president of Homogeniety Incorporated, despite professing that his homosexuality has been cured, continues to live a secretive gay lifestyle, often seducing the weaker-willed men who sign onto his organization's course as well as hiring male prostitutes upon which he slakes his lust. His self-hatred is often expressed in such encounters as sadistic and masochistic behaviour. Not infrequently his games get out of hand, leaving a trail of dead youths which may yet be Fowler's downfall. Those course members who reject him are congratulated on passing a nonexistent test, while those who give in to his perverse charms become even more guilt-wracked, and thus more open to possession. Publically, Jim Fowler projects a wholesome facade, maintained in part by his public image-conscious wife, a Pentex operative.

Fomori: Possession by Homogeniety Incorporated's Banes proceeds along well-documented lines. After initial possession, the victim's sex drive diminishes rapidly. This is often the cause of temporary joy, as the Bane-hor's unwanted homosexual desires begin to wane. No heterosexual urges supplant homoerotic urges, however; instead, the new fomor loses all desire for sexual activity. It is during this gestation phase (which usually lasts between six and eight months) that the fledgling fomor is sought out by Homogeniety Incorporated, and sent out with recruitment parties. Once the fomor's ability to sense unnatural beings has fully manifested (usually after eight months, although in some individuals taking as long as a year), a surge of hormones are released into the fomor's bloodstream, triggering the final transformation and, as a side effect, making the fomor aggressive and violent.

The metamorphosis begins with the fomor's genitals atrophying (withering up and dropping off in the case of men, or simply closing up for women) over a two-week period. After three weeks, scab-like crusts begin to grow over the fomor's eyes and nose, slowly absorbing the organs in pulpy new flesh. When it heals, the fomor is left featureless save for its gaping mouth.

As the fomor's genitals atrophy, its bones, particularly in the spine, arms and legs, distort and grow. This latter period of transformation is especially painful. After a month, the transformation is complete. The faceless fomor walks on hands and feet, tracking its prey via alien senses, attacking with its teeth and claws. Such fomori are known as Normalites, or Norms, and properly leashed and muzzled, they are used by Pentex and Homogeneity Incorporated to hunt down and kill Garou and their Kinfolk.

Registered Artists Worldwide (Talent Agency)

Come inside!

The show's about to start!

Guaranteed — to blow your head apart!

You gotta see the show!

— Emerson, Lake & Palmer, Karn • Evil 9

Victims Targeted: RAW seeks unsuspecting recruits on two fronts around the world. The agency promises to make them the next acting, singing or modeling stars. First, its scouts troll the seas of hungry "wannabe" personalities. Whether on the streets of Soho, under the shadow of the Eiffel Tower or in the dark subway tunnels off Broadway, RAW's representatives can smell inexperienced and unbridled ambition miles away.

On the second and more selective front, RAW executives constantly hunt for that special victim — that hopeless case — experienced in its self-destruction and especially worthy of corruption. Stars rise and fall in entertainment fields. Fads come and go at the movies, sweeping out whole crops of one-time stars in their wake. Voices fade out of style in popular music. Wrinkles cut across faces, hips grow wide and breasts sag, ending countless modeling careers. All these forgotten idols share one thing — deep, twisting pain. They ache to regain the success and public favor they once enjoyed.

Male or female, young or old, actor or model — RAW puts the ravenous lust into the grip of Pentex. The megacorporation's minions introduce them to the Wyrms. The Wyrms introduces them to their new, short-lived role in the organized, festering destruction of Gaia.

Public Facade: Registered Artists Worldwide started as a small literary agency nestled away in the Hollywood Hills. However, once bought out and gutted by Pentex, RAW grew into a global talent agency. With offices in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, London, Sydney, Paris and Tokyo, the RAW can scour most of the world's misguided industrial societies for fomori recruits.

Ironically, RAW enjoys a better reputation than any other agency. All too often, any sort of major entertainment agency weathers a well-deserved barrage of negative

public sentiment. Sleazy agents suck the money and life out of more talented people, throwing them up on a screen or out on a runway like a piece of meat. When that name, face and voice stops making money, the agents will waste little time throwing that human life on the rotting pile of countless other flashes in the pan.

In contrast, RAW's history of granting young, unproved talent a shot or calling older, forgotten stars back to the spotlight earns it a warm respect throughout the industry. Some claim that RAW must lose a fortune on so many risky business ventures. Others even whisper that RAW hides strange plans for its showbiz clients, but those voices never seem to surface long enough for anyone to hear.

The Real Story: While most agencies simply suck 10% of a client's blood and money out of them, RAW rips away 100%, sacrificing it to the Wyrms. The Wyrms enjoys a healthy crop of young fomori thanks to RAW's seduction of young performers and models.

In the entertainment world, the bottom of the industry food chain stocks its larders with energetic and hungry youngsters. Ranging in age from 14-30, these lost souls never enjoyed any semblance of love or attention from their families. They developed their talents or outward appearances to hide the gaping wounds underneath. Their peers considered them pretentious outcasts for their artificial, extroverted behavior. Their ridicule only forced them farther out into melodramatic fantasy. So often these ambitious children's talents never amount to what they truly need to satisfy their primal need for love and attention.

Before these youths are "discovered" by the Wyrms' agents, they find their way into cheap fetish studios, pornographic video houses and bad community theater productions. Any RAW offer to this "diamond in the rough" feels too good to be true. However, it's the attention the soul wanted all its life. It also becomes an escape from a world steeped in deadly drugs and sexual abuse. They grab the brass ring — not knowing it's the doorknob to hell as a fomor.

RAW offers many of society's abandoned glamor hounds and one-hit wonders another life. They might believe that they found their ticket back to their beloved public eye. They learn too late how easily their addiction to fame leads them to a doomed existence. It takes a strong (if flawed) spirit and above average intelligence to achieve and retain success for any time. These one-time stars make powerful and effective Wyrms agents. In some cases, the resulting fomori can stand as a worthy one-on-one challenger to a battle-tested Garou.

Whether a tattered showbiz veteran or naive novice, both types of fomori prospects share an amazing trait. These actors and models already exist in such a state of delusion and fantasy that they do not recognize their transformation into fomori until it's almost complete. While their features twist into bestial death masks, even as their muscles and limbs rot away into bloody, pus-riddled weapons, they see themselves as beautiful and

powerful. Either for the first time or the last time, somebody wants them. If that ties body and soul to the destruction of Mother Earth, so be it.

Fomori: Like a seasoned PR agent, the Wyrms seems able to spin the past corruption of these lonely spirits into specific fomori agents. Depending on the recruit's former occupation, the Pentex forces will confirm that its fomori powers are well endowed.

For example, a RAW agent seduced and transformed a fallen movie director. Once flavor of the month and talk of the town, this former video rental clerk turned mega-celebrity grew fat on success sucked from the soured tit of civilization's underbelly. He made the decomposition of human society entertaining. The violent pulp of his bent fiction reveled in Gaia's passing. When someone more disgusting came down Hollywood's garbage chute, everyone forgot him — except RAW. The Wyrms made that fomor into a leader, trained to deal death to Garou and well armed with immensely potent Eyes of Wyrms. He possesses the director's viewfinder to oblivion.

In keeping with this specific mutation, a possessed dancer could sprout multiple, spiked tentacles from its spine — or spill its swollen intestines like tank tracks for increased mobility. A singer would borrow the Wyrms' wrenching voice, sucking the dubious will out of both hapless human and weakened Garou.

Finally, a model makes the most tragic fomor of all. His angelic looks turn inside out, and his once pink and perfect flesh bursts with Fungus and Poison Tumors. In very rare occurrences, a model turned fomor becomes a unique Wyrms agent. Able to transform at will for brief periods of time and hide her fomor hideousness under her former hypnotic beauty, she can move among Gaia's children and hook fresh meat virtually undetected. If this fomor finds a resistant subject, or if by chance a Garou does uncover her malevolence, she can revert to her fomor shape and deal the Wyrms' special brand of entertainment.

By hook or by crook, RAW remains one of Pentex's and the Wyrms' most effective recruitment tools. Using the basic human weaknesses of ambition, greed and addiction, RAW tempts with promises of never-ending fame, material comforts and primal love. Desperate for the attention and recognition they will never know (and, sadly, may not deserve), RAW's fomori become the Wyrms' most willing agents.

Realm of Deceit (MultiUser Dungeon)

Victims Targeted: Computer fanatics

Public Facade: It's an online game, one of the thousands in existence. Realm of Deceit is an AberMUD; a multi-user textual game in which you, the player, quest to kill the evil creatures of the night, and solve the many online puzzles.

You begin the game as a novice warrior, and hopefully quickly learn the ways to gain the powerful artifacts and solve the difficult quests. Find the Greatsword so that you may kill the werewolf! Where is the stake hidden to kill the vampire in the catacombs? Quest for the mysterious Lady of the Lake! You will soon learn the steps to solve each difficult puzzle and gain possession of greater and greater weapons. With each solution, you also gain points to advance to the next level, until ultimately you reach the highest player title: Wizard.

