

TERRITORIES™

the World of Darkness®

WEREWOLF
THE FORSAKEN™

TERRITORIES™



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WORLD OF DARKNESS CREATED BY MARK REIN-HAGEN

HOMECOMING

The werewolves watched from the brush, covered in the foliage. They stood still and silent. The people laughed, hitched their packs onto their backs and talked about what they hoped to accomplish that weekend.

From a place that neither werewolf nor human could see, the spirits scrambled for their homes. The tree-spirits fastened their roots tightly to the soil, while the spirits of rabbit, squirrel, fox and bird fled to their dens. They knew what was coming. They had seen the spirits of greed flocking along with the humans, and had watched as murder-spirits, tiny red-brown creatures with hummingbird-like wings and sharp bat-teeth, clung to the brush near the werewolves.

One of the humans glanced to her left and cocked her head. She walked off the path toward the thick tangle of bushes where the werewolves lurked. Looking down at the plants, she ran her fingers across the leaves. Her fingers came back wet, sticky and red.

• • •

“Hey, Mike.” Judy turned and looked back at her boyfriend. “This look like blood to you?”

Mike trudged through the calf-high ground cover. Brambles cut at his shins. He was sorely regretting not wearing jeans. He looked down at Judy’s hand and then at the leaves she indicated. “Yeah, it does.”

“What from? You think someone’s hurt?”

Mike shrugged. “Probably a deer got bit or shot or something.” He looked around as though expecting to see a trail or even a wounded animal, but, quietly, he admitted that if it weren’t for the path leading back to the parking lot, he’d never find his way out of the forest. “Come on. We need to set up our tent before the Evening Fire tonight.”

Judy wiped her hand on the bandana hanging out of her pocket and followed him back to the path. She loved hiking and camping, and if this was the only way she’d get Mike into the woods, she could cope with a weekend of self-help blather.

Still... the blood bothered her. She wasn’t sure why. She had seen dead animals in the forest before, and Mike’s guess about a deer being injured made sense. But the blood had felt *warm*, as though it was fresh from an open vein. She looked back at the spot and thought she saw something move. Judy shuddered, and hurried to catch up with the others.

• • •

The werewolves withdrew, slinking through the brush and the shadows down a hill that human feet would have been hardpressed to traverse. They leaped across a shallow stream onto a sandy bank and took their birth forms.

“Tuck, you’re an idiot,” one of them said flatly.

Tucker adjusted his shirt. It was dirty. He didn’t understand how it could be clean before he changed shape and dirty afterwards, but there it was. “Screw you.”

“No, really,” she pressed. She stood up and stretched, and then crouched down to the stream. The wound on her left arm was healing nicely. She had nearly died in the fight with the thicket-spirit, but this wound was all that remained. She washed it in the stream and dug at the scab a bit. She hoped it would scar. “You didn’t think to check if anybody had the site reserved for this weekend?”

“Goddamn it, Shelly. I am not the only one who could have done that. I have been working my ass off to get ready for this. You could have checked, K.C. could have checked...”

A rather plump black man, lying on his back with his hands over his face, snorted. "Leave me out of this. You know I think everything's fine here the way it is."

Tucker waved a hand at him. "You're wrong, but that's nothing new. And it doesn't matter what you think. Crim agrees with me, and we're doing this. Tonight." He kicked a bit of sand at K.C. "Unless you'd like to argue with her about it."

K.C. gave a noncommittal grunt. He had argued with their alpha before, and come out the worse for it. He moved his hands and looked around the forest. This place was *fine*, he didn't know what the others were grousing about. Something about the Shadow, probably, but he'd be just as happy never going there again. What difference if a few spirits wanted to eat each other?

The three of them waited there. Crimson would be joining them soon. The forest noises echoed around them, interrupted every so often by the whoops and laughter of the humans.

"Don't know how we're going to do this with all those idiots out there," muttered Shelly. She ran her hand through her hair, feeling for the gash on her scalp. It was already gone. She sighed with disappointment.

"Gotta be tonight, huh?" muttered K.C.

Tucker just shook his head.

• • •

Crimson had been born Renate Long. She hated her name. She was black, but the name was German. She didn't know where her mother had heard it or why her father had capitulated, because they had both died before she was three days old. The hospital had burned, and she had been one of a handful to live through the fire.

She lived with her aunt and uncle, went to college for a month, then took her student loan money and left. She was living on the road, playing guitar on the street for extra cash, when the Change hit. She'd been in a New York subway station when it had happened, and when she came to, there was nothing but thick blood all around. *Crimson* had been her first thought, and so she took that name.

Crimson hated the woods at first. She'd grown up in the city, but ever since the Change she'd dreamed of the trees. She'd traveled out here to God's nowhere in hopes of figuring out what the hell the dreams meant, but she'd found the pack in-

stead. Maybe that *was* what they meant. She'd long ago decided that some Cahalith dream and some sing, and she wasn't a dreamer, thanks anyway.

She was in human form, standing the parking lot, running a pick through her hair. She'd been reading the pamphlet these crackers were handing out to other campers, something about a "forest seminar to reconnect with *who you truly are*." The pamphlet mentioned firewalking. It talked about losing all fear. Crimson read that, and her hands started to shake with Rage.

Fear tonight, she thought. Fear the moon.

• • •

Judy stood in front of a tree, a wooden arrow pressed against her throat. She took a step forward, felt a pinch of pain in her jugular notch, and then watched the arrow break. *This is really fucking stupid*, she thought.

All around her, other participants were exulting in their "triumph over fear." She heard someone say that he was ready to be a man now, not just a boy. She turned and looked at him. He looked about 30. Rolling her eyes, she looked around for Mike. He was still trying to work up the guts to step forward and break his arrow.

She walked over and shoved him lightly. The arrow snapped. He gave a yelp of surprise. Judy put a hand on his shoulder and whispered, "Mike, this is stupid. These are flimsy wooden arrows. What does this prove?"

He turned on her with that smug look he got when he talked about his latest self-help discovery. "It's about conquering fear," he said. "You step into danger, and then you break it. You put all your fear into that arrow and watch as you just walk through it."

Judy rubbed her temples. "But there's *no danger*. If the arrows had points, that would be dangerous."

Mike looked down and smiled. "Not all danger is danger you can see."

Judy shoved him lightly. "You're so full of shit. I'm gonna go grab some water. Want one?"

Mike nodded and grabbed a fresh arrow off the pile. All of the broken arrows would eventually be burned for the firewalking ceremony tonight. All of their fears would go up in smoke. Mike didn't consider himself a spiritual guy, but he liked the idea of burning up his fear.

Judy, meanwhile, pulled a bottle of water out of an ice-filled cooler. The water was part of the

fee for this seminar, otherwise she would never have stooped to drinking it. She took a long swig and then spit it out, retching. One of the seminar mods, an athletic man named Mr. Greene, looked over. "You OK?"

She spit again. "The water, it tastes like..." She looked down. It was just water. "Weird," she said. "Tastes weird."

Greene shrugged and went back to guiding arrows into people's throats. Judy suspected that the word had already gotten around about her. She hadn't chanted much during their Opening Circle, and Mike had said something to the seminar leader shortly thereafter. She wasn't concerned about that, though.

She took another sip of the water, carefully, and swished it between her teeth. It still tasted like blood.

• • •

The sun was beginning to set. The spirits flocked to the locus, and found people there. The locus was a stone in the center of the fire pit, a stone that had once been used to split the skull of an escaped slave crossing through this forest. The stone had been used to kill a child guilty of nothing but bastardry. The stone had cut the hands of a hundred campers as they tried to light fires here. The stone had decided it liked blood, and the spirits came here to feed every night.

Some of the spirits, curious about the humans, thought of crossing the Gauntlet. None of the spirits did. The werewolves were watching. They were *always* watching. The spirits remembered when one of them had slipped through the locus into Twilight and latched onto the body of a pet dog. One of the werewolves — the spirits didn't know her name, but in their tongue they called her *Sa Kul* — pounced on the dog and tore it to pieces. When the spirit fled back to the locus, the spirit found *Sa Kul's* pack waiting for it.

The spirits waited near the locus. The tiny red murder-spirits began to arrive, drawn to the promise of blood and death like the gnats to the humans' fire. The spirits crouched under trees and watched through the smoky, hazy lens of the blood-stone locus, now heated red by the fire atop it. Years of drinking its Essence had made even the squirrel-spirits a bit bloodthirsty, and as the gibbous moon rose, tinged with the ash of the fires, the spirits knew they would see blood tonight.

• • •

"I cannot believe what you're asking us to do." Tucker shifted his weight nervously.

"Ain't asking," Crimson was squatting behind a tree, taking a piss. Normally, she'd shift to wolf form for that, but she wanted to keep talking, and she didn't have a good handle on the First Tongue. "There must be 50 people."

"I don't give a shit, Tucker. You said this needed to be done. You said tonight was the night." She licked her lips. "Tonight is the night," she whispered.

Tucker looked helplessly at Shelly and K.C. Neither of them spoke. Shelly picked at the gash on her arm again and pulled out a thorn covered in blood and fat. K.C. just looked at his shoes. "Crim, don't you think someone's going to *notice* if we kill 50 people?"

Crimson stood and pulled up her weathered cutoffs. She walked around the tree to face her packmate. She could feel the moon rising, and it made her skin itch. She wanted to howl, to run, to fight and fuck and, most of all, to kill. She felt she could kill those people herself.

She took a deep breath and smelled the campfire smoke on the wind. It was pleasant — the humans had at least refrained from using lighter fluid. "They aren't going to turn up dead," she said. "We're going to drag them into the Shadow, one at a time, and let them go. *Then* we'll kill them." She stared past Tucker, off into the trees. "The stone's going to grow. I know it."

K.C. shuddered. "Shit, I don't want that thing to grow. It's already —"

Crimson pounced, her slim body swelling to the red-furred nightmare of her Urshul form. She pinned her packmate to the ground and snarled. "*Grows tonight*," she managed, calling on what little she knew of the *Uremehir*. "*Grows with blood and pain*." She let him up, and he slowly clambered to his feet. She took her birth form again.

Tucker walked behind Crimson and said softly, "You know it doesn't matter if we skip this tonight. We've been working at it. The Shadow's ready to change for us. We can finish it when they've gone."

The alpha turned on him. "I had a dream, Tucker," she rasped. "I dreamed of these assholes, I dreamed of them cutting themselves with plastic swords and breaking twigs but pretending they were solid wood. I dreamed of them setting fires and waving their hands through the smoke, and

pretending it made them brave. You know what I saw then?" Tucker shook his head, mouth open. His alpha *never* talked about her dreams. "I saw one of us rise up from the middle of the crowd, and she said *'I'll show you fear,'* and she reached out and started tearing them to pieces."

Crimson stepped back and addressed all three of them. "We'll take them into the Shadow, and we'll kill them there. We'll put out the fire with their blood and grind their bones down to sand. And then you" — she pointed at Tucker — "will say your words and finish the rite." She nodded, slowly at first, then vigorously. "Meet at the north end of the campsite in two hours. We'll start then. Then the forest will be what we want."

"What *you* want," whispered Tucker, but if Crimson heard, she didn't turn around.

• • •

The humans had raked the coals from their fires into a long strip. The leaders of the seminar had already strewn the path with several bags of dirt so as to avoid a brushfire. Now, the humans took turns walking across the coals.

Judy stood off to the side and watched. She hadn't walked yet, and was rather hoping she wouldn't have to. Not because she was afraid — quite the opposite. She knew that walking across wood coals wasn't likely to burn anyone's feet, and watched in mild amusement as the people stumbled across the coals as though they were performing miracles.

Mike, who had already walked the coals and jumped triumphantly into the trough of water at the end, came up to her. "Are you ready to do this?"

She looked at him with what she thought was a smirk, but he just looked frightened. "You do know that this isn't a big deal, right? You're not going to get hurt unless you stand still for a minute."

He coughed and looked at the ground. "Judy, I don't know what's the matter —"

"*Nothing is the matter,*" she snapped.

He looked up sharply. "Jesus. See, this is what I mean. You've been snapping at me like this every night this month."

Judy's eyes narrowed. "You're crazy," she hissed. "We've been fucking like rabbits every night this month."

"Yeah, that, too," he said. "But I feel like you're going to kill me as soon as we're finished. I don't know what the hell's wrong —"

"OK, Judy, your turn!" Greene had wandered over and grabbed Judy's shoulders, gently pushing her toward the coals. He didn't notice that Judy was panting slightly, or that her eyes had taken on an odd yellow cast. He'd probably have thought it was the moonlight, anyway.

• • •

Crimson was standing between the trees near the clearing that the seminar was using as their campsite. She gazed hungrily at the throngs of people. It would be difficult, she knew, to pull them all into the Shadow. She would kill the strongest and fastest here and take their bodies into the spirit wilds, then hunt down the others. She felt a string of drool roll down her chin. *Oh, yes,* she thought. *Just like the dream.*

Tucker was trying to find his voice. *This is wrong,* his mind kept screaming. *This is so wrong!* The hunter in him agreed. Hunting humans like this, for no reason, would only bring retribution, from other humans, other Uratha, even from the spirits. He considered terminating the rite, reversing all of the progress they'd made over the past few months... but could he even do that? Would the Shadow change to fit what they had wrought even without his entreaties now?

Shelly looked in disappointment at her arm. No scars. She *never* scarred anymore, no matter what she fought, no matter what bit her. She suspected silver would leave a scar, but she was too afraid to try. Maybe after the forest became bloody and vicious, all over instead of just at the locus, maybe then it would attract something strong enough to mark her.

K.C. stood a short way off from his pack. Like Tucker, he knew this was wrong, but he had seen the hungry look in his alpha's eyes and wanted to stay as far from her as possible. *I hate this place,* he thought. *I hate that rock. I hate those fucking spirits.*

Crimson glanced up and saw the moon. She felt strength course through her, and she threw back her head and screamed in joy, beginning the hunt.

• • •

Judy stood at the front of the path of coals. She felt heat. Smelled burning wood. Smelled sweat. Heard chanting. Saw light, fire, screaming faces, Mike's fear. Smelled... blood. Blood crackling and boiling on a heated stone.

She looked up and saw the gibbous moon, and heard... a howl. No, a scream. A loud, ecstatic



scream, the beginning of something, the jumping-off point of something hungry. The longest orgasm she'd ever heard. A tearful entreaty to something she'd never known.

She took a step, and stopped. She felt the coals begin to burn her feet, slowly, the pain rising up through the soles of her feet.

Greene reached out to grab her. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Keep walking."

Judy turned to him and picked him up by the jaw. She smelled burning hair, heard her clothes tearing. "I'll show you fear," she said, but the words came out slurred into a snarl.

• • •

The werewolves leapt from their hiding places and charged at the assembled humans... but they were already screaming in fear. Crimson looked around wildly, trying to figure out what was causing their panic. *It's not me*, she thought, and this realization stung. Tucker ran up behind her wearing the Urhan form and whined in confusion.

Then the pack heard the howl. It rose up from the clearing, drowned out the sounds of screaming humans, the night sounds of the forest, the crackling of the fire. The howl saturated the forest, turning every tree, leaf and twig to its haunting resonance. The howl chased the humans as they fled into the trees, falling down into the deep valley and slashing their flesh on the thickets. They looked back, trying to identify the beast behind them, but there was nothing but the howl.

Judy stood on the coals, now almost nine feet tall. She was covered in brown fur and lifted massive, muscular arms to the moon. She held in her claws Greene's lifeless body, and her lips were stained with his heart's blood.

The other four werewolves approached, awestruck by the power of her howl. Judy threw the body into the coals and leaped forward at the pack.

Crimson changed to Urshul form and pounced at Judy, intending, perhaps, to knock her down and subdue her. Judy saw the beast springing and reached forward, catching Crimson's massive body in her claws and throwing her toward the bonfire. Judy turned to the rest of the pack, blood on her fangs and *Kuruth* eating at her heart.

"It's all right," said Tucker. "It's over."

Judy stumbled, and dropped back into her human form. Crimson staggered over, shaking the embers from her fur, and managed to force herself into her Hishu form as well. The new Uratha

turned to the alpha, looked her up and down, and recognized her spiritual sister under the gibbous moon.

Tucker touched his alpha's shoulder. "This is enough," he said. "Please. We couldn't catch them if we tried, anyway, but this is enough. I can finish the rite."

Crimson hadn't taken her eyes off Judy. "Let's do it." She smiled, the disappointment of losing the hunt melting away. She felt the Cahalunim around her, around Judy, heard their distant screams and felt herself shudder as they sang. *She'll dream,*

Crimson thought, and felt a savage, pulsing joy in her heart. *She'll dream, and I'll sing. This place will be what we want.*

Judy, of course, did not know what they were talking about. She looked up again to the swelling moon, and then looked back at her sister. *I don't need to leave this place,* she thought. She glanced over to the fire pit and heard whispers of pain and fear on the stone inside. She tasted blood on her lips again, still warm, fresh from the vein, and, for some reason, she found herself smiling.



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INTRODUCTION

“EACH ADVANTAGE OF PERMANENT VILLAGE LIFE HAS A CORRESPONDING DISADVANTAGE. DO PEOPLE CRAVE COMPANY? YES, BUT THEY ALSO GET ON EACH OTHER’S NERVES.”

— MARVIN HARRIS, *CANNIBALS AND KINGS*

The moon rises over the city, and a small group of people meet in a disused basement. After a moment of discussion, they shed their clothes, take on the forms of wolves and prowl the city. The streets beneath their feet are concrete, cracked and worn by weather and cars, but lead to gatherings of prey just as surely as a game trail in the forest. The Uratha patrol their territory, making sure that the prey remains prey and that the Uratha remain the predators.

Why do werewolves cling to the notion of keeping and protecting territory? Is it instinct from their lupine side? Possibly, but werewolves don’t simply hunt in their territories. They often protect their territories from incursions by Hosts, hostile spirits and other threats. Many packs police loci to make sure that spirits don’t slip into the material world and cause problems. This behavior doesn’t usually hinder a werewolf’s hunt, so why bother?

Uratha are not wolves or humans, but the Uratha have the instinct and drives of each. Their wolf nature tells them to hunt, to claim a territory and keep competing predators out. Their human side compels them to protect their territory, because if they do not, the pack and all it holds dear is at risk. Tribal imperatives figure into this equation, as well. The Hunters in Darkness are bound by their vow to let no sacred place in their territory be violated. A Blood Talon might never conceive of surrendering her home, no matter what the opposition.

Ask a werewolf why she claims territory, though, and the question might confuse her. The need for territory is basic, primal and, to the Uratha, a part of their identity.

THE TERRITORIAL CHRONICLE

That doesn’t mean, however, that a Werewolf chronicle has to take territory and the defense thereof as a theme. Doing so is very appropriate thematically, and has a lot of great story potential to

boot, and so territory and its role in the chronicle is the focus of this book.

We’ve already discussed, in brief, what drives Uratha to claim territories. The reasons that a pack does so, however, are ultimately their own. The more important question might be, from the standpoint of the game, why should Uratha characters worry about territory? Or, even more simply, why is such a chronicle *fun*?

WORLD BUILDING

Many players like the notion of designing their characters’ strongholds, even if that “stronghold” is actually a few city blocks. Knowing what’s contained in that area, what the characters’ meeting places and neutral ground are, where the characters go to relax or plan their hunts and what areas even they avoid makes the story come alive for the players. The territory, as will be discussed later in this book, is a character in the chronicle just as much as the werewolves and their enemies, and every character benefits from detail.

This detail does not have to be present at the start of the chronicle, of course. Just as characters grow and develop as players guide them through stories, spend experience points and learn about them, territories change as the Uratha interact with them. Indeed, looking at the initial notes on a territory and realizing how much the pack has changed things, for better or worse, can be an eye-opening experience for a player.

The territory can also be an extended metaphor for the pack. The notion that “the king is the land” is a bit extreme for our purposes, but it is certainly true that werewolves can influence the ambiance of their territories by changing the *Hisil*, driving off certain kinds of spirits and so on. The Rite of the Chosen Ground and Fortify the Border Marches are ways to influence the spiritscape of a territory, but the more well-defined that territory is, the more those rites mean. It’s one thing to say that the Gauntlet in the

area grows thicker, but quite another to say that bar fights in that area decline because the anger-spirits can no longer influence people as easily.

HOME IS WHERE THE HORROR IS

The horror genre is always more compelling when the protagonists have something at stake, something personal to lose. In *Werewolf*, the characters' main source of personal danger is often their own fury, which means that everything around them is in peril. Driving this home to the players, however, is much easier when the players (and the characters) are invested in the story and their surroundings. If the players put time and effort into detailing their packs' territory, they will probably be careful to avoid Death Rage when inside that territory, lest they destroy everything they've worked for. If the territory isn't fleshed out, though, and simply feels like "a city" or "a neighborhood," the perceived danger of *Kuruth* is severely lessened, and, therefore, so is the horror surrounding it.

This principle applies to external threats as well. Uratha shouldn't be willing to cut and run the minute something comes into their territory to threaten them. While a wise pack recognizes when it is overpowered, the characters should be able to use their knowledge of their territory, its geography and history, to repel invaders. The possibility that the characters could lose their homes to another pack or a stranger menace such as the Hosts or even an *idigam* should be enough to ground your chronicle in the genre of savage horror — but this requires that the players know what their characters are fighting for. That means that the territory needs to feel like *home* to the characters. When the players and the Storyteller are willing to put in the requisite amount of effort in order to evoke this feeling, however, the chronicle achieves a much greater level of drama and excitement. If the players feel that they know their characters' home, the players can share the characters' elation when they successfully fend off attackers or root out a persistent threat.

CHOOSING A TERRITORY

A few basic principles of territory choice, however, are worthy of consideration at the very beginning. What, for instance, does the pack's choice of territory say about that pack? A pack that goes out of its way to claim an urban territory might be composed of Uratha who grew up in large cities, but then they might also be Iron Masters who feel a spiritual compulsion to hunt in the concrete jungle. A pack

that will only claim a rural territory with a great deal of land might have too many members for a smaller hunting ground, or the members might be uncomfortable around each other and need the space. A pack with an enemy might claim territory near them to stage attacks.

Another important consideration when deciding upon a setting for a chronicle is whether that setting is meant to be a real place or a fictional city. Both approaches have their advantages and drawbacks, of course. Likewise, the troupe might wish their pack's territory to be in a milieu with which they are familiar, or a more exotic setting.

REALITY

The major advantage to using a real city is that most of the hard work — deciding on a city's population, major industry and geography — is already done for you. All you need to do is find an atlas or look online for a wealth of information about most cities. Chapter Two contains more information about researching cities and to what degree research is necessary, but the benefit of simply being able to look up such facts rather than make them up is clear. If the players are inclined to do this sort of research, using a real city is of even more benefit because it allows the players to find the nuances of the area that they find interesting on their own time.

Unfortunately, small towns don't normally get comprehensive treatment online, although information such as population numbers is usually possible to find. Still, the ability to find a street map of the territory and mark off areas that the characters have claimed, designated as neutral ground or still want to investigate saves a great deal of time for the Storyteller.

FAMILIARITY

Using the troupe's hometown or an area that all of the players know well can be a way to introduce a degree of verisimilitude into the chronicle. The players can picture their characters slinking down familiar streets, hunting through local parks or washing the blood from their fur in a nearby lake. Resources for the chronicle are only a short walk or drive away, and anyone the players meet on the street can serve as inspiration for Storyteller characters.

The problem with using such locales is that the players sometimes feel strange about introducing horror, death and savage fury into an area that they know personally. If you do use such a location, be sensitive to the players. Don't include people that the

troupe knows personally as Storyteller characters. While everyone involved understands (or should) that the game is fictional, hearing a description of someone that the *player* knows well being torn apart by a frenzied werewolf can still be a bit uncomfortable.

On the other hand, including such unpleasant details can be a way to drive home the threat under which the Uratha live, and can serve to heighten the drama of the chronicle. Just be receptive to the needs and comfort levels of the other players, and know when to back off.

FICTIONAL LOCALES

Working with a setting that the Storyteller or the entire troupe creates out of whole cloth takes quite a bit of effort, but can be very rewarding. If the troupe works together on creating the setting for the chronicle, the members know the setting well and will feel comfortable adding details along the way without worrying about contradiction from a real-world source. A fictional city can easily be based on an existing one (comic books, for instance, have been doing this for years). The troupe can use Paris, Los Angeles or even a smaller city such as Indianapolis or Sacramento as a basis, but change the name and any other details necessary to add a sense of discovery to the chronicle. If the chronicle takes place in a fictional city, the players never have to feel as though their characters' events are hampered by real-world events (the players really shouldn't feel that way anyway, but it's sometimes hard to shake such notions).

Creating a fictional city isn't easy, of course. Even if all the troupe does is pick a real city and change a few names around, the players still need to know enough about the city to set the chronicle there. It is possible, of course, to simply create a name and a skeletal history and make up the details as the chronicle progresses, but this can result in the city feeling false and rootless. That isn't the feeling that the troupe should be looking for in a territory-centered chronicle. Without the feeling of the area being "home" to the characters, the players might have trouble being invested in protecting it.

EXOTIC LOCALES

A strange and exotic territory presents a number of advantages to the troupe. For one thing, a territory with a distinct culture and flavor allows the players to consider what Uratha who grew up in that culture would be like. A Blood Talon Ithaeur raised on a Navajo reservation is likely to express his spirituality

and warrior's ethic in a very different way than one who grew up in San Francisco's Chinatown.

Also, given the fantastic nature of Storytelling games, choosing a territory that is exotic and distinct from the troupe's experience is entirely appropriate. If the players all grew up in Midwestern suburbs, setting the chronicle in *any* big city can feel exotic. This brings up another point — "exotic" is a subjective term. What one player might find exotic and enticing, another player might find dull if she knows it well. (On the other hand, that dichotomy of knowledge can make for interesting roleplaying between the two players, as one learns about the other's culture.)

The biggest drawback to an exotic territory is the amount of work required to represent the territory fairly. If one of the players knows the area, the workload is lessened, but if none of the players have ever visited the area, the presentation can feel forced or artificial. This might not be something that concerns the troupe, especially if the players don't know the difference, but some players are more concerned than others with "accuracy."

In general, though, accurately presenting what an area is like in real life should take a backseat to the mood and feel of the World of Darkness. In real life, after all, werewolves, vampires and other monsters don't lurk in our shadows, and it's fair to assume that, in a world with such predators about, things would be subtly different. The important thing is to make the territory real to the players, and that often means getting at least a few of the details right.

CHAPTER BY CHAPTER

Chapter One: Drawing Borders discusses selecting territories and helps players be aware of the options for doing so and the advantages and drawbacks of various kinds of domains. This chapter also presents new game systems for representing territorial changes and evolution.

Chapter Two: Mapping the Land presents advice for the Storyteller on fleshing out existing territories and using the territory as a character in a chronicle. Also present are pointers for how territories can change with and without the characters' involvement and a list of potential encounters and events that the Storyteller can use to springboard stories.

Chapter Three: Lines in the Sand consists of five sample territories to use in your chronicles — a small town, a stretch of wilderness, a section of city, a swath of suburbia and a incipient war zone. These

places may serve either as refuges for the characters or as enticing goals for them to achieve. Some of these territories are written as specific places, but can easily be shifted to any locale that the chronicle requires. Other territories are more general, with no real geographical location intended but still full of easy-to-use hooks, characters and places worth fighting over.

INSPIRATIONS

The Shield: If there is a better example for a morally-conflicted pack of Uratha and their interactions

with their territory than Vic Mackey and his Strike Team, it hasn't revealed itself yet. *The Shield* is a violent and harsh look at the tradeoffs that police officers have to make while ruling their territory.

SimCity: The video game series. No, really. It only gives the bird's-eye view of a city and the level of control that a mayor or city manager might have. But the game's simulation does a good job of working through what would happen if a major new entity appears in town (police station, university, etc.) and what would happen if other areas are allowed to decay.





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CHAPTER 1

DRAWING BORDERS

I took a step back and tried not to piss my pants. The big guy — he had no shirt on and scars up and down his torso — had leaned his head straight back and was screaming wordlessly at the stars. His friends seemed just as angry — they were yelling and screaming at me, too. I couldn't understand every word they were saying. But they were furious.

I was sure I would die. I don't remember going down to my knees, and I don't remember my exact words, but they went something like, "Oh God I swear I'm just lost I don't have any idea where I am please don't hurt me I've been wandering around for three days I sprained my ankle I can't keep any food down I ate a bug please I didn't mean to come to your campsite I just want to go home please don't hurt me."

I went on like this for a while. Long enough that they stopped screaming and yelling at the sky and just let me babble until I trailed off, "... please my mother told me something like this would happen and I guess she was right just please don't kill me or hurt me..." Once I went quiet, they got into arguing with one another.

The dark woman said, "I don't think they're all gone," but Scar Guy shook his head.

"They're all gone, every one of them. Look around. Human feet on the hill. Which one of you idiots was keeping an eye out?" I don't know who they were.

The blond guy said, "It was me, but dammit, Bill, how the hell could I be expected to anticipate something like this? We're more than a day from the nearest road! Humans don't wander across this forest for fun."

The girl — she couldn't have been more than 14 — said, "Are you kidding? Can't you smell her? She's got some kind of bug. I would guess that she's been shitting herself for at least a day."

It was true, I had been. I don't know what the bug was, but I had drank some water right out of a stream the day before yesterday. Bad choice, I guess.

The blond guy said, "She came from downwind!"

The big, scarred guy pointed a finger at me, and spoke to me. "No living human has crossed onto this hill. Ever. Ever. It's the last patch of virgin land in this forest. It may be the last patch of virgin forest east of the Mississippi. And you, you blind, stupid, coward, pathetic, lost retard, you just blundered across it. You've ruined it. You may as well have wiped a handful of shit across it. It's gone forever. And you're going to pay for it."

The blond guy put a hand on the scarred guy's shoulder, and said, "No, Bill. Killing her won't do any good." Scar Guy spun around to face the blond. There was a tearing noise, and growling. I don't know what happened then. Things went kind of dark.

I ran and ran and ran.

EVEN THE OLDEST VILLAGES ARE INDEBTED TO THE BORDER OF WILD WOOD WHICH SURROUNDS THEM, MORE THAN TO THE GARDENS OF MEN.

— HENRY DAVID THOREAU

DESIGN

There are several different ways that a Storyteller and troupe can come together and determine a chronicle's setting. The main intention of **Territories** is to provide players with the tools they need to help the Storyteller design the chronicle's setting. The default assumption is still that players and Storytellers might work together to design a pack's territory without resorting to rules or sourcebooks. Depending on what your troupe prefers, **Territories** can serve as inspiration and example rather than as a hard set of rules. Alternately, you may prefer to use some kind of rules set to design the players' pack's territory. There are two main ways for such a group to design the pack's territory: Storyteller-driven or cooperatively.

STORYTELLER-DRIVEN DESIGN

For some chronicles, the Storyteller may do all of the setting design herself — she probably has strong ideas about the features she wants to see in the setting. For instance, in a setting where the characters are all newcomers to their territory (as in the free demo **Werewolf: The Forsaken** chronicle, Manitou Springs, available at <http://www.white-wolf.com/>), the Storyteller may prefer that the players be as ignorant as the characters with respect to the setting. Storyteller-driven design may be the best choice for a troupe whose players who are new to the World of Darkness in general and to **Werewolf: The Forsaken** specifically — ignorance of setting details can help players better model their characters' own ignorance of their circumstances and surroundings. Other troupes might traditionally entrust the Storyteller with these kinds of responsibilities, and prefer not to deviate from a model that works well for them.

Storytellers who want to design their packs' territories have a relatively free hand, but here is a suggested approach:

1. Pick a dozen or so elements from the element list below — be sure to include at least a few elements from each section that is appropriate. Feel free to repeat elements if necessary — there may be multiple apartment buildings, or multiple farms or multiple spirit catalyst sites, in a given territory.

2. Relate those elements to one another geographically. If you are setting the game in a real place that you are familiar with, you may already have some ideas in mind. If you are setting the game in an invented place or you aren't too concerned with real-world geography (as might be the case with a real city that none of the troupe has ever visited or a game set in the past or future), get out a piece of paper and pencil. Draw a circle on the page that

represents the center of the pack's territory (possibly the locus but not necessarily). Pick another element, draw it as a circle and draw a line between the two if they are adjacent. Repeat this process, moving outward, until you have hit every element and figured out how they all fit together. You may discover that you need a few other elements to fit the territory together better. You might prefer to do this with 3x5 cards, moving them around until you're happy with the result, or use a computerized drawing/brainstorming tool.

3. Name your elements. Even minor streams have names. This is easier if you're working from a real place, but here is a great opportunity to foreshadow or otherwise hint at plot hooks buried in ordinary-seeming locations. Naming a generic apartment building the "Phoenix Gate Arms" instead of the "East City Apartments" is one way to go here — though that particular example may be a little over-the-top for some groups. You may at this point start to work out which important Storyteller characters are around at each element and what story hooks will hang on each element, but that certainly isn't a requirement.

4. Present your players with the "surface map" you have created. Don't give them your notes on story hooks and so on, but the packmembers will quickly learn what the important features of their territory are, so use this opportunity to cut out that wasted time.

5. Work with players to determine where their homes are, as well as the general locations of any Allies, Contacts, Mentors or Retainers. Some of these may be outside of the pack's territory; others may roam around. But those who can reliably be found should be determined.

6. Offer players the opportunity to add to the territory with Merits. Most territory elements include a "Merit cost." A player who wants to associate one or more particular territory elements with his character (or with the pack in general) may wish to spend Merit points or experience points to add those elements to the pack's territory. The Storyteller, as always, has veto power over these purchases.

The expenditure of Merit points should represent the characters getting involved in some way. If one player really just wants to make sure there is a decent bar in the pack's territory and spends his Merit points appropriately, that's fine, but usually the investment of Merit points means that the character is personally involved — he inherited that farm, or he won that bar in a bet. He doesn't have to own it, but he should have a personal stake in it.

Characters can have a pleasant, decent territory without spending any points at all. However, this option

allows them to spend their own resources to shape parts of the territory as they see fit.

COOPERATIVE DESIGN

Other troupes might prefer to work cooperatively with the Storyteller or even work entirely without the Storyteller to generate their pack's territory. Certainly that is this book's recommendation: players will have a greater sense of investment in their pack's territory if they have helped to design it.

Perhaps each player selects two or three territory features, or the group collectively works from a high-level design. Players may prefer to work forward from their other Merits such as Allies, Contacts, Mentors, and Totem, determining which features are necessary to support each of those characters, and then fill in "connective tissue" between them.

Important note: In cooperative design, it is *not* expected that players' characters pay for territory features' Merit costs. Merit costs are intended for Storyteller-driven design, above.

Obviously, the Storyteller can participate here, pointing out necessary elements to the territory, or things she wants to make sure to include for her own devious story reasons.

WHY TAKE A "BAD" FEATURE?

In "cooperative" design there is no apparent incentive to include "negative" elements in a pack's territory (elements with no Merit cost or with more negative parts than positive ones). The Storyteller may wish to insert a few negative elements into a pack's territory in order to present more of a challenge to the characters.

But players may wish to take "negative" features of their own accord. The reason is simple: negative features make for fun gameplay. No one wants to play a **Werewolf: The Forsaken** chronicle wherein every week the pack lounges around a nightclub and basks in the safety of its home territory. Having a few "bad" places within the pack's territory gives the characters something to do at home — business they have to attend to in their own backyard.

In the World of Darkness in the 21st century few territories are pristine and beautiful. The only ones that really are pleasant places for werewolves are those places that werewolves have worked hard to make that way. Having the pack's territory start out as "damaged goods" and improve over time is a tangible representation of the pack's progress as Uratha.

After the group finishes putting together its territory, it is up to the Storyteller to determine the local spirit population and its internal interactions:

Which groups of spirits hate one another?

Which ones deal with one another?

What are the sources of competition among them?

At the same time, the Storyteller can work out what the neighbors are like and (generally) what territory they control. What features in the immediate area are contested or poorly-patrolled? What features are especially attractive and may soon be contested?

TERRITORY FEATURES

Every pack's territory has one or more features associated with it. The features that the group describes through these guidelines are not the only locations in the pack's territory. They are simply the most noteworthy features in the area. There may be (for instance) dozens of apartment buildings in the pack's territory, but the one that the players define through these guidelines is the one where the interesting stuff is most likely to occur.

FEATURE DESCRIPTIONS

Every feature description has most of the following components to it:

Creating: The means by which a pack of Uratha might bring such an element into its territory during actual play. This section doesn't describe how such an element is added as part of game preparation; as discussed above, such things are largely a matter of negotiation and planning between players and Storyteller. This may involve some magic; creating may be outright impossible in non-geologic timeframes. In many cases, creating requires an extended roll of some kind.

Eliminating: As with "Creating," this heading describes the way that a pack can destroy a feature within its territory. In many cases, eliminating requires an extended roll of some kind, possibly aided by rituals, spirits or Gifts. The destruction of a territory feature almost always leaves *something* behind, and this heading generally describes what is left behind.

Benefits (free-form): In a more free-form game, in which Storyteller and players cooperate to design the pack's territory, these are the sorts of benefits that the characters are likely to receive for tending to this feature. The Storyteller may rule differently on any of these benefits, or change them as she sees fit. The dice pool bonuses and penalties provided by a territory feature are sample circumstance bonuses.