The Real Story: Realm of Deceit is an AberMUD based on the mass appeal online games have over people. It is run off a branch computer of ICS, and while the player is having fun killing whatever new creature is thrown its way, ICS is gauging the potential of the client, and ascertaining other important information such as the player's home and e-mail address.

Realm of Deceit was created six years ago in response to the increased availability to the Net. It was set up by Katsumi Takahashi, a Glass Walker Theurge, through her office computers. It was yet another one of the hundred of MUDs that people could log onto and mindlessly play. ICS had been watching the company, and with the initiation of the MUD, it began to slowly corrupt the database, changing the quests slightly. Katsumi found herself drawn into her own MUD. The combination of the violence she was already used to and the new quests allowed a corrupt spirit to enter and fuse with her soul. A few short months later she disappeared from her sept, and set Realm of Deceit up on ICS, where it currently resides.

All of the quests have some relation to specific tasks for fomori. One of the more popular quests is searching out the Greatsword and using it to kill the werewolf that is terrorizing the small town. Another quest requires the player to kill a vampire. The player must slowly learn through experience which steps to take, in what order, to solve the puzzles, creating an addiction to the game. Each step, each kill, brings the player further into the game and the game setting. While the player believes the MUD to be a relief from stress, and only mindless violence and fun, ICS slowly begins to weaken the player's resolve until he becomes so enmeshed in the game, reality and the MUD are inseparable.

After determining the player's level of commitment, ICS make the levels more difficult to solve. The player rises in the ranks, killing all the supernatural creatures, and becoming numb to acts of violence. The final test comes, and the final quest is discovered: the player must kill five other players. While many find this fun and even funny, others stop at this point. Those who do kill five other players rise to the title of Wizard, and are granted additional powers, such as power over the lesser ranked players.

One of the greatest Wizard benefits is the Runesword, also known as the Wizard's sword. This sword can be given to other players, but once given, the sword forces the wielder to kill everyone around him save the Wizard. Many players find out about this tool, and will actually ask for use of it when they find they must kill five other players. Any time after reaching Wizard, Deceit and Corruption Banes find their new hosts, creating new fomori — many with wonderful computer skills.

Fomori: Many of the people become either willing personnel for Pentex, or the actual Arch-Wizards for the MUD. Other, more violent players, become Gorehounds. Players find either an Ooralath or a Bane of Abhorra or Anqu inhabiting their soul.

Smoker's Bane

Victims Targeted: This program ostensibly benefits those who lack the willpower or discipline to stop smoking on their own. The self-help group, run by Pentex's Project Iliad, screens all applicants. They take only those who meet certain criteria: they must be single and preferably have no living close relations, they must have tried (and failed) to stop smoking before, and they must be willing to appear in advertisements for the program should they successfully complete it. Plans are underway to begin a new program for married couples, and a teens-only program is in the works. There has also recently been some talk of starting up preschool and elementary school preventive programs and of offering the program to select companies for their employees' use.

Public Facade: Though fairly expensive, Smoker's Bane is the most popular new treatment program for habitual smokers. Designed to assist those who have failed with nicotine patches, hypnotherapy or aversion therapy, the program emphasizes group support and participation in activities in which smoking is banned. Members attend movies, dine out together in non-smoking sections of restaurants and choose one or more healthy group exercises — swimming, aerobics, and dancing, for example. Rather than isolating the group, the Smoker's Bane program integrates them into ongoing activities attended by the general public. Instead of holding their own aerobics class, for example, members join such classes at gyms and fitness centers near their homes and at times when their schedules permit.

At meetings, members discuss their difficulties and partake of their "community toast," a glass of non-alcoholic grape juice which all quaff in a toast to their continued success. The group leader, a Pentex employee, gives the group a short pep talk designed to make them feel good about themselves.

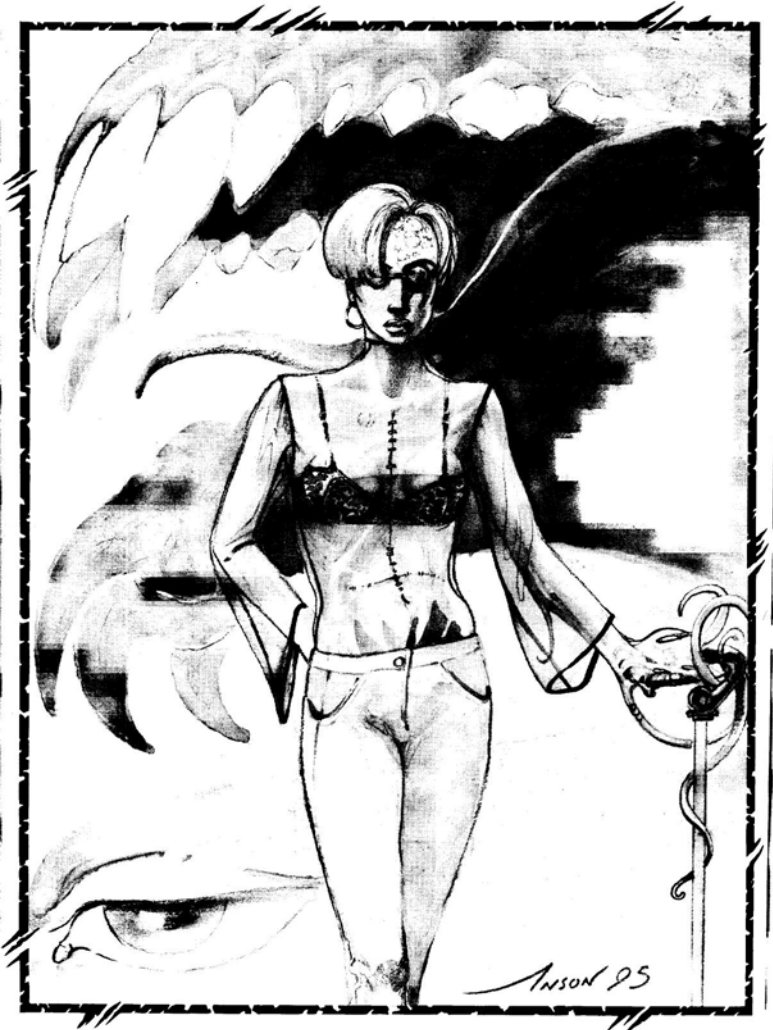
The public sees Smoker's Bane as a miracle cure. They understand that the program emphasizes fun activities, doesn't depend on drugs or pseudo-psychological sessions

intended to make the smoker feel like a spineless addict, and still has a phenomenal success record. In the age of the 12-step program, it also seems quite fashionable. Best of all, the whole thing seems painless and more like a singles club than therapy.

The Real Story: Smoker's Bane actually does what it claims to do — those who complete the program never smoke again. Of course, they don't need to. At their first meeting, when members drink a toast to their commitment to stop smoking, each glass holds a special Bane known as a Lunghugger. Unknown to the participants, the Banes slip inside and bond with their lungs. The Lunghuggers actually benefit the recipients in that they change their lung tissues, making them more resistant to tar, smoke and airborne toxins of all sorts. This causes other tissues to become less resistant to such things, however, leading to a higher incidence of skin, prostate, ovarian and colon cancers. Additionally, the Lunghugger secretes a particularly potent chemical mixture which changes to a gas and is expelled from the host's mouth and nose with each breath. The chemical mixture contains carcinogens as well as a gaseous form of nicotine that causes a craving for more of it in those who breathe it in — unless, of course, their lungs are protected by a Lunghugger.

These unwitting fomori, known as Sicklungs (see Chapter Two), feel no urge to smoke (they receive massive doses of nicotine in their weekly grape juice), but unconsciously spread their former addiction and deadly gases everywhere they go. And since they look and act just like everyone else, they go to lots of places other fomori couldn't reach — to health clubs, to non-smoking sections of restaurants, to work for the American Lung Association — hooking the health-conscious into becoming smokers, and poisoning them, even should they manage to resist the urge. Those who take up the habit in turn eventually may become candidates for the Smoker's Bane program, which generates more money for the company and begins the cycle anew. The original hosts invariably die within five years from some other type of cancer, but none ever die from lung disease.

Fomori: Currently, only one type of fomori is created through this program: Sicklungs. As they are unwitting dupes, Sicklungs are very weak fomori and usually have few Powers. Some of the more aggressive ones have been recruited further into Project Iliad and given other powers to see how far they can go before becoming obvious fomori and thus limiting their usefulness as infiltrators. Experiments are underway to beef up Sicklungs and give them the power to consciously breathe out lethal smoke and deadly amounts of nicotine during combat situations. Cigarette, anyone?



Chapter Five: Low Society

*your god is dead and no one cares
if there's a hell i will see you there*
— Nine Inch Nails, "Heresy"

Ah, quit whining, you little faggot! You think you're miserable? You ain't got shit on most of us — what're you, some college boy who wanted a bigger dick to impress the bitches with? A fucking "Generation X" wastoid who fucked around with the wrong chick or the wrong dope? What's your sob story, ya fuckin' crybaby? I guarantee you there's guys here who'll make your worst nightmares sound like lullabies. So suck it up, cupcake — you're one of us, so get used to that fact.

You got no choice now.

Fomor society is not kind.

Imagine that you were a loser from the start; something was wrong, or went wrong, enough to eat a hole in your heart. Now imagine that something else crawled into that hole and grew, something so vile that it warped you into a servant of corruption. It's always there now, eating your fucking soul away, passing you an excuse for power at the expense of your humanity.

Not a cheerful thought, is it? Not exactly an experience designed to promote good will and cheer.

Formori are not happy folks. Most take their frustrations and horror out on everyone around them, including their own kind. The society of the tainted is viciously Darwinian, an unnatural selection where the strongest rule, only to be eaten away from the inside out. It is the Wyrms incarnate, a regimented chaos stratified by three sets of factors: Pentex membership (or lack thereof), personal might, and a passing resemblance to normalcy.

Obviously, those tainted ones created by Pentex for Pentex have all the best seats on the bus; "second-hand" fomori who devolve out of their own corruption (or from the "toys" seeded about by Pentex subsidiaries) hold a lower place in this mad society. Most regard "softies" (normal humans) with jealous contempt. Once counted among the freak legions, a fomor holds his or her own through wit, strength or allies. Any status gained is fleeting — fomori are damned to a short, painful life. What happens after it ends is anyone's guess.

Are We Not Men?

The tainted folk have an identity complex; they were normal, once, but that humanity has been stripped — or given — away by an outside force that eats them alive. Even those who know nothing about Banes or the Wyrms can feel the difference on some primal level. This disintegration is somewhat worse than insanity: it is a condition of the body, soul and mind. Naturally, fomori are not the most well-adjusted of people.

Some cope with their loss by distancing themselves from the humanity, living and acting like the monsters they appear to be. Others take the opposite approach; they enter a profound state of denial where absolutely nothing is wrong — they're just as normal as anyone else. Their flesh may be coming away in handfuls, their eyes may bleed, their secretions may melt the pavement as they walk, but it's not like there's anything *wrong*, it's just a really bad cold. Their friends at Pentex will find the cure, and everything will be fine.

Fomori and "Normal" Folks

Although most Pentex companies mix humans and fomori together in their First Teams, both sides favor their own kind over the "mutants" or "softies." Most untainted humans fear their comrades on an instinctual level that has less to do with fomori's bad habits and hygiene (though those things factor in) than with a primal dread of the freakish. Most fomori secretly believe themselves inferior to their "normal" allies, but compensate with their impressive abilities and a feeling of superiority. Thus, neither side really understands — or even tries to understand — the other.

This isn't to say that all such relationships are strained; most First Teams acquire a battlefield camaraderie — or die — regardless of how "normal" their members might be. Less active groups still interact, and occasionally even make friends across Bane-taint boundaries. Close friendships and even romances spark between the tainted and mundane, although such bonds rarely last — the fomori are doomed, after all. These relationships are most common among humans and normal-seeming fomori, although given the kinks some Pentex employees possess, anything is possible.

In general, however, fomori and untainted humans keep their distance from each other. Such isolation is only one more facet of the Wyrms — it breeds prejudice, loneliness, and the rage that goes with both.

"Normalcy Status"

Desperate for normalcy, some fomori gauge their worth by how well they can pass for human — or for better than human. Enticers are notorious for this conceit, but other normal-seeming fomori play the game as well. These folks often establish pecking order around how human — or

inhuman — a given fomori appears. The more "normal" she looks, the more respected she is. In certain companies, the really fucked-up freaks are ostracized completely — after all, they're gross, disfigured blobs, not like real people at all. The more deformed ones can protest all they want (sometimes by tearing their more "normal" cousins limb from limb), but still accept that judgment because they *feel* freakish, and accept more attractive fomori as their leaders despite themselves. For many mutants, the power they may wield cannot compensate for the humanity they have lost.

"Power Status"

The opposite of normalcy, power status measures a fomori's raw physical might — his "I-can-kick-your-ass factor." This form of esteem, especially common in First Team assault groups, comes from bizarre Powers like Webbing, Hide of the Wyrms, Hazardous Breath, Mega-Strength — anything that makes a fomori "more human than human." The badder the fomori, the more respect he earns. Naturally, such fame is short-lived; the Taints that come with outrageous Powers soon turn the fomori into a pile of sentient protoplasm.

Regardless of what a given fomori respects, each one carries a sorrow and anger few humans ever feel. Pentex knows how to put that rage to good use. By demonizing protesters, authorities, Garou and other opponents, Pentex bosses focus their fomori's hatred to a near-psychotic degree. By diverting their attention this way, management keeps its custom-built freaks in line, gives them a target for their aggressions, and speeds their corruption. The off-kilter psyches of most fomori allow Pentex to feed them absurd propaganda and expect it to work.

Pentex

The strongest bulwark of the capitalist system is the ignorance of its victims.

— Adolf Fischer

How many freedoms do we need to be free?

— USA Today headline

In its own warped way, Pentex and its various divisions provide a home, family and purpose for fomori. Thus, those tainted folk who work for the corporation directly have an edge over those who do not. Some have a degree of status, and the attendant comforts; others enjoy this new "family" more than the ones they left behind. Even the lowest-bred fomori receive a stipend, living quarters, and all the comic books, video games, movies and MTV they can stand. Pentex takes care of its own.

Recruitment

Corruption's touch comes from many sources; some are personal, but many come from the foul labs of Pentex subsidiaries. Many of the company's recruits begin as

outsiders—innocent victims, human employees of Pentex and people whose personal evils or rotten luck have led to their possession.

Some subjects begin as normal employees; Pentex leadership is infamous for "upgrading" the human members of its First Teams, and many common laborers find their way into "special programs" whenever Iliad needs volunteers. A good many workers earn their own possession, through close contact with the Wyrn-taint, "industrial accidents" and their own flaws. In any case, those who began with Pentex tend to stay loyal to their employers.

The other common source of Pentex manpower (Iliad aside) is the quantity of Bane-riden products that the corporation spews throughout the industrialized world. Although many possessed goods fall short of their full effect (the world would otherwise be full of fomori), enough Banes take command of their hosts to ensure a small but constant trickle of new recruits. Many such Banes carry tracers which spiritually-attuned employees can follow when a fomor comes "on-line." These trackers lead Pentex retrieval teams (see below) to capture the new fomor, take her home and indoctrinate her into her new lifestyle.

Once converted, a Pentex fomor receives a lot of attention; for some folks, the sudden concern and sympathy (even if it is faked) is all she needs to remain loyal to her new "friends." As you can imagine, Bane-conversion is pretty goddamned traumatic; a man or woman brutalized this way will often latch onto the first support that comes their way. From there, recruiters feed the novice a steady diet of propaganda, promising a cure while indulging the new fomor's darkest lusts. Through rewards, fellowship and punishments, a bond to Pentex forms.

Goodies

A good many "recruits" come from the underclasses—poor homes, struggling communities, mental hospitals and the streets themselves. For them, Pentex provides a more comfortable living than jail or charity; the majority of them are already used to being treated differently. With Pentex, they get square meals (even if those meals are tainted), comparatively luxurious apartments or barracks (even if those quarters are bugged), and enough mind-numbing entertainment to keep them happy (even if said diversions are propaganda—after all, don't most forms of commercial entertainment contain an agenda?). For most Pentex fomori, it's a vast improvement, so they don't question the arrangement.

Special treats include promotions (see "Rank," below), financial incentives, and special privileges—like sports, outings, or the joyous opportunity to blow things to hell. Pentex's vilest rewards—"shopping sprees" and "visiting hours"—release grateful fomori on unwilling guests brought to the quarters to entertain the troops. Such guests, as you can imagine, rarely survive the night's festivities.

Punishments

Occasional dissidents arise; these guys are dealt with pretty harshly. Communal punishments, where the group reprimands an individual or two, are the first and most common form of discipline. These group beatings—often called "shower meetings," "bunny hunts" and "boot parties,"—usually pit the offender(s) against his teammates in fights, hunts, or gauntlets. Such punishments are usually painful, even crippling, but not fatal. Pentex doesn't want to waste their precious cannon fodder—yet.

If the offender hasn't learned his lesson, or has committed some crime that a mere beating can't rectify, he may be sent to Section C—the experimental labs. Here, Iliad technicians introduce new Banes into the fomor's system and record what happens. These agonizing treatments occasionally result in a chastened—and possibly more powerful—fomor. More often than not, however, a trip to Section C leads to a long and horrible death.

Dead fomori are often ground into mulch and used to poison the land. Some bases operate on tight incomes, or have their funds diverted by greedy directors. These groups use dead fomori as food in their cafeterias. Some even sell the stuff to Pentex-controlled fast-food chains; ever wonder what "meat by-products" were?