Merit: If a player wishes to bring a feature into a territory, he can always purchase the feature as a Merit. This section describes the cost of buying the feature as a Merit. Note that purchasing a feature as a Merit incurs all the benefits and *problems* described in the "free-form benefits" section.

Resonance: The resonance (if any) of any Essence harvested from the place. Not every location with a given Resonance entry will generate that kind of Essence — but this entry tells the most likely resonance if there is any resonance at all. Note that it may take time for an element to begin generating Essence; a cemetery won't begin generating Essence or have a powerful resonance with only a few burials.

Problems and Hooks: Every territory feature (even if bought as a Merit) brings with it difficulty, story hooks and Storyteller characters. These hooks are for the Storyteller's inspiration, and players should not expect to see every hook listed in their territory.

TERRITORY SIZE

There is no set minimum or maximum size for a pack's territory. A pack can hold as much land as the pack can hold — though, as modern werewolves say, "You can't hold Wyoming." The average pack tries to hold as much territory as it can reasonably patrol every day. That doesn't mean that the pack *does* patrol every day, simply that it could.

A pack in the middle of the Great Plains might carve out an entire county — as much as 1,000 square miles. No pack could patrol such an area on foot every day, even in Urhan or Urshul form, but this is the 21st century (see "Patrolling Your Territory," below, for tips on patrolling). Such a large area requires a large pack, good communication and favorable terrain. Throw a few mountains and woods into the area, and you'd best cut your territory considerably.

Any pack of Uratha can claim any territory the pack wants. Most use one of the minor Gifts from the Warding list to do so, though the pack can simply piss on landmarks to declare a particular space off-limits to wolves and other werewolves. But the pack must be able to hold that territory.

PATROLLING YOUR TERRITORY

Four quick tips on patrolling your territory.

- **You don't have to do it in person.** Read local newspapers. (Especially those free local tabloids composed mostly of ads for escort services. These papers don't have any sense of propriety, and therefore — unlike the so-called mainstream media — they might mention the weird stuff that poses a danger to your territory's integrity.) Listen to local radio stations. (Especially AM talk radio. Again — no sense of propriety.) Read local blogs and websites. Talk to members of the local freak/outcast contingent — the dope dealers, the homeless, the performance artists, the day laborers. Develop plenty of local Contacts in these areas.

- **Use magic when you can...** Several rites and Gifts can assist in tracking down spirits and humans who violate the Gauntlet or otherwise interfere with your pack's territory. Several Gifts from the Crescent Moon, Insight

and Knowledge lists can help patrol a territory. Gifts from the Warding list let your pack control and define the areas it has to patrol. Summoning and Binding rites allow the pack to enlist spirit allies in its patrol — whether willing or not.

- **...but this is the 21st century.** Get a good satellite map of your territory. Buy cell phones or good walkie-talkies. Use vehicles. If you have a big, underdeveloped territory, get a Jeep. Vehicles won't help in every situation, but if you need to get several miles overland quickly, Ford is faster than Urshul. Use spotting equipment — binoculars, if nothing else. If you're covering 1,000 square miles of central South Dakota, you'll have to cover around 500 linear miles a day if you can see half a mile in all directions. If you can see a mile in each direction, you can cut that patrol time down by two hours. Binoculars won't help you spot problems in the spirit world, but humans cause as many problems as spirits do.

- **Get high — and low.** Outside of impossibly flat areas such as Kansas, your territory will have high points — hills, ridges, tall buildings and so on. Hit them. You'll have a better chance of noticing strange things going on with sky-spirits, and sometimes that high perspective will give you a chance to notice things below that you wouldn't ordinarily notice. On the other side of the coin, almost every part of the world has underground infrastructure or natural caves. Spirits, monsters and humans who prefer to spend their time out of the sunlight will lurk down there, where you can't see them.



THE APPLICATION OF TERROR TO HUMAN INSTITUTIONS

Many political, religious and criminal organizations in the World of Darkness and the real world apply terrorist tactics to their opponents and ordinary civilians in the hopes of achieving specific aims. A pack of Uratha may attempt to use the same sorts of tactics to drive humans away from a particular location or otherwise bludgeon humans toward the pack's goals. In **Werewolf** these sorts of activities are compounded by the Lunacy and werewolves' inherent magical abilities.

The players' pack may wish to engage in this sort of activity in order to achieve the pack's aims at some point. The players may wish to drive the Winters family away from a farm that sits near a catalyst site, or the players might want to force a nearby factory into idleness so that they can use its husk as a base of operations.

Storytellers and players should take a few minutes and have a serious conversation about their level of comfort with these kinds of storylines. In the modern world, the application of terrorist tactics to achieve personal aims can be a polarizing subject, to say the least. Some play

ers may not be comfortable playing the role of “terrorist” even in a Storytelling game and that is certainly their right. On the other hand, this sort of activity may seem entirely appropriate for a game of savage fury and may work well to emphasize the werewolves’ role as terrifying creatures of the night.

Some considerations:

Humans react unpredictably to Lunacy and terror tactics. Even within the boundaries of Lunacy, there is no easy way to know how humans will respond to the sight of werewolves in the night. Some humans will flee at once, others will go catatonic. Still others will react violently. When presented with horrific violence, exploding bombs, rioting and so on, a given human cannot be predicated to respond in a given way. Over the long run, an institution of humans will react to such events with stepped up security and heightened awareness (or more dice to Perception pools). This will make the werewolves’ goals more difficult to achieve.

Humans react more predictably to the inexplicable. The above descriptions assume that humans are responding to things they think they understand — murders, explosions and so on. In the modern day, many humans will respond violently and defiantly to any terror that they see as the work of a sentient being or group. Humans are *much* more likely to flee from things that they consider to be the senseless acts of an uncaring universe (such as the application of many unnatural-seeming Gifts and rites).

RURAL

Rural features represent places with relatively light human populations. Any of these sites can be placed within a more urban locale (there are still horse stables in the heart of New York City today), but such rural sites are more likely to be found in the countryside.

CAVERNS/TUNNELS

Certain parts of the country are riddled with underground passages of all shapes and sizes. Some are ordinary limestone caverns, while others are leftover mines or other, stranger things. This feature expressly refers to tunnels large enough for a human (or, at least, an Urhan-form werewolf) to pass through. This feature can exist in urban settings as well, but, in that case, cavern/tunnel refers to subway tunnels, broad sewer tunnels or gigantic 1950s-era fallout shelters.

Creating: Uratha can create caverns or underground tunnels of their own by digging for weeks or months. Keeping such tunnels from collapsing requires a Science roll (and possible reinforcement) for every 100 feet of passageway.

Eliminating: Cave-in is the fastest way to eliminate an unwanted cave or tunnel. This can be accomplished with heavy equipment, through an earthquake or flash flood or with explosives.

Benefits (free-form): Earth elementals, spirits of burrowing mammals, spirits of bats and other nocturnal creatures are drawn to caverns: +2 dice to summon such entities. +1 die to Survival dice pools that revolve around the need for shelter. In addition, caverns provide invisible and silent transport between different parts of a pack’s territory. Pick two (or more, at the Storyteller’s discretion) features of your pack’s territory; these caverns open in both of those areas, and your pack can move from one to the other through these tunnels. Caverns lack the strong odors of the surface world: +1 die to track by smell underground.

Merit: •

Resonance: Earth, stone, darkness

Problems and Hooks: Excavation or flash flooding can unearth things that were best left buried — in this case, powerful chthonic-spirits that were exiled to underground imprisonment by Father Wolf and his get, many thousands of years ago. Such a creature might well be comparable to one of the *idigam*; unearthing it is a true disaster.

CLIFF/RIDGE

A high point where the ground falls away steeply to one or both sides, a ridge is a very defensible point that provides good visibility; it may be long or relatively narrow.

Creating or Eliminating: Geologic structures of this magnitude cannot be casually created or destroyed. Portions of a ridge might be destroyed with high explosives or heavy machinery.

Benefits (free-form): +2 to Wits dice pools to detect approaching people or spirits; +2 to Stealth dice pools to hide from those coming up from lower ground. Cliffs and ridges are usually steep enough that they cannot be climbed without special equipment.

Merit: •

Resonance: Peril, defense, flight or sky

Problems and Hooks: Native American tribes in the southwestern United States sometimes built their cities into cliffs or ravines; in those regions, Uratha may have to deal with spirits that expect to be dealt with according to ancient human tradition.

DESERT

A desert isn’t defined by its heat, but rather by its aridity. Deserts are nearly bereft of water. They do carry life — it’s just that the life in a desert is especially well-adapted to the desert. Desert areas that have other features (beyond barren wasteland) should be represented by those features and the “Arid” descriptor (see below).

Creating: Creating a desert is easier than you might think. Admittedly, it’s nearly impossible for a pack of Uratha to change rainfall patterns or divert rivers. Howev-



er, it doesn't matter how much water falls in an area if the land can't hold the water. Eliminate ground cover (trees and even scrub) and topsoil won't hold in place. Once the topsoil has floated downriver or blown away, the land will be unable to hold water for long, and the land becomes a desert. This process "naturally" takes several years.

A pack might choose to drive off all the water-spirits in an area. That alone will not create a desert, but will speed the process described above so that it can be accomplished in a single year.

Eliminating: Deserts are harder to eliminate than to create. Repeated summonings of water elementals could help replenish the local landscape, but such summoning should accompany fertility rites and widespread planting of ground cover. This process is rarely done, and takes years unless it is done with the aid of very powerful spirits.

Benefits (free-form): -2 dice to summon spirits of water or cold. +2 dice to summon spirits of heat or fire. +1 die to pools used to resist temperature extremes — a pack with a desert area in its territory knows how to avoid the worst of the heat. The intense heat and aridity in a desert are conducive to hallucinations; characters who spend more than four hours in the desert without water or heat protection may make Occult rolls to attempt to pull meaning from the mirages that they see.

Merit: •

Resonance: Desperation, heat, solitude

Problems and Hooks: See p. 181 of the *World of Darkness Rulebook*, "Temperature Extremes," for the effects of extreme heat. Deserts make good hiding places for refugees and runaways of both the spirit and fleshy persuasions.

FALLOW PRAIRIE

In human-inhabited areas, almost all land that can be farmed is being farmed or has been farmed. This territory feature refers specifically to treeless land that is no longer being farmed or, much more rarely, treeless land that has never been farmed.

Creating: After driving off the farmers and farm-spirits associated with a farm in your territory, wait a few seasons, and what was once a farm should have returned to a fallow state. Eliminating farm-spirits and attracting spirits of the wild plain can speed up this process to take less than a season.

Eliminating: Encourage farming or real estate development.

Benefits (free-form): The Gauntlet thins in fallow prairie, improving dice pools to step sideways by 1 die compared to surrounding areas. Spirits of small mammals and those that hunt them are attracted to such lands; +1 die to pools to summon all such spirits (hunters or prey). Uratha familiar with a given stretch of prairie can cross it quickly and stealthily; +1 die to Athletics and Stealth pools to move around in familiar prairie.

Merit: •

Resonance: The wild or wilderness, loss of control, rebirth

Problems and Hooks: Depending on the local mortal population density, such an area may not last long; it may be bought and turned into farmland, housing or a shopping mall. Werewolves who wish to prevent this may have to buy it on their own (typically at least a Resources ●●● activity) or otherwise prevent others from buying it.

FACTORY FARM

A factory farm is a large farm containing scores if not hundreds of animals of a small number of species. The animals are kept in relatively confined spaces and are either grown to a certain size and then slaughtered, or kept around for their breeding or (egg or milk) production capabilities.

Creating: Factory farms require a more considerable investment to create. Depending on size, most require from three to four dots in Resources to start up.

Eliminating: As with many of the features in this section, a factory farm can be temporarily eliminated by destroying the farm building and/or slaughtering the animals within (such animals are not adapted to life “in the wild” and surely would not last a season on their own). However, many factory farms are owned by multinational conglomerates, which see such destruction as an unavoidable cost of doing business. Such a company will simply charge the loss against its insurance, rebuild and continue.

Benefits (free-form): Well — there’s the effectively free food for hungry wolf types. There’s an intense concentration of a single type of animal-spirit. These benefits are offset by the brutal drawbacks.

Merit: —

Resonance: Mechanization, slaughter, abundance

Problems and Hooks: Effluent pools containing waste products from hundreds or thousands of chickens, pigs or cows can damage the water table and air quality for miles in all directions. In the World of Darkness, factory farms also attract powerful spirits of pain and cruelty and spawn new and unique horrors of their own. In addition, factory farms in the World of Darkness have even fewer animal-health controls built in, which may lead to exciting rare diseases entering the human food supply without warning or control.

A factory farm may generate or reflect a Wound in the spirit world.

FARM

This sort of feature refers to relatively small family farms, rather than the factory farms described above. A farm in a pack’s territory can provide relatively safe land to roam on or otherwise use. Farms don’t typically attract wilderness-spirits, and the plant-type spirits that the farms attract are unusually docile, as these spirits are the reflections of heavily subjugated plant life.

Creating: Even with century-old equipment, a concerted pack would need no more than a week to clear, plow and plant a few acres of farm. Certainly, a pack would need more time for a larger farm or to clear forest rather than fallow prairie. The Storyteller may require Science rolls to enable this (taking advantage of any farming-related specialties). Few werewolf packs are likely to farm on their own; many may take advantage of farms within their territory.

Eliminating: A pack that wants to eliminate a functional farm in a hurry may burn its fields, slaughter its animals and destroy its irrigation. None of these require dice rolls unless they take place while (for instance) angry farmers attempt to kill the werewolves.

Benefits (free-form): Farms provide a ready source of food to werewolves. In human form, Uratha can eat anything a farm produces, while in lupine forms, Uratha can certainly cull a farm’s livestock. A pack with a moderately sized farm can provide every member with Resources • at no cost (though higher levels of the Resources Merit still cost as normal — a pack can sustain itself on farms’ output, but livestock and crops won’t buy them a laptop or Cadillac). The very existence of a farm thickens the Gauntlet slightly as humans impose order on the natural world; impose a -1 die penalty on pools to step sideways while on a farm.

Merit: • (or ●● within city limits)

Resonance: Food, fertility, slaughter, peace or pacification

Problems and Hooks: Agriculture was humanity’s first imposition of rules on wild things. Farms may attract spirits of compulsive order or even those prone to enslave other spirits. Additionally, it turns out that farmers don’t

care for wolves, particularly those that steal livestock. Uratha who abuse local farms may find themselves picking lead shot from their hides.

GLACIER/ICEPACK/TUNDRA

This territory element is an area that is always (or nearly always) cold, with deep snow and/or glacial ice covering the ground for most of the year.

Typically, such lands are represented by the “Cold” descriptor (see below), but a pack may control a large temperate territory with some area beyond the arctic circle.

Creating: The cold temperatures necessary to create such a landscape are beyond the resources of most Uratha. The invocation of a powerful spirit of the winter may be enough to temporarily create an area of this sort.

Eliminating: Global climate change is already eliminating some southern glaciers; otherwise, without magical assistance, artificially warming an area sufficiently to eliminate this feature is impossible.

Benefits (free-form): Water is always easy to find, so Survival rolls to avoid thirst always succeed. A werewolf familiar with a patch of cold terrain in her pack’s territory receives +1 die on rolls to resist temperature extremes; +2 dice to summon spirits of cold or winter; -2 dice to summon spirits of summer or heat.

Merit: •

Resonance: Cold, sleep

Problems and Hooks: Regular rolls are necessary while outdoors, to withstand the cold of this region — see p. 181 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, “Temperature Extremes,” for details. Wildlife is relatively scarce; Uratha hunting for food need eight successes rather than five to find enough food for a person for a day.

LANDFILL OR GARBAGE DUMP

The average American generates around four pounds of trash per day. That’s paper, plastic, glass, metal and inedible foodstuffs, just for starters. In a large city, humans generate 15,000 tons of trash per week, or more. That stuff has to go somewhere.

Garbage dumps have their own ecosystems — insects feed on organic waste, rats and gulls feed on insects and on organic waste, cats and coyotes feed on them and so on. It’s a vile circle of life. Dumps therefore attract spirits from various animal choirs, as well as artifact-spirits associated with non-organic discards.

Some homeless humans may make a home out of a dump; the food found there may not be much good, but scavenging recyclables and burnables can help a desperate human eke out a few more days.

Creating: In the World of Darkness, getting a given site established as a trash heap doesn’t take a lot of work. All you need is some unloved land, a lot of junk and time.

Eliminating: If all the trash in a landfill were exposed to the elements and scavengers, the organic stuff would probably be gone in a year or so. But, of course, the mate-

rial is piled high rather than spread thin. Neither scavengers nor weather can get at anything not on the surface — brave explorers have found intact, readable newspapers just a few feet down from the surface of a dump. Even if all the organic material were destroyed, glass, plastic, metal, silicon and harsh chemicals would be left that shouldn’t have gotten into the waste stream in the first place. A landfill requires a long cleanup, and even then, the stuff has to be put *somewhere*. Fire-spirits and unendingly ravenous spirits of consumption and decay might speed the process, but millions of tons of waste might have to be eliminated for a landfill to be truly destroyed.

Benefits (free-form): A dump has an unlimited supply of free food for werewolves with strong enough stomachs — and the gulls and rats that frequent such places make even better food. It helps to have access to Gifts that protect against toxins such as heavy metals in your diet. In addition, the extreme plentitude of *stuff* to be found in a dump means that a good scavenger pack can get nearly anything it needs. +2 dice to all Survival pools to find food or scavenge low-grade equipment. Such a wide variety of spirits frequent a trash pile that Uratha can summon any scavenger-oriented natural spirit, artificial spirit or appropriate conceptuials with +1 dice to their pools to do so (and Storytellers may be convinced to allow an even broader range to receive that circumstance bonus). Third, the treacherous footing on a garbage heap requires Dexterity + Athletics rolls from anyone not intimately familiar with the feature (the pack won’t need to make such rolls after spending a month patrolling the dump, or if this feature is bought as a Merit).

Merit: ••

Resonance: Secrets, abundance, destruction

Problems and Hooks: For an interesting twist on the garbage dump, consider a garbage scow drifting from port to port, looking for a place to dump its “cargo.”

As dumps tend to attract rats, they also attract Beshilu, which means, in turn, that a dump may well have a few spots with extremely thin Gauntlet. Many spirits might use the dump as a crossing point from the *Hisil* to the flesh world; perhaps the spirits at the dump, or the Beshilu, extract a toll from such border-crossers. Or perhaps immigrating waves of spirits have settled further and further out from the dump; newcomer Uratha will have to deal with the “immigrants” one layer at a time in order to pacify the whole area.

Decaying organic material releases methane, ammonia, hydrogen sulfide and other toxic and flammable gases. Local authorities may “pipe the stacks” in order to burn those gases off; enterprising Uratha or others may prefer to tap into such a fuel source themselves.

MOUNTAIN

Mountains are pinnacles of the local terrain — a “proper” mountain peak is more than 2,000 feet above sea level. Mountains are rarely useful for agriculture. Their

steep sides prevent local humans from doing anything useful on the surface, but humans dig into mountains to extract their mineral wealth.

Creating: Geographic features of this magnitude cannot be created through the actions of mere Uratha.

Eliminating: See “Creating.” But, as some coal-mining companies have learned, destroying a mountaintop is easier than mining by burrowing into the mountain itself.

Benefits (free-form): A mountain provides an almost unassailable fortress for Uratha who need defense. A mountain provides good visibility, and enemies have to fight their way uphill to defenders (defenders can easily gain the standard +1 dice pool for fighting from higher ground as long as they avoid being outflanked). Earth elementals, spirits of wealth and spirits of raptors are drawn to mountains; +2 dice to summon such things. Water naturally flows away from mountains; -2 dice to summon water elementals. Mountains often serve as home to great mineral wealth and can provide materials for Artifact creation, adding 1 die to the pool for the Fetish Rite so long as the fetish and spirit are of the appropriate resonance.

Merit: ••

Resonance: Earth, vision or perspective, defense

Problems and Hooks:

- A rival pack learns that the necessary materials for a particular fetish or ritual can only be found on or in this mountain.

- A national mining company buys the mountain's land and begins operations in the area, with the intention of deep-mining the pack's mountain (or of shearing the mountain's peak off and processing the tillings).

OCEAN/SEA/GREAT LAKE

This territory element really refers to the shallows near the coast, as well as some lands immediately bordering the sea. No werewolf pack would bother to claim all of a large body of water as the pack's territory — the packmembers couldn't possibly patrol the entire thing, and many large bodies of water serve as home to powerful and alien spirits. Werewolves stick to territory that suits them better.

Creating: Without serious tectonic activity, a pack cannot create an oceanfront or major body of water. Some exceptionally powerful packs (or spirits) may be able to enact such things, but they are beyond the scope of this supplement.

Eliminating: See “Creating,” except to note that erosion may change the local waterfront beyond recognition, and characters can certainly use *skill* to speed that process.

Benefits (free-form): Once out of sight of land, the Gauntlet in and above the ocean thins dramatically, usually imposing a modifier of +0 or even +1. The sea allows a savvy pack to travel without alerting those on land — a pack may travel on the water to elude mortal authorities or other packs, or to lay ambushes for unsuspecting foes. A waterfront probably includes a beach, which can help an

exhausted werewolf recover from recent strain (+1 dice to Meditation pools to recover Willpower).

Merit: •

Resonance: Water

Problems and Hooks: Werewolves do not patrol the deep sea; not even the wolf-spirits they claim descent from range there. Certain factors make the Shadow of the ocean particularly hostile and alien for air-breathers.

- The spirits of the deepest trenches of the ocean are huge, somnolent, very powerful creatures. The spirit ecosystem of the deep orbits these mammoth aliens; lesser spirits feed off the great ones' Essence directly, and have no reason to venture away from the deep trenches unless the deepest spirits are themselves roused. These entities are theoretically comparable to the *idigam* in terms of power and majesty.

- The spirit ecosystem of the deep ocean is itself brutally competitive. While the spirit landscape of the living world may be somewhat less dangerous than that of the *Hisil*, the same laws of bloody tooth and claw rule both realms. Few oceanic spirits reach the shore because few spirits have reason to try, and those that try without reason are annihilated by spirits that better understand their place.

- Other entities patrol the seas between the deepest ocean trenches and the shoreline. The Uratha know little of these entities, but surely they *must* exist.

In any given Storyteller's chronicle, any of the three above reasons may be true. Or none might be true. The deep ocean of the World of Darkness is a terrifying and alien place, far from the safety of land and sun. If the three points described above are all true, the disruption of any of the three of them could lead to extreme danger for coastal Uratha.

- Natural storms are a potential hook and danger, particularly along the shores of the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic coast of the southern United States. Hurricanes have ravaged that area throughout history. In the World of Darkness, some of these storms might well be augmented by powerful spirits — spirits that can be defeated or bargained with, thereby dissipating or greatly reducing the power of the storm. More often, these storms are purely natural. There will surely be spirits along for the ride, but the storms themselves must be withstood or escaped.

MYSTERIOUS PLACES

The Storyteller may wish to include some of the strange and horrific places found in **World of Darkness: Mysterious Places**. These locales don't have an in-game benefit or Merit cost, but suggestions for dealing with them from a story perspective can be found in that book. Most of the Mysterious Places in that book are appropriate as part of a **Werewolf: The Forsaken**

pack's territory; Swamp Indian Hollow (where a mysterious life energy is creating puppets of vine and sinew) and the Whispering Wood (which draws sinners to it and changes them to better manifest their moral weakness) may be the most appropriate while the least appropriate from this perspective are the Empty Room (which isn't bound to a particular place) and the Village Secret (the nature of the Village and its caverns don't fit well with the activities of a pack of werewolves)



POND/LAKE/LAKEFRONT

A pond, lake or lakefront is a standing body of water, fed by streams, rivers and/or springs. No pack will have a truly huge lake to itself (such as the freshwater seas that are the American Great Lakes), but may claim a share of lakefront and the lake out to a certain distance.

Creating: Ponds and lakes can be created by damming rivers (with many potential ramifications). Ponds larger than about an acre are otherwise very difficult to create without magical assistance and/or heavy equipment.

Eliminating: Ponds and lakes can be drained. This is likely to enrage local water-spirits — even if the Uratha aren't responsible for the destruction, they will have to deal with the implications of it.

Benefits (free-form): +1 die to summon water- and fish-spirits. +1 die to Survival rolls to find food (the characters can fish) unless the water is heavily polluted. As with an ocean or other large body of water, characters can travel quickly across a lake's surface, possibly surprising enemies that didn't expect the characters to do so. Small lakes and ponds freeze over in the winter, allowing anyone to cross them without boats or swimming — Uratha worried about ice breaking should stay in Urhan form as it is the lightest.

Merit: •

Resonance: Water

Problems and Hooks:

- One particular lake may not be a lake at all — instead, it is a reservoir created by damming up a large river. The process of that damming flooded an entire village. The villagers were given a chance to evacuate their belongings — but it may not have gone entirely smoothly. Now the lake has begun to suffer a rash of unnatural events. What was left behind when the flood came?

- A powerful artifact rests in the hands of an equally powerful spirit at the heart of the pond. The spirit has the respect of its fellows and uses the pond as a sort of “court” locally. The spirit is not willing to give the artifact up, and is powerful enough that the pack can't simply destroy the spirit. How do the werewolves reach détente with the spirit?

RIVER/RIVERSIDE

A river is a navigable waterway — a stream large enough for boats to float down it.

Creating: Rivers can't be created without some sort of noteworthy catastrophe going on. Only in the most remote areas could such a thing even be attempted, and even then it would require an enormous feat of magic and the enslavement (and likely destruction) of at least 200 Essence rating' worth of water-spirits. Such wanton enslavement and destruction of spirits would count as a Rank 8 Harmony sin.

Eliminating: Rivers can be destroyed more easily than they can be created — rivers across the western United States and Mexico are being effectively destroyed even today through poor planning and overuse. This sort of industrial-scale river abuse is extremely difficult for a pack of werewolves to attempt. However, this may prove to be an excellent story hook, as the slow exsanguination of the pack's territory causes chaos in both the physical world and the spirit world.

Benefits (free-form): Rivers provide rapid transit for large and heavy goods, create huge and defensible natural barriers between territories and attract spirits of all sorts (spirits of commerce, most of the water choir and most of the fish choir as well as spirits associated with those that prey on those fish, and so on). Rivers provide a good platform for many other territory features — whether tranquil wilderness, heavy industry that relies on river barges for transit or a riverfront shopping district. A bridge over the river may provide a good neutral site for meetings between the packs that control territory on opposite sides of the river.

Merit: •

Resonance: Water, travel

Problems and Hooks:

- A river is a great place to dump a body. The body of a well-known local human floats downriver and into the pack's territory, or the body of the leader of a local Uratha pack floats downriver — and he shows signs that he was killed by werewolves' teeth and claws, and attacked from behind.

- A riverboat casino that passes through the characters' territory regularly plays host to all sorts of unsavory entities that might prey on elderly and/or desperate humans who frequent the casino.

- Spirit refugees flee a catastrophe downriver, such as a toxic spill. The pack downriver should have known the spill was coming; their negligence has driven these terrified and rampaging spirits into your pack's territory. Now you must deal with those spirits as well as the (lazy? negligent?) neighboring pack.

SPRING

Springs have great mythical power: they represent spontaneous creation, the eruption of life from sterility.

Creating: Springs usually occur naturally; a pack might bring one into existence by digging down to a high-pressure point in the local water table (an Intelligence + Science roll would help a werewolf find a good site for such a thing). Mystically skilled werewolves may be able to lure and bind water-spirits to an area with the appropriate rituals.

Eliminating: Without outright destroying a spring, werewolves or their enemies might choose to pollute it by contaminating the local water table. This might generate polluted or corrupt spirits, poison the local spirits or destroy them entirely.

Benefits (free-form): Most springs provide a nearly limitless supply of clean water. Springs are inherently creative entities; a well-maintained spring provides a +1 dice pool modifier to Summoning rituals performed there and a +2 (total) modifier to rituals performed to summon water elementals there. The Gauntlet of a spring at its source is often quite low, typically allowing a +0 dice pool modifier.

Merit: ••

Resonance: Creation, water

Problems and Hooks: The spring manifests a locus, and its creation resonance causes a number of spirits to congregate around the spring. This unusual state of affairs begins to clutter and then even pollute the material-world waterway; the pack must either change the resonance, eliminate the spring or otherwise deal with the cascade of problems.

STREAM

A stream is a small stretch of running water, usually wet year-round. It is shallow enough to wade through and rarely more than a few yards across.

Creating: A stream may come from a spring (see above) or may just represent natural water runoff in the area. Construction equipment might be used to dig a ravine to accumulate water runoff. An earth-spirit might be convinced to move things around to allow a stream through a given area, but anyone trying to persuade an earth-spirit of such a thing will be at -3 or more dice on her Social pools to do so, given earth's natural suspicion of water's erosive qualities.

Eliminating: As with "creating," construction equipment or earth-spirits can be harnessed to eliminate or move a stream. When water falls, it has to go somewhere, so it is easier to move a stream than destroy it entirely.

Benefits (free-form): Streams are calming and peaceful; Uratha who meditate near a stream receive +2 dice to their Composure + Wits rolls while doing so. Tracking prey across a stream is more difficult; trackers receive a -2 die penalty to Survival or Perception rolls to follow a target that has crossed a stream. A stream may, at periods of high water, provide +1 die to summon water-spirits.

Merit: •

Resonance: Water, peace

Problems and Hooks: Construction or irrigation upstream dry up the creek. Water-spirits become enraged, and the peaceful nature of the stream evaporates.

SWAMP/MARSA/WETLAND

A marsh is an area with an unusually large ability to retain water. This makes the land very fertile, and allows it to support many animal species not seen elsewhere. Additionally, wetlands tend to serve as a buffer for excess water. In times of drought, wetlands keep the water table high, while in times of heavy rain, wetlands absorb water that might otherwise cause damage.

Creating: From a spiritual perspective, a wetland can best be created by repeatedly summoning water-spirits and otherwise pouring water-aspected Essence into dry land. Artificial wetlands can be created through physical means as well. The construction necessary to do this requires an Intelligence + Science roll and one month's labor by a typical pack.

Eliminating: The easiest way to eliminate a wetland is to drain and pave it. This isn't trivial, and usually requires Resources ••••• or more worth of investment. The loss of wetlands can cause massive erosion problems for nearby areas, as wetlands tend to act as a "sponge" for heavy rainfall — without a wetland, runoff can carve a simple creek into a steep ravine in just a year or so, and wash away acres of topsoil at a time. Coastal wetlands also blunt the impact of tropical storms on inhabited areas. Uratha may wish to use this to impoverish downstream rivals or drive humans from the area.

Benefits (free-form): Spirits are especially easy to banish or imprison within a wetland, as the tendency of such a place is to take Essence (and creatures composed of Essence) and bury it away for a long time. +2 dice on attempts to banish or bind spirits when within a swamp. +1 die to summon water elementals and spirits of the serpent choir. Marshes often contain rare plants and animals; +1 die to Survival rolls related to herbalism or Craft rolls related to creating a fetish.

Merit: ••

Resonance: Water, fertility, mystery, the hidden or unknown

Problems and Hooks:

- Things that would otherwise remain hidden for a long time lurk in a swamp. A spirit that previous inhabitants bound becomes unbound through the activities of Uratha (and isn't happy about its long imprisonment).

- A serial killer uses the swamp as his base of operations. The police cannot easily search the swamp for him, but the pack can (the pack's motivation to do so is up to the Storyteller and players). The killer compulsively collects silver jewelry from his victims, and is covered in the stuff. This makes him more dangerous to the Uratha than he might otherwise realize.



WOODS/FOREST

This feature refers to wild forest, rather than “tree farms” (tree farms are more like ‘farms,’ above). A wild forest doesn’t necessarily have to be an old-growth forest; any large patch of woods that has been left to grow under its own auspices for many years can qualify.

Creating: Without the assistance of spirits of wood and fertility, it takes at least three years for even a moderate semblance of woods to arise where trees have been planted. Doing that requires no real skill. This process might be sped up with a Science roll; otherwise, werewolves who need forest must invoke spirits of the forest.

Eliminating: Surprisingly, fire won’t reliably destroy a naturally grown forest. Tree species native to dry areas frequently “expect” fires to occur and are adapted to them; most forests actually benefit from infrequent forest fires. In wet areas, of course, fires are less likely to spread and do wide damage to forests. The greatest danger to forests in the modern world is clear-cut forestry and real-estate redevelopment.

Benefits (free-form): +2 dice to summon spirits of trees, wood, earth elementals, spirits associated with any bird choir or with any animal choir that lives in the forest. +2 dice on Survival rolls to hunt; +1 dice on Stealth and Athletics rolls to move around in familiar forests. Deep forest has a thin Gauntlet; +0 dice pool penalty to step sideways in a deep forest. Spirits of the wind and of fire are harder to summon in a forest — suffer a -2 dice pool penalty to summon either of those kinds of spirits. Within reason, Uratha can harvest wood for small construction projects or fires without bothering with Resources rolls.

Merit: ••

Resonance: Forest, wood, age or wisdom

Problems and Hooks: As with fallow prairie (above), woods won’t last long in the face of concerted human attempts to expand into them. It typically takes Resources •••• or exceptional bureaucratic delaying tactics (typically involving Contacts and Politics rolls) to prevent such rezoning and expansion.

Forest is also very attractive to human logging and lumber companies. Some may wish to simply clear, sell

and move on, while others might engage in “silviculture” (forest agriculture). Forestry that consists primarily of clear-cutting causes problems in the spirit world, as spirits of a slaughtered forest may be killed themselves, or go insane with the destruction of their physical-world “anchor.” Silviculture has the same general effect on the spirit world that farming has on otherwise virgin land — an increase in the local Gauntlet and a tendency to attract spirits of labor and enslavement.

URBAN/SUBURBAN

Not every feature listed below is restricted to “the big city.” Most of them can occur in more rural areas. They are more commonly found in or around population centers. Note that the werewolves don’t have to legally own some specific features (such as a bar or club) to benefit from them, though some features may have to be claimed as “theirs” informally.

APARTMENT BUILDING

This aspect may refer to housing projects of the sort that have yet to fall out of favor in the World of Darkness. It might refer to ordinary working-class apartment buildings, or to wealthy high-rise slivers in a city’s rich core.

Creating: Building an apartment building is typically a Resources ●●● or greater task requiring dozens of workers and heavy machinery. Converting an abandoned building into squatter housing, by contrast, is just a matter of moving in and locking the door.

Eliminating: See sidebar, “Destroying a Building.”

Benefits (free-form): Werewolves with an apartment building in their territory can more easily find a place to live; characters can live in apartments as though their Resources Merit was one dot higher if they live in an apartment in their territory. The pack can extend this benefit to family and friends if packmembers wish, but no more than one family per packmember. If the apartment building has the “Poor” descriptor, characters cannot receive more than Resources • level housing.

Merit: •

Resonance: Safety, home, insects (hives)

Problems and Hooks: Hooks in an apartment building primarily stem from the residents of the building. The Storyteller and players should work together to determine what kind of people live in this building — is it across the street from a hospital, housing plenty of young medical students and nurses? Or near a college campus?

DESTROYING A BUILDING

There are a few ways to destroy a building in a hurry. None of them is exactly safe. The **World of Darkness Rulebook** contains rules for damaging objects and vehicles on pp. — ; the Storyteller should consult those rules before reading

on. The core rules do not contain references for Size Structure and Damage for objects as large as buildings. Sample Size and Structure ratings are listed below.

Rules for explosives are on pp. 178–179 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook** but to summarize: players must succeed in an Intelligence Science roll to place explosives correctly (Demolitions or Construction Specialties apply). Buildings larger than house-sized apply difficulty penalties to this roll: – f or a large house up to – for a skyscraper. The damage from the explosives is applied to the building after subtracting its Durability.

As a very general rule, a collapsing building deals a number of damage dice equal to half its Size to all within the building and within yards half that many dice to those within yards half that again to those within yards and so on. Buildings designed to collapse inward do their Size in damage to those trapped inside but half as much damage as described above to those outside.

Example: Bob is trapped inside a collapsing house. He takes dice of Damage. His friend Tim is yards from that house; he takes dice. If the house were designed to collapse inward Bob would take dice Damage but Tim would take just 2 dice from flying debris.

Ordinary House or Shop: Durability Size Structure

Small Apartment Building, Large Restaurant or Store: Durability Size Structure

Factory, “Big Box” Store, Office or Large Apartment Building: Durability Size Structure

Skyscraper, Shopping Mall or Stadium: Durability or more Size or more Structure or more

BIG BOX STORE

These stores are large hardware or electronics and technology stores. They are typically stand-alone buildings and occupy thousands of square feet of suburbia.

Creating: Only the rarest werewolf has the Resources and Status necessary to open a chain store in her territory.

Eliminating: See the “Destroying a Building” sidebar. Driving one of these stores out of business through crime and violence is probably easier than blowing the building sky-high.

Benefits (free-form): If the pack has a “big box” hardware or electronics store in its territory, the pack can outfit itself for unusual occurrences in a hurry. A pack with a big box store in its territory never suffers the dice pool penalty for having the wrong tools for the job — as long as a packmember has 10 minutes to spare. Even if the pack doesn’t

have 10 minutes to spare, the packmember with the highest Resources score can roll his Resources. If he succeeds, the pack has the necessary tools lying around.