Rank

Rank is the most obvious sign of Pentex's favor; those who do great things for the megacorp are rewarded accordingly. By giving a fomor a badge, a title and a pay raise, upper management inspires him to greater deeds, greater loyalty and greater vanity. Any fomor's success is short-lived, after all, but why let the poor schmuck know that? Let him think he's got a chance to advance, wind him up and watch him go. As far as Pentex superiors are concerned, anything that motivates an employee to work harder is worth the aggravation of giving some lunkhead a rank.

Advancement Methods

Anyone in Pentex can hold a rank; fomori, because of their isolation, are more motivated to advance than many of the corporation's human staff. The usual tactics—bribery, seduction, well-placed friends, etc.—work better for "softies" than they do for mutants, so the direct approach is often the most effective.

Officially, advancement within Pentex is based on kills, cunning and corruption. A fomor strong, clever or stupid enough to kill lots of foes—especially Garou—rates a promotion in Pentex' eyes. In addition to the incentive such rank offers, the company bets that some of the tainted one's expertise will rub off on her underlings. Cunning reflects a employee's ability to outthink or outmaneuver her foes and rivals—both within and without the company. A fomor smart enough to sneak a knife into

someone's back is considered an asset to the Wyrms-corp; a title will also give her enough visibility to be watched more closely than the rank-and-file. Corruption measures an employee's ability to fuck up the world around her, either through subtle influence or overt slash-and-burn tactics. Pentex is, of course, always willing to put destructive individuals wherever their talents will be most useful.

Promotions apply to anyone within the company; fomori just stand to gain more through them than a normal human would. As so few fomori have lives outside the corporation, status within Pentex is the most rewarding thing many of them could think of. The board of directors knows this, and emphasizes the importance of promotions to all company execs. Most supervisors, in turn, get where they are through fomori's good graces, and this leads to the "unofficial" method of promotion — backing a winner.

Pentex politics make Wall Street look like kindergarten. Within the Wyrms-corp, anyone with a shred of motivation (or self-preservation, for that matter) wants some kind of status. The nail which stands out, as they say, is the nail that gets hammered; when the hammer approaches, it's always good to have a mallet of your own. A wise climber, then, will have a few friends among the company's fomori. The intimidation factor of a right-hand man who vomits acid gives the phrase "power lunch" a whole new dimension.

Wise fomori work as bodyguards, assassins, strong-arms, spies, couriers and saboteurs for Pentex's executives and scientists. Those among the military wing are capable enough to command themselves, though such officers usually surround themselves with a small army of loyal (if slow-witted) "lieutenants." By working for an ambitious boss, a fomori who just wants the goodies without the hassles can make a good living by performing the occasional unpleasant task and staying in reserve in case of trouble.

By making themselves essential, most fomori hope to gain access to the Holy Grail of their existence — a cure, or at least a neutralization, for the disease which devours them. No such thing exists, but the tainted ones don't know that. By dangling around the possibility of power without cost, the board of directors keeps Pentex and its fomori motivated and alert.

Pentex Ranks

Military	Scientific	Executive
Recruit	Technician	Gofer
Private	White Level	Associate
Sergeant/ Lieutenant	Green level	Junior exec
Captain	Blue Level	Supervisor
Major	Yellow Level	Manager
General	Red Level	Director

Divisions

Rank is a chancy thing in Pentex; it rarely crosses over between the corporation's three divisions — the military, executive and scientific wings. When you're out of your own element, it's not generally a good idea to push peoples' limits. "You may be a real ass-kicker down in the corps," Amazon supervisor Catherine Snodgrass is fond of saying, "but I decide where you go and when — and if — you get fed!"

Each branch has its own rank and power structure; outsiders are given some concessions if they hold status, but an arrogant bastard will find barriers he never knew existed jumping up in front of him anytime he deals with a different branch. Some of these will be bureaucratic, but many will be more permanent. A pushy exec may disappear in the middle of the night (doubtless killed by Garou infiltrators), Sergeant Shithed may find himself without those much-needed reinforcements, and a scientist who passes off shoddy equipment or doctored progress reports may end up locked in a reject room with the mutants she helped create...

Most divisions' upper ranks are made up of normal humans, supernaturals (vampires, magi, and rogue shapeshifters), or Wyrms-gifted ladder-climbers. Fomori know the true meaning of the glass ceiling; even if you've got all the right friends, your life's too short to make much headway. Most fomori can only work within one branch at a time. Splitting your efforts between projects gives your rivals plenty of room to slide a knife — literal or otherwise — between your shoulder blades. The short span of most fomori lives offers little time for multi-division advancement; some ruthless and dedicated folks have managed such accomplishments anyway — there is, after all, very little a really twisted fomori can do outside Pentex' walls, anyway, so why not go for it? The obvious limitations never stop a fomori ambitious enough to try...

Wyrms-Faith

Another, less obvious form of status involves service to the Wyrms itself, in any of its incarnations. While many fomori have no idea what being they serve, some do; those who recognize the primal nature of their powers often embrace their creator with a religious zeal, hoping to earn demerited favor when the Wyrms finally wins.

Most Wyrms-worshippers hang around with the Black Spiral Dancers; their comrades' fervor wears off on them, and they learn the lore of their corrupted maker. Fomori who follow the Wyrms — either as a total entity or as one of the many Urge Wyrms — often give their greatest respect to the Dancers; to them, the fallen Garou are the new Chosen, the elite guard of madness. Fomori who display some mark of the Wyrms' favor (see the Merit: Stigmata of the Wyrms, in Chapter One) are seen as divine links to their god, and are treated accordingly. Though few

gain rank within Pentex this way, anything the servitors can give them — from fresh victims to cash to carnal pleasures — is theirs for the asking.

Some dedicated servitors worship the Wyrms with unholy glee, disfiguring themselves and ripping their way through whatever form of innocence they choose to defile. Some fomori actually begin as human Wyrms-zealots "rewarded" for their devotion. Such dark disciples glow with black light to Garou using the Sense Wyrms Gift, and thus rarely survive long enough to retain lasting power. While they live, however, these fanatics leave a stain upon Gaia that may take years or even decades to erase.

First Teams

Another marvelous day in the Corps!

— Sgt. Apone, Aliens

A fomori's most obvious opportunities lie with the military First Teams. Many mutants are created for combat duty, and receive special training, equipment and privileges within the military ranks. First Team duty is good to fomori: it offers them prestige, purpose, and the chance to take their hatred out on the world in general, without consequences or restraint. Pentex trumpets these benefits to its "special recruits," and grants large salaries, health care, and other goodies (see above) to those who join the corps. (The Wyrms-corp is less open about the fomori's chances of being ripped apart by an angry werewolf, but then nobody really believes in honest advertising anymore.)

Pentex is a corporation, not an army; most subsidiary companies keep one to two First Team platoons for security and troubleshooting. Large or really important projects, however, like research facilities and deforestation plants, employ small armies of humans and fomori. Although some First Teams include Black Spiral Dancers, wicked vampires, and even corrupted magi, most fomori avoid these mad comrades in such close quarters. After all, who wants to trust a fucking *corpse* at your back?

The Acquisitions Division (see *Book of the Wyrms*, Chapter Two) makes the most use of First Teams, but each division employs these agents of mayhem. Public Relations uses Enticers to win folks over and tiny surgical strike teams when persuasion fails. Project Coordination uses First Teams as enforcers when ambitious or rebellious companies throw the Omega Plan off-schedule. Special Projects creates the mutants in the first place, and employs a few for lab security or "sensitive missions." The latter usually involve spy jobs or punishment for environmental activists. "It's amazing," says Dr. Von Hauser of the Aesop Research company, "how quickly animal-rights demonstrators disperse when a few of them get murdered in their sleep." Some scientists hire muscle to watch over facilities where botched or horribly-mutated fomori are kept, but



this is generally considered unwise; a fomor need not be Einstein to make the connection between her own condition and the abominations she helps restrain.

Discipline within the corps is harsh, as is the training these mutants receive. A constant stream of propaganda reinforces the idea that First Teams are superior to all other civilians or military units. At the same time, a smart First Teamer knows where his gear and assignments come from, and treats the other branches with strained civility. Although most fomori know deep down that they're cannon fodder, each one believes that his or her unit is the best to handle a given situation. Through subtle brainwashing, less-subtle browbeating, and generous bonus plans (which few First Teamers live to draw for long), Pentex's often human officers keep the troops in line. Mirrors, obviously, are damned rare in First Team quarters.

Team Sizes

- **Basic Team:** five members. Commanded by a sergeant.
- **Platoon:** 20 soldiers (four teams). Commanded by a lieutenant.
- **Company:** 80 (four platoons). Commanded by a captain.
- **Battalion:** 160 (two companies + an HQ platoon). Commanded by a colonel.

Life in a First Team

Military life depends on the First Team's station and purpose: an assault team in the Amazon will, by necessity, run under strict discipline, constant training and hair-trigger readiness. An inner-city retrieval Team, however, might live in a luxurious barracks doing nothing more stressful than occasional search-and-seizures and guard duty. ("Damn, those trespassers taste good.")

Generally, First Team members (human and fomor alike) awaken at a predetermined time; eat breakfast; attend propaganda sessions; exercise; train with their weapons, abilities and tactics; eat lunch; attend chores or duties; train some more; eat dinner; curl up with some propaganda or mind-warping entertainment; go to bed, and do the whole thing over again the next day. The routine varies by post, duty and commander, but stays as constant as any military regimen.

Assault Teams

Chosen for their capacity to inflict damage, Pentex assault teams fling ultraviolence at whatever target their commander suggests. Few "softies" are tough enough — or psychotic enough — to serve in such teams. The most twisted fomori often end up here, taking out their aggressions with firepower and corruption.

Discipline in such groups tends to be severe; a fuckup can cost objectives and lives. The rewards are pretty generous, too, to compensate for the risks. Assault teams get the best weaponry and the greatest leeway when called out to attack. Their mortality rates are high, but team morale usually stays high as well. These fomori consider themselves the baddest of the bad, and often act accordingly.

Assault teams often see action in contested areas — the Amazon front, the inner cities, special take-over locations, and areas suspected of heavy Garou activity. Small fireteams work as guards and enforcers for Pentex executives and project bases, but the real heavies are sent to battlegrounds where their powers and ferocity can be put to good use.

Ranger Teams

Selected for smarts over carnage, ranger team members scout problematic areas for enemy presence, hunt rogue fomori, investigate new companies for takeover possibilities, work as bodyguards and patrol outlying Pentex projects. Team members train themselves in specialized warfare, survival and tracking, information-gathering and interrogation, keep a high morale, and draw the best overall benefits of any First Team type.

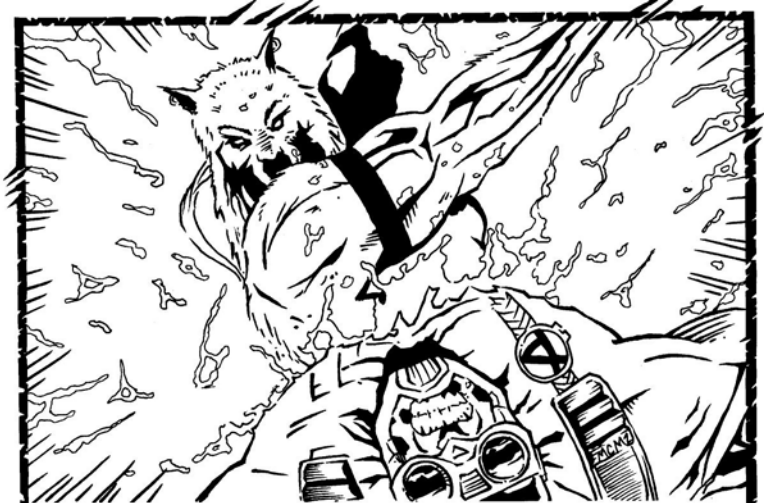
Although fomori dominate ranger teams, such groups are more "human-friendly" than the demented assault teams. Mutants within ranger teams often employ subtler powers than acidic vomit or armored skin. Most teams carry a variety of small arms and keep one heavy-firepower member as backup if necessary. As First Teams go, rangers tend to have an easier time than most; combat mortality is fairly low, discipline more forgiving, and camaraderie more substantial. Executives prefer dealing with the level-headed scouts to wrangling with support or assault personnel.

Support Teams

These teams soften or mop up contested areas, either through sabotage, demolition, infiltration or assassination, and provide cover, communication, supplies and information for troops in the field if need be. In warzones like the Amazon, support teams work as couriers, technicians and specialists. In more peaceful operations, they spy on, seduce and undermine targets inside and outside Pentex.

Support team duty covers a lot of ground; some members specialize in infiltration and subterfuge while others excel at covert destruction. The lowest support staff ranks clean up after their comrades' fights, maintaining Pentex security while finding good spots to dump the bodies. Fomori (and "softies") who piss their bosses off too often may find themselves on scrub detail.

Most support teamers operate on their own or with little supervision. Morale (and survival) within these Teams varies by assignment; custodians obviously resent their



miserable status and make their anger other peoples' problem whenever possible. Infiltration teams consider themselves the most glamorous among the tainted; many become insufferably smug or painfully secretive over time. Technicians and specialists behave as normally as fomori can be expected to, and often act as go-betweens for Team bosses and their surlier comrades. Benefits and status generally run below those of assault team members, but support staff tend to live longer.

Retrieval Teams

"Retrievers are a buncha fags!" about sums up other Teams' disgust for these specialists. Even so, these predominantly human kidnap squads keep Project Iliad staffed with prospects. Their job is to track, capture and indoctrinate new "wild" fomori to Pentex's ranks. This is not always as easy as it sounds.

These troops are trained in psychology, martial arts, stealth and tracking, and equipped with nonlethal weaponry and restraints — drugs, gasses, special vehicles, surveillance devices and fetishes. Their pay is low, but their survival odds are better than most. Retrievers draw a "soft" duty, and other Teams regard them with disdain. Even so, these teams must face down insane "wild" fomori, mundane legal authorities, and the occasional Garou, and get a ringside seat at their own damnation besides. Blowing things apart is easy compared to hunting down your

own kind and handing them over to certain torture. Many retriever fomori either crack or develop a superior attitude that gets them killed when they cross an assault trooper once too often....

Scientists

For the most part, freaks are not welcome in the science division. For one thing, the research there runs too close for comfort; even if a fomori didn't mind spending her time turning out monsters like herself, her coworkers would be, shall we say, less than trusting about her apparent sanity. Nevertheless, infiltrators and other sneaks find their way into the science department occasionally.

Most fomori working the science turf act as bodyguards for human researchers. These employees are watched heavily, which often stirs resentment on the tainted one's part. A few innocuous mutants masquerade as humans themselves to cause trouble, gather information, monitor certain individuals, or simply indulge their own curiosity or fetishes. Those who do discover how despised their kind truly are among those who create them.

Freak jokes. Fomori cartoons. Hostile gossip, contempt, and naked fear. These are the prizes of fomori who sneak into the clean halls of Pentex science. If discovered, an infiltrator would be caught and sent to a Section C facility



(see below); if she stayed hidden, the disgust which the "softies" view their subjects ("Little more than test animals, really") would drive most spies to murder or worse.

Even so, some rare fomori do work openly in the science labs. Although such researchers — respected and feared for their innate knowledge — help design the Bane-poisoned products that Pentex companies distribute, playing a lab-bound scientist would be an exercise in boredom.

Section C

The name of Pentex's "waste product" division may be a bad joke on somebody's part. More a catch-all phrase than an actual department, Section C describes the lockaway hells where the most warped fomori end their days. Freaks too demented, deformed or diseased to be of any use are herded to Section C dungeons and monitored by some of the most heartless scientists since the Nazi medical camps. There, these mad doctors conduct experiments too horrible to describe, documenting resilience factors, Bane possession thresholds, crossbreeding, pain receptivity and other interesting subjects. The results make their way to Iliad planning sessions, equipment design, research & development, and the private porn collections of the company's sickest executives.

Most fomori know of Section C more by reputation than through contact. Few scientists are stupid enough to employ fomori in Section C facilities, but every so often an especially sadistic mutant takes a post in one. These psychotic souls fuel their inner demons by tormenting their own kind, oblivious to the fact that sooner or later, they will follow their victims to the torturer's table.

Project Odyssey

Although most subjects of the Project Odyssey treatments (see *Book of the Wyrms*, pg. 34) are non-mutated psychics, some Bane gifts tap into the mind, not the body. Many researchers cannot tell the difference. Thus, a so-called "psychic" in Pentex's employ may be a very subtle fomori in disguise. So long as his powers and taints remain secret, this psychic employee can go further into the corporate ranks than a freak is supposed to be able to go.

Most psychic fomori, if they even realize what they truly are, will pretend to be normal for as long as possible. Getting your cover blown during such a masquerade can be fatal. Some Project Odyssey subjects, however, never accept what happened in the first place. ("What do you mean, I'm possessed by an evil spirit? Wake up, asshole, this is the 20th century!") Realizing the truth can be even pretty traumatic, especially if it involves worms, dementia, or bits of flesh falling off.

Executives

Few fomori join the executive branch unless they can pass for human. No Pentex supervisor wants the product of their warped agenda working in the office next door — who knows what she might slip into your coffee, what news she might leak, or what “friends” she might bring over from the Special Projects Division?

Naturally, human executives sneak fomori allies into rival departments and companies to infiltrate, disrupt and assassinate chosen targets. Nobody ever thinks it can happen to them.... Some fomori with very faint Wyrmpowers sneak themselves in and occasionally claw their way through the hierarchy without revealing their talents — at least not to anyone who lives. Thus, while the “official” fomor-occupied positions within Pentex are almost non-existent, more mutants walk the executive halls than anyone wants to admit.

Fomori with mental powers, or subtle physical ones, work best among the executive branch. A few well-chosen “flexes” can undermine a whole company. Some execs hire non-military enforcers with more overt manifesta-

tions of possession, but only a fool would let them get too close. Executive opportunities for fomori, then, are rare but not impossible to find.