Merit: •

Resonance: Greed, commerce, technology

Problems and Hooks: Werewolves who regularly pilfer the inventory of big box stores may find themselves wanted, caught on video or even pursued by the police. Theft doesn't cause the spiritual complications tied to Harmony, but can cause complications for a pack that wishes to go about its business unmolested.

CLUB OR BAR

A bar or nightclub is a location serving alcohol and playing live or canned music. Some bars serve a full menu of food; others have nothing more than bar snacks, or no food at all. Most jurisdictions keep children under the legal drinking age (21 in the United States, 19 in Canada) from entering bars at all.

Creating: A corner bar is easy to open. Financially, it represents a few months' worth of Resources ••• invest-

ment. Bureaucratically, opening a corner bar requires a few months' worth of weekly rolls to accumulate 15 successes to get the proper permits.

Eliminating: See "Destroying a Building," above. In many jurisdictions, enough violence in the area around a club can get it shut down as a "nuisance bar." Avoiding that fate requires regular Resources •• bribes and/or good Politics and Bureaucracy rolls.

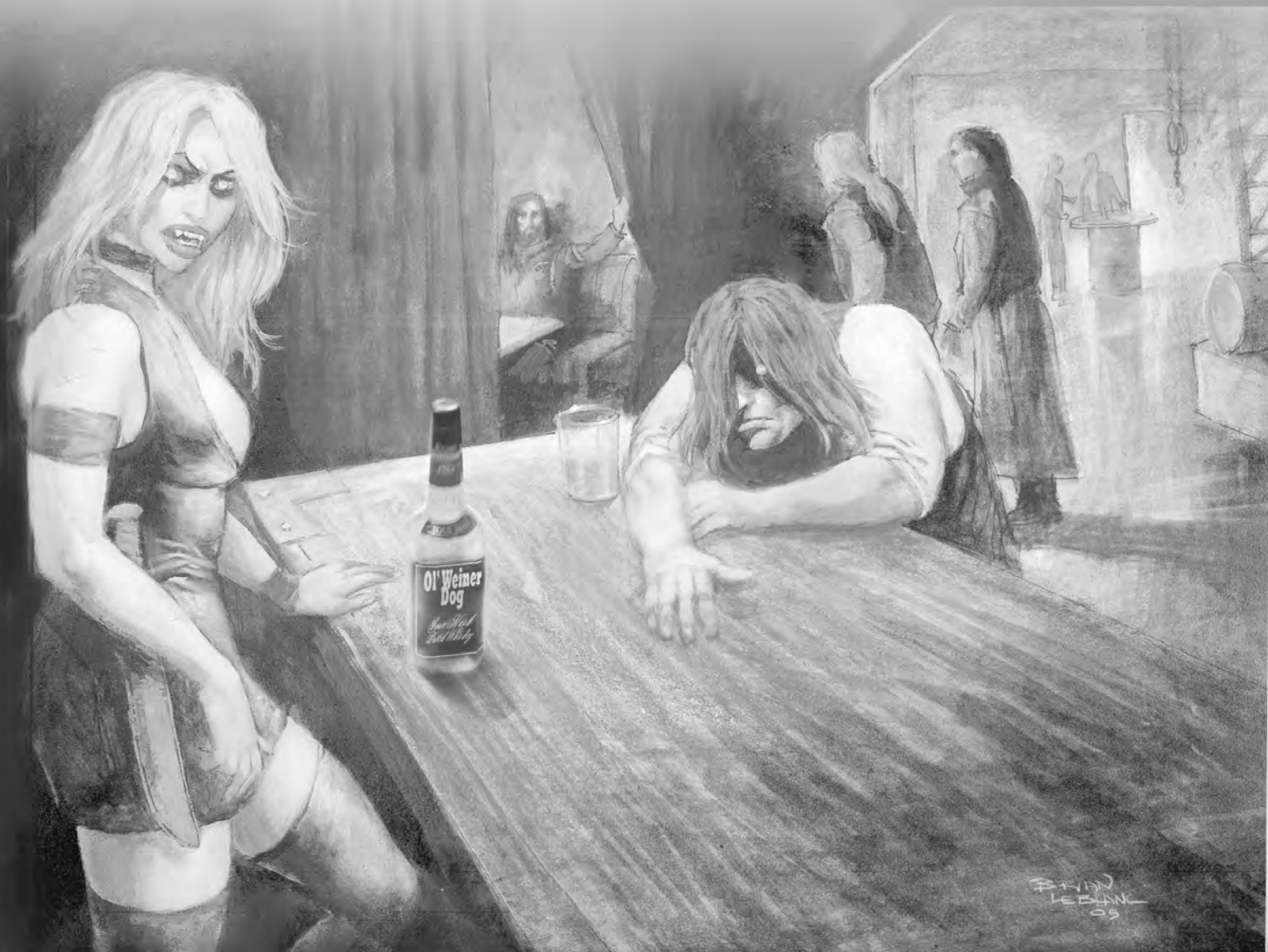
Benefits (free-form): Packmembers who succeed in a Socialize roll can treat any bar in their territory as though they had the Barfly Merit (they can enter the bar without difficulty, regardless of the sort of establishment it might be). Clubs are excellent places to meet Contacts — subtract 1 experience point from the cost of buying or raising the Contacts Merit. Drunken patrons are easily seduced; werewolves receive +1 die to seduction attempts while in a bar.

Merit: ••

Resonance: Passion, intoxication, music, lust

Problems and Hooks:

- Predatory spirits of lust haunt a local bar, looking to Ride or Urge young people in the area.



- Drug dealing or other criminal activity happens quite openly at a particular tavern. The pack may have no moral objection to this activity, but it does attract gang activity and, later, the police.

FACTORY

A factory feature represents a manufacturing facility of some kind. It may make ordinary widgets, cars, specialty equipment, chemicals or just about anything else. Generally speaking, the larger the factory's output, the larger the facility must be (many automakers' facilities fill dozens of acres). Factories employ dozens or hundreds of people.

Creating: As with many of the features in this section, a pack of Uratha cannot create a factory so much as try to attract one to its territory, or reinvigorate one that has fallen on hard times.

Eliminating: See "Destroying a Building," above.

Benefits (free-form): Uratha can easily get jobs at factories in their area, allowing them to raise their Resources Merit at -1 experience point per dot (to a cap of Resources ●●●). Enterprising werewolves may turn manufacturing facilities to their own ends, using welding robots as weapons against powerful enemies or using a press to destroy a homicidal robot from the future. Factories may even have some *extremely* dangerous facilities — high temperature furnaces, extreme cold or dangerous chemicals in abundance. Simple Science rolls can allow Uratha to take advantage of these things in dire situations.

Merit: •

Resonance: Mechanization, creation, labor

Problems and Hooks:

- Soul-deadening, repetitive, robot-driven work begins to scour much of the Essence from the Shadow around a factory; the pack's ritualists realize that a Barren may soon erupt if something isn't done.

HOUSES/HOUSING

Humans own houses all over the world. Certain territories might contain no houses at all — downtown commercial districts, for instance, or deep wilderness. This aspect generally refers to tracts of housing, be they suburban neighborhoods, city enclaves or housing developments; not every territory with a house within its borders would qualify as having "housing" as a feature.

Creating: A house requires several months' investment of Resources ●●● or more, to represent the labor of a house-building crew. A tract of homes costs more but is typically built by a developer as an investment.

Eliminating: See "Destroying a Building," above.

Benefits (free-form): Uratha who outright own or inherit a house receive +• to their Resources Merit (to a maximum of ●●●● — and note that it isn't so much that getting a house makes the character richer, as that if the character owns a house free and clear, many of the other necessities of life become easier to attain and manage). They also have relatively safe and protected

places in which to perform rituals, hack international computer networks, change shape as they wish and so on. Uratha with a tract of housing in their territory but which they don't own outright receive a +1 dice pool bonus to summon conceptuials, as so much human emotion is in residence rather than simply passing through.

Merit: •

Resonance: Safety, home

Problems and Hooks:

- A housing development may be more trouble than it is worth; when a pack has a consistent set of neighbors who expect to see them mowing the lawn, sending children off to school and so on, the packmembers will have trouble concealing that they are "strange" and may even inadvertently trigger the Lunacy in neighbors during times of stress.

- As endless television dramas suggest, suburbia is a more complex place than its surface suggests. Some of the most clichéd "movie of the week" stories have new resonance in an animistic world. The alcoholic, the wife-beater and the teenage drug addict all push resonance into the spirit world — and the pack must deal with the impact of that resonance, whatever form it takes.

MALL/STRIP MALL

A mall is a collection of stores and restaurants all sharing a common structure. They may all be indoors, under a common roof or they may just be one long building subdivided into individual shops, with a large common parking lot. A strip mall may be as small as just four shops; the largest indoor shopping malls have more than 100 stores, and even contain small amusement parks inside.

Creating: Malls are large and expensive; as with many of the other features in this section, an investment of Resources ●●●● or more, plus difficult rolls in Politics, Bureaucracy and Finance are necessary to build one.

Eliminating: See "Destroying a Building," above.

Benefits (free-form): A mall has a thick Gauntlet (typically -3 dice or more to step sideways). The main reason malls are useful to Uratha are that malls provide a way to rapidly "gear up" when action is called for. Characters with a mall in their territory can purchase or steal equipment more conveniently and quickly than they might otherwise. A pack that is familiar with its local mall can take advantage of back hallways and loading docks to sneak around and ambush enemies found there — in appropriate circumstances, the Storyteller may allow a Stealth bonus while the pack is inside a mall in its territory.

Merit: •

Resonance: Greed, commerce, ennui

Problems and Hooks: Malls are frequently hollow and bereft of spirituality. Most spirits avoid them entirely; only spirits of money and occasional spirits of desire are likely to be found there. The main reason for the absence of spirits in a mall is the high Gauntlet. Malls just about anywhere

are considered to have a “dense urban area” Gauntlet, providing a –3 dice pool modifier to step sideways (see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 250, for details). This barrier can prove useful to Uratha in some circumstances.

MUSEUM/LIBRARY

These buildings are local centers of knowledge and learning.

Creating: A pack may have a library of its own if it owns a house or other building in which the pack can house the library. Thousands of books, scrolls and other writings are needed to truly represent the kind of library that Uratha need.

Eliminating: See “Destroying a Building,” above.

Benefits (free-form): Museums sometimes contain artifacts that are dormant fetishes (or that can easily be transformed into fetishes by Uratha ritualists). +2 dice to rolls to fabricate fetishes. Libraries allow Uratha to perform mundane research more easily, and even arcane research is easier with a real library to fall back on; free access to a library gives +2 dice to Research rolls, per p. 55 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook** — and unfettered access to the library’s closed stacks may give as much as one additional die to that roll. Artificial of the information choir (other than radios and televisions) are more easily summoned in a library or museum — +1 dice to summon such spirits. At the Storyteller’s discretion, an Uratha ritualist can receive +1 die to summon a conceptual by sacrificing a large amount of material written about its core concept. As libraries and museums are both often full of people, Uratha ritualists who intend to perform summonings at such a place must choose their times and places carefully.

Merit: •

Resonance: Learning, silence

Problems and Hooks: Museums and libraries often draw the attention of humans who have some suspicions of the unseen world and seek to learn more. The werewolves may have to figure out a way to scare the humans away from unsafe knowledge without instead invoking the mortals’ curiosity.

OFFICE BUILDING/SKYSCRAPER

Small office buildings may be just one story, or they may be “office park” type buildings with up to five stories. Larger buildings than that are rarely found outside of downtown commercial districts — but, in even a medium-sized city, those buildings can reach 30 stories or more. Small office buildings may house just one company’s operations; large buildings can house dozens or hundreds of companies.

Creating: Office buildings typically require an investment of at least Resources ●●● and good Finance and Bureaucracy rolls. Skyscrapers require even more resources — amounts in the tens of millions of dollars or more.

Eliminating: See “Destroying a Building,” above. If a resident business is put out of operations with its build-

ing left intact, a new one will come along eventually to replace it.

Benefits (free-form): Characters whose territory includes one or more major office buildings receive +1 die on Finance rolls as they survey local business conditions before making investments or withdrawals. Although many Uratha are ill-suited to office work, those with high Willpower scores (7 or higher) can receive a –1 experience point cost break on the Resources Merit, as they take day jobs in office buildings. The roofs of skyscrapers and tall office buildings are excellent places to summon spirits of the sky, storm or avian spirits; +2 dice to do so. However, truly wild spirits are loath to approach such towers; –2 dice to summon spirits of the deep wild.

Merit: •

Resonance: Labor, greed, wind (in the case of skyscrapers)

Problems and Hooks:

- Really large skyscrapers may be contested by two or more packs of Uratha (imagine running battles through nighttime offices and firefights up and down elevator shafts).
- As the local business climate gets worse and repeated layoffs occur, the level of despair in the headquarters of a major local business reaches truly epic levels. A rash of suicides among desperate employees opens a Wound in the spirit world around the office park.

PARK

A “park” is a pretty broad designation, as it could in theory refer to a national park like Yellowstone just as easily as the playground on the corner. A large national or state park is better represented by a number of rural features (above); this feature refers to a park that can be thought of as a single entity. A park is a natural recreation area and may include hiking trails, picnic areas and playground equipment.

Creating: Small parks can be created by the simple expedient of buying a plot of land (Resources ●●● or more), clearing it and declaring it a park (which may require a permit best gotten with Politics or Bureaucracy rolls).

Eliminating: Buy the park and build something on it, or destroy or pollute whatever structures are already present there.

Benefits (free-form): Parks provide a window into nature even within large cities; in parts of New York’s Central Park it is possible to briefly forget that one is inside a huge metroplex. This gives Uratha a +2 dice to Meditation rolls to regain Willpower. Large parks provide good spots to meet or perform rituals out of sight of local humans or police; they can even provide good hunting for Urban-form werewolves (+1 die to Survival rolls to find food). Laying an ambush is easier in a large park, as well; characters receive +1 die to Stealth rolls within a park in their own territory. The Gauntlet in a large park is typically one point less intense than in the surrounding area.

Merit: •

Resonance: Peace, wilderness, youth

Problems and Hooks:

- Local college students begin using the park as a shortcut between their classes and nearby cheap housing. However, gangs begin preying on those students as they cross through the deepest woods in the park, mugging them or worse.

- An infestation of wilderness-spirits in the park exercise their powers to spread vegetation and wild animals outside of the park's boundaries.

SCHOOL

Schooling varies throughout the world; in the United States, students remain in school until graduation at age 18. A school may either be open for free to the general public or a private school requiring tuition payments.

Creating: Schools are generally only built in response to population pressure; causing a new school to be built is therefore a complex political proposition.

Eliminating: See “Destroying a Building,” above.

Benefits (free-form): School libraries may have useful information; characters can consult them for research as necessary (though adult characters would have to do so after hours). –1 experience point to purchase teachers or teenage Contacts or Allies if a high school is in the characters' territory. School-aged Uratha can purchase Knowledge Skills or Athletics at –1 experience point cost if they are students at a school in their territory. A high school probably also includes a small sports stadium (see below). Uratha may be able to harvest some of that emotional energy as Essence.

Merit: •

Resonance: Learning, wisdom, youth, conformity, tension

Problems and Hooks:

- Several Uratha cubs who are classmates at a local school all go through the First Change in rapid succession. A locus in the school seems to be the catalyst for this; did some unknown spiritual force draw all members of the pack to the school prior to their First Change? And if so, to what end?

- A member of the pack has a school-aged child with strong wolf blood. The stresses of school life have begun to wear on this child, who has inherited some of his parent's near-supernatural temper. The werewolf must help his child adjust to ordinary human society.

- A local religious school has the best educational reputation of any school in the area. A packmember's mate enrolls their child at that school regardless of the werewolf's wishes. The character must deal with his child's possible indoctrination into a belief system at odds with his own.

SHOP OR RESTAURANT

This feature can represent any kind of small shop — from a small restaurant or coffee shop to a pet store

or clothing store. A shop might sit as part of a shopping center, or may be part of a downtown shopping district in a small town or large city.

Creating: Find — or be — an entrepreneur. Unlike some of the larger establishments described in this section, a small craft store or restaurant can be opened with a Resources ••• investment.

Eliminating: See “Destroying a Building,” above. Small shop owners typically survive on very small margins, as well; it doesn't take much of a loss of business to close their doors forever.

Benefits (free-form): It is entirely plausible for a pack of Uratha to run a small shop within the pack's territory; a shop can make a good center of activity for a pack, and provide a small income (Resources • for packmembers) as well. If the pack doesn't run the shop itself, packmembers may take advantage of its offerings, use the shop as a center of operations or just patrol to keep the place clean and safe.

Merit: • if the pack owns and runs the shop; no cost otherwise.

Resonance: Greed, commerce, community

Problems and Hooks:

- If the pack runs a small local shop, perhaps competition enters town. This may be another small local shop, or may be a national “big box” store. Uratha who wish to run their business as a business will need to make Academics (using Bureaucracy and Finance as applicable Specialties) and Politics rolls to keep their customers happy; those who wish only for a convenient center of operations may need to bolster their Resources in other ways, as their center of operations becomes a drain on their finances rather than a profit center.

- A favored local shop is robbed one night. The police seem uninterested in investigating the crime, but the proprietor suggests that he cannot remain in business if he is hit again. The criminals could be anyone; the pack must get involved or lose a local institution.

STADIUM OR ARENA

A small local baseball stadium may hold just 1,500 people. The Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, holds almost 100,000. People throng to these facilities to cheer for sports teams or watch concerts.

Creating: Use the Status Background and Politics Skill to attract a sports team to the local area. Influential allies and contacts will likely have to be dragged into such an effort as well. Most Uratha will be somewhat suspicious. All in all, the construction of such a thing costs in the tens of millions of dollars and will never be undertaken lightly.

Eliminating: See “Destroying a Building,” above. Stadiums are sometimes demolished in favor of newer and more modern facilities. A team that does badly enough for long enough, or becomes unpopular with local fans for whatever reason, may leave town, which won't eliminate

the stadium but will eliminate the benefits from it (see below).

Benefits (free-form): Though many Uratha scoff at humans' obsession with sports, the fact is that an enormous amount of emotional energy is focused through sports teams. Even if the game only lasts two or three hours, the undivided attention of 60,000 people can have a hell of an effect. Appropriately resonant Essence will almost certainly be harvested by savvy spirits (particularly emotionals and reactionaries) in the hours right after a game, and crafty werewolves can take advantage of those spirits after the spirits have had their fill. If a locus is in the immediate vicinity, its resonance will surely match the emotional output of those fans.

Additionally, as thousands of humans pass through an area, it is easy to pick pockets, beg for loose change or otherwise earn a dishonest living from them. Packmembers receive +2 dice to Larceny or Subterfuge rolls to take advantage of fans on the way to or from a game.

Merit: •

Resonance: Passion, greed, victory, loyalty, aggression

Problems and Hooks:

- The local stadium is set to be demolished in favor of a more modern and 'sexier' one built largely at taxpayer expense. Word gets around that the local organized crime organization intends to dispose of a few skeletons in its closet through the stadium's destruction. The pack might want to do the same — or catch the mob red-handed.
- A conceptual-spirit of the emotional choir sets itself up as the "patron spirit" of the local sports team, taking on the appearance and qualities of the team's mascot. The spirit doesn't have any dire plans; it doesn't intend to suck the life from sports fans or anything like that. It enjoys sport and competition, and it harvests a small amount of Essence from humans' emotional outbursts during the game. Does the pack interfere with this activity? What if the spirit starts to interfere with games, as it realizes that it pulls more Essence from a tight, emotional game than from a blowout?

RAW ESSENCE

Spirits Uratha and others attuned to magical energies may harvest Essence directly from massive outpourings of emotion from humans. The emotion must be similar for most or all humans in the area and must be intense. Generally speaking a great well of emotion from a human crowd acts as a "temporary locus" of sorts. Essence comes into being in its rawest state, ready to be harvested by any spirits, werewolves or other entities quick enough to catch it. Spirits may even be able to cross the Gauntlet at the climax of the event — an "angel" manifesting before a crowd desperate to believe or a spirit slipping into the material world to ride an angry young rioter. Werewolves

suffer a -3 penalty to die rolls made to harvest the Essence as the timing is more challenging than drawing off Essence from a fixed locus.

The event will generate roughly two Essence per "dot" of the event's intensity which can be harvested in the usual fashion. The Storyteller is the final arbiter of any event's intensity; the following are merely guidelines. Note that the intensity of the event can be diluted or heightened by context. A snake-handling church in a region with many other such churches is less likely to generate Essence than one that operates in an area where such practices of faith are considerably rarer and more alarming. Note that certain events may trigger multiple such temporary loci; a city that breaks out in riots will probably have several separate "riot" events throughout the area and a public assassination captured on television may spawn minor loci from people watching in large groups.

- Particularly moving speech or theatrical performance; violent car accident on a freeway
- Major tent revival or other religious practice; dramatic moment during a sports game (last minute game winning goal for instance)
- Particularly damaging fire; act of random violence in a public place
- Riot; public assassination
- Catastrophe or act of major violence; widespread panic or fury

The Essence resonates with the emotions going on in the crowd (a riot's Essence is violent; a sports team's fans' Essence is exultant or despairing)



THEATER/OPERA HOUSE

Theaters show plays, musical theater, opera, symphonic concerts and even rock shows. Theaters typically seat from 100 to 2,000 patrons.

Creating: Small community theaters are not terribly difficult to organize, though finding a permanent place for them to perform can be hard. Success on a Politics roll can bring together a community theater; good Resources and/or Status are necessary to find a permanent place to perform.

Eliminating: See "Destroying a Building," above. A theater company or symphony can be driven out of business relatively easily; these organizations operate on razor-thin margins, and one financial disaster (dramatic failure on a Finance roll, or an especially bad show) can spell doom.

Benefits (free-form): Art can be inspirational; audiences at a theater generate Essence just as those at a sports stadium (above) do. However, theater is more predictable. After a werewolf has seen a given performance once, she

knows where the emotional high and low points of the show are, and can harvest Essence at a -1 penalty rather than the standard -3.

Merit: •

Resonance: Passion, ambition, tragedy, laughter

Problems and Hooks: Theaters can draw an interesting crowd of performers and patrons, including potential supernatural entities.

GENERAL FEATURES

These territory elements can exist almost anywhere, whether urban or rural.

CEMETERY

A cemetery is an area where the dead are buried. This may be a traditional graveyard, with rows of headstones side by side every eight feet, or it could be unusual — such as the crypts of New Orleans. Cemeteries are often, though not always, associated with churches. Certainly, vandalism in a cemetery will have the local religious population up in arms.

Creating: Find a big plot of land (Resources ●●●); get the appropriate permits and clearances (Politics and/or Bureaucracy).

Eliminating: Cemeteries are expensive to eliminate; hundreds of underground caskets must be excavated and moved to a new location before any development can be done.

Benefits (free-form): Ghosts are easy to find in a cemetery: -1 experience point cost benefit to purchase a ghostly Contact or Mentor. Certain rituals require parts of dead bodies; the cemetery is the only place that they can be found. Humans are naturally unnerved by the ominous presence of death in a cemetery; any sensible human must make a simple Willpower roll to enter a cemetery in the pack's territory at night.

Merit: •

Resonance: Death, mourning, history

Problems and Hooks:

- The 200-year-old cemetery is located on a bluff adjacent to a lake; erosion has begun to eat away at certain graves, revealing tombs and possibly upsetting the dead.
- An unethical corporation releases a chemical that causes the dead to begin clawing their way to the surface, hungry for human flesh.

- Death-obsessed vampires are especially fond of cemeteries; one or more local vampires may make their homes in one the cemetery's crypts.

CHURCH

A church might well be an old granite-and-stained-glass Catholic cathedral, a converted-storefront evangelical Protestant church, a Jewish synagogue or Muslim mosque. Rare indeed — in the World of Darkness — is the simple, quiet Protestant church. A church in a pack's territory has stature and meaning.

A church gives human spiritual life a physical center and often provides meaning to mortals in the area. A church may also provide services for the poor or disenfranchised. The flow of Essence in the area is disrupted by the church's presence: either the faith of the church draws the Essence in, or the church diverts or reflects the Essence in some way. This could have many effects (see below).

Creating: Depending on the scale of the church involved, creating a new church can be as simple as renting a building and beginning to hold services. The founder may have to be ordained, depending on the faith.

Eliminating: Many mortal institutions are vulnerable to simple destructive methods: fires or other instances of massive property damage. Churches of the truly faithful are resistant to that sort of thing. Knock down a church and its members will take up a collection to rebuild. The "best" way to eliminate a church is to eliminate its spiritual leadership, optimally in such a way that the leadership isn't martyred.

Benefits (free-form): -1 experience point cost to buy the appropriate kind of religious Contacts. +1 die on Academics pools to research information about the religion in question. Some ghosts and spirits cannot enter "holy ground." Most incorporeal entities can be persuaded to avoid churches — +1 die to pools to perform Warding type rituals against non-humans.

Merit: •

Resonance: Faith, belonging or home, passion, music, fervor



Problems and Hooks: Religion is often closely tied with the supernatural in folklore, from the old chestnut of religious vampire hunters to various superstitions about church bells driving off the fey, and the World of Darkness may see more connections. Emotional congregations can create a great deal of Essence, attracting spirits. Some supernatural entities may aspire to become or replace the head of a church in order to have access to the congregation's loyalty, for whatever purpose.

CRIMINAL DISTRICT

This feature represents a part of a pack's territory that is well-known as being a haven for criminals and criminal activity. This district may be an entire neighborhood, a single block or alley, a housing complex or anything else the players and Storyteller find appropriate.

Creating: Crime tends to breed crime, and crime and poverty tend to feed off one another. A pack that wishes to create a criminal district within the pack's territory can do so relatively easily by initiating criminal activity of its own — dealing drugs, performing burglary and vandalism and so on. Over time, this may drive the “good, hardworking” folk away, leaving only those who are comfortable with a criminal area or those too desperate or set in their ways to leave.

Eliminating: A “law and order” campaign by local police, or even by a sufficiently motivated pack of Uratha acting as vigilantes, can eliminate the worst crime in such a district. However, without significant investment, such a district may well be transformed from a poor-and-dangerous neighborhood into a poor neighborhood. And, given that poverty and crime tend to encourage one another, the pack will have to work hard to keep the area “clean.”

Benefits (free-form): A criminal district provides a -1 experience point benefit to purchasing criminal Contacts and Allies. This district also gives +1 to all local Larceny dice pools. It is far easier to find illicit or illegal equipment for sale in a criminal district — drugs, weapons and stolen goods can all be found. A character willing to purchase stolen goods can do so as though those goods cost • less than they ordinarily did (although nothing can be had for no dots). The area also tends to attract spirits associated with criminal activity.

Merit: •

Resonance: Desperation, poverty, greed, opportunity, violence

Problems and Hooks: Nearly any plotline from a police show or movie of choice can take place in a criminal district. These can be drawn away from pure cliché by the context of dark animism. The obsessive detective may in fact be Urged; the beat cop who gets off on abusing petty criminals attracts the attention of a spirit of the reactionary descant, and so on.

EMPTY BUILDING

Empty warehouses, sports arenas, shopping malls and the like all arise after the businesses that previously occupied the buildings vanish.

Creating: Take nearly any of the buildings listed above, and drive the business away without destroying the building.

Eliminating: Destroy the building (see “Destroying a Building,” above) or use Politics and Status to attract a new business to the site.

Benefits (free-form): Empty buildings make decent homes or secret hideouts; they can also be useful as temporary warehouses or meeting places for large groups of people who don't want to be observed. Rituals that don't require open sky or virgin land can be done without interruption in large, open buildings. And they make okay places to stash a body in a pinch.

Merit: •

Resonance: Potential, despair

Problems and Hooks:

• The city has suffered a large drop in population and grown poorer in recent decades. Dozens of homes and businesses now stand empty, even in formerly “good” neighborhoods. Squatters and drug users infest these buildings. How the pack chooses to deal with this is up to them.

• The Stanhope Building on a busy and prosperous corner in the city should, by all rights, be home to successful businesses. Three restaurants, two shops and a nightclub have all opened and closed in the building during the last 18 months. It stands empty. Is this simply a function of economics? Rumors persist of a string of old murders in the building in the 1980s. Is something older and darker going on?

HIGHWAY

A highway is a high-speed road for motor vehicles with few or no crossing roads. Highways can spell disaster both for motorists and for wildlife, as “road kill” numbers increase every autumn.

Creating: A decent investment of Resources and Status, combined with some means of influencing a member of Congress, may get a highway paved through your community as part of the next federal transportation bill.

Eliminating: Highways are rarely shut down permanently; once they are put in place, budgetary allowances are made to cover their continuing maintenance. Even major interruptions of service such as earthquakes won't shut down a major highway forever.

Benefits (free-form): A highway provides rapid transit in and out of a territory. Most packs allow stretches of highway to serve as neutral territory, so long as travelers don't abuse the privilege. Spirits of cars and motorcycles love highways, and haunt their way up and down empty nighttime roads (+2 dice to summon spirits of cars or motorcycles or awaken the spirits within such devices while on the highway). A werewolf receives +2 dice to her Drive pool while driving on a stretch of highway in her own territory. Most animal-spirits with any sentience to speak of know to avoid highways; -1 die to summon animal-spirits there, and +1 die to banish animal spirits from a highway.

Merit: •**Resonance:** Travel, speed, death, fatigue**Problems and Hooks:**

- A pack of the Pure has begun to use the local highways to move in and out of its inner-city territory. If the Uratha can catch the Pure packmembers while on the road, the Uratha may be able to do real damage to their foes.

- Beings unknown have taken up an ambush site on a bluff high above a local highway, and attack passersby — including local werewolves. The pack must find the attackers and bring them to whatever form of justice seems most appropriate.

HOSPITAL

A hospital feature is any major medical center containing facilities for scores of doctors and support personnel, as well as rooms for short-, medium- and long-term recuperation. Some hospitals have helipads for use by emergency medical helicopters; nearly all hospitals have emergency rooms and facilities for ambulances.

Creating: A hospital is a mortal institution; most hospitals in the World of Darkness are part of large medical corporations. Influencing such a large organization would be a long-term, complex effort. However, smaller medical centers could be opened up by influencing individual doctors; a pack may choose to get involved in reopening a recently-closed hospital through raising funds or other means.

Eliminating: If a hospital is owned by a large medical corporation, the easiest way to get the hospital shut down is to increase the hospital's operating costs to the point where the hospital is no longer a profitable arm of the corporation. This can usually be accomplished through violent and/or supernatural means. If the hospital is an independent entity, or part of a charitable organization, this will be much harder (see the sidebar on p. 18).

Benefits (free-form): Obviously, a hospital is handy to have around when a werewolf (or associated mortal) runs into a medical emergency. Characters who regularly patrol a local hospital may find that spirits of healing are easier to attract (+2 dice to Summoning) and may even be willing to teach specialized healing Gifts and rites (allowing a 1 experience point cost break on such things). As mentioned below, ghosts tend to cluster around hospitals; those few ghosts that are both self-aware and benevolent may prove to be useful Contacts or Allies in a hospital. Should a supernatural problem take place, if the pack takes care of it and makes it known to mortals in the hospital that the pack is responsible for solving that problem, the characters may find useful mortal Contacts in the hospital from then on (-1 experience point cost to gain a medical Contact).

Merit: •••**Resonance:** Healing, disease, death, birth**Problems and Hooks:** A hospital in a pack's territory requires regular attention. A Storyteller can look to the

preferred hospital medical drama of the year and rip story ideas from it without much trouble.

- So much pain, death, disease and madness occurs in hospitals in the World of Darkness that even the ideal hospital is constantly at risk of infestation by dangerous spirits. A pack could expect to work almost as an exterminator in such a place, coming in on a regular basis to deal with whatever semi-natural thing has taken up residence since the last visit.

- Similarly, so many humans die in hospitals that the places are practically breeding grounds for ghosts. The boundary between the living and the dead isn't exactly part of werewolves' usual responsibilities, but Uratha may find that their territories are easier to manage if the most dangerous ghosts are out of the way.

- A hospital in the inner city may suffer from gang-related crime (a rash of shootings, or theft of medical supplies). A pack that wants to keep its territory safe could easily get involved in protecting the hospital from this mortal threat.

MILITARY BASE

Military bases are large, complex entities. Their nature and contents depend on the arm of the military that they are associated with (in the United States, that means that a given base may be part of the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, the Air Force or various arms of the National Guard or Reserves). Almost every city has a National Guard presence of some kind, and most major cities have one or more military bases; however, military bases can also be found far from large cities. Navy bases are only found on the coast of an ocean or the Great Lakes.

Bases may be built outside of a country's territory; the United States has military bases in dozens of countries, either in support of ongoing military operations or as part of longstanding treaties.

Creating: Military bases are expensive and complex parts of a huge organization (the Department of Defense or its equivalent). A single pack of Uratha probably lacks the resources to induce such a base to be built in the pack's territory. A pack that wants a military base as part of its territory will have to expand into such an area.

Eliminating: Active, combat-oriented bases are hard to eliminate by violence, as they are full of soldiers with guns and other fabulous military hardware. The military might be induced to close a relatively minor base in an era of cost control, by raising the cost of maintaining the base. Uratha may work from within a country that has been invaded, aiding locals in attacking a foreign base; however, a powerful invading nation may simply reinforce that base rather than eliminate or move it.

Benefits (free-form): Uratha on good terms with the residents of a military base can acquire military Contacts or Allies at a -1 experience point cost. A military Contact or Ally may be able to provide Uratha with military equipment if he is sufficiently induced to do so, but such a

theft, if discovered, may result in the Contact or Ally losing his position (and thereby his usefulness to the pack). Military bases tend to be full of guns and other equipment (bazookas, high explosives, jeeps, boats, tanks, helicopter gunships, jet fighters, and so on, depending on the nature of the base). The theft or hijacking of such equipment won't go unnoticed, but in a serious emergency, a pack of Uratha may not care. Spirits of violence and weaponry are attracted to military bases; spirits of the sky frequent Air Force and Air Force Reserve bases, to better frolic in the chaotic winds created by supersonic jet traffic.

Merit: ●●●

Resonance: Violence, defense

Problems and Hooks:

- Eagle-spirits resent humans' violation of the birds' domain above an Air Force base, and either cause a crash or threaten to do so if the local Uratha can't "keep the monkeys down where they belong." Or perhaps sky-spirits resent the unnatural way that supersonic flight disrupts the sky, and get involved in the same manner.

- In an era of cost-cutting, a base is threatened with "realignment" (elimination). If the pack wants to keep the base around, the pack must get involved in human politics; if, on the other hand, the characters would like to use the base's land for their own ends, the pack must keep the local "Save Our Base" movement from gaining too much traction.

- If the game takes place in a country where a war is going on, the pack may find itself on the receiving end of an invasion, as a temporary or permanent military base is built within the characters' territory. Do they drive the base out, or take advantage of it? Such a base will attract new spirits, threatening the local balance of power in the *Hisil*.

- In the World of Darkness, many military bases contain prisons full of alleged "enemy combatants" and "terrorists" who are neither of those things. Perhaps one of these prisoners is a relative, Contact, Ally or Mentor of a member of the pack. Do the Uratha dare to break in and rescue their loved one?

- Secret military research bases are surely more common in the World of Darkness than the real world, and a small fraction of those bases sponsor investigation into Things Humans Were Not Meant To Know. The local army uncovers magical secrets, frees a powerful bound spirit or inadvertently opens a gateway into the *Hisil*, and the packmembers must fulfill their responsibility as the Guardians of the Border Marches by keeping the humans out of the spirit world.

UNIVERSITY OR POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL

A university is a large, accredited institution of higher learning that provides bachelor's degrees (or higher-level degrees) to its students. A university typically consists of many buildings and a campus several square miles in extent. A postsecondary school is usually a much smaller

place, perhaps occupying just one building or a few floors of a large building. Postsecondary schools are mostly specialized, and provide associates' degrees in their fields of specialty.

Creating: Such schools take a lot of time and an *enormous* amount of money to create. A pack with a particular hankering for in-home education might be able to attract a school to its territory, but this would rely more on Social rolls and Merits than anything else. And it would surely take time. Packs that want the benefits of a university or postsecondary school in their territory are encouraged to pick a territory that includes such an institution. Barring that, a pack would be better off raiding a rival pack's territory to claim a big school than the pack would be trying to lure a new school into its territory. A large university can itself *be* a pack's territory.

Eliminating: As with most human institutions, a university can be eliminated through the tenacious application of terror. However, this is sure to bring with it problems — see the sidebar on p. 18 for more details. Driving a university "out of business" by going after its finances, contributions or accreditation might be easier. In any event, eliminating a university is a massive undertaking that should take months, if not years, of a pack's attention.

Benefits (free-form): A university or postsecondary school allows a character to buy the Encyclopedic Knowledge Merit after character creation. Additionally, characters who actually take advantage of the institutions of learning in their territory (spending real training time doing so) gain a one experience point discount to learn any Mental Skills (so it costs eight experience points to raise Computer from 2 to 3). Academic Contacts, Allies and Mentors all receive the same experience discount.

Merit: ●●

Resonance: Learning, wisdom, calcification, youth

Problems and Hooks: Thousands of young humans spend time in these self-contained cities. Each of them has a story.