Non-Pentex Fomori

The Wyrm-corporation does not corner the market on fomori; Banes possess plenty of folks who never see the inside of an Iliad laboratory. Some of these “wild” fomori get collected by retrieval teams; others find their way to Pentex labs through a sort of warped “homing instinct”; still others live on their own or in small communities, oblivious to Pentex’s existence.

Although they share many characteristics with their industry-grown brethren, most “wild” fomori lack the coherence, fellowship or purpose. Many simply go from victim to victim until they either fall apart or meet an enemy stronger than they are. The details of such “free agents” are left to the Storyteller and her players to decide — the possibilities are too numerous to explore.





ANSON '95

Chapter Six: Storytelling

*Bow down before the one you serve
You're going to get what you deserve*
— Nine Inch Nails, "Head Like a Hole"

Running a Fomori Chronicle

*There I was, completely wasting, out of work and down
All inside it's so frustrating as I drift from town to town
Feel as though nobody cares if I live or die
So I might as well begin to put some action in my life*
— Judas Priest, "Breaking the Law"

Sometimes it's a fun break to play the bad guys for a while; not the werewolves (although most of them would sooner gut a human than speak to him), but the Wyrmspawn who sicken even the Garou. One of roleplaying's advantages is the opportunity to confront those things within ourselves that we cannot — must not — act out in real life. By playing villains occasionally, we "keep the gators fed," as Stephen King says, and let the darkness out to play for a short while before putting it back where it belongs.

(That being said, let's never forget that fomori are foul Wyrmspawn, of course, but the humor will have a very sick edge even if they aren't terribly hip, and we offer them up to you as entertainment, not as role models. Just for the record, anyone who really wants to be a fomori is a sick puppy who needs to be put down.)

Fomori chronicles will be nasty, brutish and short. You can run a slapstick comedy game with these Wyrmspawn, of course, but the humor will have a very sick edge even if the characters use nothing more deadly than banana cream pies. Still, a game which features endless existential moaning about lost souls and gray morality would get boring quickly, and wouldn't be terribly appropriate for fomori, anyway. Fomori are visceral, not intellectual, and they react to their condition at the gut level. Such simple passions can be a lot of fun to play in the right context.

Troupe Purpose

Fortunately for the Storyteller, grouping fomori together under a common purpose is easy, especially if they all work for Pentex (see Chapter Five). Whether they work as a First Team, an infiltration unit, a pack of Freakfeet, or a disgruntled bunch of rejects, the player characters will share a common origin, agenda and similarly warped perspective.

What brought the group together? Did they emerge from the same Iliad batch? Are they a First Team with a specific purpose, or a troubleshooter squad with different talents? Do they have a common power, or did they become friends during an assignment? Are they rogues, and how much does Pentex know about them if they are? Any of these questions can supply the hook to get your chronicle started.

The trick here is to avoid becoming predictable. "Your captain gives you orders to attack so-and-so" can become as lame as "You all walk into this bar, see, and..." Decide who the group's friends, enemies, superiors and preferred targets are ahead of time; this will go a long way toward figuring out stories to run. A First Team whose leader has made an enemy in the assignments division is in the same boat, regardless of individual members' actions. Likewise, an infiltration team with a vampiric ally will have certain doors opened — and others bolted shut — that a group without such friends will never see.

Most fomori chronicles will be short, if for no reason other than attrition. With their brief life spans, the tainted ones take all relationships to heart. Every tie a fomori troupe makes — good or otherwise — will have some immediate impact.

Death

Fomori characters are gonna die. That's a given. Once your players understand that, the whole troupe can go wild. A well-honed sense of mortality can do wonders for a gaming group — with no "prize characters" to protect and no long-term "levels" to attain, you can all happily commit your characters to freeform suicide.

The heights of melodramatic weirdness that a fomori chronicle can attain balance out the earnestness of regular games. The fun lies not in climbing the ladder but in making the most of the downward slide.

Humanity

Psycho or not, the tainted ones are still human; their fate lends pathos and horror to what might otherwise be a carnage-fest. By playing up the human angle of your troupe's creations — the inability to get a date, visit your parents, or take a shit without corroding the toilet bowl — you can emphasize that even monsters retain their souls.

Every so often, if you wish, bring the troupe's humanity into play. What would it be like to rot from the inside out, to know that you were a fated agent of corruption with little or no hope of redemption? By reminding your players that these creatures were once normal humans like yourselves, you can extend a simple game session into an exploration of inner terror. (Please remember, once again, that this is angst-for-fun; if your players identify too closely with their favorite fomori, then for God's sake, take up Parcheesi or something equally safe.)

Out-level violation isn't an essential part of a fomori game; all the same, shifting the perspective around occasionally reminds a troupe that even devils have their stories to tell.

Story Types and Elements

Now these sick souls who rape the entire land

Live in a world, for the love of

Gore!

— Brainstorm, "Born to Kill"

The springboards below ought to be enough to jumpstart your creativity. Just pick the kind of game you want to run and brainstorm.

A sit-down game is easy — just pull the kind of story you want to play and go for it. Extended chronicles — however long they may last — demand a richer mix. For these, set up a simple framework and combine the elements of your choice. A splatterpunk shoot-'em-up can dovetail into a tragic romance or a superspy adventure with very little effort — add an intriguing bystander, a treacherous commander, a mysterious file, a Garou-instigated gang war or a nightmare to get the ball in play. Mixing elements is a lot of fun, and can keep a fomori chronicle entertaining way past the hack'n'slash saturation level.

Splatterpunk

Let's face it; fomori are gross. So why not have some fun with them? Call your friends together, throw some Judas Priest, White Zombie and Gwar on the CD player, invent the foulest fomori your warped little brains can imagine, and send them to hell laughing. There are worse ways to spend an evening.

This kind of story works well for pick-up games; pass around the character creation rules, put together a First Team, equip them well, and throw them into situations of maximum carnage. Such games won't often feature deep themes, but what the hell. Have fun — award a prize (like a package of Gak or a really cool Pez) for the foulest fomori, revel in graphic carnage descriptions ("His brain spews to the winds as my chainsaw rips through his greasy head!"), and see who dies the coolest death. Beer and pretzels, Black Dog style.

Splatterpunk games are generally run for laughs, not for angst. Obviously, this kind of gaming plays up to all the worst RPG stereotypes. Don't run splatterpunk tales when grandma comes to visit. Live-action variants are not recommended.

- Yes, that's right, your group's been stationed at the Amazon front. Those damned werethings have been making hash out of your buddies, so turn the fuckers into hamburger! The C.O.'s got data on their base of operations, requisition's got some hot new ordnance, and the regional board wants the Garou menace stomped out ASAP. Between you and them lies a jungle teeming with hostiles, natural traps, and wercat guerrillas. Let's rock-n-roll!

- The local gangboss won't listen to reason; Pentex made him a nice offer for a share of the action, but he sent the goodwill party back in pieces. This breach of etiquette cannot go unrewarded, of course, so the player Team has been sent in to teach every gang in town that rudeness will not be ignored. The targets have numbers, scouts, heavy weapons and familiar ground. The First Team has...well, imagine *Pulp Fiction* with Wyrms powers. Wheee!

Romance

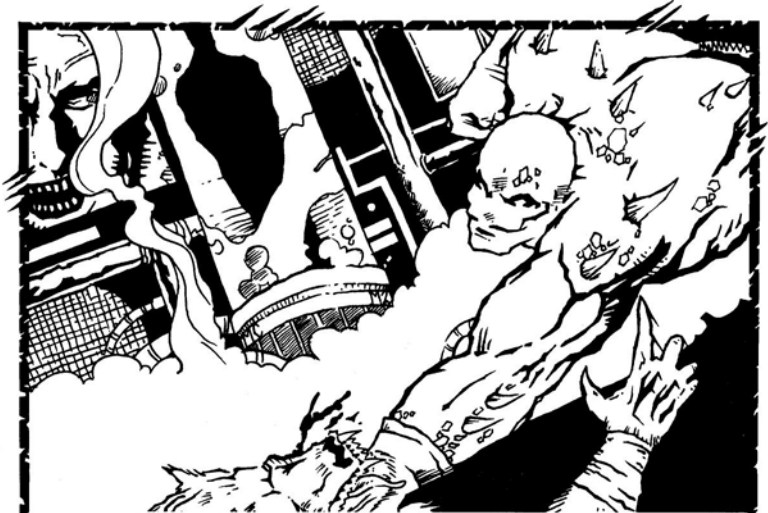
Romance? With *fomori*? Yeechh! The tainted *are* still people, though, and fall in love (or lust) despite their mutant state. Given the subtle — and occasionally enticing — nature of some *fomori* powers, there's no reason why a normal human cannot sometimes reciprocate these feelings. In most cases, however, a *fomor* in love resembles Quasimodo — banished forever from normal companionship, no matter how he behaves.

Fomor love can take many forms (so to speak); perhaps the character in question has hideous deformities and a crush on a normal Pentex employee or a complete innocent. What might the mutant do to acquire her (or his) love? Kidnap the person? Watch his beloved from afar? Try to defect and atone for his misdeeds? Perhaps the *fomor* in question is an Enticer or has some other "subtle" powers; how might she approach someone she actually likes? What if the smitten character is a Storyteller "softie" (or another *fomor*) and the *player* wants nothing to do with her? Many complications are possible.

Sexual attraction has a nasty flip side, too; *fomori*, Wyrms-bent as they are, may not take rejection well at all. What happens if a *fomor* hurts — or worse — someone she has genuine feelings for? Depending on the troupe, variations on a romance theme could be touching, comedic, or downright sick.

- The new member of the Team is pretty hot — too bad he's a "softie." Despite the shit the others put the new guy through, he stands up and works hard. One character develops an attachment for the new guy that goes beyond camaraderie; what happens from there is up to the troupe.





The player involved could be either the new guy or the fomor who's attracted to him. Complications could include orientation — are they both the same sex? If not, are they both gay, or do they have a problem with the situation? Either way, is the attraction mutual? If so, might a third party develop an interest as well? And then there's the freak angle — would the new guy be repulsed? If so, how will the "lover" react...?

- A normal-seeming infiltrator works her way into a Garou's confidence and soon learns to respect his ways. She's supposed to subvert her target, but falls in love with him instead. Now what? Her superiors — and perhaps the other members of her First Team — want to know why the target hasn't turned to the Wyrn, and the Garou's pack senses something...wrong...with their comrade's new girlfriend. Will the target reciprocate the fomor's feelings, and if so, what will happen to them both?

War with the Beasts

Remember *Predator*? Or *Aliens*? That sweaty, claustrophobic feeling that *something* is ready to leap from the shadows and shred you before you can even do anything but scream? The suspense of knowing that violence could come howling around the corner at any moment; the drip-drip-drip of water echoing in the dark tunnels where death waits, licking its chops? Welcome to the Wyrn's side of the Apocalypse, where fomori push back the werewolves' last stand.

Imagine what it's like to work for Pentex — for the corporation that wants to bring a new start for humanity, that battles those primal monsters which threaten to drag us all back to the days of jungle law. Imagine what it's like to see your partners mangled, torn apart, eaten alive by slaying nine-foot beasts. Most First Teams are proud to battle the monsters, to stomp those shapeshifting sons of bitches into the toxic waste where they belong. This war takes no prisoners — it's brutal, terrifying, and, from the fomori's standpoint, totally necessary.

Many of these tales resemble the splatterpunk ones, but emphasize terror over carnage and atmosphere over bloodlust. Fomori aren't fearlessly stupid — they know werewolves can kick their asses, and don't really want to die. Such war stories invert the usual "good guy Garou" perspective and offer a harrowing look at what it's like on the other side of the claws.

- Once again, we find ourselves in the Amazon — a steaming jungle ripe with menace. When a First Team finds itself cut off from HQ, they must fight their way out or die screaming. Think *Deliverance*, *Platoon*, *The Wild Geese* and *Southern Comfort* and you'll be off to a good start.

- Glass Walkers have cut the power. The city is burning, and the wolves are quite literally at the door. Inside their warehouse, office or factory, the First Teams wage a blackout battle with looters, Garou, and their own shadows in an endless urban night.

Paranoid Politics

As Chapter Five shows, Pentex has many uses for its freaks. Some include infiltration, sabotage and other covert activities, and there's no guarantee that the party you're working for acts in your best interests. Lone fomori who creep into places they're not supposed to visit have even greater adventures — the price of capture is even worse than death.

These stories have lots of potential, from bizarre super-spy missions (James Bond with webbing!) to suspenseful undercover work. They also have excellent single-player possibilities. As a Storyteller, you should write up a "who's doing what to whom" sheet to keep track of the people the players encounter, their motivations, and their true allegiances. Establish a goal and obstacles between the troupe and the objective. Work heavily with atmosphere and keep your players guessing. Who does the boss really work for? Why? Is this a setup, and if so, what'll happen when the mission's over?

Dropping hints about the shifting corporate politics also adds a nice edge to other story types. What about that enemy in acquisitions? Who's this new "friend" of the captain — the one who only comes around after dark? What's screaming in the restricted area in the sub-basement? And how did those furballs know where the Team was going to be last mission? Hostile takeovers, deep-cover missions, assassinations, changes of fortune, and other "quiet" kinds of stories lend themselves well to a paranoid atmosphere.

- While running undercover in a scientific lab, a fomori discovers another infiltrator — possibly a Garou, a mage, or some other off-limits supernatural being. Exposing that spy's true nature would compromise the character's cover; if she doesn't act, however, the rival could do serious damage to Pentex — or reveal the player's own surveillance. Whatever is done must be done quietly — and quickly, because the other spy just dug up some potentially lethal secrets....

- The last few missions have gone poorly; equipment has been shoddy, data has been wrong, reinforcements never showed up, and the captain's acting funny. Who's screwing around with your team? And why? Sarge went looking for answers, and the players haven't seen him since. Rumor has it he's been sent to Section C. You can't just go barging in after him — the whole thing could be a trap to send the entire Team to the pits. Any move you make could be reported before anything's accomplished — it's happened before. Where will you go if you free the Sarge? And what condition will he be in if you do?

Tragedy

The tragic aspect of Bane possession is pretty obvious; it can also be very easily done to death. Perpetual angst does not suit the tainted ones well. All the same, the humanity of the freak shouldn't be completely forgotten in a long-running game.

Who were these fomori before the Wyrms destroyed their lives? What do they remember, desire or regret? What might happen if they were to be confronted, in a bigger way than usual, with the horrors that they have become? Would it sober them up, or drive them further into the darkness? By deciding the things that were important (or even trivial) to some given character, the Storyteller can remind the player of the price tag on her fomori's powers.

- Pentex isolates its powerful freaks for a reason — the truly deformed ones cannot pass for normal. The separation also helps the Wyrms-corp brainwash its employees, cutting them off from their past and denying them a future outside Pentex. Such quarantines do not always work. What happens if, during a mission, some fomori sees a child who reminds him of his old life — his own son, perhaps, or a boy who resembles the fomori during his own childhood? Will he pursue the boy, or remember him fondly long after the incident passes? If he follows the child, what might his intentions be? To preserve its innocence, or to demolish it?

- Even fomori have breaking points; what happens if one receives orders that demand some atrocity she cannot forget? Does she do it anyway (and regret it), or is she paralyzed by her remaining decency? What might happen if she refused to act? She'd probably survive the punishment, but she'd be watched. Perhaps this crisis begins a breakdown of Pentex's conditioning, or leads her into conflict with the Bane within her. What then?

Redemption

Can fomori be saved? Can one throw off the Wyrms-taint and die redeemed? The ultimate answer lies with you, the Storyteller, but if there is some path beyond corruption, it will be hard to find, much less to follow.

Roleplaying the conflict between decay and decency can be an emotional and perhaps rewarding stretch. Acting like a freak is easy; the struggle to be more than a monster lends a fomori a bent nobility. It's not an easy fight — the mutant would probably die in the process. To die without damnation, however, would be worth the battle — if it could occur.

- Some character of great faith meets a fomori who has begun to have doubts about his profession. What epiphanies could she inspire? What if the fomori were ordered to kill that person, or fell in love with her? Would she follow through, or refuse and suffer internal and external punishment?

- Gaia cannot be denied; during a deforestation project or poisoning raid, you have a vision of the Earth Mother, God, or some other incarnation of creation, weeping. The experience shatters your resolve — perhaps something exists beyond hatred, cash and violence. To pursue this vision, you must defect; to do this will mean a fugitive run, with a horrible death at the either end. Would your character follow the vision, or wonder about it for the rest of her life?



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Appendix: The Wound Within (Banes)

Given here are many of the Banes expert in possessing humans and turning them into fomori. Even though a Bane is fused with its host once it has fully possessed him, and is thus no longer a free Bane, their Traits are given here for Storytellers to use in encounters with Garou. At anytime before full possession, a Garou can slip into the Umbra and attack the possessing Bane. If he kills it or chases it away, the process of possession is ended. Another victory for Gaia — at least, for now...

Blood Banes

These repulsive Banes look like nothing so much as rotting bags of pus covered with blood. Servants of the Eater-of-Souls aspect of the Wyrn, these wretched spirits spend most of their time seeking out blights, cesspits, toxic waste dumps, slums and illegal sites where tainted hospital equipment (like disposable needles) is dumped. In short, they gather anywhere that there is a chance of acquiring disease. They feed on both the disease itself and on the pain and suffering caused to those whom they make ill. Project Iliad has found a use for these walking epidemics and is now utilizing them to create Blood Hounds (disease carrying fomori) from vampires.