- A professor of ancient and primitive myths has begun to discover a common thread in them — the presence of wolf-men or wolf-spirits that hunt and are hunted by other spirits. He begins working on further research into this, and encounters the pack as part of that research.

UTILITIES

Utilities represent the nervous and circulatory systems of human communities. Utilities bring water, power, communications and heat to various buildings, and take away waste. Players and Storytellers don't have to represent ordinary power or gas lines through the "utilities" feature — instead, elements of this type represent noteworthy facilities: a water treatment plant, water tower, power plant, telecommunications switching station, major sewer juncture, gas depot and so on.

Creating: These facilities represent enormous investments of both money and political clout. Characters without high Resources and Status, as well as high Bureaucracy and Politics scores, would be unable to even begin such a thing.

Eliminating: Power plants and gas mains blow up real good. Use the rules elsewhere for destroying buildings, but double the damage effect of explosives against such facilities (and also double the damage taken by those in and around them). Water plants are significantly harder to destroy, however; increase water facilities' Durability by one point or more.

Benefits (free-form): Electrical-, water- and/or fire-spirits cavort in the potential generated by these facilities: +2 dice to summon a spirit of the appropriate type. In a pinch, characters can use a Science roll to tap into a torrent of the appropriate substance. At telecommunications switching stations, characters can use a Computer roll to tap into the electronic communications of anyone within a five-mile radius.

Merit: •

Resonance: Health, safety, pollution, as well as water, electricity or fire, as appropriate to the facility

Problems and Hooks:

- A powerful spirit of lightning has become tainted by a Wound or one of the Maeljin. She lairs in a local power plant, and her taint has begun to infect the power supply to nearby homes. Humans who rely heavily on electricity in their everyday lives (which is to say, most of them) slowly become more cruel; a few gruesome deaths by electrocution occur.

- Spirits of waste or decay become enraged by the work of a water-treatment facility and use spirit abilities to prevent certain substances from being entirely removed from the city's water supply. Those substances might be drugs, bacteria or anything else the Storyteller deems appropriate.

SPIRIT/SUPERNATURAL

These areas may only exist in the Shadow, or they may be intrusions across the Gauntlet (either a finger of the physical world pushing into the *Hisil* or part of the spirit world interfering with material reality).

BARREN

A Barren is a spiritually empty site. A Barren has no Essence or resonance to speak of.

Creating: A Barren may come about because of the extremely thick local Gauntlet, or a Barren may arise because every scrap of local Essence has been sucked away in powerful magical assaults. A pack that taps a locus too frequently or too deeply may inadvertently create a Barren, though this is not a common happening (see p. 263 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken** for the beginnings of this). A pack that dramatically fails while using the Rite of the Border Citadel (see p. 51) may inadvertently create a Barren.

Eliminating: A pack may learn the Rite of Desert Rain (see p. 50) to temporarily alleviate the effects of a Barren; repeated use of this rite and judicious redirection of Essence flows may create a healing process. However, this rite is hard to track down, difficult to learn and hard to perform. A Barren may take decades to fade on its own, even with natural trickles of Essence directed at the site; without this generosity, a Barren may never heal.

Benefits (free-form): There are few true benefits to a Barren. However, there are some game effects to consider. The Gauntlet is impenetrably thick in a Barren; any supernatural ability that relies on the spirit world suffers -3 dice to the ability's effectiveness. This includes the Gifts and rites of the Uratha as well as Numina of spirits, Ridden or the Hosts. All other supernatural abilities suffer -1 die to their efficacy in a Barren.

Merit: (No cost)

Resonance: None

Problems and Hooks:

- Truly desperate spirits may hide in a Barren. This is a losing decision in the long run, as the spirit cannot regain Essence while in the Barren, but if the spirit is on the run from more powerful entities, such a wasteland may be the spirit's only alternative.

- A human who has somehow crossed over into Shadow may inadvertently find that a Barren is one of the few safe places around — as few spirits enter the area, and those that do so have a hard time harming the human.

CATALYST

A spirit catalyst site enables (and speeds) the transformation of one spirit type into another. This site does nothing for the power of those spirits; a Gaffling will not be infused with enough power to become a Jagglung on the virtue of the site alone. Radical changes are unusual, and few catalyst sites cause them. These transformations are based on resonance.

Catalyst sites, considerably rarer than loci, tend to occur along major Essence flows, when a large amount of Essence is flowing from one strongly resonant site to another of the same resonance. A catalyst might therefore be found between two powerful loci of similar resonance.

Primal places, catalyst sites draw on the core of the spirit world. They represent simple spirit concepts — fire, stone, death and so on. A spirit that spends too much time at a catalyst site finds its nature tugged toward the catalyst site's nature. A bear-spirit making its lair near a "death" catalyst site might find itself a ghost bear within a month. A hawk-spirit that regularly hunts in a "fire" site may be consumed and reborn as something more akin to a phoenix.

Creating: Catalyst sites only happen naturally and cannot be brought into being deliberately. Uratha may encourage the creation of a catalyst site by repeatedly summoning a particular kind of spirit in a thin Gauntlet area or by attempting to tamper with the resonance of Essence flows.

Eliminating: Eliminating a catalyst site requires an extinguishing or disruption of the core of the catalyst and the raising of the local Gauntlet. This may be done with the help of local Azlu (not likely), or through other means as determined by the Storyteller.

Benefits (free-form): Catalyst sites have a very thin Gauntlet (+0 dice to step sideways), no matter where they are, though they don't count as loci. This makes the site handy to have in an area where the Gauntlet is otherwise thick. Other benefits may accrue as pertains to the nature of the site — Uratha always receive +1 die to their pools to summon spirits of the appropriate type to the catalyst, with a -1 die penalty to summon any other kind of spirit.

Merit: •

Resonance: As appropriate to the catalyst

Problems and Hooks: In addition to the complications listed above, a catalyst site may also affect humans who spend a lot of time nearby. Humans with Willpower scores below 5 begin to take on personality traits associated with the catalyst site — near a “fire” site they become pyromaniacal, while near a “breeding” site they become more amorous.

GLADE

A glade is a fountain of positive emotion and peaceful energy. Glades are havens within the Shadow, and are extremely rare in the modern day.

Creating: Glades only arise in sites with positive, healthy, peaceful resonance. Creating a glade would require eliminating any sources of negative or dissonant resonance, keeping the site safe (without violence or frenzy) over a period of time and continually investing Essence of positive resonance into the site. The process may take months, even years of constant attention — but the benefits for the spirit world are great.

Eliminating: Glades can lose their power if they become the sites of great violence. Although a single battle or act of bloodshed probably won't undo a glade's power, repeated violent acts or extended ritual acts of cruelty can undo the glade's harmony. Most werewolves with a glade in their territory are careful to keep the battle lines well away from the place.

Benefits (free-form): To initiate a fight within a glade (or to continue a running battle that enters a glade), the character must succeed in a Resolve check. Even if that roll succeeds, the attacker suffers -2 dice to all rolls to attack or hurt another, or to transform into the Gauru form. Defenders or those seeking to prevent violence receive +2 dice to all pools rolled to that end.

Merit: •••

Resonance: Peace, healing, rest

Problems and Hooks:

- A wounded and desperate pack of rival Uratha makes camp in a glade ‘belonging’ to the characters’ pack without permission or notification. Does the pack honor the nature of the glade, or defend its territory?

LOCUS

A locus is a center and fountain of spiritual energy (or “Essence”). Loci also represent “crossing points” between the spirit world and physical world.

For more detail on loci, see pp. 260–264 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**.

Creating: Uratha must invest 150 points of appropriately resonant Essence into an object to increase that object's locus rating by one point. That Essence must remain undisturbed for a full week. For more information, see **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 262.

Eliminating: To eliminate a locus, the pack must destroy the physical object that encapsulates the locus, and then counter the ambient resonance of the area by investing 150 points of Essence whose resonance opposes the local resonance. Each time this is done, the local area's potential to serve as a locus decreases by one rating point.

Benefits (free-form): See **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, p. 262.

Merit: A locus that is fully under the control of the pack counts as a Merit whose rating is equal to the locus' rating.

Resonance: As appropriate to the locus

Problems and Hooks: Loci are central points in the lives of the Uratha. Spirits congregate near loci, Uratha rely on loci to accumulate Essence, the Gauntlet is thin near them and loci can even alter the local landscape and mood through their resonance. Azlu, in particular, like to hunt near loci. By a locus' very nature, a locus is sure to be the focus of many stories over the course of a chronicle.

SHOAL

A shoal, as described on p. 258 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, is a pool of negative emotions and nihilism. Uratha who enter a shoal find themselves too overwhelmed by ennui to stand up and leave the area, even in the face of hunger or other stimuli.

Creating: Like many other negative manifestations of the Shadow, shoals may come into being from any number of stimuli. Shoals seem to be particularly attached to the emotional echo of extreme inaction and negativity. The site of Kitty Genovese's murder in New York City (a young woman was raped and murdered while her neighbors watched without calling the police or intervening) is a shoal. Some crack houses cause shoals to come into being. An Internet café where a patron died by sitting and playing video games for more than two days could also create a shoal.

Eliminating: The bleak resonance of the shoal must be countered with action and Essence tinged with enthusiasm. Just as healing a Barren or Wound, this is a process that requires great effort over an extended period of time.

Benefits (free-form): There are no benefits to having a shoal in your territory. An attempt to leave a shoal requires a Resolve + Composure roll (any wound penalties apply); failure prevents departure, and each subsequent roll suffers a cumulative -1 penalty.

Merit: (No cost)

Resonance: Depression, sloth, introspection, paralysis

Problems and Hooks:

- A packmate or mentor goes missing; she was last seen wounded near an area known to be a shoal. The pack must find her before anything else does.
- Some spirits are rumored to be immune to the taint of the shoal. These predators wait for passersby to become overwhelmed by listlessness, and then attack. The trapped person or werewolf can defend himself, but cannot flee.

VERGE

Verges are fleeting places where there is no Gauntlet at all — the barrier between worlds has worn so thin that a person or spirit can cross from one world to the other freely. On certain nights, a person might walk down the wrong alley and find himself between the twisting buildings of the Shadow. A verge is not a constant feature; most seem to manifest only once a year, or even less frequently. Verges do not generate Essence — they are simply portals across the Gauntlet of temporary nature.

Creating: By their nature, verges are difficult to predict, much less create. Some werewolves believe that if a nest of Beshilu is left alone too long, they might gnaw several verges in the local Gauntlet. Some verges manifest on the anniversary of spiritual events of particular force, which would imply that creating a similar event would have a chance of creating a verge. Unfortunately, which factors contribute most strongly toward a verge's creation have yet to be determined.

Eliminating: Rites that raise the Gauntlet, such as Fortify the Border Marches, can temporarily seal a verge. No rite seems to be able to permanently remove a verge from existence, as the rift between worlds may yet return when the time becomes right once more.

Benefits (free-form): A verge provides instant access to and from the spirit world, which makes a verge a painless way to step sideways. Of course, this benefit is available only on nights when the verge manifests, which is a considerably limiting factor.

Merit: —

Resonance: None innate

Problems and Hooks: A verge tends to provide far more problems than benefits to a werewolf pack. While a verge remains open, humans become lost in the Shadow where they have little chance of survival, and spirits move freely into the physical world to pursue their own ambitions. The night a verge opens in a pack's territory is sure to be a busy one for the pack.

WINDOW

Occasionally a window between worlds opens, allowing viewers on either side of the Gauntlet a clear view of what lies on the other side. A spirit window doesn't remain "open" at all times, mostly remaining present but opaque. Between the hours of midnight and 12:03, a

computer screen shows flashes of the other world; a sole remaining pane of glass in a derelict building displays strange images when the wind comes from the northwest. The sights it offers may induce Lunacy in humans; only a few are able to look on the Shadow for what it is, whether they understand it or not.

Typically a window is bounded by physical phenomenon — one may arise between two trees or through a particular doorway. Windows are only visible from a specific angle — that doorway may look perfectly ordinary from outside the house but open onto a terrifying spirit world wasteland when viewed from within. A window does not allow passage through the Gauntlet; a window only allows vision (and possibly other senses) to operate through it. Windows function in both directions through the Gauntlet — those in the *Hisil* can also use a window to see the physical realm.

Creating: There are no known ways to deliberately create a spirit window, though it's rumored that accidental use of certain Gifts, rites or Numina might cause such a thing to come into being. Windows mostly arise spontaneously, and are a phenomenon few werewolves can properly explain.

Eliminating: Spirit windows are fragile and temporary things. If the local Gauntlet increases or decreases for any reason, the window is eliminated.

Benefits (free-form): Other than the obvious benefit for Uratha, spirits tend to congregate near windows, hoping for a glimpse of the paradise of the physical world.

Merit: •

Resonance: Perception, madness

Problems and Hooks: Spirit windows can trigger strange reactions in humans, from an unhealthy fascination with the supernatural to near-madness. Spirits find it easier to monitor the physical world for potential opportunities, and those that might not have been tempted to cross the Gauntlet on their own might feel that urge once they see the lures of the physical through a window.

WOUND

To an observer in the spirit world, a Wound seems like a street corner in Hell. A Wound vomits forth extremely negative Essence; a Wound is a site where the spirit wilds themselves are damaged. Wounds are full of violent, diseased, corrupt spirits that gnaw on the vile Essence belched forth from the site, and then fight among themselves or assault travelers.

Creating: Thankfully, Wounds are not easy to create. They erupt only in the spirit wilds' echo of a location where true horror occurred — plague, natural disaster or genocide or other mortal atrocity.

Eliminating: There is no known certain way to destroy a Wound. Destroying it is a war, not a battle; the process requires driving away or capturing the spirits that dwell there, enacting powerful rituals of cleansing and working diligently in the physical world to soothe the painful memories associated with the place.

Benefits (free-form): Only Bale Hounds would consider owning a territory that includes a Wound to be “beneficial.” All Harmony rolls and rolls to resist Death Rage are at -2 dice while within a Wound. All injuries suffered within a Wound do one additional point of Health or Corpus damage.

Merit: (No cost)

Resonance: Cruelty, slaughter, pain, despair, fear — almost any negative emotion

Problems and Hooks: The existence of a Wound within a pack’s territory is a major problem and is likely to drive the core of the chronicle’s storyline.

TERRITORY DESCRIPTORS

The following descriptors could feasibly apply many territory elements, within reason. Few places have more than one descriptor, and many places have no extra descriptors at all. Each descriptor has the same sorts of features as those already described; the only difference is that descriptors add to an existing territory element. Merit costs that are listed as “+•” mean that they add one dot to the Merit cost of an existing location. A “-•” cost means that the element is one dot cheaper than it would ordinarily be (though no element’s cost can ever be reduced below ‘free’).

Storytellers — and other players — are within their power to veto an especially silly combination (particularly the stacking of descriptor on descriptor — a bloody arcane haunted site, for instance), but, in general, troupe are encouraged to say yes to unusual ideas if they are well-justified or would lead to good and believable stories.

AMBUSH SITE

This descriptor represents a location within the pack’s territory where all of the Uratha of the pack know that they can get the drop on enemies wandering through. It is up to players to define and describe why a given location is a good ambush site. It may be a blind alley, a “killing field”

empty lot with no cover anywhere or a twisted junkyard maze.

Creating: Werewolves with a good sense of tactics should be able to create an ambush site with a few hours’ preparation. Most rolls to set up an ambush site are based on Intelligence, but Storytellers might choose to combine Intelligence with Crafts, Athletics, Firearms, Stealth or Survival.

Eliminating: Some ambush sites are easy to demolish — if your foes have set up an ambush by creating lots of cover, destroy the cover with whatever is handy. Other sites can’t be destroyed short of building demolition (usually based on Intelligence + Science — see *the World of Darkness Rulebook*, p. 178).

Benefits (free-form): An ambush site is designed for letting the pack claim the element of surprise. A good ambush site also provides partial concealment or better (-2 to opponents’ dice pools to attack) and cover (see *the World of Darkness Rulebook*, pp. 162–164).

Merit: •

Resonance: Violence, defense, alertness

Problems and

Hooks: The value of a good defensive fortification is evident to other packs, and such a feature might quickly become contested. In addition, if the pack makes a habit of bushwhacking victims there, the amount of blood shed may draw the wrong sort of spirits or taint the local resonance.

ARCANE

An arcane area sees traffic from one or more sorcerers, witches or other magic-using humans. The pack may see them as potential allies or deadly enemies, but usually the two groups settle into a loose rivalry where supernatural features of the area are concerned.

Creating: Many things can attract mages to a location. Loci seem to attract them, as some mages relish the powerful Essence flows near a locus. Some mages also summon spirits (and know enough to summon in a location that is resonant to the spirit’s type). However, sometimes a



cabal of wizards is attracted to a location that has a thick Gauntlet and a weak connection to the *Hisil*. Few Uratha mystics can even hazard a guess as to what such wizards are up to.

Eliminating: Uratha may find it easiest to simply slaughter mages who intrude in the pack's territory, but there are two primary complications to this. First, mages are powerful beings; their most elder scholars can hold their own against a pack of werewolves, and a cabal of mages is certainly capable of fending off a pack. Secondly, even if Uratha can drive off or slaughter local mages, whatever causes this area to be arcane will remain; werewolves must trace the magical anomaly that makes this area so interesting to wizards, and somehow eliminate it, if the werewolves wish to rid themselves of interested wizards.

Benefits (free-form): Uratha who cultivate an arcane area or otherwise retain friendly relations with local mages receive a -1 experience point cost to purchase or improve wizardly Contacts. Many mages are attracted to centers of learning; Uratha of a more scholarly bent may find arcane areas to their liking.

Merit: +•

Resonance: Learning (not necessarily wisdom), secrets, mystery, change

Problems and Hooks:

- Mages who summon spirits from the Shadow are in direct violation of werewolves' edict to patrol and protect the Border Marches. Few mages are aware of the laws of Father Wolf, but powerful human shamans have posed problems for Uratha since before the Fall. Keeping such beings in check is an important task for dutiful Uratha.

- A wizard creates a powerful artificial person — a robot, or animated statue or column of sentient muscle and sinew. This creature seems to be truly sentient, and, for whatever reason, it is immune to most magic. Magical contacts approach the pack for help; an aggressive pack will find that most Gifts don't work against the artificial person. If the werewolves wish to destroy it, they'll have to get down to tooth and claw.

- In order to power a mighty spell, mages who live nearby need body parts from a werewolf — whether living or dead. There are plenty of ways this could go: Wizards might begin to hunt the Uratha (a nice play on the game's "hunt or be hunted" theme). Sufficiently sympathetic mages might ask for (or offer to buy) blood, fur or claws. Or the mages might go after nearby Pure Ones.

CONTESTED

A contested element is one that is directly and actively fought over by the players' pack and another pack of Uratha. Werewolves must use caution in any conflict, for their Rage may get the best of them, and yet the People may not slay the People without grievous repercussions.

Creating: A pack can easily create a border region by raiding another pack's territory — the border region then

comes out of the other pack's territory and is considered contested. The opposite side of that coin is that a rival pack may contest a particularly lucrative area within the pack's territory.

Eliminating: The two packs must reach a concord of some kind — either through violence and submission, or through diplomacy (our money is on the former).

Benefits (free-form): The only real benefit of contested territory is the possibility of expanding the pack's territory even farther by handing their rivals a particularly sound defeat.

Merit: - •

Resonance: Per the base feature

Problems and Hooks: In addition to clashes of sheer territoriality, many potential subplots can arise from contested territory. Two packs might clash over a medical clinic in hopes of drawing spirits of healing to their sides, or attempt to control a bar for pure status purposes. By the same token, in a territory-driven chronicle, the Storyteller should place a few lucrative areas in other packs' lands, and thereby tempt the players' pack to raid its rivals' territories.

ESSENCE CURRENT/LEY LINE

Essence doesn't just pool in place or slowly ebb from one location to another. Essence also *races* from one place to another at high speed. An Essence flow generally runs from one locus to another. These loci may have nearly identical resonance, or they may have opposed resonances. Essence flows swiftly through the line, at speeds of hundreds of miles per hour. If the current connects two loci of identical resonance, the ley line serves to keep the two loci roughly balanced (in terms of the amount of Essence each holds). If the current connects two opposing loci, the ley line keeps each locus strong by funneling Essence toward the appropriate locus. Ley lines sometimes spontaneously emerge between loci that are dozens of miles apart — or even farther.

Note that ley lines do not naturally raise a locus' rating. Instead, they simply balance the amount of Essence flowing through an area.

Ley lines tend to run along natural paths — where possible they flow along with rivers or streams, along strong wind currents or even mineral veins underground. If no such obvious path exists, Essence may flow along human-made paths, roads or even along with power or sewage lines.

Creating: Essence currents tend to arise spontaneously. Some Uratha study the ebb and flow of Essence and attempt to direct it using methods similar to the practice of *feng shui*.

Eliminating: An Essence current is destroyed if the locus at either end is destroyed or tapped of all its Essence (even temporarily). Unruly spirits may choose to dam, disrupt or otherwise interfere with its flow.

Benefits (free-form): Ley lines can be used to drain negative Essence from the local area, by connecting a powerful local locus to a weak remote one. The negative Essence doesn't vanish forever, of course — it is simply leached away to a place that is someone else's problem. Essence currents can also be used to support a nearby locus, by aligning it to a powerful remote locus.

Merit: +•

Resonance: Based on the loci at either end

Problems and Hooks: A pack's rivals and enemies can use an Essence current in the same way that the Uratha who control it can. Additionally, if the pack's foes control one end of the current or the other, they can effectively stop up the current.

NOTORIOUS

This chunk of the pack's territory is sufficiently weird that a few unusual humans are attracted to it. Humans tend to be curious monkeys; while most humans will avoid overtly dangerous areas, this particular place isn't so much dangerous as it is *interesting* to mortals. The humans in question may be just a lone hunter, a small group of "monster-hunters" or an arm of an organization such as the Catholic Church. The mortals probably have no idea what a werewolf is, beyond what they've seen in movies — and they may well have no idea that the pack is in fact a group of werewolves. The humans only know that weird shit is going on, and they are curious enough to stick around and try to learn what.

Creating: Werewolves can create an air of notoriety by being sloppy or by allowing particularly vibrant spiritual activity to run unchecked. When adding an area like this to the pack's territory, be sure to describe precisely what attracts local weirdoes, and at least make a first pass as to what they *think* is going on.

Eliminating: Stay away. Destroy any wayward spirits. Create fake evidence that explains the weird stuff away (swamp gas!).

Benefits (free-form): Curious mortals of the attractive sex are even more powerfully attracted to creatures such as Uratha than "ordinary" mortals are — +1 die to seduce "curious" mortals in your own territory. The presence of mortals with pet theories regarding local weirdness can help to explain away actual weird stuff — +1 to Subterfuge pools to cover up supernatural activity in such an area. One experience point cost discount on Allies or Contacts in the "monster-hunter" hobby.

Merit: (No change)

Resonance: Secrets, paranoia, dread

Problems and Hooks: Notoriety may be what draws the pack to claim a section of territory as the pack's own in the first place. Local urban legend may lead a pack to a potential locus or to supernatural activity that needs to be quelled for the good of the area.

• Something — other than the pack — is hunting local monster-hunters and freaks. Is it the Pure Ones? Vampires? Rogue spirits?

• A local monster-hunter gets a sequence of photographs of one packmember shifting all the way through the sequence from Dalu to Urhan. The next time she sees that packmember, she attempts to blackmail him, extort information from him or beg him for help.

HAUNTED

The area in question is infested with one or more ghosts. For the most part, ghosts in the World of Darkness are the emotional impression left over by particularly violent deaths or by those who died while still leaving something important in their lives unresolved. Some ghosts are self-aware — they realize that they are ghosts. Others are mostly self-aware, but do not realize that they are ghosts. Still others are simple whorls of rage, or mindless automata, endlessly repeating the actions immediately preceding their demise.

Although ghosts have many things in common with spirits, ghosts are *not* spirits, and werewolves have fewer means overall to deal with ghosts than with spirits.

Creating: Haunted areas are most likely to arise in locations commonly associated with death — be they the sites of a murder or suicide, a cemetery or even a church or other memorial site. Uratha sometimes inadvertently create a haunted area by killing humans and creating ghosts.

Eliminating: A haunted area can be eliminated by destroying the ghosts in it, or by helping them let go of the mortal world. This activity depends heavily on the ghost's nature; a werewolf is well-advised to do some research into local history to discover what may be the events surrounding a ghost's mortal life.

Benefits (free-form): The dead are inherently unnerving to humans; decrease humans' effective Willpower by 1 for purposes of Lunacy while the human remains in a haunted area. Ghosts see and hear a lot of things that mortals miss, as ghosts lurk invisibly near areas that were important to them in life. A ghost may be willing to part with useful information in return for a treasured reminder of the living world.

Merit: +•

Resonance: Death

Problems and Hooks: Some ghosts are openly hostile, and even those who aren't may make life difficult for the werewolves nearby. A haunted area may also gain a measure of notoriety (see below).

MEDIA CENTER

This feature gets a lot of attention from the local media. A media center may be a hub of local politics or sports, or be frequented by celebrities. Events that transpire in such an area are much more likely to get attention from local media — for better or worse.

Creating: Attracting the attention of local media can be achieved in a number of ways, though the most effective is to study the local media for patterns of what they find most newsworthy and then arrange for such news to happen.

Eliminating: Many reporters, cameramen and talking heads are easily scared away from dangerous locations. Real reporters — whether print, radio, television or Internet — will only become more intrigued by a dangerous area. Such individuals must be bored away; a pack attempting such a thing must actively suppress newsworthy events for at least six months.

Benefits (free-form): -1 experience point cost to buy media-related Contacts (as newspeople are always lurking around somewhere). Werewolves looking to publicize local goings-on can do so with +2 dice to their pool by taking advantage of a media center.

Merit: + •

Resonance: Exposure, light

Problems and Hooks: The primary fear that Uratha must have regarding a media center is that of exposure. A pack of werewolves ripping one of the *hithimu* limb from limb in the background of a television report on the local sports team could be disastrous.

NEUTRAL GROUND

Neutral ground is territory that no pack claims, and which all local packs agree is free for all. The local Pure

Ones may even participate in such an agreement, though this is unlikely. Neutral ground typically borders on the territories of several packs. However, a piece of territory cannot be both neutral and contested (see above), as an area is either accepted as neutral or is contested by two or more packs. By definition, this descriptor can't be added to a territory feature that a pack controls, but is included for purposes of thoroughness. When designing a pack's territory and the larger area of a chronicle, figuring out where the neutral ground is in relation to the pack's own turf is important.

Creating: A patch of ground may be traditionally neutral ground, such as a high mountain, or a high-traffic area in the middle of the city. A pack may carve out neutral ground between the pack's territory and adjacent packs' territories by negotiating with those packs. Or an area might be neutral ground simply because no pack currently claims it.

Eliminating: Easy — violate the neutrality of the ground, by claiming it as your own. Nearby packs will probably respond poorly to that, but you knew that when you took this job.

Benefits (free-form): Neutral ground is designated as such by local elders. As a result, violating neutral ground with violence against another werewolf is a minor (level 8) Harmony sin by virtue of violating an elder's edict. Neutral ground does give packs a comfortable buffer, and a chance to get to know one another and share news



about local supernatural activity. -1 experience point cost discount to take an Uratha Storyteller character as a Contact, so long as both packs hold true to the neutrality of the nearby neutral ground.

Merit: No cost for this element. It is near your pack's territory, but you do not control it. By definition, you do not receive any of the element's game-mechanical benefits.

Resonance: Peace

Problems and Hooks:

- Neutral ground sometimes suffers the tragedy of the commons, as members of any pack feel that they can do as they please in neutral territory without repercussions.
- Neutral ground is most often used for negotiations or other meetings between rival packs. Some packs even party together in such areas.

OCCLUDED

An occluded area is one through which it is exceptionally difficult to track prey. There are numerous strange smells, sounds and frequent piles of debris that serve to hide prey and make it more difficult for a predator to keep tabs on his quarry. This could represent anything from a stretch of wilderness with many small streams that break up scent trails to the mess, stink and noise of a stockyard.

Creating: Uratha who want good hiding places or escape routes may create their own mazes — perhaps in a junkyard or thick forest. This is mostly a matter of physical labor; perhaps a good week of labor is required to build such a site.

Eliminating: Only hard physical labor should clean up an occluded site.

Benefits (free-form): +2 dice to all Stealth rolls to those who are familiar with the occluded site.

Merit: +•

Resonance: Escape, safety, hunger

Problems and Hooks:

- A rival pack discovers the occluded area and spends enough time surveying it that they can take advantage of it; that rival pack begins to use the occluded area as a staging ground for their own activities within the pack's territory.

POOR

In game terms, a poor area is one where the average member of the population has a lower-than-average Resources. Most people in a poor area have no more than one dot in Resources; many have zero dots of Resources and lead truly desperate lives.

Creating: The causes of poverty are complex beyond the ability of this sourcebook to trace. Widespread crime, violence and destruction can lead to increased poverty in a neighborhood, as those with the resources to leave do so, leaving only the poor behind.

Eliminating: As with “creating,” this is a complex issue. One sample way to eliminate the “poor” descriptor

over an area is to attract students and artists to a region. This can lead to the opening of “trendy” and slightly dangerous nightclubs, which attract suburban kids who want a wild night on the town. Soon arthouses open up in support of the local artists, and gentrification begins; poor locals are driven away and the “poor” descriptor is gone (though few of the poor residents truly benefit from the switch).

Benefits (free-form): Drugs and criminal activity abound; +1 die to all Larceny dice pools in a poor neighborhood. Legal goods costing more than a Resources •• roll are hard to come by (-1 die from Resources pools to buy goods costing more than that). Violence also abounds, and spirits of violence and retribution are prone to haunt the streets (+1 die to summon such spirits; -1 die to pools to summon spirits of peace or prosperity). Criminal activity in poor neighborhoods tends to go underreported; characters may wish to “go to ground” in a poor neighborhood to hide from the local authorities (and receive +1 die to Stealth pools to do so).

Merit: +•

Resonance: Poverty, greed

Problems and Hooks: Human activity can drive storylines in a poor neighborhood. As described above, crime is high; mortal gangs may have rivalries within the neighborhood, and violence can erupt at a moment's notice. Drug use is rampant in poor neighborhoods in the World of Darkness; addicted mortals tend to create Barrens or Wounds echoing in the spirit world. Police rarely spend much time in the poorest neighborhoods; Uratha may find themselves as the self-appointed “neighborhood vigilant committee,” keeping things as safe as they can. In the World of Darkness, police may actually take advantage of poor residents, setting up their own criminal empire in the poorest parts of the city.

PURE

Related to contested areas, “Pure” areas are those for which the pack must vie with the Pure Tribes for control. These areas are specifically sacred to the Pure Tribes; for some reason, any pack of the Pure that knows of this space is likely to come after the pack and challenge the pack's control of the space. Pure areas are more dangerous to the Forsaken than Border areas are; struggles for dominance between “cousins” are common and rarely end in death, but a battle between a pack of the Forsaken and one of the Pure may well end in death. Additionally, the Pure have the same expansionist and territorial imperatives that the Forsaken have. If the Pure contest for the financial district today, they may well be coming after the city's nearby waterfront next.

Creating: The players' pack may add a Pure region to the pack's territory by seizing a bit of territory from a nearby pack of Pure Tribes. This isn't trivial, of course; it is likely to lead to ongoing guerilla combat until one pack or the other withdraws. The Storyteller may turn part of

the pack's territory into a Pure area by having a pack of the Pure invade it.

Eliminating: There are three ways to make an area no longer Pure: the pack of Forsaken can destroy or drive off nearby Pure (however, as described above, if another pack of Pure Tribes comes through the area, the Pure are likely to be equally angry with the pack for its control of this place), or the pack can withdraw from the area, yielding it to the *Anshega* (the area remains Pure, of course, but it is no longer part of the pack's territory). Lastly, the pack may come to some kind of agreement with the Pure. This is unlikely in the extreme.

Benefits (free-form): None

Merit: -•• (two dots cheaper)

Resonance: Per the base feature

Problems and Hooks: Even a single Pure is a major problem. It is up to the Storyteller to determine the pack's motivations and activities. While the Pure may not be actively expanding into the players' pack's territory, they won't want to hold hands and sing "Kumbaya" either. However, if the troupe's pack spends all its time worrying about (and attending to) the Pure's activities, the rest of the pack's territory will begin to fall apart.

RICH

A rich area in the pack's territory is one where the average Resources is higher than normal. When applied to a given feature in the territory, 'rich' simply means that feature is especially 'ritzy.' A rich shop might be a high-class clothing store or expensive restaurant. A rich apartment building might be a secure, downtown high-rise.

Creating: Money attracts money. Persuade a few wealthy people to begin frequenting (or live in) an area, and more are likely to come. Politics, Bureaucracy and Finance rolls may come in handy to help control zoning and taxation in appropriate ways.

Eliminating: Increase the level of violence and crime in an area to drive rich people elsewhere.

Benefits (free-form): Money tends to attract money. To purchase the fourth or fifth dot in the Resources Merit, the cost is -1 experience point.

Merit: + •

Resonance: Wealth, greed

Problems and Hooks: • Rich areas are more secure than poor ones. Police presence is greater, and private security is much more prevalent. -1 die to all Larceny pools in a rich area.

SANGUINE

A "sanguine" area is one frequented by vampires. As hunters of human blood, vampires prefer to prowl areas where a lone human might be caught and drained of blood without alerting the authorities. These areas may be college campuses, nightclub districts, slums or nearly anywhere else. Most vampires prefer city living — more victims per acre — but some can be found in the wilderness.

Werewolves and vampires can coexist in the World of Darkness; some even live as allies or lovers. This is rare, though. Uratha and vampires are both predators, and although they hunt different things, each has a tendency to challenge the other's activities in common territory. Uratha may choose to designate part of their territory as fair game for the local bloodsuckers, or otherwise come to accord with them.

Creating: Vampires are attracted to places where humans are both active and blind at night. A pack that wishes to attract vampires to an area, therefore, must attract nightlife.

Eliminating: Destroying or driving off the local vampire population will temporarily eliminate a sanguine area, but if humans continue to frequent the same places at night, vampires will return to it, as the predators they really are. Driving off the vampires for good requires a pack to drive off the humans that attract the vampires.

Benefits (free-form): Werewolves who remain on civil terms with local blood-drinkers can buy vampiric Contacts at -1 experience point. Areas that attract vampires tend to have plenty of humans around, which may make it easier for werewolves to find a human on short notice for whatever purpose.

Merit: +•

Resonance: Hunger, thirst, death

Problems and Hooks:

- A feud between local vampires spreads to include the pack, as one of the vampires offers local werewolves a bounty on members of a vampire gang known as the "Dragons." Even if the players' pack ignores the offer, other local packs may get involved on opposite sides of the feud.

- A packmember's teenage child is attacked by what appear to be vampires, leaving bloody wounds on the teen's neck. If there is a "treaty" of sorts between the Uratha and vampires, surely this shatters it. But which vampires attacked her?

VIRGIN

Virgin territory is land that humans have never set foot in — or, at least, land that humans have left no mark on.

Creating: Either a place is virgin or it isn't; the mark of humanity cannot be scrubbed from an area.

Eliminating: Easy. Invite a group of humans out to the 'special place in the woods' that you know about.

Benefits (free-form): Essence generated in a virgin area is especially potent for spirits not associated with humankind. The resonance of a virgin area may be nearly anything of the natural world. A locus in a virgin area that produces an appropriate resonance produces one additional point of Essence per day. (A Rating 4 virgin locus with a "forest" resonance would produce 13 Essence per day.) If materials to create a fetish are taken from a virgin area, the ritualist may add 1 to his dice pool, as long as the fetish and spirit are of an appropriate resonance. A locus in a virgin area is increased in strength by 1 Rating point.

Merit: +••

Resonance: Per the base feature

Problems and Hooks: Uratha who wish to preserve a virgin stretch of wilderness have to work at it. Curious and lost humans might accidentally happen across the area — although in the modern day they would have to work hard to find a site that no human had ever visited before.

TERRITORY-WIDE DESCRIPTORS

The descriptors listed below can, at the Storyteller's discretion, apply to an entire territory as well as the surrounding areas. These descriptors cannot be created or destroyed, and they have no Merit cost. Only in the rarest and weirdest of cases would one of the following descriptors apply to just one part of a pack's territory. They are regional. The Storyteller may prefer not to bother with these descriptors — if every pack's territory in a region is tropical, he may not bother applying the associated dice pool bonuses and penalties, since they apply equally to everyone in the chronicle.

ARCTIC

This descriptor applies to regions north of the Arctic Circle or south of the Antarctic Circle (more than 66 degrees from the equator) — though, as with “tropical,” if the group generally agrees that a given area is effectively arctic, regardless of its actual latitude, this descriptor can apply. These are cold regions — deadly in deep winter and only mild in the summer. True arctic regions (beyond 66 degrees latitude) experience “midnight sun” in summer, as the sun stays above the horizon for six months, and “noon moon” in winter, as the sun stays below the horizon for six months.

Effects: -1 die to summon spirits of heat, fire, water and fertility. +1 die to summon spirits of cold, snow and winter. -1 die to Survival pools during winter; +1 die to Survival pools during summer. The “midnight sun” tends to keep away vampires and nocturnal spirits (-5 dice to summon nocturnal spirits during summertime), while the “noon moon” attracts both (+5 dice to summon nocturnal spirits during winter).

DRY

This descriptor applies to any region that generally experiences low rainfall. The area doesn't have to be a desert — the plains of western North America can be quite dry without being a desert.

Effects: -1 die to summon spirits of water; +1 die to summon spirits of wind or fire. -1 die to Survival rolls generally, as water is hard to find (except for tracking and similar uses of the skill).

HIGH

This descriptor refers to any region that is above 5,000 feet in altitude. The air is thin here; nights are colder and days hotter than lands lower down.

Effects: -1 die from all Stamina rolls until the character becomes acclimated to the local oxygen levels, a process that takes 20 successes accumulated over daily Stamina + Athletics rolls.

TROPICAL

This applies to tropical or subtropical regions — technically, tropical areas are within 23 degrees of the equator, but the group is welcome to define certain parts of the United States (for instance) as being effectively tropical. These are hot regions — sometimes deadly in the summer and only mild in the winter.

Effects: -1 die to summon spirits of snow, cold or winter; +1 die to summon spirits of heat and fire. -1 die to Survival pools during summer; +1 die to Survival pools during winter.

WET

This descriptor refers to any region that experiences regular heavy rainfall, such as coastal tropical areas or ocean islands. The region may suffer a monsoon season, or may simply be generally rainy.

Effects: +1 die to summon spirits of water; -1 die to summon spirits of fire. +1 die to Survival dice pools if they pertain to tracking footprints, unless it has rained since the prints were made (in which case -4 dice).

EXPANDING SPIRIT WORLD FEATURES

Players or Storytellers may wish to come up with new features not described here. In the case of real world features the various features listed above should serve as models. The spirit world is however a strange place that operates according to its own rules — rules that even the Uratha don't always understand. There is no easy template for spirit world sites. The following list of themes or inspirations is provided for Storytellers and players to use as they see fit. These bullet points aren't suggestions for elements in and of themselves but rather suggestions for themes for elements

- Superstructure/Endoskeleton (elements might include Essence “conduits” support structures and so on)
- Design/Blueprint (magical sigils writ large; map of the local area with effects on the “real world”)
- Raw Materials/Supplies (“spring” that pours out water or liquid fire or blood; trees that grow at a rate of six inches per day)
- Body/Corpse (areas that provide sensory input from other areas far away; locations where dark thoughts or emotions are made manifest)
- Scavengers (“dead” spirits and things that feed on them)

- Intense Weather ("lightning strike" bursts of enormous quantities of Essence too great for a single werewolf or spirit to hold)
- Projector/Plato's Cave (echoes of real/unreal places things spirits mortals or werewolves)

TERRITORIAL MERITS, GIFTS AND RITES

MERITS

These Merits can only be taken by Uratha, though, at the Storyteller's discretion, these Merits may be appropriate for those with the Wolf-Blooded Merit. They can be taken after character creation.

EYRIE (•••)

You know the best lookout points and lines of sight within your pack's territory. You receive +2 dice to all Perception pools while within your own territory, and if you attack a foe at range, you receive +1 die to your pool to do so.

This Merit can only be learned by a werewolf with a defined territory.

LOCAL (••)

You are so comfortable within your pack's territory that you blend right in with local humans. They accept you as one of their own. You receive +1 die on all Social rolls when dealing with humans in your territory. Humans in your territory unconsciously suspect that there's something strange about you, but know that you are one of them — humans in your territory receive +1 to their effective Willpower to resist Lunacy that you cause. If you are seen alone in Urshul form in your territory, for instance, the Willpower 5 observer reacts as though he had Willpower 6. If you and your three packmates (who lack this Merit) all shapeshift within sight, the same guy would respond to you all with his base Willpower 5.

This Merit can only be learned by a werewolf with a defined territory.

NIMBLE DEFENDER (••••)

You know the best spots from which to defend yourself in your pack's territory. When in your pack's territory, you receive +1 to your Defense score. In addition, you receive +1 die to Athletics rolls to move around within your territory (to keep your footing, climb or keep your balance, for instance — you know that Old Man Ratcliffe's roof is slippery, but your foes do not).

This Merit can only be learned by a werewolf with a defined territory.

SECRET PATHS (••)

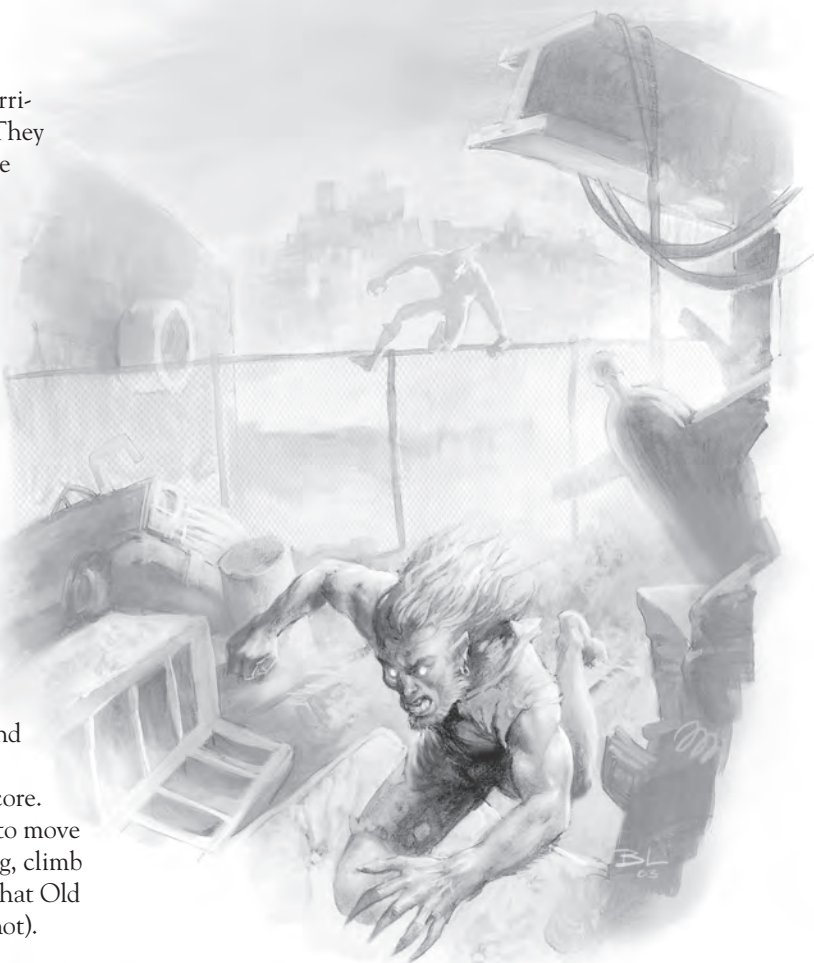
You know better than anyone else how to move around your own territory unobserved. You receive +2 dice to Stealth pools while in your pack's territory. Moreover, if you have one turn to prepare, you can quickly rig up a good hiding place that gives an additional +2 dice to Stealth pools and one point of cover.

This Merit can only be learned by a werewolf with a defined territory.

SHORT CUTS (•)

You know the best, fastest routes through your pack's territory, even if they involve going across rooftops or through basements. Once per session, if your path is blocked by an obstacle within your own territory, you can declare to the Storyteller that you know a shortcut that lets you bypass the obstacle without slowing you at all.

This Merit can only be learned by a werewolf with a defined territory.



Territorial Merits, Gifts and Rites

SCOUT (••)

You are exceptionally talented at scoping out an enemy's territory, so long as you are not interfered with and don't attack. You receive +1 die to Perception and Stealth dice pools in a rival werewolf's territory.

STAINCH DEFENDER (•••)

You are especially fierce when defending your pack's territory. When in your pack's territory and fighting an invader to that territory, receive a bonus die to all attack pools made with claws and teeth. This Merit does no good against any humans, other werewolves or other supernatural creatures that live within your pack's territory, or spirits that belong there (or that you have summoned there). Your ferocity in defending your territory gives you -1 die to resist *Kuruth* while doing so.

This Merit can only be learned by a werewolf with a defined territory.

VICIOUS ATTACKER (•••)

You have no respect for other werewolves' territory and see their territorial claims as a challenge to your own dominance. When invading another werewolf's territory, you receive +1 die to attacks made with claws and teeth against that werewolf or his allies. This Merit does not provide you with any benefit against humans or supernatural entities that live in your opponent's territory, unless they specifically take up arms to help those werewolves. (If the local police attack you because you appear to be a shotgun-toting maniac, you get no benefit from this Merit; if a werewolf's spouse attacks you because you are fighting his wife, this Merit does apply.) This Merit provides you no benefit if you are fighting another werewolf in neutral ground or in territory he does not claim as his own.

TERRITORY GIFTS

Uratha instinctively know that they must claim territory as their own. These Gifts aid werewolves in protecting their own territory and assessing the strength of rivals who control territory nearby. These Gifts are open to Pure Ones as well as the Forsaken. Territory is critical to a werewolf: this is an open list, and any werewolf can possess these Gifts as if they had tribal or auspice affinity for them.

Each of these Gifts relates to a pack's territory in some fashion. Generally speaking, a section of territory is considered "claimed" by a pack only if the packmembers have taken some pains to make it so; packmembers who say they control a street they haven't ever set foot on doesn't "claim" that street for purposes of this Gift. Only land that's been patrolled, fought over, laid stake to via the Howl of Ownership (see p. 50) or otherwise seen a genuine werewolf presence counts.

LAY OF THE LAND (•)

This Gift gives the werewolf who uses it an instant sense of how many people and spirits are in the immediate area, as well as which werewolf pack (if any) claims it. For

purposes of this Gift, "the immediate area" means "the territory feature," as described in this book.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Wits + Politics + Purity

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The werewolf receives faulty or misleading information about the local area. The exact nature of the character's mistake is up to the Storyteller — the werewolf should learn half-truths so that it is not obvious what she is wrong about.

Failure: The werewolf gains no information. She cannot use this Gift again in this immediate area, until the next moonrise or moonset.

Success: The werewolf gets a rough impression of what the total population of the area is, though the Gift does not differentiate among humans, werewolves, spirits or other supernatural beings. The character also sees the symbol and totem spirit of the pack that claims the area — if she has encountered the pack in the past she recognizes them immediately.

Exceptional Success: The werewolf gets a more precise impression of the territory feature's overall population. She also sees the symbol and totem spirit of the pack (if any) that claims the area, and if she does not know them, she hears the pack's name as a howl.

MINOR SENDING (••)

Minor Essence flows crisscross every werewolf pack's territory. With this Gift, the werewolf may infuse one or more Essence onto one of these minor Essence flows and whisper a message for a packmate. The packmate can be any distance away, so long as both are within the pack's territory, and will still hear the Gift user's message as if whispered directly into her ear. This message cannot be tapped or intercepted.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Presence + Expression + Cunning

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The message fails to arrive at all.

Failure: The message arrives, but is garbled beyond understanding.

Success: The Gift user is able to transmit a whispered message up to 30 seconds in length. The message travels at about 200 miles per hour, or about half a mile per turn, so if the packmate is two miles away, the message needs four turns to arrive.

Exceptional Success: As with an ordinary success, but the Gift's recipient actually receives the spent point of Essence as it chases the message.

SENSE OF THE TERRITORY (•••)

A werewolf can use this Gift to read the local Essence currents, instantly gaining an idea of where all noteworthy

disturbances are. He can learn the location of any loci in the territory, as well as the presence of any spirits of Rank 3 or higher or werewolves. This Gift only works within the werewolf's own territory.

Cost: 1 Essence

Dice Pool: Wits + Politics + Wisdom

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Every werewolf and spirit in the pack's territory instantly learns the Gift user's location. The Gift user receives no information in return.

Failure: No effect; the Essence spent is lost.

Success: The werewolf learns the location of all loci higher than • in rating and all werewolves and all spirits of Rank 3 or higher within his pack's territory. The Gift reveals only the presence of potential intruders on the same side of the Gauntlet as the user; if the Gift user is in the Shadow, the Gift will reveal only the location of spirits and werewolves who are likewise in the spirit world.

Exceptional Success: The Gift reveals the presence of significant intruders on both sides of the Gauntlet.

ANIMATE THE LAND (••••)

At the werewolf's command, the land of his pack's territory itself rises up in defense of the pack and its power.

Cost: 2 Essence

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Intimidation + Glory

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The land rises up in rage against the Gift user; the werewolf suffers a -2 to all Physical dice pools for the next three turns.

Failure: No effect; the Essence spent is lost.

Success: Within the immediate area (the present territory feature), the player may apply the successes rolled as either bonus dice to the character and his packmates or penalties to his opponents' dice pools, for the next four turns. The player defines the way that the local terrain rises up to assist the werewolf; shopping carts may hurl themselves into the path of onrushing foes, or a peaceful stream may become a roiling river. At that time, the player must also define which Skill will be affected by the dice — for example, the pack may receive bonus dice to Athletics as the ground tilts and



eases to help them, or the pack's enemies suffer a penalty to Firearms as barriers spring up in their way. The Storyteller has final judgment over whether a particular Skill use is appropriate; a pack cannot expect to gain bonuses to Politics rolls in the middle of a forest, for instance. Once the Gift user has defined the specific bonus or penalty that the terrain will impose, the modifier continues to work in that fashion throughout the duration of this Gift.

This Gift can naturally be used only within the werewolf's own territory. The local area cannot benefit from more than one use of this Gift at the same time. This Gift may be used only once per scene.

Exceptional Success: The duration of the Gift is extended to six turns.

DISRUPT ESSENCE (•••••)

Within your pack's territory, you can cause spirits and werewolves to waste Essence in powering their supernatural abilities. This may make them resort to physical tactics, or stay out of your territory entirely.

Cost: 3 Essence

Dice Pool: Presence + Occult + Honor

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Gift effects rebound on the user. The user cannot use any more Territory Gifts until a day and a night has passed.

Failure: No effect; the Essence spent is lost.

Success: For a number of turns equal to the number of successes rolled, any creature that is not a member of the Gift user's pack must spend twice as much Essence as would normally be indicated to power a given ability for as long as the creature remains within the Gift user's territory. For purposes of this Gift, a pack totem is considered to be part of a pack (and therefore does not suffer that penalty).

Exceptional Success: The Gift user may also designate up to five entities that are not members of his pack who do not suffer this penalty.

NEW RITES

HOWL OF OWNERSHIP (•)

This simple ritual allows a pack to declare to the spirit world that the pack controls a given patch of territory. The rite is simple, but it is easily interrupted. In this way, it is designed to announce the claim to other nearby werewolves. If those neighbors do not challenge the pack shortly after performance of the rite, obviously the pack's claim is true.

Performing the Rite: The ritualist stands in the center of a territory element that his pack intends to lay claim to and unleashes a howl of dominance. Each of the ritemaster's packmates must be named in the howl, which in essence exhorts any nearby werewolves to come if they dare and challenge the ritualist's pack if they believe they have a valid claim to this place.

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Only the nearest spirits hear the howl, and they are inclined to believe that the ritemaster and her pack are weak and incompetent. For the next day, the ritemaster and her pack receive -1 to all rolls made to perform rites or influence spirits within the territory.

Failure: Only the nearest spirits hear the howl, and they are unimpressed.

Success: The spirits within the area become aware of the ritemaster's pack and their claim.

Exceptional Success: The spirits within the area are impressed or intimidated by the strength of the ritemaster's conviction. For the next day, all members of the ritemaster's pack receive +1 die to summon or banish spirits within this territory element.

RITE OF DESERT RAIN (••••)

Ordinarily it takes years for a Barren to heal and become fertile again, if it ever happens at all. The Rite of Desert Rain temporarily undoes the effects of a Barren, allowing Essence to flow through the area once more. With repeated applications of this rite, and no small amount of luck and hard work to encourage Essence to continue flowing after the rite's effects end, healing a Barren completely over time is possible.

Performing the Rite: The ritualist crafts a clay brick, baking it in a kiln or with the aid of a fire elemental. Once the brick is finished, the ritualist sets it on the ground at noon and begins slowly trickling 100 gallons of water over the brick. He may use an assistant to ensure a constant flow of water. The water must flow for precisely one day, and the flow cannot be interrupted for any reason (or the ritual fails and a new brick must be made). When this is complete, the ritualist and any assistants begin slowly trickling Essence into the precise spot on the brick weakened by the water flow. If the ritual succeeds, the brick cracks and melts into mud, and the Barren is broken. If the ritual fails, it cannot be attempted for at least 28 days.

Cost: 1 Essence per roll

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (40 successes; each roll represents 10 minutes)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes are lost; the rite fails, and cannot be attempted on the particular Barren again until 28 days have passed.

Failure: No successes are gained; the ritemaster or anyone assisting the rite must spend one Essence.

Success: Successes are gained; the ritemaster or anyone assisting the rite must spend one Essence. If the total amount equals or exceeds 40 successes, the ritual is a success. The penalties imposed by the Barren are eliminated for seven days, at the end of which time the Barren reasserts itself.

Exceptional Success: Successes are gained; the ritemaster or anyone assisting the rite must spend one Essence. If the total amount equals or exceeds 45 successes, the rite's effects last for 14 days rather than seven.

BESIEGING THE SHADOW (.....)

Uratha use this ritual to lessen the strength of the local Gauntlet. This ritual came into being as a counter to the activity of the Azlu, but has also proven useful in counteracting a Gauntlet thickened by other outside forces. Besieging the Shadow can be used to undo the effects of the Fortify the Border Marches rite, for instance. Some Forsaken disapprove of this rite's very existence, as it represents a temptation to make an area more prone to heavy spirit activity in the physical world.

Performing the Rite: The ritualist creates a symbolic barrier, and then destroys it by hand, tooth and claw. The symbolic barrier can be crafted of wood, stone, brick or cement. Once the symbolic wall is complete, the werewolf must spend days carving runes and sigils into it — different sigils as *Ama-han Iduth* changes her face. Every face of Mother Moon must see the wall and approve of its construction: the werewolf must spend at least 14 days crafting the wall, and it must be built outdoors, where the Lunes can look upon it. The strength of the symbolic barrier must correspond to the strength of the local Gauntlet. Once the symbolic wall has been created, the true ritual begins as the werewolf destroys the wall with tooth and claw. The construction of the symbolic wall can only be begun on the night of the darkest new moon.

Cost: 1 Essence per -1 of the local Gauntlet penalty

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (10 successes per -1 penalty of the local Gauntlet; each roll represents 10 minutes)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All accumulated successes are lost. The ritemaster must begin from the beginning by building another symbolic barrier before attempting the rite again.

Failure: No successes are added.

Success: Successes are added to the roll. If the total equals or exceeds 10 successes per -1 of the Gauntlet penalty (for instance, 20 successes in an area where the Gauntlet strength is -2), the rite breaks down a portion of the barrier between worlds. The penalty imposed by the Gauntlet is lessened by 1.

This rite only works in areas where the Gauntlet is unnaturally thick, where the dice pool penalty is greater than it would normally be (as determined by the standard modifiers on p. 250 of *Werewolf: The Forsaken*). This rite cannot be used to create a positive Gauntlet modifier; this rite cannot raise an area with a +0 modifier to a +1 modifier. This rite cannot be successfully performed more than once on the same area; if the local Gauntlet is again thickened after successful use of this rite, the werewolf must find another means of reducing the penalty.

Exceptional Success: No effect apart from additional successes gained.

RITE OF THE BORDER CITADEL (.....)

This rite is a more powerful version of the rite *Fortify the Border Marches* (see *Werewolf: The Forsaken*, p. 154). Few werewolves know the secrets of this rite, and fewer are willing to share its knowledge with others. The rite thickens the local Gauntlet permanently, an activity that can cause damage to the spirit world and draw much of the life from the physical world. Most ritemasters capable of using this rite do so only to repair damage caused by the Beshilu or to protect the physical world from the depredations of a Wound.

Performing the Rite: The ritualist must erect a new and permanent barrier within her pack's territory. This barrier does not necessary have to be in the same place as the place whose Gauntlet she wishes to change, but it must be within the pack's territory and the chosen location must be visible from this new barrier. The barrier can be nearly anything: a chain-link fence, a brick-and-mortar wall, a jail cell. The barrier must be a physical barrier, and it must truly interfere with the movements of mortals in the area — they have to walk or drive along a new path as a result of this barrier. The werewolf smears a bit of her own blood into the center of the new wall while speaking words of warding and banishment. This ritual can only be begun once per month, on the night of the brightest full moon.

Cost: 1 Essence per -1 penalty imposed by the local Gauntlet

Dice Pool: Harmony

Action: Extended (20 successes; each roll represents 30 minutes)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All successes are lost. At the Storyteller's discretion, a Barren may form in the local Shadow.

Failure: No successes are gained.

Success: Successes are added. If the total number meets or exceeds 20 successes, the rite is complete, and the Gauntlet in the local area is increased in power by an additional -1 penalty — a -2 modifier becomes a -3, and so on. This rite cannot be used more than once on the same area, although *Fortify the Border Marches* can still be used as a temporary augmentation of the Gauntlet's strength.

Exceptional Success: Successes are added. If the total number gained meets or exceeds 25 successes, the effect is so perfectly formed that the rite may be performed an additional time in the area (allowing the werewolf to add a permanent total of -2 modifier dice to the Gauntlet's strength). This bonus can only be gained once; an area can never "benefit" from the effects of more than two applications of the Rite of the Border Citadel.



CHAPTER II

MAPPING THE LAND

We were lucky to find this place. The house has stood empty for six years now. Nobody knows who owns it. Nobody cares. It's out of the way, past the unused section of Route 211. The plumbing doesn't work, the electricity's off and, during winter, your piss crackles before it hits the snow. But it's ours. It's home.

We haven't had to defend it much. There was a pack of Blood Talons that showed up one night, pissed on the lawn and yelled at us. We came out and threw down, broke some limbs, but that's really all they wanted. To know we could take it. Actually, I felt pretty good after that night. I kept thinking, they'd have taken the house if we'd let them, but this is our home. We can fight for it. That seemed important.

And then today, I get home and there's a guy in the house. He's naked and it's freezing out, but he doesn't look bothered by that. He's kicking in the floorboards in the main room, and screeching, "Where'd you put it? Where the fuck did you kids put it?"

The pack isn't here. It's just me, and I don't know what to do, but I know I don't want this crazy shit tearing up my house. I try to change, but he turns and fixes me with a glare that freezes me in place. I try talking, but he just runs over to me and rakes his dirty, ragged finger-nails over my face.

"Where is it?" I try to answer, but I can't. "I said you kids could live here, as long as you didn't touch it. But now it's gone. You're all going to die if I can't find it! Where is it?"

“A BLUR FROM THE SHADE
A TRAIL IS MADE,
SNOWY WORDS A RABBIT WRITES.
QUICK SAWS A MEAL BRINGS;
WITH VICTORY HOWL, WOLF SINGS.”

— JEFFERY WILLIS, “SONG OF THE NIGHT”

In a **Werewolf: The Forsaken** chronicle, the territory is a supporting character. It has history and probably secrets, and given that cars, parks and even whole cities can have spirits, one could argue that territories have motivations and goals as well. As Storyteller, it's your job to make the territory come alive in the minds of the players, to give them the sense of familiarity (though not necessarily comfort) that their characters feel when patrolling their own turf. This chapter is dedicated to helping you do exactly that.

Note to players: Despite the title, this chapter isn't meant explicitly for Storytellers. No grand secrets are contained herein. By reading this chapter and taking to heart some of the principles, you can help your Storyteller and the other players flesh out the territory in which your chronicle takes place. Pay special attention to the sections on taking cues from players, and then give your Storyteller those cues.

HOME SWEET HOME

If you're reading this book, you've probably decided that territory is going to be major thematic feature in your **Werewolf** chronicle. It's important, then, to make sure the players care about their pack's territory. If they don't, any story involving protecting, altering or enhancing the territory will fall flat — the players might go along with the story, but it won't engage them nearly as much as it should. So, how do you go about getting the players invested in the territory?

THE TERRITORY IS A CHARACTER

As mentioned previously, the territory should be as important a character as any other in the chronicle. Of course, the territory doesn't have game traits in the same sense as a werewolf does, and even though spirits within (or of) the area might have direct motives and goals the territory as a whole does not. The main way in which a territory is a character is that the territory plays a role within the chronicle. Therefore, the first thing to consider is what that role entails. Some possible roles for the territory:

THE GOAL

The characters know they want their own turf and have settled on the territory they wish to claim. The challenge, however, comes in actually doing so. Maybe other Uratha already claim the land — why, then, do the

characters want it? Do they really want the land or do they just want to oust the current residents? Perhaps the territory plays host to no werewolves at all, but has a thick vampire population. Is that ever going to cause a problem for the pack?

Maybe the acquisition of the territory, as far as moving in, marking it with some tags and making sure that any local street gangs capitulate isn't really a problem. Perhaps the territory holds some deeper problems. These can be spiritual, of course, but might also be completely mundane — if someone makes an archeological find in the pack's territory, are the characters going to let people dig big holes in their turf? Can the characters stop them?

If the territory is the goal of a chronicle (or at least a story), it behooves you to detail the borders of the land but let things get more mysterious as the pack moves farther in. The characters should know what the edges of the turf look like, who hangs out there and probably have some idea of the spiritscape. As the characters venture away from those borders, though, they should be exploring new turf, and that's dangerous.

THE REFUGE

The pack's territory can be a place where they are safe. Territories like this should be small, because, in the World of Darkness, safety is an extremely rare commodity. In fact, a “safe haven” of any kind might seem counter to the themes of **Werewolf**, but consider that if the characters truly are safe within their territory, they must work to remain that way. Letting a rival or enemy see where they make their homes is dangerous in the extreme, because doing so opens the territory up for invasion. Keeping a refuge secure requires more than just physical security, which werewolves are usually quite capable of providing. Keeping a refuge secure requires making sure that no one is spying on the territory from nearby vantage points and requires keeping the Gauntlet strong enough that spirits can't just come bursting in, but still being able to peek across at the Hisil occasionally. This, in turn, means keeping an eye out for *shartha*, since both the Azlu and the Beshilu have a vested interest in the strength of the Gauntlet.

If the territory includes a locus, the pack has even more to worry about. Spirits congregate at loci to feed, both on the Essence given off by the locus itself and on other spirits that cluster near it. If the pack can nudge the spirits into a kind of equilibrium, so that weak spirits feed and are fed upon and more powerful spirits don't feel the

need to cross into the material world, the characters can keep their refuge peaceful. That, of course, doesn't stop a nomadic pack from discovering the locus, draining it dry and thus upsetting this equilibrium.

THE DARK SECRET

A territory can play the role of the mysterious secret in a chronicle quite easily. Consider the particulars, though, of what that means. Does the territory *contain* the secret? Such a situation might involve a locus that plays host to a particularly powerful and dangerous spirit, perhaps one with ties to the Maeljin. The secret might involve some bleak local history on the part of the Uratha, or could be something frighteningly relevant for the werewolves in the area, such as a nest of Azlu. A character within the territory can likewise have such a secret (Pure spy, Bale Hound, deserter from an existing pack and so on), but this removes focus from the territory.

STORY HOOK — THE CONCRETE GRAVE

The territory is a few square blocks in the city that some few Uratha in surrounding areas know as "the Concrete Grave." Back when that section of the city was being built several packs of Uratha fought each other. Many of them entered *Kuruth* with the result that when the dust finally settled every pack had lost at least one member. In shame over murdering the People, the survivors buried their dead beneath what would become the foundations of buildings and the streets of the city. Those Uratha still live, but never speak of the Concrete Grave, except occasionally to each other.

In such cases, the dark secret should be tied into the history and culture (human or werewolf) of the area, but it is possible to resolve the secret without completely changing the territory. What if, on the other hand, the territory *is* the secret? What if the characters have discovered a strip of land that isn't supposed to exist? Due to errors by the local government, the land doesn't appear on any official maps. No people live there, making it a perfect hiding and resting place for a pack of werewolves. To what lengths will the pack go to keep the area secret?

Consider, too, the relationship of the characters to the territory and to the secret. Are they protecting the secret from discovery? Is the secret something that they suspect but need to uncover? Is the secret something that they might simply happen across when investigating the territory? If other Uratha already claim the territory, perhaps the secret is something that helps them in doing so — or something that they would die to protect.

KNOW THE TERRITORY

Whether the territory is a real place or a fictional construct, you need to know the territory well. That doesn't mean you have to know the history forward and backward, remember every street corner and become expert in the local laws. This means that you need to have a sense of how the area feels, what defines it and what would make for the best places to insert the supernatural. Don't choose as the chronicle's setting an area that you find boring or annoying; choose an area with a milieu and an atmosphere that is appropriate to the stories you want to tell. This isn't just a matter of choosing the right city. Cities have different neighborhoods within them that lend themselves to different types of chronicles, and that's not even considering using the suburbs or outlying rural communities (which many cities have) as potential backdrops.

Most cities have web pages, usually devoted to drumming up tourism. That means that the most interesting sites and pieces of history are collected in one place. It also means that the city is presented in a good light, which in turn means you'll need to deepen the shadows a bit. Still, spending a little time online can usually show you how the city's inhabitants perceive themselves and their home, and that, in turn, goes a long way toward helping you portray these people. Also, if you can find a copy of the local paper (some cities have their papers online), you can find out through the editorial pages what is important to the people of the city and how they respond to issues of the day.

Another good step in preparing to use a territory in your chronicle is to learn what kinds of flora and fauna are common to the area. Is there an endangered species that thrives only in the region? An introduced species wreaking havoc on the ecosystem? What animals do residents commonly see in their backyards or perched on their roofs? What plants thrive there, and what weeds? Knowing this sort of thing helps you to populate the spirit world in more detail. Rather than just saying "snake-spirit," you can describe the dark scales and faint yellow stripe of a garter snake or the colored bands of a coral snake. Likewise, an introduced species that is doing lasting harm to the area's biodiversity might come across in the spirit world as omnipresent, always hungry but just a bit out of place. Such spirits, removed from their usual homes, try to fit in as best they can, and that means eating whatever crosses their paths to assimilate themselves into the local spiritscape. If you know what creatures and plants are likely to upset local ecological balances (rodents are historically good at this kind of thing, as are snakehead fish and zebra mussels), you can present their spirits accordingly.

HOME TURF

The absolute best way to get a feel for an area is, of course, to live there. If you live in Ohio and want to set your chronicle in England, of course, this probably isn't possible, but you might consider the possibility of setting

the chronicle in Ohio instead. Almost every city and region in the world has story potential for **Werewolf**; it's simply a matter of adding the supernatural to the mundane. Try driving around your town (or better yet, riding a bus or a subway, or walking, as these allow you to easily take notes) and observing various areas as a visitor would. You might know why the statue of the town founder is holding a scroll and a pen, but what might a visitor assume? If you didn't live there, would you be able to tell at what point neighborhoods changed from high-income to "ghetto"? In some areas, this can happen in the space of a block. Look for landmarks that werewolves might consider good territory border markers and places that the Uratha might look at as neutral territory. If you've got a camera or are willing to spend a few dollars on a disposable, take some pictures to act as visual aids during game sessions.

Another great resource is the library. Most cities have a "local history" section, and, unlike a city's website, these books aren't usually shy about revealing the dirtier history of an area. In fact, it isn't uncommon for authors to compile accounts of murders, robberies, political scandals and even ghost stories of a city for publication.

The biggest advantage in setting a chronicle in your hometown is that doing so gives the players a good feeling of familiarity with the area. They can easily picture their characters as part of the territory, and if they need inspiration for how the pack might interact with an area, they can take a day trip around town for it. People whom you and your players know might even serve as the basis for Storyteller characters, including those whom the characters have as Allies, Contacts, Retainers or Mentors.

The problem with this approach, however, is that familiarity can breed contempt. Some people don't like their hometowns and have trouble feeling any attachment to them — a far cry from the fierce territoriality of the Uratha. Likewise, some players feel strange about interacting with something so familiar in the context of a Storytelling game. They would rather escape to somewhere new, exciting and exotic, and that's not an unfair desire.

FAR FROM HOME

Rather than set your chronicle in an area you know well, you might want to pick a setting that feels compelling for whatever reason. If you live in a big city but the notion of werewolves just screams "rural" to you, a more rustic locale is probably the best bet. If you live in the country but the idea of the Uratha chasing down urban spirits and battling it out on rooftops and in subways is intriguing, there are plenty of large cities to act as backdrops for your chronicle.

Setting your stories in a place with which you are unfamiliar makes research all the more important. If you don't have a sense of what your locale is really like, it will come off as the generic city (or small town or suburb or whatever). The players won't feel as though they have any special connection to the territory as a whole, though they

might well connect to people, places and events within it. To really get a sense of the pack's connection to its territory, though, you need to make Philadelphia *feel* like Philadelphia. So, how do you go about doing that?

First, do the research described above. You don't need to become an expert or a historian. Cherry-pick items and locales that make for interesting stories and seem indicative of the given area. Feel is more important than fact. If you want to run a chronicle that deals with the Mafia and the lingering spirits of the old Prohibition era, New York, Boston or even Cleveland were all involved to a great degree — but Chicago is iconic.

Another possibility is to find books, television shows and movies that are set in the region. A good novel expresses the feel of the setting as well as tells the story, but movies have the advantage of being visual and incorporating music, lighting and other such immersive considerations. Be aware, of course, that most movies are shot in California or Canada, regardless of where they are set, but if you can find a movie set in your chosen region and shot on location, you can get a good sense of how that city really looks.

Visiting the area might also be possible, if it's not too far away from your location. As stated previously, take pictures, take notes and talk to locals to find out the tidbits of information that tourist books don't mention.

WHOLE CLOTH

Another option, of course, is to make up the locale. Movies, books and comics do this often, because it's often easier to make up a city than to keep abreast of what's going on in the real world and because then the creators can alter or even destroy the city without causing outcry from the real-world inhabitants. If you go this route, you need to answer all of the questions presented in this chapter concerning the territory, and also consider a few others.

What, for instance, is the main industry of the area? Is it a small town in which most of the citizenry work in a factory or mill, or a bustling metropolis built on a given industry (steel, coal or shipping, for instance)? What is the rough population of the city, and what are the dominant ethnicities? You might also consider what the religious and cultural breakdowns of the city are, especially if the characters are native to the area.

Are there universities, and if so, how many and of what quality? How old is the city and how does its history fit in with that of the country? What occult secrets lie buried beneath the city (this being the World of Darkness, there should be *some* such secrets)?

What is the overall tone of the city? Is it dark, brooding and gothic or deceptively bright and cheery? Do the citizens smile to each other but nurse deep-seated loathing for a given type of citizen (blacks, gays, Native Americans, etc.)? Is the city a hotbed of liberalism or a staunchly conservative community? These questions will help you determine the spiritscape of the city, what types of loci it boasts and the

general mindset of the citizens (which is important if some of them discover werewolves in their midst)?

LET THE PLAYERS DEFINE IT

After you've presented the setting and decided what role the territory is going to play in the chronicle, it's time to get the players involved. The questions on pp. 70–71 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken** provide a good road map toward fleshing out the individual characters and their relationship as packmates, but don't focus much on the territory. That's deliberate, of course: not every pack controls a territory, and so not every troupe requires that kind of focus.

Have the players consider the following questions about their pack's territory (or lack thereof):

- **Do they already claim the territory?** Is the turf acknowledged as theirs? By whom (see the discussion on territory and other Uratha later in this chapter)? How did the characters come by the territory? It makes for a very different story if the characters are the only Uratha in the city and "claim" the territory simply because they live there than if the city is home to many packs all scrambling for the best piece of land. Did the pack take their territory from another group of werewolves? If so, where are those werewolves now? Do they harbor the desire for revenge? Were they Forsaken or Pure?

- **Do they have eyes on a territory?** If the pack doesn't currently claim a territory, do they want one? Do they know which one they want? Does it already boast a werewolf pack? If so, why are the characters vying to take it over rather than find their own? Do they bear a grudge against the current owners or is that territory just so desirable that the pack can't resist? Why is it that desirable? Does it contain a powerful locus with a resonance appropriate to the pack's totem? Do one or more members of the pack have family living in the territory? Was it traditionally the domain of the Pure and the pack simply wants to send a message to the *Anshega* by taking it away?

Not claiming a territory raises other questions, of course. Where does the pack live? Are they nomadic? Squatters? Do they still live like humans, maintaining their own residences?

- **How does/will the pack enforce their territorial claims?** If the pack already has a territory, they need to find ways to let visiting Uratha know where the boundaries are. If the pack plans on taking a territory, the same problem applies. How do the characters set these boundaries? Does the pack have a "tag" that they spray paint onto buildings in their territory, indistinguishable from normal gang graffiti unless the reader understands First Tongue? Does the pack's Ithaur bind or bribe spirits to watch the borders periodically, or recruit wolf-blooded humans to do so (either is dangerous, both for the pack and for the guard involved)?

Certain Gifts and rites help to demarcate these boundaries, but Gifts and rites are temporary solutions unless backed up by constant effort. The pack can patrol the borders of its territory, of course, but can't do so

ceaselessly. Besides, werewolves are proactive creatures by nature — they might be protective of their territory, but that instinct combines with an (arguably stronger) need to *hunt*. "Protecting" a territory, therefore, might involve tracking down and killing nearby threats preemptively.