Rage 6, Gnosis 5, Willpower 6, Power 20

Charms: Airt Sense, Possession

Breeder Bane

This hideous creature is little more than a walking womb. The Breeder will Materialize and rape a human as he sleeps, using potent charms to make the victim believe it was nothing more than a harmless dream. If the victim is male, the Breeder gains his semen; if the victim is female, the Breeder extracts the eggs it has impregnated. The Breeder then retreats to the Umbra, where it lets its new lifeform gestate in its transparent womb-sac. It Materializes again to birth a Ferectoi (see Chapter Two) in the physical realm.

Rage 5, Gnosis 6, Willpower 5, Power 25

Charms: Airt Sense, Breeding Trance (Power cost: 5; the sleeping victim of this trance is raped but believes it was all just a dream once he awakens later), Materialize (Power cost: 9; Str 2, Dex 2, Sta 2, Stealth 5, Health: 7)

Howling Insanities

These Banes are almost formless. Nearly invisible, they float through the air creating sounds like demented howling and screaming. They were among those servants of the Wyrn who corrupted the White Howlers, and they tend to gather in Hellholes awaiting victims. They feed upon the insanity which they cause in their victims, stripping away their hosts' intelligence little by little. Project Iliad

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has standardized a particular type of fomori created when Garou bond with Howling Insanities; they are known as Howling Shamblers.

Rage 7, Gnosis 6, Willpower 7, Power 20

Charms: Airt Sense, Corruption, Possession

Mind Feeders

Feeders are black, shadowy Banes that are almost unnoticeable in shadow or darkness except for their three yellowish glowing eyes. Mind Feeders have existed for as long as sentient creatures have walked the Earth, but they have only recently broken their secretive manipulations of individuals and become part of Project Aeneid. Some people speculate that Mind Feeders first stimulated human brains, resulting in the creation of psychics and that this connection to corruption is why psychic powers awakened under torture or extreme privation are usually stronger. Mind Feeders bond best with psychics, though they will accept any hosts with high intelligence.

Rage 4, Gnosis 5, Willpower 8, Power 20

Charms: Airt Sense, Corruption (Feeders gain 1 Power point every time one of their prey acts on their dark suggestions), Possession

Scavenger Pack

Scavenger Packs are colonies of lower animals possessed by a Bane. The Bane uses the animals as a physical extension of itself to possess higher animals (humans). Scavenger Pack Banes are not particularly powerful, and are thus only able to possess the weak, the sick or the dying. The pack may also possess the dead, but fomori created this way must take the Taint: Rotting. Often a Scavenger Pack will approach an ally to help them procure a body, in return for later services. The intelligence of the Bane is spread throughout the colony, but is centered in only one of its members. If the colony leader is killed, the pack is dispersed, and the Bane dematerializes. Scavenger Packs can create fomori from bodies that have been in large measure, physically hollowed out (about 50% of internal organs missing).

Scavenger Packs travel through both the physical world and the Umbra in search of the dead or dying. The Bane will use the specialty Charm: Prolonged Dying to delay the victim's death. Once the Bane has fully possessed the creature it may use the Charm: Healing to heal up all physical damage to the body. This power may only be used at the time of the initial possession.

Scavenger Packs appear as a group of whatever kind of animal the Bane has possessed. Upon close inspection, the individual members of the pack always appear as rather corrupted examples of the species (rats are particularly mangy, snakes have large patches of missing scales, etc.). Scavenger Packs are always made up of creatures that are small enough to squeeze into a human body without causing it too much additional damage (no Elephant Men, sorry).

Rage 4, Gnosis 6, Willpower 4, Power 20

Charms: Airt Sense, Healing, Materialize (Power cost: 11; Str 1, Dex 4, Sta 2, Stealth 5, Bite: Str +1, Health: 7; the Bane can only Materialize through animal proxies; if none are available, this Charm cannot be used), Possession, Prolonged Dying

Serpent Fathers

Serpent Fathers are Banes summoned by the rites of the Serpent Brotherhood. They possess their targets (the boys of the Serpent Brotherhood scouting orders; see Chapter Three) through the scarification and mixing of blood the boys engage in at their rites. These Banes are kin to the Breeder Banes, whom they address as "cousin." They glory in the youth and vigor of their human hosts.

Serpent Fathers are unique in that they possess more than one person at a time, usually an entire Brotherhood scout troop (three to six boys). They appear solely as a gleam in the eye of an attractive, athletic young man with encyclopedic knowledge of the wilderness and the supernatural. If they are visible at all, it is as a serpent-like appendage hanging between the host's thighs. Killing one of the hosts will not destroy the Bane; it will live on in the other hosts.

These Banes are actually Wyrms-corrupted Weaver spirits. The Spartan phratrises, medieval knights' brotherhoods, and Anglo-Saxon frankpledges turned to such spirits of bonding to join themselves together. The Serpent Fathers are wily and will steer their human hosts out of trouble as long as they can.

Rage 4, Gnosis 5, Willpower 7, Power 25

Charms: Corruption, Healing, Possession, Tracking

Typhon's Brood

Typhon is a Wyrms-thing familiar from Greek mythology. His brood are the spirits who make his evil manifest on the Earth. Uniting with human hosts, they create for Typhon an earthly body made of the fraternity who are his sons (see Sons of Typhon in Chapter Three), as many-headed and many-winged as Typhon was of old.

The Typhon-get are very rarely found outside their human hosts, who are usually stereotypical party-vegetable frat boys. When they do appear, they are man-shaped things covered with bat wings and hissing snakes.

The Typhon-spawn have been a source of horror and corruption for millennia. The animals and people that they infest become monsters. It is a point of pride with these things to get away with as much evil as possible before leaving one human host for another. This is a weak point. Often their wish to top another's achievements will lead them to deeds that can't be covered up. They are kin to the Breeder Banes, who, like them, refer to the Defiler Wyrms as Our Father Below.

Rage 7, Willpower 7, Gnosis 8, Power 20

Charms: Airt Sense, Corruption, Possession

Break Region:

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Name:
Player:
Chronicle:

Nature:
Demeanor:
Breed:

Rank:
First Team:
Concept:

Attributes

Physical

Strength _____ ●0000
Dexterity _____ ●0000
Stamina _____ ●0000

Social

Charisma _____ ●0000
Manipulation _____ ●0000
Appearance _____ ●0000

Mental

Perception _____ ●0000
Intelligence _____ ●0000
Wits _____ ●0000

Abilities

Talents

Alertness _____ 00000
Athletics _____ 00000
Brawl _____ 00000
Dodge _____ 00000
Empathy _____ 00000
Expression _____ 00000
Intimidation _____ 00000
Leadership _____ 00000
Streetwise _____ 00000
Subterfuge _____ 00000

Skills

Animal Ken _____ 00000
Drive _____ 00000
Etiquette _____ 00000
Firearms _____ 00000
Melee _____ 00000
Performance _____ 00000
Repair _____ 00000
Security _____ 00000
Stealth _____ 00000
Survival _____ 00000

Knowledges

Bureaucracy _____ 00000
Computer _____ 00000
Enigmas _____ 00000
Investigation _____ 00000
Law _____ 00000
Linguistics _____ 00000
Medicine _____ 00000
Occult _____ 00000
Politics _____ 00000
Science _____ 00000

Advantages

Powers

Backgrounds

_____ 00000
_____ 00000
_____ 00000
_____ 00000
_____ 00000
_____ 00000

Other Traits

_____ 00000
_____ 00000
_____ 00000
_____ 00000
_____ 00000
_____ 00000

Rage

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Gnosis

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Willpower

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Health

Bruised
Hurt -1
Injured -1
Wounded -2
Mauled -2
Crippled -5
Incapacitated

Taints

Experience

Break Region:

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Merits & Flaws

Merit	Type	Cost

Description

Age _____ Height _____

Hair _____ Weight _____

Eyes _____ Race _____

Sex _____ Nationality _____

History

Recruitment _____

Possession _____

Transformation _____

Present _____

Equipment

Gear (carried)

Possessions (owned)

Fetishes

Item: _____ Level _____ Gnosis _____

Item: _____ Level _____ Gnosis _____

Item: _____ Level _____ Gnosis _____

Item: _____ Level _____ Gnosis _____

Power/Weapon	Cost	Roll	Difficulty	Damage	Range	Rate	Clip	Conceal	Rank

Brawling Chart

Manuever	Roll	Diff	Damage
Bite	Dex+Brawl	5	Strength+1†
Body Slam	Dex+Brawl	7	Special
Claw	Dex+Brawl	6	Strength+2†
Gore	Dex+Brawl	7	Strength+2(+4)
Grapple	Dex+Brawl	6	Strength
Kick	Dex+Brawl	7	Strength+1
Punch	Dex+Brawl	6	Strength

†These Manuevers do aggravated damage

P - Pocket

J - Jacket

T - Trenchcoat

N - No concealment

THE BEATING THAT MADE A MAN OUT OF MARK!



30 DAYS LATER...



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Dr. Samuel D. Veridian

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— COL. OLIVER NORTH

"DR. VERIDIAN, YOU'RE A BOSS! THANK YOU!"

— PATRICIA PULLING

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NAME _____ APT. # _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____
 FAVORITE FOOD _____

Freak Legion™

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