- **Are the characters lifelong residents?** If the characters have lived in the area all their lives, how do they react to the knowledge that the supernatural has always been around them? Are they prepared to cope with seeing the truth of their old haunts, and with the damage they might inflict upon those haunts during the course of their activities as Uratha? Are there people in the area who know the characters and can recognize the changes in them (and thus inadvertently help the characters' enemies)?

Consider how the area might be confusing to new arrivals. What little quirks of the region might be disquieting, annoying or just strange to them? When dealing with humans and the mundane world, this might simply be a matter of knowing what part of town locals mean when they say "the Neck" or "Little Five." When dealing with the more dangerous realities of the World of Darkness, however, knowing your way around is a matter of life and death.

ANECDOTES

A good way to give the players some say about the territory (and to let them do some of your work for you) is to ask them to come up with stories, anecdotes and rumors about the area. You can do this in many different ways:

- **Hot seat:** Put each player on the spot and ask him questions regarding his character's relationship with the area. Use more specific questions than the ones presented above, though. Some suggestions: *What is your character's favorite place to eat? Where does your character never go alone if he can help it? What was your character's favorite nightspot or hangout before the Change? Does he still go there?*

Don't let a player answer more than two or three questions before switching, and try to avoid posing all of the same questions to all of the players (though keeping one question the same across the board is a good idea, because it not only fleshes out the territory but gives you some sense of the differences between characters).

- **Start a rumor:** Have each player come up with a rumor, urban legend or weird story that her character heard, relating to the territory. Encourage stories that are related to places rather than people. People are mobile, but if the story is about a barbershop where by paying an extra \$20 you can get a "special jar" in which to keep your hair, the characters can theoretically go visit that spot.

Write down the rumors that the players come up with so that you can work them into stories later on. Encourage the players to keep the rumors non-specific, but visceral. "I hear an Azlu's hanging out by the old mill" limits the type of story you can tell considerably. "I heard that nobody who lives near the old mill can keep pets unless they're strictly indoors — they just disappear" allows the Story-

teller a great deal of leeway in creating the true inhabitant of the building.

- **Remember when?** If the characters are local and entered their First Changes in the area, their sudden and brutal transition into the world of the Uratha should make for some interesting stories. Have each player revisit the site of her character's First Change and consider what happened between then and the start of the chronicle. What damage remains, if any? What about in the Hisil? Do any of the people nearby remember "the night Anna disappeared" or something similar? Yes, the Lunacy offers some protection for eyewitnesses, but a neighbor sat huddled in his apartment listening to the sounds of a newly Changed werewolf feasting next door probably still hears them in his nightmares.

GROUND THE CHRONICLE IN THE SETTING

After going through all of these steps, you should have a fairly solid idea of the territory, its role in the chronicle and the characters' relationship with the territory. Now consider what else might be present and how you can integrate the Storyteller characters and the players' characters into the ongoing chronicle.

OTHER URATHA

You don't need to write up character sheets for each and every werewolf in the area, but you should make a list of any packs that the characters might meet and include the names, auspices, tribes and rough power levels of their members. You can use the characters provided in the Rockies Appendix of **Werewolf: The Forsaken** as a yardstick. A young pack might be made of characters comparable to Moriarty, while a pack meant as foils, mentors or rivals to the players' pack might be more like New Hope or Jagged Sky's pack. When creating these packs, consider how long they have been in the area, what their relationship with the territory is and, if they claim their own turf, how they go about defending and patrolling it. In fact, most of the questions and considerations in the section above should be applied to important Storyteller-controlled packs as well. You might consider thinking up a few rumors or stories ahead of time, just so a pack has something interesting to tell the players' pack. The rumor doesn't have to be anything related to the ongoing chronicle, but if the players decide the rumor sounds interesting and follow up, you need to be ready to tie it back into the story or let it play out into an interesting chapter.

RUMORS AND CHATTER

You can use Storyteller characters relating rumors and stories to the pack as a way to further the plot of the chronicle or to simply give the players a hint of what else is out there

There's always the possibility too that the Storyteller character in question is lying deluded or misremembering what he saw. That's the danger of urban legends — once we tell the story enough we start to think it happened to us even if we originally heard it from a "friend of a friend." This kind of "telephone game" can occur among werewolves too.

When designing these rumors don't worry about the truth. Instead consider what the witness actually saw (or thinks he saw) and make that the focus of the conversation. Not every werewolf has heard of the Rat Hosts so even if a werewolf saw a man sitting in an alleyway covered in white rats he might not say to others later "I saw a Beshilu sitting on that garbage can." If he describes what he saw it's not only much more visual and powerful it doesn't mislead the players.

Here are a few rumors that Storyteller characters can casually impart to the pack:

- "Every half moon the Elunim sneak through a locus and fly through this whole area. Any Uratha the Elunim find, they measure his soul. I'm not saying how they do it just that it's not pleasant. They look like a swarm of moths glowing moths when they're hunting. If you see them and you've done something wrong in the last month just run."
- "There's a car wash downtown that you do not want to go near. It washes *everything* away. There used to be a Rahu around here who chased something into the car wash. When he came out he was still in Urhan form but he'd forgotten how to change back or even that he was one of us at all."
- "I'd love to be able to help you out but you've got the Mark. No I can't see it but there's an old Ithaeur lives outside of town on his own little patch of turf and he said you've got it. Hey you want to know go ask *him*."

Of special consideration is how the packs deal with intruders and visitors. Do they attack and "blood" any werewolf who crosses their borders before any kind of negotiation can begin? Do they recognize that the world is too small to be violently defensive of a large area, but defend their loci with tooth and claw? If a neighboring pack follows a totem, what kind of ban does the totem place upon them? An otherwise reasonable pack of werewolves might be bound by a promise to their spirit to never enter into friendly conversation with other Uratha until they have fought the others once. Subtler spirits have more insidious bans, of course — a pack following Fork-Tongue the Serpent might be required to lie to strangers during the new moon. What if the pack enters that pack's territory on a moonless night's hunt?

WOLF-BLOODED

Uragarum are sometimes considered to be part of a territory. These people might not even know what they truly are, but werewolves fight over them just the same. Not every pack cares about having potential mates among the wolf-bloods, but some packs are protective of their human family. Remember, too, that wolf-bloods are often resistant (though not immune) to the Lunacy, meaning that if a wolf-blood lives in the pack's territory she might be able to remember a pitched battle between Uratha, or stand her ground as the werewolves change shape. Wolf-blooded offer subtle story possibilities, but it's certainly worth considering whether or not they share the characters' turf.

VAMPIRES AND MAGES

Werewolves aren't the only supernatural beings that claim territory. Vampires battle each other for prime feeding grounds, and mages have their own arcane reasons for setting up sanctums in particular places. That doesn't necessarily mean that the Uratha are aware of these machinations. A pack might live next door to a vampire's haven for years and never know it. Conflict between these creatures isn't a foregone conclusion. Indeed, *contact* between them isn't a necessity.

If you do decide that vampires, mages or any other strange denizens of the World of Darkness dwell in the pack's territory, consider *why* these creatures dwell there and why it's necessary for your chronicle that they do.

"Every city has vampires" isn't a good answer. Every city might indeed boast a vampiric population, but why should the characters in your chronicle care? Are they ever likely to meet vampires unless you arrange it as part of the chronicle? Why? What would a vampire gain out of contact with your players' pack? What about a group of mages? The notion of "studying werewolves" might be a motivator, but it might also (rightly) seem like quite a dangerous proposition and not worth the risk. Neither mages nor vampires have some sort of cosmic imperative to search out and catalog every supernatural being in the world (though some might make it their personal business to do so), so what compelling reason would draw these beings into contact with the pack?

Plenty of good answers to these questions exist, of course. Vampires, mages and werewolves all have uses for loci, and so conflict can arise over them. A werewolf might have a personal grudge against vampires (and vice versa). A coterie of vampires might be tracking an enemy and start following the pack around by mistake. If you own **Vampire: The Requiem** or **Mage: The Awakening** and wish to integrate such characters into your **Werewolf** chronicle, by all means do so. But consider what place these creatures have in your chronicle, rather than including them just because they're there.

SECRETS

How many loci an area contains, what kinds of spirits they attract and how those spirits deal with werewolves





are all up to the Storyteller. While spirits are, as a rule, hostile to werewolves, that hostility can take many forms. Some spirits flee the Uratha in terror, while other spirits stalk them in hopes of freeing (or consuming) their pack totems. Werewolves *can* form alliances with spirits, but this is an uphill battle requiring work and probably chiminage on the werewolves' parts. In order for that kind of work to pay off, you need to know how the spirits feel about the Uratha by default. This ties in to several of the other factors mentioned in this chapter, including the spiritual history of the area and the presence of other werewolves. If the characters take a territory next to one claimed by a pack of Storm Lords who treat every spirit in the area as a servant or a lesser, the spirits aren't likely to see the characters in a favorable light.

Often, a locus is an important factor in determining a territory's desirability. You need to consider how common the loci are. Since loci allow spirits to slip into the material world, loci shouldn't be found on every corner, but a large city might boast one or two powerful loci and a handful of smaller ones that not even the resident Uratha know about. Bear in mind, too, that not every locus has a pack protecting it. Some loci have no common visitors except spirits, while mages and even vampires claim others.

When deciding how frequently the pack should encounter loci, consider how much time you want them to spend in the spirit wilds. Hunting in the Hisil has definite advantages. Aside from the plethora of prey and the constant possibility of running afoul of powerful spirits, both of which make for good stories, the spirit world takes the characters out of the public eye. Werewolves can change shape without worrying about who's watching and take on powerful or dangerous spirits without inflicting much collateral damage on their territory. Depending on the emphasis of your chronicle, you might want to place loci strategically around the area so that your players' pack is never far from a gateway into the Shadow. Or, if you would rather the Hisil be more inaccessible, make loci few and far between.

Whatever you decide about loci in the territory, don't reduce them to generic checkpoints. Every locus has a physical form and a resonance. Even if you have to make up a locus on the fly, choose a resonance that gives your players pause. A locus might be "bloody," "cold," "putrid" — any of those descriptors might make the characters nervous about what kinds of spirits await them on the other side.

THE TOTEM HUNT

Not every pack has a totem but the ability to take a totem spirit is one of the most potent advantages that a group of werewolves have

Plus coming together under a totem helps the pack to establish an identity for itself provides a look at the pack's dealings with the spirit world and opens the door for the possibility of dramatic conflict. What happens when the pack's goals conflict with the totem's? What about when the pack needs to violate the totem's ban to accomplish an end? Also, all totems are spirits, meaning that they can be enslaved destroyed and consumed by other more powerful beings

If the players spent points on the Totem Merit they have already built their totem spirit They probably have decided how they found it and gained its favor (or enslaved it) But if the pack has yet to find such a spirit, hunting for a totem spirit in their territory is a good way to showcase the local spirit population and how it relates to the Uratha as well as the particulars of the territory's Hisil As mentioned previously knowing the local wildlife is a good idea If the pack makes its home in Michigan it is unlikely to take Gila Monster as a totem but Black Bear might be a possibility

HUMANS

Don't forget about normal humans when designing a territory. They, after all, make up the most significant population. What are the people in the territory like? Hardened urbanites? "Simple" country folks? Paranoid suburbanites, who know each other only vaguely by sight? Are people on the street friendly, curt or downright rude to outsiders? Likewise, are the characters considered outsiders, or have they been here long enough to know everyone?

Consider who the influential people are in the area, as well. Who's the mayor of the city? What are the mayor's politics? Does he have an agenda that conflicts with something the pack might do? Influence can manifest in other ways, too. The chief of police, county sheriff and district attorney might merit some consideration, but what about the animal warden? She and her staff are certainly going to be notified if reports of wild dogs or wolves start coming in, especially if the reports start becoming frequent. Medical examiners and forensic officials might also notice that something strange is afoot if they are called to too many of the characters' battle sites, so it's not a bad idea to give names and identities to a few of these people. Reporters, too, can be troubling, as can psychiatrists who notice that just a few too many people seem to have recurring nightmares about slaving wolves. Pastors, bartenders and anyone else whom people talk to can learn enough about the supernatural to be threats or contacts. If the characters are new to the area but a significant supernatural presence already exists, this kind of dynamic might already be in place and the humans who are "in the know" might actually come calling.

People can help flesh out an area even without knowing about the World of Darkness or wielding political clout, and the players should help develop these people. Maybe a player decides that his character has as an Ally the man who runs the junkyard outside of town. Now the Storyteller knows that this junkyard exists and can consider how it might fit into future stories. Such characters don't have to be addressed by Traits, though. A character might have bought ice cream from the same corner store every week since she was a kid, and watched as the ownership passed from father to son. If something happens to that ice cream shop and to the man who now runs it, that player is going to be invested in finding out what, because her character knows and cares about those people.

THE EVOLVING TERRITORY

Places change, just as people do. Sometimes that change is sudden and dramatic. A fire or other natural disaster can reduce an entire town to rubble within a few days. More often, that change takes place over years or even decades, as political attitudes shift and the priorities of the people living in an area change. Towns can "move" as new development is concentrated in one area (the north part of town, for instance) while another falls into disuse. Anything that changes a territory has an effect on the Uratha living therein, and, as your chronicle progresses, you'll need to consider such changes.

This section discusses how to make use of a territory during the chronicle, how to change the territory to fit the ongoing story and how to set yourself up for future stories with a minute or two of preparation.

ZERO DATE

In order to make the territory a dynamic and important part of the chronicle, the territory has to change. In order for change to be meaningful, however, you need to have a solid starting point. Decide on a "zero date" for your chronicle, including date, month and year. Look in your library or online to find what was happening at the time, and remind your players of important national and international events. You can also find moon phase calendars, either online or in various almanacs, which are handy for determining whose auspice moon is currently in phase. You can alternately run a chronicle without dates, with most sessions being referred to somewhat obliquely in terms of time: "two weeks later," "a lazy Sunday in late October" and so on. This has the advantage of requiring less careful tracking of time, but the looser bookkeeping also means that more questions can arise ("wait, if last session took place three weeks ago, shouldn't it be a full moon now?"). It really depends on your troupe's style.

THEN, NOW AND LATER

Should you set your chronicle in the past the present or the future? Each has its advantages and drawbacks

Setting your chronicle in the recent past gives you the advantage of knowing what's coming in the real world at least. You don't have to set your stories further back than a year or two to gain this benefit, although historical games certainly have some potential (but are beyond the scope of this book). You can work upcoming real world events into your chronicle with enough perspective to see how they might intersect with your players' actions and with the World of Darkness in general. The disadvantage here is that your players might feel that they are limited by what "really" happened. Some players try to make sure that history happens the way it "should" while others go out of their way to disrupt it. In any case, if you give the players a chance to change the way important events worked, you'll need to consider what ramifications this has in the long run.

Keeping the date of your chronicle concurrent with real life gives the chronicle a sense of urgency and allows the characters to experience the same world events that the players are. This can lead to some interesting roleplaying experiences as events that seem strange or unlikely in the real world can take on new significance when viewed through the lens of the character. The problem is that the pace can be hard to manage and you might find yourself taking large amounts of downtime to stay current. Plus, experiencing the world as it happens robs you and the players of the perspective needed to make sense of the events.

Setting the game in the future, even by a year or so, allows you a great deal of freedom in building your own world out of ours. Unfortunately, since reality will undoubtedly develop in different ways than you imagine, this approach requires keeping tabs on what changes you've made versus what's actually happening so that the players don't become confused.

Decide, and write down, what is happening within the territory as of the start of your chronicle. What tension is present? If two rival packs are fighting over a territory, what stage is this "fight" in? Have they actually come to blows yet, or is the situation just festering? Storyteller characters should all have goals and machinations. What stage are these plots in? To what extent do they involve the players' pack? You should have a good sense of what is happening in the territory as the chronicle begins. If the pack is arriving in the area, then consider how the Storyteller characters are going to respond to a new group of werewolves. If the characters are current residents, then work with the players to determine what irons *they* have in the fire.

An important consideration when determining the status quo in the territory is what recent changes have occurred. What new buildings are being constructed? What's getting media attention lately? Are any workers on strike in the area? Is the community reeling from the loss of an important figure? Figure out what the mood of the area is as the chronicle begins, and decide upon some ways to exemplify that mood. Storyteller character actions and attitudes are a good way to indicate the milieu of the territory.

STORY HOOK — MEN AT WORK

A new building is being constructed in the pack's territory. At present, there is just the skeleton, but even that looks forbidding: solid concrete pillars, thick walls, and heavy steel girders. The foundation doesn't contain a locus, and yet the section attracts certain types of spirits as though it did. Most spirits flee the place, but death- and murder-spirits flock to it. No ghosts are anywhere to be seen and from the material world, everything seems normal. Why, then, do such dangerous spirits haunt the place? Perhaps the company constructing the building is owned by the leader of a death cult, and this structure will be used for sacrifice on a grand scale. Perhaps the building itself is normal, but the construction crew has uncovered something that is attracting the spirits.

One of the most important reasons for determining what's going on in the territory is that the players can then choose to be proactive in changing their turf. Suppose the pack has recently claimed a stretch of urban territory. The packmembers take stock of the area, and you tell them that a street gang has been dealing drugs and committing armed robbery and petty theft in the area. In addition, something is living in a burned-out building in the center of their territory, and, judging from the stories people are telling and the little bit of physical evidence, the creature could be a werewolf. Finally, the characters discover a small locus in the local elementary school, but the school is undergoing renovation that might damage or destroy this *nahdar*.

Depending on the pack's priorities, any of those situations might merit immediate attention. The players might decide that the possibility of a lone werewolf in their territory threatens their claim to the area. They might reason that the werewolf is no match for them (if it even is a werewolf), but that the street gang has the possibility of bringing down police and media attention that the characters don't want. Or, they could decide that the locus

is the first priority because, without it, they can't access the Hisil. You, as Storyteller, should be prepared for the players to pursue any, all or none of these story hooks.

TIMELINES

As you consider what the status quo entails, consider, too, what is going to happen in the near future if the players don't intervene. For instance, you might decide that the city boasts a lone Hunter in Darkness Irraka who makes his home near the pack's territory. The pack meets him during the first story, and can choose to associate with him or not at the packmembers' pleasure. You might decide that he is going to be murdered by the Lodge of Crows for whatever reason about a month (in game time) after the chronicle begins, unless the characters change the situation. How they could change it depends on why the Crows have marked him for death. The characters might allow him to join their pack, or they might drive him out of the area entirely. The point is, if they do *not* change the situation in some way, he dies.

Don't become too attached to any plots that you set up in this manner, because players have a habit of changing everything. Just have a general understanding of what will happen in and to the territory in the absence of action by the players' pack. The point here is that the territory is alive with or without the characters' actions. They can (and should) become important within the territory. The story is about them, after all. That said, the territory continues to change and grow even if they do nothing. That doesn't mean it should necessarily improve or worsen due to their inaction, simply that the players shouldn't feel that every single thing that happens within the territory is the result of their characters' actions. If the only significant events stem from their escapades, the story seems too artificial and contrived. Also, if the players see that the world continues on even when their characters aren't paying attention, throwing in rumors and stories that don't relate to the chronicle directly but help to flesh out the world is much easier. If the territory exists only to prop up the characters, then the players often feel obligated to investigate every hook thrown at them, and this can be overwhelming.

EVOLUTION OF THE TERRITORY

Keep the pack's goals in mind, which means asking the players about them often. Find out what their plans are for their territory and what Trait increases they need to exact those plans. For instance, changing the spiritscape of a territory might include performing the Rite of the Chosen Ground, but this is a fairly high-level rite. Is anyone around who can teach it to one of the characters? What price might the person ask? If a player expresses interest in having her character learn this sort of rite, or in joining a lodge concerned with the protection or alteration of a territory (the Lodge of Harmony, for instance), you have a great opportunity for a story. Don't waste it, and don't be afraid to put the main events of the chronicle

on hold in order to pursue it (you might also be able to work the main plot of the chronicle into such a story).

Make note of locations that the characters visit often and what effect they have on those locations. For instance, if the characters use a particular cornfield as the starting point of a regular hunt (maybe the Sacred Hunt described on p. 160 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, maybe a part of their totem's ban), how might this constant predatory activity affect the area's spiritscape? Predatory spirits might start stalking the cornfield. The spirit of the corn itself might grow somewhat feral, with the result that weak spirits are snapped up and consumed by the cornfield-spirit (leading to a very interesting magath). Spirits might start avoiding the area entirely, weakening the area somewhat and leading to sparse crops.

Keep a record, too, of people with whom the characters commonly interact. Names, occupations and descriptions are probably enough to begin with. As the characters develop relationships with this supporting cast, though, jot down any change in attitude toward the pack. If one of the pack stops by a butcher shop to buy beef hearts once a month, the butcher will definitely notice if that character sometimes looks bedraggled or even bruised (uncommon for werewolves, but it happens). If the butcher is especially perceptive, he might connect the character's purchases with a given moon phase. Anyone within the territory who notices anything strange about the pack is a possible informant, so consider who might look for information about the pack and where that person might have the most luck in doing so.

Chapter One includes a list of features that a territory might boast and notes on how to go about creating or destroying those features. Consider this information when planning the (d)evolution of a territory. While changes wrought during a chronicle probably shouldn't cost (or bestow) Merit or experience points, a Storyteller using the Merit-based system for territories might allow players to swap points around as their characters change the area.

TERRITORIES AND ROLEPLAYING

One of the biggest challenges in running a chronicle in which territory and the defense thereof figures heavily is making sure the players understand the territorial mindset of the Uratha. This section aims to help Storytellers and players with that aspect of **Werewolf**, as well as deciding what effect actions in the story have on game mechanics.

THINKING AS A WEREWOLF

What does "territory" really *mean*? The werewolf pack that claims a section of a city doesn't really own that area, after all. The packmembers are simply patrolling a small piece of turf and claiming the rights to hunt there,

but that distinction really only means something to other werewolves, spirits and creatures such as the Hosts. To human beings — who make up the majority of the world's population — the fact that a pack makes its residence in the area doesn't make the slightest bit of difference, because the Uratha never let the humans know.

And yet, the urge to claim and hold territory is strong in most werewolves. Uratha are not human or wolves, but they have aspects of both species. Wolves claim large hunting grounds in the wild, and werewolves share that urge. Other wolves that enter that territory must defend themselves, but other animals can come and go without that sort of challenge (either because they are prey or because the wolves don't see them as significant). The same is true of the Uratha and their territory. Any being in that territory is either a threat, prey or unworthy of notice.

Humans can fall into any of those categories, of course, but the throngs of humanity tend to be background noise to the Uratha defending their territory. Unless the werewolves do something to attract the humans' attention, human beings stay out of the werewolves' way. This is partially because the Uratha keep their affairs out of human sight, but largely because people don't want to know. To acknowledge such predators in their midst would be terrifying, and, moreover, would require that humans do something about it. Humans instinctively defend their families and homes, after all.

Uratha, therefore, combine the urge to hunt with the urge to protect their territory and their family (that is, the pack). Werewolves are not wolves or humans and don't feel compelled to protect either species, but might well include a wolf-blood as part of a territory. "Territory," therefore, doesn't have to a place. Anything upon which the werewolf places value can qualify.

Note, too, that although a werewolf pack's territorial boundaries are typically only acknowledged by other Uratha and creatures with a common frame of reference (that is, spirits, Hosts and the like), those beings are the only ones *meant* to understand the boundaries. Human beings and even other supernatural entities such as vampires and mages might notice overt marks of territory (though probably not the spiritual ones) and write them off as graffiti or vandalism or even occult symbols. These beings do not know that a werewolf pack claims the area, and, ordinarily, they don't need to know.

Most werewolves see themselves as Uratha first and last. Young Uratha might still identify with humanity, particularly if they maintain their pre-Change lives in some fashion and have living family. But among the People, werewolves feel truly at home. They might see another pack as intruders and as deadly threats, but that other pack is composed of *Imru*, and thus requires a different kind of consideration than, say, a gang of human thugs would. The werewolf pack can tear the human thugs apart, but must exercise restraint when dealing with werewolves. Killing other werewolves is repugnant. Killing

human beings isn't, necessarily. Needless killing, of course, still feels wrong, but only because it is a waste of energy and an unnecessary risk. Killing a human being doesn't set off the same kind of moral revulsion that killing a werewolf does. Of course, a low-Harmony werewolf might *not* feel such revulsion, and territories claimed by such packs are dangerous ground. But even taking this into consideration, the Uratha world is exclusive, a microcosm within the World of Darkness. Vampires and mages and other such beasts might see that werewolves exist and might identify with them insofar as they must hide from humanity as well, but such being will never be *Imru*. That doesn't mean that they can't interact, even come to consensus. It simply means that, to werewolves, only creatures that are spiritual in the same way as they are truly understand the world.

THE TERRITORIAL MINDSET

How can we (or the Storyteller) encourage players to think as Uratha with regard to protecting territory? It doesn't do any good for the Storyteller to tell the players "You feel this way" or, worse, "You think this way." Instead, consider the following points:

- **Keep it experiential:** Don't tell players what their characters think or feel. Instead, tell them what they see, hear and smell and let them interpret the data. Learn to describe situations in terms of sensation, including scent (which forms the strongest emotional and memory links in the mammalian brain, by the way), and link related ideas together in this manner. For instance, if the characters get into a fight with a horde of Beshilu near an oil refinery, that sickening smell of gasoline is forever going to remind them of that battle. When they smell the exhaust from a truck or smell gas splattered on someone's shoes, tell the players what they smell and that it calls the squeal of rats and the pain of their bites to mind.

Experiential memory works for positive emotions as well, of course. If the pack claims territory near a slaughterhouse, the packmembers might come to associate the stink of cattle with being home and safe. Visitors might complain of the stench, but the pack barely notices anymore. People who live near train tracks experience much the same thing. A visitor might find the noise of the train whistle annoying, but residents find it soothing. The players and the Storyteller should decide what sensations are common to the pack's territory. Such sensations might be worth small bonuses on rolls to avoid Death Rage, at the Storyteller's discretion.

- **Borders:** Decide on the borders of the pack's territory and what they contain. What exactly does the pack claim as territory? In general, the greater the population density, the smaller territories in the area will be. How does the pack mark their borders? Is one member of the pack in charge of this, or is it a duty they split? Is any part of the territory expressly forbidden to other Uratha (again, difficult to enforce in heavily populated areas)?

Get as specific as possible about what the borders mean and how the pack controls them. If the players know what's in the territory, they have a much easier time thinking of it as theirs.

- **Territory as identity:** As mentioned above, the only creatures that truly understand a werewolf's territorial urges are other werewolves and creatures with similar spiritual mindsets. Hosts and spirits of all stripes understand why werewolves claim territories: it's just what Uratha do.

Players should understand that most beings, humans included, just don't get it. Territory is important, on a visceral, instinctive level. At the same time, werewolves understand that all of their territory is, in a way, humanity's territory. The Uratha have to share, but since they want different things out of their turf than humans do (usually), this isn't as painful as it would be otherwise. The point here is that the desire for territory sets werewolves apart; it's part of being a werewolf. Vampires might fight over good places to feed and mages have their own inscrutable desires, but both of those entities are inextricably tied to the material world (as far as the Uratha know). Werewolves have deeper concerns — the hunt and the protection of territory are part of their identity. Is it any wonder that they defend their territory so ferociously?

This also means that when a pack is outside of its territory, the werewolves don't feel comfortable. Away from familiar ground, a werewolf never knows if she is about to be ambushed by a native Uratha or a powerful spirit. She doesn't know where the nearest locus is in case she should need to enter (or leave) the Hisil, and she doesn't know where the best places for traps and surprise attacks are. The Storyteller can help convey this sense of unfamiliarity by using pure description rather than explanation. For instance, the Storyteller might describe a building this way: "You smell the grease and cigarette smoke as you come around the bend. Before you sits a brick building with large glass windows and a dirty white roof. You can hear the clink of silverware and scratchy music from a jukebox inside, and the rumble of a motorcycle echoes from the parking lot." It's fairly obvious that the building is a diner or greasy spoon, but the players will probably have to listen to the whole description to be sure. The Storyteller can use this technique to strip the familiarity from almost anything when the pack is out of its territory, emphasizing the distance from safety.

- **Everything is a threat:** Suppose the city opens a free clinic in a pack's territory. To the humans of the area, this is welcome news. It means free health care, after all. To the Uratha, though, the opening of a free clinic means an influx of spirits that can gain Essence from such a place (disease- and pain-spirits, for instance). A new clinic means new construction, which disrupts the spirit world. A free clinic means new people frequenting the area.

All of these things mean threats to the pack. Any of the disease-spirits might grow powerful enough to infect

Uratha. Any new person in the area might be a Host or Ridden in disguise. A disruption in the Hisil might send more spirits flocking to the pack's locus in search of nourishment.

Does this mean that werewolves are opposed to change, or that they actively attempt to stifle human progress? Not necessarily. Uratha aren't generally concerned with human progress except insofar as it affects their territory. A pack that claims territory in a city might encourage the city to grow, breaking new ground and expanding into previously residential areas, because the area then becomes similar in tone and content to the pack's territory. The point is that anything that threatens to change a pack's territory (unless the pack approves of the change) is a threat to that pack's home.

- **Spirits are everywhere, and they hate the Uratha:** Imagine what it would be like to be surrounded at all times by invisible beings that hated and feared you. These beings can't usually touch you or influence you in any way, but if they can find the right door, they can reach through it just enough to give you a good hard shove. Now imagine stepping onto a subway platform knowing that. This is a simplified version of the way Uratha must live every minute.

Everything has a spirit, though not every spirit is awake. But unless a werewolf exerts the effort, she won't know what spirits are lurking about what and what they're doing (and even with the effort, it's not easy to tell). If a werewolf presents a spirit with the opportunity to hurt her, the spirit will often take that opportunity (unless, of course, it's out of character for the spirit to do so — happiness-spirits don't make a habit of inflicting pain). So, Uratha try not to give spirits those opportunities, which in turn requires the werewolf to know what spirits are around, where they draw their Essence and what they are capable of doing.

Claiming a territory, therefore, is a survival mechanism. It allows the pack to stick to a (relatively) small area in which it knows the spiritual and physical landscape. If the pack is thorough and smart, it can run off or weaken the dangerous spirits and establish some kind of harmony with the others. It all boils down to knowing what the Hisil is like, and that's really only possible in a small area, since the Shadow is both dangerous and always in flux. Even in cities that only boast one pack, it's not uncommon to see these Uratha stick to a single neighborhood and seldom leave it.

TERRITORY AND HORROR

How does the notion of territory tie into the horror presented in *Werewolf*? This section explores this question, as well as advising the Storyteller on how to bring horror into stories about territory.

DEATH RAGE

The inherent horror of caring about anything, a place, person or object, is that something terrible might happen to

it. Werewolves add another layer onto this: anything that a werewolf cares about is in constant danger *because* of the werewolf's presence. Every Uratha is one Death Rage away from destroying anything within arm's reach, and he knows it. How, then, do the Uratha reconcile this Rage with the desire to keep, hold and protect a territory?

- **Harmony:** The higher a werewolf's Harmony, the less frequently he will fly into Death Rage. Keeping a strong moral center isn't just valuable for dealing with spirits, it helps the werewolf control himself. As a werewolf's Harmony falls, his territory becomes a more dangerous place as he patrols it obsessively, looking for infractions of his imposed rules.

- **Keep moving:** Werewolves are hunters by nature. The urge to hunt keeps them in motion. Uratha packs don't (normally) lounge about in their homes: they spend their time patrolling their territory, rooting out threats to it and striking against what could someday become a threat. Constant motion reduces the risk to any given area, too. If the pack is always on the move, even within its territory, people and places therein are less at risk. By constantly seeking out enemies or prey, the Uratha has something deserving (or, at least, something that she doesn't personally care about) upon which to loose her Rage.

Small territories are especially at risk from the Death Rage of their werewolf "protectors," since the resident Uratha have much less room to hunt and tend to fall back on the same areas more frequently. New werewolves are often amazed at how much land a pack might claim as its territory, before they realize how much ground a pack can cover in a night.

- **Packs:** A lone Uratha has no support system, nothing to fall back upon when the Rage threatens to overtake her. Some powerful werewolves claim territory alone, and packs tend to fear Uratha who do this. Any werewolf skilled enough to hold a territory without the help of a pack is a force to be reckoned with, and if such a werewolf becomes a Broken Soul, the pack might not find out until the loner's madness becomes apparent.

OUTSIDE SOURCES

The horror in keeping a territory isn't limited to the Uratha's fear that he might fly into frenzy and destroy something. Werewolves are well aware of what kinds of creatures and spirits might stalk their territories. For Storytellers, what lurks in a territory can be a great source of horror for a chronicle.

Obviously, any of the antagonists listed in **Werewolf: The Forsaken** or in other sourcebooks can act as invaders, infiltrators, outright attackers or subtle corrupters. When something foreign and hostile enters a pack's territory, the horror comes from facing a foe in the home. The feeling is disquieting and invasive. Although a werewolf pack should know better than to ever feel entirely safe, even in its own turf, an enemy presence still fills the pack with a creeping dread. This is especially true if the invader isn't interested

in the pack, but is targeting the territory itself. If the pack claims dominion over a large area, the packmembers can't possibly patrol it all at once. Suppose, then, that a subtle but ambitious spirit enters the territory and begins consuming spirits that the werewolves find desirable. The pack probably can't keep tabs on this new presence. In fact, until it makes enough of a dent in the local spirit population to change something about the territory, the pack might not even notice (one good reason for packs to be vigilant). By the time the pack even realizes that there's a problem, the spirit has grown in power and probably learned where to hide from the Uratha. The pack might spend months chasing the spirit down, and what might it do during that time?

Uncertainty is probably the best source of horror. Give a pack of werewolves a target that they can see, chase and fight, and you have put the battle on their terms. Even if an opponent is stronger than the pack, the Uratha can attack, retreat and strike again, just like a pack of wolves taking down a moose. But opponents that the characters cannot easily identify and fight can (and should) frighten them. The easiest example, of course, is probably spirits, because gaining access to them requires a locus, which not all territories have. Fighting spirits is chancy, because they tend to be powerful and deadly, and so much of the pack's effort should probably be devoted to finding the spirit's ban (and reducing any damage the spirit can do to them and their territory in the interim). But spirits are by no means the only element of mystery and horror that Storytellers can bring to bear on a pack of Uratha and their hunting grounds:

- **Vampires/mages:** These creatures, similar to werewolves, have their own societies, their own rules and their own reasons for being territorial. If you have access to **Mage: The Awakening** and/or **Vampire: The Requiem**, consider under what circumstances these beings might conflict with a pack of werewolves. Unless a given werewolf has a reason to know some specifics about vampires or wizards, the Uratha have no more true information at their disposal than normal humans do. The notion of a bloodsucking corpse or a mortal who has sold his soul to gain supernatural power should be frightening even to one of the Uratha, especially because they do not know where such beings fit into their cosmological view of the world.

Just remember that these races are not at war; a pack of werewolves that finds a vampire hunting won't tear him limb from limb just because he's a vampire, though they certainly might take offense at another predator hunting in their domain. Conflicts between supernatural beings should be personal and local, not based on some race-wide hatred.

- **Other Uratha:** A new pack of werewolves in a territory raises all sorts of questions. What totem, if any, do the newcomers follow? Perhaps they have inadvertently taken a Lune totem and are destined for madness and violence. Are they paragons of Harmony or one step away from becoming *Zi'ir*? Are they Pure warriors or proselytizers, or Bale Hound spies? Do they belong to some obscure lodge with a mysterious and perhaps dangerous agenda?

Xenophobia, the fear of strangers, is alive and well in Uratha society. When one pack intrudes on another's territory, the result isn't usually outright combat, but this is because jumping directly into a fight with an unknown pack can be suicide. And besides, although no Uratha wants to admit it, if a pack shows up in one's territory it might be because something is very wrong and the resident pack doesn't even know it yet.

The "invading" werewolves might be in the territory for quite a while before the characters notice them. The resident Uratha might notice scent marks betraying the visitors' presence, and then notice that the marks are at least a week old. What have the newcomers been doing during that time, and how have the characters missed them?

STORY HOOK — THE VACABOND

A strange werewolf arrives in the pack's territory. He doesn't travel with a pack and in fact seems extremely uncomfortable around the characters. He is dirty, disheveled, and almost incapable of blending in with humans. He seems extremely weak, however — he coughs up blood and can barely walk without a cane. Yet, if a Rahu uses the Warrior's Eye on him, she realizes that he is capable of killing the pack easily if he so desires.

The werewolf is more in touch with the spirit world and his own Uratha nature than the characters will ever be (in game terms, he has an extremely high Primal Urge rating in the to range). He knows few Gifts, however, because he has been out of werewolf society for many years and has not earned any Renown. The spirits follow him, feeding on the Essence he bleeds. What attracted him to the characters' territory? Is he a Cahalith following a prophetic dream? Is he a Zi'ir trying to complete some task that he only half-remembers? Is it possible to bring him back to full health and sanity? Is that wise?

- **Ghosts:** A human being who stands up to a werewolf in combat is, in all probability, going to die. But humans don't always disappear after death. Ghosts are different from the spirits with which werewolves normally deal — ghosts don't understand First Tongue, they aren't affected by most rites and Gifts (the Death Gifts being an exception, of course), and they don't recognize a werewolf's Renown. A ghost in a werewolf's territory should give the Uratha pause, because it is a reminder that human souls are enduring. Werewolves can be tempted to look at humans as disposable and weak. But what if the ghost of a human who died to feed a werewolf returns to spill her secret to her pack? What if a ghost has seen a creature such

as a Ridden or Azlu, but lacks the frame of reference to understand what it knows? Try to describe a Spider Host from the perspective of a person who doesn't even know that she is dead. That kind of confusion and helplessness is frightening, especially if the ghost in question was once someone the pack cared for.

- **Unique creatures:** The World of Darkness isn't limited to werewolves, vampires, ghosts and mages. Any creature from folklore, urban legend or the Storyteller's imagination is fair game. That means that the creature that lurks in a pack's territory might be something that the characters have heard about in campfire stories but never believed was real. Not all of these creatures need to be spirits, Ridden or anything else that fits neatly into **Werewolf**. The Uratha *don't* have all the answers. Their cosmology is incomplete and doesn't account for everything in the World of Darkness, and encountering something that neither they nor any other werewolf they can find can identify means that the characters are completely on their own. That uncertainty and isolation make for superb horror stories.

INTERNAL HORROR

The characters aren't always on the receiving end of horror, though. Sometimes the pack is responsible for making the territory a more frightening and deadly place. The ear-splitting howl echoing across a lonely rural valley or through the quiet city streets sends the humans who hear it running for home. A man walking to his car sees something move in the parking lot shadows, and breaks into a run. A woman wakes up in the middle of the night to a scratching sound — only to find the next morning that the scratch marks are on the inside of her door.

Why would Uratha do these sorts of things? The howls in the night can signify the loss of a packmate, the triumph over an enemy or the beginning of a hunt. The werewolf in the parking lot might be waiting for a contact or getting the scent of his prey from one of the cars. The woman who finds the scratches might be *nuzusul*, on the cusp of her Change or her house might be home to a spirit that the werewolves need to frighten away. The point is that werewolves are monsters, and sometimes they terrify the people living in their territories for reasons that have nothing to do with the people themselves. The players and the Storyteller should consider what effect the characters' actions have on the populace. Humans very rarely load their guns with silver and go hunting werewolves, but it has been known to happen. People only get so scared before the fear turns to resolve, the terror to righteous rage. Werewolves might make their territories more horrific in an attempt to cow the people living there (especially in less populated areas) only to have this plan backfire with fatal results.

Actively making a territory seem more dangerous also has spiritual dangers. While frightening humans isn't normally a sin against Harmony, if done too often or too cal-

lously it might well be considered torture. Likewise, spending too much time scaring people increases the werewolf's time around humans, which in turn increases the risk that he will enter *Kuruth* while they are still in arm's reach. Encouraging terror also attracts spirits that feed on fear, pain and nightmares, and makes the area more hospitable for Ridden created from these kinds of entities.

EVENTS, HOOKS AND LOCATIONS

The rest of this chapter consists of suggestions to flesh out your pack's territory. These come in the forms of events and hooks that Storytellers can use to springboard chapters or stories, as well as a list of special locations that a territory might contain.

TRIGGER EVENTS

The following section lists events and occurrences that characters can witness while they are patrolling their territory, engaged in other business (which raises questions of priorities) or simply going about their lives. For the most part, the list doesn't explain the truth or the backstory to the event, just what the characters would see. This allows you to tie these events easily into your chronicle. Likewise, if you need to shake things up in your chronicle, pick 10, list them in any order you like, roll a die and see what comes up. The first 10 are fairly mundane in the nature, while the last 10 are obviously supernatural.

- Mugging. **Variations:** Gang-beating, rape.
- Fire. **Variations:** Brush fire, inferno in office building.
- Robbery. **Variations:** Burglary, hostage situation.
- Car chase. **Variations:** Helicopter chase, foot chase.
- Explosion. **Variations:** Shots ring out, massive car wreck.
- Gang brawl. **Variations:** Firefight, underground boxing ring.

- Character is shot (stray bullet, sniper, etc.). **Variations:** Hit by car, struck by falling object.
- Corpse in trunk of car or inside house. **Variations:** Body is being moved or altered in some way.
- Lightning strikes near the characters. **Variations:** Lightning strikes a person, lightning strikes a car and causes it to crash.
- Man is cutting himself with a knife. **Variations:** Man punches himself in the face, squeezes a handful of broken glass.
- Spirit materializes, briefly, and then vanishes.

Variations: Spirit attacks a target once, spirit is a ghost.

- Passerby stares at character for a moment, then runs in panic. **Variations:** Passerby attacks character in a blind rage, passerby starts screaming at the character in First Tongue.

- Vampire feeding. **Variations:** Creature isn't drinking victim's blood but eating flesh, "vampire" is feeding during the day.

- Man vomits in alley then stumbles away. Vomit puddle is crawling with worms. **Variations:** Puddle is on the floor of a subway car or taxicab, man collapses and characters see worms under skin.

- The wind blows a woman's coat up, revealing a hole in her back. **Variations:** Something is living in the hole (cat, rat, small grotesque humanoid), something falls out of the hole (ring, dead leaves, animal).

- Glassy-eyed woman touches a person; that person becomes glassy-eyed and walks on while woman blinks and starts crying in confusion. **Variations:** Woman touches character but all character feels is a sudden pressure in his head, crowd instinctively parts for glassy-eyed person.

- Person sneezes into hanky and spiders crawl out. **Variations:** Characters find the hanky crawling with tiny black insects, man adjusts sunglasses and characters notice spider legs protruding from eyeballs.

- Footprints appear walking away from characters. They run if chased. **Variations:** Footprints might be wet, bloody, dirty, etc. Other detection methods — broken windows, snapped tree branches.



- A person's reflection is markedly different from him (different race, gender, age, etc.). **Variations:** Person's shadow is absent or struggling to escape, reflection variant only appears when viewed from the corner of one's eye.

- Everyone who exists a certain building smells like blood. **Variations:** Inside of building smells like blood, people's voices have an odd timbre after leaving building.

STORY HOOKS

These are events that can happen when the players aren't around. Consider what the effect on the territory would be on such an event, how it would impact the territory and what evidence the characters are likely to find when they return and start investigating. Unlike the encounters listed above, the cause and perpetrators have also been explained (or at least suggested).

- **Police Investigation:** A crime is committed on the pack's turf (of which they might or might not have had any knowledge), and the police begin the standard investigation. The pack can look forward to increased police presence, expert crime scene works, yellow tape and media coverage. How long this lasts depends on the nature of the crime. Anything that could be labeled as "terrorist action" of course gets ink, as does anything that could be labeled a "serial" crime.

- **Unwelcome Visitor:** A nearby pack chases a dangerous spirit into the pack's territory by exploiting the spirit's ban. The pack might even use the Bind Spirit rite to trap it there. The spirit follows whatever impulses it possesses. A murder-spirit, of course, encourages murder. A spirit of lies will be somewhat more insidious.

- **Turf Rumble:** A new pack decides it wants to take the pack's territory, or at least make trouble. The new packmembers remove any tags or scent marks the pack has made, either replacing them with their own or just leaving the area blank.

- **Host of Trouble:** The Gauntlet changes, growing weaker or stronger due to a Host presence (Beshilu or Azlu, respectively). The *shartha* remain out of sight as long as possible, knowing that the Uratha will kill them on sight. The *shartha* also have a leader that keeps them from leaving evidence as to their presence, so all the werewolves see is the change in the Gauntlet and the spiritual activity (or lack thereof) that results.

- **Wrath of God:** A fire, flood, tornado or other natural disaster guts the area. What has the disaster destroyed and how will the characters cope? They can't hunt down a fire and exact revenge, which might leave them depressed or edgy for months.

- **Spirit Predation:** All of a certain type of spirit disappears from the pack's territory. Is a very powerful spirit hunting successfully, or have these spirits just fled? What does it do to an area if, say, all of the cat-spirits disappear? Alternately, what if a ravenous spirit is hunting down *any* spiritual entity the spirit can find? This leaves large areas

completely devoid of spirits. What if it targets the pack's totem?

HUNTING GROUNDS

Finally, the following is a list of locations in which werewolves can hunt and fight that might be present in your chronicle's setting. We've tried to present locations that allow for interesting and dramatic hunts and, more specifically, culminations of hunts. You'll have to decide which locations are appropriate for your chronicle's tone. If the chronicle is dark and gritty with extreme emphasis on the secrecy of the Uratha, having an all-out brawl in a market probably isn't the best idea. Also included with these locales are a few key details, for establishing the mood of the area quickly. Some of these locations receive treatments in Chapter One, but this section examines them from a Storytelling point of view rather than as features to purchase for a territory.

- Any major league sports competition, from baseball to boxing to NASCAR. Most cities have a stadium of some kind where their home team competes. A pack could use a stadium for neutral territory after the stadium is closed, making use of the open space, but staying out of public view would be an issue. **Details:** (Empty) Scent of sweat and beer, televisions left on to static, security guards talking about the game; (Full) screaming fans, tailgate parties, athletes shooting up before the game.

- A landfill, trash dump or junkyard. Such places are natural habitats for Beshilu as well as a wide variety of spirits (and, therefore, magath). **Details:** Stench of garbage, uncertain footing, needles and sharp glass in the dirt.

- A power plant, factory or refinery. Such places are loud and complex, and many run 24 hours a day but still have thousands of places for prey to hide. **Details:** Scent and waste depending on the location, oppressive heat, tired and careless workers.

- An industrial park or quarry. Drainage ditches in such locales can extend 20 feet below normal ground level and be lined with concrete, making them superb places for ambushes, meetings between packs or places for urban taggers to practice their art. **Details:** Stagnant water, rusting machinery, rats and other vermin.

- A cocktail party, banquet or other high-society social occasion. Uratha in this situation must be careful — while it might be tempting to let Lunacy cover their tracks, the people at such parties are rich and powerful. **Details:** Scents of wine, caviar, liver and other rich food, decadence of the idle rich (scents of sex and cocaine), immediate police response.

- Rooftops, skyscrapers or cliffs. Even werewolves aren't immune to gravity. Fighting in such situations can impose Dexterity + Athletics rolls to keep balance or penalties on attacks to keep one's footing. **Details:** Rushing wind, approaching thunderstorms.



- A construction site. Wide-open spaces if ground has just been broken or already-built houses for werewolves to stalk through after their prey. **Details:** Scent of freshly churned earth (and whatever might have been dug up), bulldozers and other heavy equipment, still-wet concrete.

- A parking complex. An indoor parking garage can be labyrinthine (of course, if it's aboveground the character can just jump). Outdoors, the werewolves' prey can hide amidst a jungle of cars or steal one to escape. **Details:** Puddles of oil, car alarms, seagulls.

- A mine, series of catacombs or tunnels. Any city with an old church might have a series of catacombs underneath a cemetery. Natural caves and tunnels aren't uncommon, and, of course, larger cities have subways and access tunnels. Remember that natural light doesn't extend below the surface, and many such tunnels are too narrow to assume Gauru or even Urshul form. **Details:** Bats, deceptively deep pools of water, human corpses, odd graffiti.

- A school, university or playground. Nothing excites more immediate, visceral emotion than one's children being threatened, and, therefore, parents are quite likely to be able to fight through Lunacy to save their children. High schools have chemistry labs, and in the inner city the students might carry guns. Universities often open wide-open campuses, drunk, hedonistic students and secret societies. **Details:** Screaming kids, jaunty music, books.

- A cemetery. Possibly a sprawling graveyard taking up acres of land or a tiny postage stamp that's been in the city since the Civil War. A military cemetery in which the graves are simply marked with white crosses evokes some powerful imagery, too. **Details:** Freshly dug graves, mourners, ghosts, zombies, scent of fresh flowers, chewing sounds from underground.

- A theater, movie or otherwise. Cinemas attract large numbers of people, especially the multi-screen affairs so common now. Consider also drive-in theaters and arthouse or even adult theaters — fewer people means a safer place to meet or hunt. Live theater venues allow for falling lights and scenery, ropes holding curtains upon and superb acoustics for howls. **Details:** Smell of burnt popcorn, people making out in the rows, dressing rooms smelling of makeup.

- An amusement park or carnival. An obviously non-human Ridden or Host might get away with hiding in the freakshow, and a crowd of people acts as good cover for other prey. **Details:** Roller coasters and other rides, cheap fried food, games filled with plastic and stuff toys.

- An airport. Combines the elements of a parking lot with ever-tightening security. **Details:** Planes taking off overhead, armed soldiers as guards, people greeting each other joyfully and saying tearful goodbyes.

- A ranch, farm or orchard. Hunting in a cornfield or through rows of apple trees has great visual potential. A cattle ranch adds the notion of spooked animals and

angry (and armed) farmers. **Details:** Tasty domesticated prey animals, scarecrows, scent of manure or rotting fruit.

- A dog pound, animal shelter, pet store or zoo. Mundane animals are often terrified of werewolves, and might chew through their cages to get away from them. **Details:** Animals with bloodied mouths, animal noises (barks, roars, shrieks), chaos as animals get loose.

- A hospital or nursing home. An emergency room might make a good place for the end of a hunt — the prey might duck into the hospital to patch himself up. Morgues, likewise, add some interesting elements to the scene. **Details:** Antiseptic smell, beeps and whirs of machinery, chaos, well-trained people falling under Lunacy.

- A public swimming pool, quarry or lake. Water can be terrifying, and even werewolves can drown. Bodies of water at night can conceal almost anything. **Details:** Scent of chlorine or lake water, sounds of roiling water, footprints in the mud.

- A club, bar or dive. A crowded club is a panicked stampede waiting to happen. Suppose the bar in question happens to be a gang or cop hangout, though? **Details:** Under-the-table dealings, smoke, cheap beer, jukeboxes.

- A fish market or farmers market. Thousands of strange smells, which probably make tracking more difficult. One spilled box of fish makes for dangerous fighting conditions. Also, depending on where the food comes from, strange spirits might have

hitched a ride, too. **Details:** Movement among the “dead” fish, scents of meat and blood, rats stealing food.

- An asylum or prison. Werewolves might find that their prey is hiding out in a correctional institution, either as a guard, a prisoner or simply a stowaway. Breaking into such a place is complicated, at least if stealth is a concern. **Details:** Some absolutely horrific spirits, sadistic guards, solitary confinement, scent of sweat, urine and waste.

- A gym or health club. Barbells make interesting weapons. Such places usually include pools, too. **Details:** Smell of sweat, steroids, narcissism.

- A museum or library. An older library with iron shelves, huge hoary tomes of forbidden knowledge and a cranky and

intimidating librarian makes for an iconic place to find information. A museum has many dark places to hide and usually advanced security systems. **Details:** Bones (and perhaps spirits) of long-dead animals, books that should never be opened, smell of paper, people whispering in the stacks.

- A highway rest stop or greasy spoon. Rest stops can be small buildings with a few vending machines or veritable mini-malls. Greasy spoons might attract a few regulars who refuse to speak to visitors or might be common stopping places for travelers. Either way, the transient nature of

the places makes them good features for hunts. **Details:** Bad food, stale cigarette smoke, big rigs outside, truckers or bikers spoiling for a fight.





CHAPTER III

LINES IN THE SAND

I'm up and out the door while everyone else is mostly asleep; Tash sees me go out of the eye she keeps open, and I trust her to remember it. I wouldn't have thought that sleeping with one eye open was anything but a weird exaggeration back... you know, back then, when my body was as asleep as my mind. But now I'm awake, all of me, in both senses of the word.

And I go for a walk as I always do.

There's a new tag on the bridge, and not from any of the established gangs. But it's placed down and out of the way, and the first thing I think when I see it is "that's humble of them."

Down at the corner, they've left me my seat at the end and the service is nice and quick. The guys down the counter are talking about cats fighting last night. And yeah, I guess I can see how that screeching those things did was kind of like a cat's if you were a way's off. Or trying not to listen.

The park smells nice. That's a good change. I look across the way where one of the women from the Towers is walking her corgi, and I can't help but smile when she fastidiously scoops up the critter's crap and disposes of it. She wouldn't have done that three months back, back when the park stank of animal shit and human piss and used condoms and all that other garbage. Now it smells like... well, if you catch the wind right, you can just about smell us. It's the sort of thing I never would have thought humans could pick up on, and maybe they don't even know that they're doing it.

They're getting used to us. They don't want to think about it too hard, they might not even admit it to themselves, but they know. This place is ours.

SMALL TOWN: HOOD RIVER

OVERVIEW

Columbia River widens here, and runs slow, if strong. The sole freeway takes a couple of twists and turns, following the river through the region, which would slow drivers down if they weren't already slowing to take in the beauty of the waters on one side and the majestic, looming mountain on the other. Only the winds move quickly in Hood River Valley, and they don't cause a lot of stir on the ground. The people aren't fast; even the speed of the modern world hasn't been able to accelerate this sleepy rural town.

But still waters run deep.

Werewolves have lived here for centuries, since before Oregon was a state or Hood River a chartered town. They made their territory not in the lee of the great Mount Hood, but on the windward, where the wind carried seeds to grow and the vast river worked with the mountain's runoff to make the mountain one of the most bountiful places in the West.

But, most importantly, the wind blew ash away, for Mount Hood was once more active than it is now. The volcano vomited up tons of black soot and white ash in those days, and where they settled, life died. Stories tell that the Uratha of those ancient days forged unbreakable pacts with the spirit courts of wind to ensure that they would always blow the volcano's death away from the territory and the wolves, but the truth of this is uncertain.

What is certain is that there are strange things in Hood River. Things that the Forsaken keep quiet and under control, but the influx of population — *young* population, *active* population — is making that difficult. Some say it's impossible.

To most people who live there, Hood River, Oregon, is little more than a rural town in a rural state. People go to school, grow up, get a job and settle down to have kids without leaving the county. Fruit, mostly apples and pears, is the biggest industry; hundreds of acres of orchards give the region a beautiful springtime visage and bring immigrant workers and their children up for the harvest. The town's inhabitants are mostly well-meaning. Many of the elderly and idle spend their time in the region's four Lions clubs, and most children participate in 4-H for at least one or two years. Showing and selling animals is the largest part of the annual county fair, and one that gives a number of local kids their spending money for the year.

It's not the complete sticks, though, until one gets out of Hood River's "downtown" proper. They have a decent hospital, (small) law enforcement, the normal run of fast food joints and a short series of local businesses successful enough not to close down. A 20-minute drive up the mountain takes one to Parkdale. Technically another township, Parkdale is still part of the Hood River county and community, sharing the middle schools and the single high school. Here, rural life becomes most evident. Residents of Parkdale can get their gas at the small, nearby market, but most locals keep a tank at least half-full on their property. Trucks and other heavy vehicles, a fad and conceit for most in the city, are real necessities here. The snowfall can be heavy, and when it is, the runoff is even heavier. Everybody here works for a living, and it's not just a moral decision for them to do so.

Also common to the Parkdale community is a strong bond of blood. Some families' roots are as deep as the mountains and twice as thick. After generations and generations, these families have intermarried and, according to the townies, laid claim to almost all the rural region. Common jokes about Parkdale's families revolve around inbreeding, but the jokes are exceptionally exaggerated. However untrue the jokes may be, some surnames are ubiquitous throughout the region. Having so much family so close makes reunions simple matters, helping Parkdale's inhabitants stay close and remain a fairly tight-knit community. Though the townspeople are not exclusionary or unfriendly to outsiders, there is certainly a sense of being "out of the loop" that, often, only a generation or two of living there can fix.

Bennet Pass bounds the county on the south, but the dominant pack's territory finds its south end at the east side of Mount Hood. High hills to the east and west of Hood River make excellent natural boundaries, and no wolf ever crossed the Columbia River to expand a territory. Before humans settled the region, the wilds of the southern forests in the national park and the fertile earth within in the valley meant no Uratha lacked for game, and that hasn't changed much. Deer and other food only occasionally visit the open lands in the valley now, but there is still plenty to attract the Uratha to the untouched forests around the mountain.

Recently, life in Hood River has begun picking up speed. Tourists used to come in the summer to windsurf, and the townsfolk were more than happy to take their

money. Now, the windsurfers are moving in, finding niches in the area and economy where they can fit. With them comes progress, new ideas and people who don't know when they should shut up and go back inside.

Hood River is changing. New inhabitants call the police when creepy things happen, and when the authorities do nothing, the new folk complain. They're starting to affect others, too, people who grew up there but have begun to wonder why they put up with the strange things they do. Only Parkdale remains as it was, simply because the inhabitants there refuse to sell. Hood River Valley is in the middle of a social war: Parkdale is the headquarters of the old families and Hood River proper is a flat-out battleground.

Religion: Many of the people of Hood River are religious, but it is usually a quiet piety. Only members of the most evangelical organizations spend any effort trying to spread "the word" among the inhabitants of the town, most of whom are already entrenched in another belief. One facet of small town life is that, while there are significantly fewer people than there are in a city, religions still have proportional representation among the populace. They all want a place to worship, few of them want to share and none of them want to drive an hour on Sunday. So there are more than 50 churches in Hood River, supporting a population of little more than 5,000. A substantial number of the town's temples support no more than 25 to 50 members in their congregations.

Werewolves: Uratha of Hood River live, for the most part, up in Parkdale. It's the highest place available in the valley for a pack to live while still actually being in Hood River. Living in Parkdale gives them the best access to Mount Hood itself and the foothills around it, which feature many opportunities for lone-wolf or pack excursions through the wilderness or up onto the lonely, snowy slopes of the mountain itself. There are few roads that lead directly to Hood River, and setting up camp in Parkdale gives the werewolves the perfect vantage over the single public road that comes straight over the mountain.

Before the population invasion, staying hidden in Hood River was relatively easy for the Forsaken: they didn't. Sure, they didn't parade around in Gauru form, but they were visible and influential parts of their respective families. After all, Uratha have been here as long as any humans have, and Uratha are well-integrated into the few clans that have been there since time before time. In fact, Uratha *founded* most of those families, or at least co-opted their bloodlines. One of the local (werewolf) legends suggests that the old Uratha alphas set up the clan-like structure of some families to strengthen the werewolf blood. Whether that was out of pride or to defend the region against evil is a matter of debate.

Today, it's harder. The many new faces mean that fewer people are going to recognize the werewolves' faces or their societal authority, and more people are questioning "the way things are" and trying to change it. More

wonder why those howls seem so close, why they shouldn't let their cats out at night and why they can't build big, brand new houses up in the vintage wilderness around Parkdale.

Living in Parkdale can take some of the pressure off. A werewolf's more troublesome urges can be concealed within the many square miles of forests, or at least large pastures or farms. Acres and acres of apple or pear orchards also serve to hide a werewolf, if he's caught closer to town. And the community in Parkdale is even more tightly knit than that of Hood River. Those in Parkdale share the bond of living farther from town and growing up closer, spiritually, to one another than the people in Hood River whose homes were actually right next to one another. Parkdale is quieter than Hood River, and Parkdale keeps to Parkdale, making it even easier for the Forsaken to keep knowledge of their untoward activities from being spread to the town proper.

Trouble: Hood River has never been a hotbed of spiritual, physical or political strife. There are embers smoldering under the surface, sure, but generations of Forsaken have spent their lives keeping those fires banked. That's changing. Dark figures walk through town, disappearing before anyone gets close but leaving the unmistakable smell of sulfur in the air. Some orchards have poorer yields than they did 10 years ago, despite new farming techniques — some apples and pears grow rotten on the tree while appearing healthy.

Even the town's oldest inhabitants show signs of unease, and the old ways are being forgotten or ignored. More people than ever are willing to let a fire die in the hearth instead of dousing it with water, long held to be safer by the folk of Hood River. Only rarely does one see a token of ice left on the doorstep or welcome mat during hot nights.

And now, with the population on the rise due to boom instead of birth, the town is waking up. New ideas, new techniques, are seeping into Hood River's subconscious faster than ever before. People come in with modern business ideas and force the old inhabitants to upgrade or close down their stores. Hood River has changed almost overnight.

To the werewolves' great surprise, some people — new inhabitants and old inhabitants both — have begun lighting candles, or even torches, and leaving them on the doorstep at night. More people host bonfire parties with their friends, and the fire department is suspiciously easy-going about handing out permits. Orchardists use smudge pots, filled with a slow-burning concoction, to keep their trees warm at night and stave off frost, rather than letting the frost guide them. Some of the town's youths are flirting with arson.

This is wrong. The Uratha know that things shouldn't be this way, even though they aren't sure exactly why. Truths are slippery things and hard to grasp; only rumors and legends persist from the ancient times to guide

the Forsaken of Hood River. They have to hunt down the secrets that their forebears failed to pass on, by interrogating the winds and forcing true words from the throats of self-styled harvest gods. And the Uratha simply must put a stop to the flames — even if the Forsaken don't know why.

MOVING HOOD RIVER

A small town such as Hood River is easy to uproot and put back down someplace else. Certainly, some of the aspects described above are locale-specific (the mountain, the rivers, windsurfing as a catalyst of urban development), but they are reducible to their core elements or simply removable. All that is really necessary for a small town with the same old secrets versus new minds ambience is a rural location where population has focused over the years (a town in the wheat fields in the American Midwest, anything away from the big cities in Canada, something bigger than a village in rural Britain, a fishing town in Mexico, etc.).

Give the town a quality that attracts a younger, fresher, louder crowd (the new jazz sound amidst the wheat fields, the best place for bungee jumping in Canada, a reputation for brilliant and daring restaurants in Scotland, the beginnings of a Cancun-style-reputation in the small Mexican town). Mix in a secret, something even the werewolves don't know too well and the town's old inhabitants know just enough of to say no more. Add a smaller community, somewhat separate from the core, for the werewolves to call their own, and it's set.

HOOD RIVER AND YOU (STARTING OUT)

Similar to many of the homes, orchards and other land in Hood River and Parkdale, this territory is one

most often bequeathed from an older pack to a younger. Usually, the pack in Hood River gathers a small group from those who experience the First Change nearby. Unsurprisingly, new werewolves are closely related to the members of the pack itself. As the dominant pack grows older over the decades, it handpicks the werewolves the pack feels can respect the land, the people and their secrets in the right way. Most often, the pack's choices are native to Hood River, Parkdale or a neighboring, equally rural township. Hood River's guardians shape the prospects for several years, then give them a small territory to help them experience the sort of dedication necessary to maintain one's own territory.

What happens next depends on the senior and junior packs. Most transitions in power go smoothly, as is appropriate for a small and quiet town. The dominant pack passes its authority on to the chosen successors in a small ritual, handed down from the very first Uratha to claim the land.

The older werewolves sing
thanks and glory to
Luna and share
final words
of wisdom
— sometimes
nothing
more than



words of affection, but occasionally important messages that they had been putting off. Then the young Forsaken thank Father Wolf for his legacy, and perform the duty of his first children. Blood of the old pack moistens the ground, making it spiritually and physically fertile for the new pack's reign. This ritual occurs in the same place every 30 to 50 years, depending on the Ithaeur's interpretation of the omens.

To the townsfolk of Hood River and the people of Parkdale, the people who have been active in the community for decades disappear. People hear that they die, become reclusive or just move to Florida, whatever they'll believe. Their nephews and cousins, groomed for the opportunity, take their places in the Lions clubs and other quietly influential positions. To the oldest families, who know the truth in surprising numbers, it's just the changing of the guard.

Occasionally, the elder pack grows insular and reluctant to pass on the responsibility, sometimes even chasing off the younger pack the elder pack trained in a misplaced effort to eliminate their rivals. In this case, the younger pack performs the ritual themselves and spreads the old pack's blood by force. Once the blood is fertilizing the ground, everything progresses as if the elders had stuck to tradition.

Not all changes in authority are planned. Some young packs choose Hood River, instead of being chosen. Challenging the dominant werewolves in Hood River without being prepared for the position isn't an easy task in such a small community. Challengers may be able to blood the town's champions and claim the territory, but the townsfolk won't recognize the challengers' authority, even in the subtle way most mortals recognize the Uratha. To truly rule Hood River, a pack must win it socially, integrating itself into the community and earning a reputation of respect and trust. This isn't impossible; new "families" move to town now and again and, if they stay, eventually become permanent fixtures. It isn't uncommon (it's actually almost unavoidable) for a newcomer to seal her bond with the town by marrying into one of the bloodlines that's been in the region for generations.

When it becomes evident to the pack holding Hood River that their Forsaken rivals are triumphant, the old Uratha accept that they are to pass the territory on to this group. The old Uratha surrender and, surprisingly earnestly, teach the new pack what it must know about the land, and then perform the ritual. Sometimes, one member of the old pack (usually the Cahalith) stays with the new masters of Hood River to continue teaching before completing the ritual with his death. Of course, not *all* packs are so accepting, but most understand that they must protect the town, remaining true to their territory to the end.

Traditionally, the pack that holds Hood River is composed of Iron Masters, though their tribemates in Portland or Seattle tend to call them "Iron Masters in Darkness" for

their choice of rural locale. While it is true that any pack to hold Hood River must have a love for the wild, the Iron Masters have the most respect for the local humans' way of life. In this case, the region's inhabitants prefer quiet, relative solitude and comfortable aversion to change, and Iron Masters have followed that path for generations.

Not every pack to claim Hood River is made up of Iron Masters. Though that's the familial tradition, more than one young Hood River pack has chosen another tribe and still proven worthy of the responsibility. Blood Talons may choose the territory, because it represents one of the longest, most eternal fights there is. Bone Shadows may come because not all spirits in the valley are restful and sweet. When Hunters in Darkness take the town, they ignore the small downtown and live in the wilds and in Parkdale, only interfering in politics as it affects them. Storm Lords might choose to hunt there, but there are no powerful storms in Hood River — only moderate rains and snows — so to settle there might be considered a weakness. Besides, there is little there in the way of real power.

FEATURES AND ADVANTAGES

Werewolves desire Hood River as a territory for a number of reasons. Its population is low enough that a single pack can control both the town proper and most, if not all, of the county's surrounding countryside. The town is well-situated: set in a valley, backed by a mountain and fronted by a river, only Interstate 84, a couple of local roads that go over and around Mount Hood and the bridge from Washington provide easy access to the area, limiting its mortal growth potential and making surveillance of these access points a relatively simple matter. This setup won't keep out anyone skilled at traveling through the wilds, as any pack that's going to successfully defend the territory must be aware.

Still, patrolling the territory's boundaries provides an excellent opportunity for the dominant pack to don wolf form and feed itself, hunting on the move. The return to nature and opportunity for a Forsaken to maintain balance is incredibly alluring to those Uratha who don't need the comforts and amenities of city life. The quality of the hunt is even enviable in some areas.

Hood River werewolves can keep abreast of the news, even if they avoid making any themselves. The same winds that draw windsurfers bring spirits of wind many leagues from the east and west. Werewolves who want to can get information from them about what's going on from anywhere along the Columbia River and often several miles inland, as well.

Loci aren't any more common than usual, but there are a couple of note. Two of the regular meeting places for the town's Lions clubs have, over the decades, become host to minor loci, resonating with dedication and sacrifice. One is the major church in Parkdale, the other is a small church in Odell (a tiny community on the highway

from Hood River to Parkdale). The Charburger, a local restaurant with a private room that two different Lions clubs share for their meetings, contains a stronger locus of the same type. There are an indeterminate number of additional loci, almost always very weak, among the county's many orchards that are resonant with growth or fruitful harvest. A new locus, resonant with the Essence of recreational exertion and sport, is gaining strength on the Hook, a thin promontory where many windsurfers begin and end their days on the river.

Though there are few wealthy individuals in Hood River, the town doesn't want for money. Because Oregon presently has no sales tax, the bridge to Washington brings people across the river to spend and save their money in Hood River. There's enough flow here, somewhat encouraged by the dominant packs (and moderated by the bridge's toll) to keep the town financially stable.

Really, the feature of the territory that keeps the Uratha there is need and tradition. Something sleeps beneath the surface here, and it is important that that thing stays asleep. That's the biggest reason that, just as the town's mortal inhabitants, werewolves from Hood River rarely leave the town for long.

SAMPLE PERSONAE

Hood River is a small town, with few real foci. One is the fruit industry, as the orchards produce such a large fraction of the inhabitants' overall income. Another is the fast-growing windsurfing set; although windsurfing is leaving the realm of pure hobby and becoming more than simply tourism, boardheads don't yet exert any real influence except as an undirected economic force. School is the last. There are many children in Hood River, and a lot of energy goes into their teachings.

- **Gary Forbes**, Teacher (Ret.)

Gary, originally known as "Mr. Forbes" to most of Hood River, has had the opportunity to address three-quarters of the town's inhabitants from the powerful side of a desk. Moreover, the grades he gave their performances in his class are still on their permanent records at Hood River Valley High School. He exercises his influence through the vast number of people he knows well, and his influence is stronger because of his lingering authority.

Of middling height, growing out his grayed beard (but losing it from his head) and with an older man's potbelly, Gary doesn't cut an imposing figure until he speaks. An acerbic sense of humor, which he applied even to his students in the classroom, is the most notable aspect of his personality. He rarely appears to take anything seriously, but his years as a teacher made him a very strong judge of character. People eventually acclimatize to his habitual rough jokes and jibes, but not before their reactions give Forbes a decent mental picture of their characters and how to push their buttons.

Shortly after his retirement from teaching, Gary Forbes ran for the influential local office of port commis-

sioner. The strong threads that tie him to so many within the community helped him unseat the incumbent, and he's using his new power to slow the town's economic and population boom. Gary is one of Hood River's old guard; he knows enough to know that it should be a secret. A pack friendly to the status quo will have a great ally if the packmembers can befriend him — and if they can keep the man who was probably their old teacher from exercising his influence on them.

- **Anya Colby**, Superintendent of Schools

To the children in Hood River Valley, she's the person who decides whether or not to cancel school because of the weather. Unfortunately for them, she's from Minnesota, and the weather of northern Oregon doesn't impress her much. Especially since all the buses are equipped with tire chains, her most common response to a heavy snow is an hour delay so the drivers have time to put the chains on. Only the adults of Hood River see the battles Anya fights for funding in the schools, equity among students, advanced programs in all areas and — most ardently — freedom of information. Attempts to ban books from the school libraries bump into her immovable and resounding rebuffs, and even old restrictions on classes and texts are beginning to crumble before her assaults.

Anya is a warm woman, comfortable with herself and the people around her in most circumstances. She's not afraid to discuss the state of the county's educational system or her stands on any given policy, and she defends herself in debate well. Tall and handsome (if not exactly beautiful), she keeps herself fit with regular workouts.

Obviously not "family," Mrs. Colby is distressingly perceptive and quite dedicated to the unhindered dissemination of information. She's already picked up on Hood River's undercurrents — she's lived there 10 years — but she hasn't quite put the pieces of the puzzle together. People are worried that once she does, she won't be quite as respectful of the need for silence and privacy. If they're right, she could upset the balance that Hood River has kept for hundreds of years. Keeping Anya from betraying the town's secrets is something the pack must eventually deal with, whether the werewolves choose to prevent her from learning the secrets in the first place or from spreading them later.

Currently, Colby is arguing with other local educational gurus over who is to be the new principal. The old one is moving out of the state, and some would like to see a more old-fashioned man take the position. Anya would rather choose someone a little more progressive. Until this matter is resolved, Anya Colby isn't likely to be looking more closely at anything less material than educators' resumes.

- **Fillmore Herz**, Owner of Herz Orchards

Herz Orchards is one of the largest orchards in the valley. With over 800 acres, there are only three other orchards as large or larger in the valley, and none with as many acres of pure Golden Delicious apples. Fillmore

is rightfully proud of his orchard, which he keeps trim and productive in its position between Hood River and Parkdale on Highway 35. Beyond being one of the largest and best-run orchards in town, Herz Orchard is also one of the oldest. Fillmore's thrice-great grandfather founded it in 1859, immediately after Oregon became recognized as a state.

People throughout the valley — and sometimes beyond — know that Herz apples grow larger and tastier than most Golden Delicious do, and Herz apples stay ripe longer before growing overripe. What people don't know is why. At the center of Fillmore's orchard, concealed by the hills of normal trees, is the first apple tree planted by the founder of Herz Orchards. Called the Heart Tree, this is the most powerful natural locus in Hood River Valley, and radiates fertile, bountiful Essence into the orchards around. Fillmore keeps the locus a secret, only allowing his full-time hands (cousins, all) to pick around it and tending the Heart Tree himself. The small, red apples that flower on the large, gnarled tree are delicious beyond compare, and Fillmore's wife Marjorie uses them annually to win Best of Show at the county fair with various apple-based confections. The fact that she doesn't use Golden Delicious for her baked goods raises some questions, but no real suspicions come of it.

Fillmore stands about six feet, and has the browned, leathery skin of someone who does a lot of work outside. He usually wears a Gosley-Fords Fruit baseball cap over his dirty blond hair and blue eyes, along with jeans and a T-shirt. He's friendly with his friends and terse with everyone else. A stranger asking to see the orchard earns herself a cold reception, but a friend or family could probably wrangle a tour. The Herzes have been in Hood River since before it was chartered, and Fillmore has roots spreading throughout the valley. Fillmore and most of his cousins are wolf-blooded, some from an ancestor generations back and others from an immediate parent or grandparent. Fillmore is grandson to one of the Forsaken who once called Hood River her territory. Though he doesn't know many secrets of the Uratha, he knows they exist. Members of his family have been the locus' caretakers for generations now, and they've always done a good job.

What even Fillmore's cousins, who see the Heart Tree and tend the trees around it, don't know is what Fillmore does at night. Each month, at the new moon, he opens a swine's throat over the tree's roots. Taught the ritual by his father, the owners of Herz Orchards forgot long ago the black spirit that the blood feeds. This spirit, of unknown orientation, cannot help but guard the tree as long as it is fed every month.

Uratha of Hood River, who certainly discover the spirit after a short time in the territory, have so far been unable to determine what or why the spirit is. But, just as Fillmore performs the ritual because it gives him fertile trees, generations of Uratha have left the spirit alone because it guards the Heart Tree against other spirits but lets

the Forsaken drink of it. It is a mystery, but a convenient mystery.

Fillmore Herz and Herz Orchards are likely allies of the Uratha who call Hood River their territory, regardless of their orientation. They will, after all, probably be family, by marriage if not by blood. When the dominant pack grooms successors, a common test is to let the younger pack discover the truth of the Heart Tree for themselves, without any hints, and let them bang their heads against the unknowable spirit guardian for a while. This rite of passage is almost as old as the mystery itself.

• **Aaron Gosley**, Owner of Gosley-Fords Fruit

"There's nothing so satisfying as another sealed crate," says Aaron, probably because he sells every crate of apples or pears to markets across the West for a profit. He inherited the company from his father, Herman Gosley, who built it from the ground up. Beginning the company as a small packing business, Herman and his business partner Franklin Fords expanded it to include shipping services. After a little over 30 years of expansion, Gosley-Fords Fruit was one of the two largest packing/shipping companies in Hood River. Before Herman passed on, he bought Franklin's shares in the business so Herman could give the entire thing to his son. At the time, Fords' wife had just died, and because of his grief, Franklin did not resist the purchase.

Today, people generally agree that Aaron doesn't run the business as well as his father did. Herman was clever and good at making friends, with a shrewd business sense. Aaron, some say, is good at inheriting. That's a little cruel, though. He runs Gosley-Fords Fruit well enough to turn a decent profit, but, for the most part, he's just following the formulae developed by his sire. The company's current owner spends a lot of time following business trends, especially new ones, but everyone knows he doesn't have the acumen or nerves to actually follow up his prospects, be they good or bad ideas.

Aaron is neither tall nor short, but his shining black hair, dark green eyes and youthful face make him a dashing figure, even outside of the well-cut clothing he favors. He is able to make engaging small talk, but attempts at deeper conversation reveal his inner uncertainty. Aaron tries to take solid positions on various subjects, but any forceful personality insisting otherwise can fill him with doubt and set him to hemming and hawing. Since he isn't a very public figure, most of his associates are orchardists. Other of Hood River's inhabitants know him mostly for the mansion outside of town. Though the house would qualify as little more than a big house among the rich of a city, Aaron's mansion is still huge to the people of the valley, and most consider his house an excessive display of wealth.

What most don't realize is that, ever since he discovered the existence of werewolves in Hood River populace and history, Aaron Gosley has been trying to put them on his payroll. It cost him several easily affordable thousands

to pinpoint the members of the last dominant pack, but the packmembers always refused to work with (or for) him. Now that they've passed the buck on to the new pack, he's eager to make the offer again.

While no self-respecting werewolf would accept Mr. Gosley's offer, times are rough. Aaron's just waiting for the right disaster to make the pack need a lot of money, and badly. He's considering constructing one himself, but he's young and somewhat patient — he'd rather wait for a real one than borrow trouble before he needs to.

• **Sterling Fords**, Fruit Packer

When Franklin Fords sold his portion of Gosley-Fords Fruit to his partner, Franklin didn't spend much time negotiating the price. Aaron Gosley claims that's because his father offered a fair deal. Sterling Fords, Franklin's daughter, claims that Herman Gosley took advantage of her mother's death to make and close an obscenely poor offer for full ownership of the business. While Aaron Gosley builds his mansions and makes his investments, Sterling works as a fruit packer at Gosley-Fords' strongest competitors. Her inheritance was a pittance compared to Aaron's, and, while Aaron could retire comfortably, she barely has enough to build up a savings.

At 5'10", Sterling stands eye-to-eye with most men. She works with her blonde hair tied back in a ponytail, and her preferred flannel-and-jeans outfit leaves her with a typical farmer's tan. She is wiry but strong, thanks to working all day at filling and moving crates of fruit for the last 15 years. She's gruff and usually short, with strangers and friends alike. It's easy to get Sterling angry, especially by bringing up the mansion up Highway 35. The Fords lived in the valley a long time before the packing company formed, and Sterling has some wolf-blood in her. It's grown thin in most of her family, but the Forsaken spirit is still strong in her.

Sometimes, once drink has loosened her tongue, Sterling theorizes on how her mother came to die just as Franklin Gosley considered a proposal to buy out the plant. Her suspicions are unfounded and dismissed by her companions as ramblings, but there could be some truth to them. Though Sterling doesn't have any influence in Hood River to speak of, if someone could prove her story she could stand to gain a great deal. Conversely, Aaron Gosley could stand to lose a lot, and that may be a good way for the pack to threaten the richest man in Hood River into behaving.

• **Robert Owens**, President of the Parkdale Lions

The Lions exert a lot of influence in Hood River County. While part of that's been true for a few generations, a lot of their influence is due to the efforts of Robert Owens. A retired orchard owner, Owens joined his local Lions club at age 18. It was his great pleasure to work at their Sunday breakfasts, direct traffic at the county fairs as a fundraiser and participate in the organization's frequent eyeglass drives. As time passed, it became inevitable that he become the club's president, a position he has now held

for more than 15 years. Robert passed on the responsibility of managing the orchard to his son, so that Robert might have more time for the Lions. His influence among the Lions communities throughout Hood River County has grown considerably since he retired, and he talks with the leaders of the other Lions clubs almost every day.

Robert has the traits common to the Parkdale Owens: brown hair, blue eyes and a tall stature with a heavy build. He is jovial, outgoing and conscientious, all traits that earned him the position of president of the Lions club. Many people call him friend, and this wealth of contacts helps him start moving the many charitable projects he masterminds. The Owens are another family mixed with the blood of the Forsaken. Robert might not be aware of the legacy, but it's almost a certainty that some of his relatives are keeping the secret.

Learning that werewolves not only exist, but are among his blood, would throw Robert for a loop. He's always been too... material for anyone in the know to seriously discuss what underlies Hood River with him. Discovering that some of the "jokes and rumors" are actually true shocks him, and Robert, always open, straightforward and true, recoils from them and his family. To know that his family, his friends, people he's talked to and known all his life become wolves, and chase down deer in the forest by *hand* and *eat them raw* would greatly upset him.

Telling Robert the truth doesn't win the pack an ally. Unless the packmembers manage to somehow get Robert to accept them, whether through logic or shock, he resigns from the Lions club and leaves Hood River for Portland, where "at least the beasts are human." (If only he knew.) Robert's departure sends the Lions clubs and many other organizations in Hood River spiraling into disarray.

Robert wields a great deal of influence in Hood River, but that can't benefit the pack if he's gone. Especially if, as is likely, Robert discovers their existence in a time of crisis, it is in the pack's interest to settle him down and convince him to stay. The alternative causes distress throughout Parkdale and Hood River, inviting a bevy of negative-energy spirits unwelcome in the *best* of times.

• **Darlene Herz**, Clan Matriarch

Pronounced "Dar-leh-ney," Darlene was born an Owens in Parkdale in 1914. She, and Hood River, survived the Depression handily, since there's always a market for fruit, but times weren't easy. It was then that she picked up her sharp eye for seeing the truth in those around her. She helped a man get a good parcel of land for raising trees, crops and animals, and decided afterward to make him her husband because she could manage the farm better than he could. And every time he was apt to make an error, she told him he was wrong and made him fix it.

That's how Mrs. Herz approached her entire life: tell people what they ought to do and make sure they do it. Now that she's in her 90s, a widow with four children, 12 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, she has a whole brood at her command, willing to do as she says

because they're her descendants — and because she knows all of them and their secrets well enough to shame them onto her path. It hardly stops there, because she has strong (if not “good”) relations with most of the Herzes in the valley. She makes the smart ones nervous.

For a woman past 90, Darlene still has a good deal of meat on her bones. “In my youth,” she sometimes claims, “I was thin and pretty, but marriage changed that! I don't know how I wasn't thin as a rail doing all William's work for him, but I managed!” Her hair, white with age, obeys her as readily as her relatives, tied behind her in a bun. Her words are blunt but true, and she speaks her mind as often as not. When she deigns to give advice, she usually knows what's best. When around unfamiliar people, Darlene (called Mrs. Herz by many) keeps her mouth shut and her eyes open until she knows how to push the new person's buttons.

Darlene Herz has two secrets. Herzes are familiar enough with her habit of spending time outside feeding the birds. If asked, she claims it's just an old woman's habit and glares, as if daring the inquisitor to disbelieve her. Some of her cousins, however, swear they've seen her talking to the crows and ravens she feeds. But any time they whisper about finding a home for her, she always seems to know.

Second, Darlene doesn't want to die. Her son, who lives with her, sometimes hears her talking behind the closed door of her room. He doesn't understand whom she would address as being “blessed with a longer life than mine,” but then he has never had the nerve to ask her about it. The old dominant pack certainly knew what she wanted. It's only a question of time before she addresses their replacements, offering her loyalty and considerable influence for some method to extend her life.

And if they can't deliver, she may just find a source who can.

Though Darlene Herz *intends* to live forever, she knows that's not likely to happen. She's now in the process of grooming her replacement, one of her great-granddaughters now five years old. But even though that's taking a great deal of her time, she's also keeping an eye on the valley. She may focus on Parkdale, her extended family and their orchards, but she watches everything. And the stance she takes is always what's best for her Herz family.

PUSING THE BOUNDARIES

The territory of Hood River Valley has been stable for hundreds of years. The Uratha were there long before the United States came to claim the Oregon Territory for its European civilization. Even before the county's official borders were drawn on paper, the shape of the land guided the Forsaken in laying their own markings. Places where the boundaries are less clear cause the fewest fluctuations in the territory's long history. The region to the east and south of Mount Hood is sometimes part of the Hood River territory and sometimes part of the territory to the south.

Lost Lake, a popular tourist destination within the county lines, shifts between Hood River and the territory to the west. Strong packs make sure that Lost Lake and as much of the mountain's surroundings are theirs, weaker packs lose the areas, but neither pack lets the borders change much. Tradition usually binds them too greatly for them to do so.

Packs might choose to expand past these natural limitations for many reasons. Outside influences encroach too much on Hood River's way of life, inspiring the pack to move outward and seek to control these influences, or to bring the slower pace of life to towns around it. Dangers from nearby The Dalles go uncontrolled by the local pack, which is young and unblooded, and the Hood River pack expands its territory to tame the Shadow wilds and return their home to safety. Hood River Valley is, compared to much of the world, relatively safe, and the Uratha who live there decide the valley should be the jewel of a much larger territory. Progressive werewolves choose to encourage Hood River's expansion; the town needs room to grow, and nearby packs won't let it as long as they rule their territories. For any of these reasons or more, a pack may attempt to expand the territory.

Expanding South: A wolf with expansion in her eyes is sure to look southward. Though Mount Hood is tall, the lands there are not hard to cross for the Forsaken, and they are good lands for hunting. Forests of Douglas fir shelter many assorted creatures for hunting, and the trees hide the Uratha from most humans' eyes as well. Unfortunately, the Indian reservation to the near south is home to a family of fierce packs who, driven by their ancestors' mistreatment, brook no trespass on their territories or rights. Though these packs may quarrel amongst themselves, they always come together to fight foreign foes. Few packs from the Forsaken tribes would risk bringing all the werewolves of Warm Springs down on their heads.

Still, there is room enough for expansion into the Mount Hood National Forest, also to the south of Mount Hood but west, away from the reservation. There are two or three packs there, as well, but they do not have the same unity. In a time when one or more of the packs that roam there show weakness, an aggressive pack could take the national forest. It's worth noting that, at this point, a territory based in Hood River becomes of a size that most Forsaken packs could not keep the territory all safe, let alone keep it all from other desirous Uratha. Claiming a small section around Mount Hood and trying only to hold that would be wiser for a pack.

Expanding East: The Columbia River flows from the east, and where the river meanders the land around it is fertile and easy to travel, if not wide. Shortly to the east is the small town of Mosier, which usually has its own werewolf pack within the small community. The Uratha of Hood River and Mosier clash occasionally, but, historically, Mosier's pack has never been strong. The Mosier packmembers also disagree with the “old ways” policies

held by most of Parkdale's werewolf families. Mosier ends up being the "small territory" that Hood River's guardians give to their replacements for training; the pack claiming the town puts up a fight against the young upstarts when the pack can. Today, Bloody Thunder has the run of Mosier, and this pack is no exception to the rule. If the pack in Hood River has the strength — or makes Bloody Thunder believe it does — then the Mosier werewolves will put their tails between their legs after little more than a token fight.

Beyond Mosier is The Dalles. Built on less fertile ground than Hood River and with a less convenient crossing to Washington, The Dalles has never been as trouble-free. Economic difficulty is more common there, mostly a symptom of the town's larger population. Though still no more than a town, The Dalles has many of the problems of a full-grown city, and The Dalles' spirit realm is worse. The pack there, called Dark Moon Falling, fights valiantly to keep the town from worsening. To expand one's territory into or through The Dalles, a pack would have to defeat Dark Moon Falling, by no means an easy task alone, while fending off assaults from the many spirits in the *Hisil* that would take the opportunity to strike.

Asserting influence in The Dalles and claiming it as territory is a matter of giving Hood River more influence over the policies governing its neighbor. Politically, the two towns are in different counties, and there is little that the governance of one can do to affect the other. But a few crafted crises in The Dalles, solved by prominent members of the Hood River community, can lay the foundation for a dependence that would pull The Dalles under Hood River's guidance and into the Hood River territory. If the pull were sharp enough, it might pull all the land between, as well. Dark Moon Falling won't give the land up without a fight, but the pack won't leap toward one, either.

Moving south from the Columbia after moving east would not be easy, though after taking The Dalles it might seem a vacation. Tygh Valley and Dufur lie in that direction, each a town with a reasonable population and unreasonable werewolf packs. Since these towns don't sit on the river, a Hood River pack can depend only on traveling werewolves and the human news to learn what goes on there, and neither is dependable. The werewolves of Dufur and Tygh Valley may be strong, weak or gone. Or they may be Pure. The risk is clear, and a wise pack would wait to expand in that direction. Of course, a wise pack might know that one source of Hood River's purity and security is its insularity.

Expanding West: To the west of Hood River, following the Columbia River and Interstate 84, there is a great deal of rugged but lush terrain, almost free of humankind's touch. The only towns in that direction closer than 40 miles are small and on the river. Most of these towns do not have attendant Forsaken packs that claim territory, but one does. Cascade Locks, a community barely

large enough to warrant the single K-12 public school it has, serves as home to a bitter pack of Hunters in Darkness. The Rotten Leaf Steps, as the packmembers style themselves, wish only ill on the pack of Hood River, and the Rotten Leaf Steps werewolves will do all they can to prevent the Hood River pack from expanding its territory.

Inland, only loners and Uratha live. There is room enough in the wilderness west of Hood River and south of the Columbia for many werewolf packs to claim sizeable territories. Claiming additional territory in this region would not present any great challenge beyond defeating the pack that already holds it, but each additional victory would increase the Hood River territory more than any expansion to the east or south would, and each chunk of territory brings its own problems and dangers. Even after defeating only one or two packs, the conquerors would find that their territory had become unwieldy in size.

When expanding into this nearly uninhabited area, the distinct claims to territory hinge more on inter-pack combat than on scratching marks on stones or pissing on trees. Once the resident pack sniffs interlopers, most packs insist on direct challenge.

Expanding North: Every hunter, and the talented criminal, knows that scent does not keep on water. And a river as wide as the Columbia makes for a difficult swim, so wolves always tended to end their claims on the river's banks. That's still easiest today, but it's no longer necessary. Bridging the river between Oregon and Washington is one of the advantages that make Hood River so successful, and it gives the Uratha of Hood River Valley the opportunity to expand into Washington to the north.

Obstacles abound. First, immediately across the bridge is White Salmon, a small town with a backyard wilderness to rival Hood River's own and a strong, old pack to guard it. If that was not enough, inhabitants of Oregon and Washington have a measure of state identity. Neither state would take it kindly if the other began to annex additional land, and the werewolves who live there share some of that identity and that response. In short, an Oregon pack trying to conquer Washington soil is likely to cause the packs there to ignore their feuds in order to expel the intruders.

Trying to hold territory with only one thin link, the bridge, to the pack's home territory is another huge reason not to even try. A pack needs to protect its territory in order to keep it, and the pack must tread the territory if the werewolves want to protect it. Walking both the soil of Hood River and White Salmon in the same day costs money for the toll bridge, and keeping both safe over months or years adds up, especially if the werewolf crosses often. Aside from the monetary cost, the bridge then becomes a weakness. There's no place for one to walk it, so if a rival pack blocks traffic or, worse, destroys the bridge, the Hood River pack is neatly cut off from its Washington territory. There are other bridges, but they add an hour to the travel time. Only Uratha who know nothing — or

something special — would attempt to claim territory accessible only by bridge. For this reason most of all, the land to the north is left to its current claimants, at least by the pack in Hood River.

POTENTIAL THREATS

Idyllic as Hood River may look on the surface, no place on earth is truly safe. Dangers are everywhere, and cunning spirits want more than they deserve. The pack that claims Hood River may strive to keep it quiet, safe and unnoticed by the rest of the world, but there are dangers aplenty anyway.

WHERE ARE THE PURE?

Eternal enemies of the Forsaken implacable foes why aren't there Pure packs here to threaten (and hopefully kill) the dominant pack of Hood River?

In part it's theme: the threats to this territory are quieter but potentially more deadly than the Pure Pure Tribes can make the spirits rise up in revolt and assault their Forsaken cousins in both the spirit and physical worlds but the Pure Tribes can't simmer beneath the surface the way Mouth Under the Mountain can

It's also history: sometime in the last generation, the Ivory Claws managed to influence some of the youngest of Hood River's Uratha It was easier than the Pure could have hoped; the were wolves' connection to Parkdale through blood and repeated intermarriage had made them susceptible to the Claws' notions of purity in blood Once the dominant pack discovered the trouble — and had to kill several of its own kin who could not relinquish the foul ideas of the Pure — the pack rallied the nearby Forsaken in a massive hunt The Pure have not been seen within miles of Hood River since

Of course that doesn't mean they're not actually there

• Rotten Leaf Steps, Hunters in Darkness Pack

Once, this pack claimed the territory known as Hood River. That was some years ago, now, and it is a mystery how these packmembers came to possess that territory in the first place. Some whisper that Rotten Leaf Steps interrupted the generational progression, by successfully challenging the dominant pack and running off the pack-in-training to take it. Others hint that the Rotten Leaf Steps were the rightful inheritors until the previous dominant pack drove them off. The wolves of Rotten Leaf Steps speak little of these things, but they are vocal enough about having once possessed Hood River. And their enmity for any pack that holds it today is also clear.

Hood River may not be prime territory, but it is silently mighty enough for any Forsaken to want it.

Rotten Leaf Steps now resides in Cascade Locks, about 15 miles west of Hood River along Interstate 84 and just a few miles outside the Hood River territory. The packmembers hold a territory 20 miles square, a few miles along the road and several into the wilderness away from the river. It's hard for them to keep much more. The Uratha could expand westward, leaving their marks in the small towns until they near Troutdale, with its own pack, but doing so would consume their attention and efforts voraciously. Not only would they probably lose their grounds away from the river to the packs that live only in that region, stretching their territory in such a way would also take them away from Hood River, the object of their hate and desire.

The Forsaken of this pack become a threat when they think they could take Hood River back. They constantly watch for a weakness in the pack that holds the territory. Once the Rotten Leaf Steps does, there's nothing for it but to go on the offense. Rotten Leaf Steps wants nothing so much as to once again call Hood River its own, and the packmembers will take advantage of any opportunity. If the dominant pack begins expansion in any direction but west, Rotten Leaf Steps will silently tread into Hood River as the pack steps out. When the pack returns from a mighty battle or cleansing of the Shadow Realm, Rotten Leaf Steps will take the chance to face the dominant pack down and run those packmembers out. Worst, Rotten Leaf Steps is just waiting for a new, young pack to be given the territory so that Rotten Leaf Steps can hastily evict the younger pack and claim what was once this pack's. When the players' werewolves take this territory (or begin the game with it, or get distracted by a spirit uprising or Pure attacks), this jealous pack may see its opening and make a move.

Gilbert Owens (Iryaka): Of the Parkdale Owens clan, Gilbert was always a sharp young man. Sharp enough, in fact, that he earned a scholarship to the University of Washington. There, he experienced his First Change and would have invalidated his scholarship were it not for a few local elders who told him what was going on. He was also smart enough to figure out, from what he saw around him as a youth and what he had learned now, the secret of his family back in Parkdale.

In Washington, he joined the tribe of Hunters in Darkness, celebrating his enjoyment of surviving in the wilderness through his wits alone, and he gathered about him a pack of like-minded Uratha new from their Changes. As their alpha, he led them to Hood River, anticipating being welcomed home by his family and his new brethren.

No one's sure what actually happened. His family may have given Gilbert the territory, only for him to lose it to another pack, or Gilbert may have taken the territory without the old pack's blessing and then lost the land, either to that pack or its chosen successors. Anyone who

was there isn't talking, and the humans who were around don't remember any trouble either. Whether Rotten Leaf Steps ever held the territory without question is unknown, though the packmembers insist they did. Regardless, Gilbert and his companions were eventually exiled to Cascade Locks.

Like his cousin Robert, Gilbert is tall, with a heavy build, brown hair and blue eyes. He dresses in the blue jeans and T-shirt of an orchardist, too. His muscle has less tone that it appears, however; Gilbert would rather convince someone than fight him, and he'd plan an ambush rather than an open challenge. His sharp wits, combined with his bitter nature, give him cause to speak sharply to those around him — unless he wants something. In the end, Gilbert wants nothing more than the territory his family should have passed on to him, and he means to have it.

Owl's Wing (Ithaeur): Born as Tanya Osk, Owl's Wing was never satisfied with the explanations her parents and teachers gave her for "how" and "why" of the world. Something more was behind it, she always felt, and it turned out that she was right. After her Change, she found her naturalist's love of the outdoors turned to mystical ends, and she finally began to feel as if the answers made sense. She named herself 'Owl's Wing' for wisdom and silence. Since joining Gilbert's pack, she has served as his temperance, common sense to protect him from his pure intelligence.

Owl's Wing is almost as tall as Gilbert, with long, dark hair hanging to her waist that matches her coffee skin and dark brown eyes. She speaks little to strangers, and then cryptically. Only with her packmates is she straightforward. Owl, as her packmates call her, usually wears a loose, earth-toned dress that she can separate and bind to each leg for easy movement through the woods or up mountains.

Mark Wing (Rahu): Short and clearly Asian, Mark doesn't look like anyone to fear. Unfortunately for people who underestimate him, Mark long ago embraced his wild side. He's a fierce warrior in Hishu or Dalu, launching himself at foes and not letting up until they fall. Mark prefers to fight in Dalu when he can't don his war form, because he enjoys the rush his instincts give him as he enters battle.

In conversation, Mark Wing likes to hang back and let Gilbert do the talking. Mark occasionally makes jokes or thinly disguised insults, usually referencing something that only the rest of his pack will understand. Mark dresses in jeans and shirts, like the youth of Cascade Locks, and likes to stare at people until they look away.

Cathy Admonton (Cahalith): A Washington native, just as the rest of the pack apart from Gilbert, the opportunity to join an age-old territory with a fairly steady record of succession — something quite rare among the Forsaken — excited her. There would be a wealth of history, unique howls and songs to learn, and she could

explore an Uratha family tree going back centuries. And she never got the chance, because they didn't keep the territory. If anything, she is more bitter than Gilbert about losing Hood River. She recognizes now that the werewolves of Hood River would probably never tell her the stories or sing for her the howls she wants to learn. All she can do from Cascade Locks is listen to the echoes over the hills, remember these unclear distortions and fume.

Cathy's of middling height and has blonde hair she lets hang down to her shoulders. She typically wears a shirt or blouse with her jeans or pants, and is pretty. She's very inquisitive, but her questions have a sour tone to them. She's also no longer entirely happy with Gilbert as alpha, but she isn't ready to leave and she can't challenge him. Instead, she picks at him with sarcasm.

• **Mouth-Under-the-Mountain**, Spirit in or of Mount Hood

Mount Hood is an old mountain in the Cascade Range. Everyone knows that. But not everyone knows that Mount Hood is also an active volcano. It hasn't erupted in a long time, to be sure, and studies suggest that, even should it spew lava, any danger would affect the south face of the mountain and Hood River Valley would be safe. These are, unfortunately, studies that do not account for the fickle nature of the spirit world.

Uratha understand more of the world's animist nature than those scientists ever will, and the Uratha know that there is something else beneath the snow-and-stone skin of Mount Hood. This is Mouth-Under-the-Mountain, an old spirit whose origins are known only to it, if it isn't too old to remember them either. Mouth-Under-the-Mountain is not overfond of the Forsaken, but showing proper obeisance and offering tribute can appease the spirit enough to suffer the presence of a werewolf on its slopes or even answer a question.

Mouth-Under-the-Mountain doesn't challenge or fight werewolves just for traversing its slopes, but it allows none to claim them. Uratha who stay too long on Mount Hood's slopes soon find that the trees and stones give them no shelter and the snow turns treacherous. Voicing respect for Mouth-Under-the-Mountain as one approaches and bringing gifts allows a werewolf to stay longer, though not any longer than a month at the most. The best gifts are those related to heat or fire. Coal, oil or other things that burn hot are good starts, hot peppers will sometimes do and hand-warmers are a good modern touch. A werewolf drops the tribute into a crevasse on the mountain, where the items seem to disappear. Sufficient respect can earn a werewolf the right to ask a single question of Mouth-Under-the-Mountain, though the werewolf should leave the mountain shortly after. Getting an answer wears out one's welcome. Questions are asked to and answers come from caves in the slope, which are sometimes steaming but always too small to explore.

Any local Forsaken knows that Mouth-Under-the-Mountain loves fire and heat, but they don't understand

how much, or why. Mouth-Under-the-Mountain gathers its supply of flammables in order to ignite Mount Hood once more, and the spirit is coming close to fulfilling its requirements. In the months preceding its eruption, Mouth-Under-the-Mountain begins giving ever-stranger answers to those who ask, and spirits surrounding Mount Hood become agitated, even afraid, and some flee the area for safer parts. Few, if any, are willing to share what they know with the Uratha for fear of reprisal. If the pack of Hood River is perceptive enough to note this threat, it falls to them to determine how it will affect their territory: adversely. The eruption will occur out all faces of the mountain, and will be larger and more fierce than the last time Mount Hood erupted: the eruption will set Hood River to ruins.

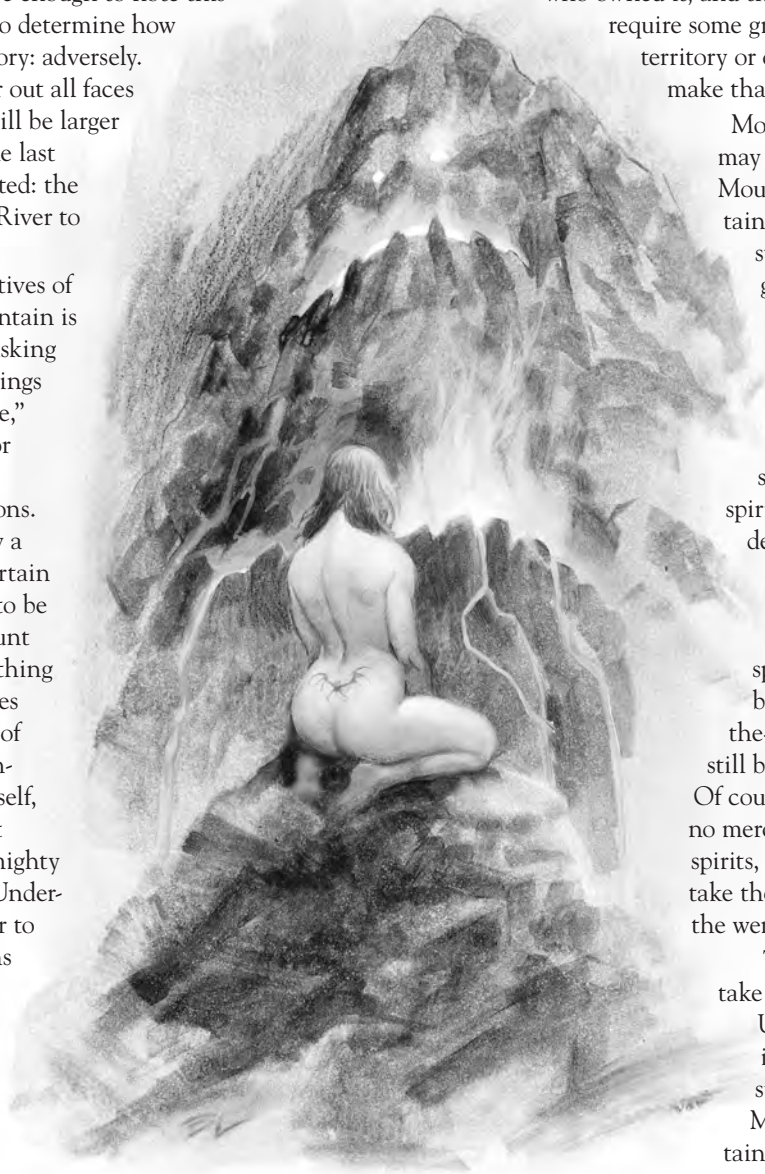
Discerning the motives of Mouth-Under-the-Mountain is not easy, especially by asking it directly. It may say things like, "Pregnancy is come," "The belly is overfull" or "Heat is warranted," in response to such questions. Oblique questions allow a werewolf to learn for certain that *something* is going to be released by or from Mount Hood. What that something actually is never becomes clear: Is it a child-spirit of great power? Is it Mouth-Under-the-Mountain itself, and what exactly is that — an *idigam*, or just a mighty spirit? Or does Mouth-Under-the-Mountain only refer to the lava the spirit means to spit out? As the time draws near, finding spirits in the area willing to talk about what will happen becomes more and more difficult. All those not sworn to Mouth-Under-the-Mountain have already left the area, which suggests a spiritual effect in addition to the merely physical eruption.

There are a few ways to slow or stop the eruption and accompanying event. Cold things, such as ice, dry ice, water or endothermic chemical reactions can be thrown into the mouths around the mountain, previously used to give hot things in tribute. Each item thrown in buys the werewolves anywhere from a few minutes to a half-hour,

but the mouths move, or cease to be effective. Shortly after throwing in something cold, the small hole ceases to emit steam, and throwing items in only fills the hole. If a truly vast source of cold — something that absorbs a prodigious amount of heat — is sacrificed to the mountain, the entire process might cease. Such a thing would have to be magical in some way, a powerful fetish devoted to surviving hot climes or the spirit of a glacier, for example. The first would be a great sacrifice for the werewolf who owned it, and the second would surely require some great gift to the spirit's territory or court in order for it to make that sacrifice.

More directly, the Forsaken may be able to learn that Mouth-Under-the-Mountain needs its less-potent sworn spirits to reach its goal. Without them, the eruption could not be. The solution becomes clear: the werewolves must mow their way through the lesser servants of the great spirit beneath Mount Hood, destroying as many of them as the pack can. It would be kinder to force the spirits to leave and spare them, but they are bound to Mouth-Under-the-Mountain and could still be used for its purpose. Of course, this method shows no mercy whatsoever for the spirits, and those that come to take their places will not thank the werewolves for the assault.

The last choice is to take the battle to Mouth-Under-the-Mountain. By interrogating one of its subordinates or by asking Mouth-Under-the-Mountain itself, Uratha can find an entrance to the spirit's chamber within Mount Hood. After crawling through miles of pitch black, damp tunnel, growing warmer with every foot, the werewolves step out onto a ledge of obsidian over a floor of red-hot stone. Here, at the heart of a mighty locus imbued with heat and explosive Essence, they can speak to Mouth-Under-the-Mountain directly. Its motives are still hard to discern, but it speaks more freely. Once in its presence, the pack can choose to combat Mouth-Under-the-Mountain directly or convince it not to detonate



the mountain. The spirit is strong, but not invincible, and it is stubborn, but not invincible.

• **Flowering Judgment**, Fertility-Spirit in Revolt

There are many fertility-spirits in Hood River, encouraging the land and trees to bear fruit and feeding off the results. Flowering Judgment is one of the stronger, feeding off most of the well-known Herz Orchards and commanding a small legion of weaker growth- and fruit-spirits. Flowering Judgment desires the Heart Tree, the only part of the orchard that the spirit is not allowed to touch. In order to get the Heart Tree, Flowering Judgment has been sowing dissension among fertility-spirits throughout the valley. They are kept from their right, Flowering Judgment claims, the most powerful source of sustenance for them in 100 miles. Were they allowed to consume its Essence, Flowering Judgment asserts, they could make the valley bloom with an unprecedented bounty, making the region even stronger and more fecund than ever. That the

Uratha families of Parkdale forbid the spirits to drink of the tree's Essence is an outrage, the spirit insists, and other spirits are beginning to believe its words.

Hood River's pack can, and a good pack should, pick up the mutterings of discontent before the spirits rise up in pure rebellion. Politics becomes the weapon of choice for keeping the anger from growing too great and eventually winning the spirits back to the werewolves' side. Or, at least, back into grudging complacency, as the spirits were before. But Flowering Judgment cannot be won over. It must be removed from its position of power or given a concession. It's willing to stop aggravating the other spirits only if it is allowed to draw Essence from the Heart Tree. (Flowering Judgment doesn't care about the other spirits.) How much and how often is a matter of negotiation. Flowering Judgment will eventually try to leverage that access into owning the Heart Tree outright, but the spirit is willing to be patient.

If the pack can't calm the spirits, the packmembers will be forced to defend the Heart Tree and Herz Orchards as the enraged spirits of the valley assault the locus to earn their "right." While the Forsaken may be victorious, the aftermath will still trouble them. Spirits foreign to Hood River will take the place of those that fall in battle, and the pack will have to make sure these new spirits know how things there work. Not all of them will be agreeable.



ALTERNATE INTENTIONS

What if Flowering Judgment is right? Maybe the Heart Tree and the way the Herz family keeps it alive and bounteous actually constricts the natural flow of Essence through the valley binding up much more of the Essence in the Herz Orchards than is healthy. In this case Flowering Judgment's cause is righteous and the spirit feels the responsibility to convince the Uratha of that fact — or move the other spirits of fertility to destroy the tree and free Hood River's potential.

• **Black Blood Guardian**, Enigma of the Heart Tree

In the spirit world, the Heart Tree appears vibrantly beautiful, shaming all the spirit-reflections of the trees around it. In the *Hisil*, the Heart Tree is always in bloom and bearing young and ripe fruit at the same time. To all appearances, the Heart Tree is a haven of life in the dangerous Shadow Realm.

Sadly, it is not so. Approaching the Tree close enough to touch awakens its guardian. Known only as the Black Blood Guardian, though angry spirits and curious were-

wolves call it all manner of names, it manifests by seeping out of the spirit earth around the Heart Tree, composed of the dark blood from 1,000 sacrifices. After several moments, the creature congeals into a vaguely human shape, blood constantly running down its body to pool around its feet and disappear.

The Black Blood Guardian speaks little. It warns off spirits that come too close (though few by now need that warning) and answers an Uratha's questions with a simple affirmative or negative — though the spirit never reveals anything about its nature, and it knows little about much besides the Heart Tree and its immediate environs.

The Black Blood Guardian must be quite powerful to guard the desirable locus against all of Hood River's spirits, but the spirit's Rank and strengths are unknown. It's been too long since any, spirit or otherwise, tested their strengths against it.

WANT THE TRUTH?

The nature of the mystery in Hood River proper is left purposefully vague so that Story tellers can tie the mystery to any of the threats presented here or one of their own design. Here are a couple of options:

- **Of Ice and Fire:** The small rituals of ice and water protected homesteads from admitting the spirit servants of Mouth Under the Mountain which would steal embers and coals and other hot things for their master. All the flames and burning in Hood River have only accelerated the mountain spirit's timeline. If the werewolves don't change things soon, the mountain will fill to capacity.

Should the eruption occur, it would herald the return of an *idigam* to the world. Loving of heat and fire, the *idigam* was bound beneath the snow and cold stone of Mount Hood along with a small minded but strong guardian spirit. The *idigam* corrupted its guardian, making Mouth Under the Mountain gather power until it had the strength to break the *idigam* free of its prison. Failing to stop the eruption could be the beginning of a new era in northern Oregon and southern Washington, and a new war.

If you don't want an *idigam* in your game but the pack fails to stop Mouth Under the

Mountain, make the threat the birth of a new spirit thing from the peak of Mount Hood. Made of stone and fire, the spirit-thing wanders the area mindlessly seeking flammables to consume. When destroyed, whether in the flesh or spirit, the spirit thing rises again after four days from the now open peak of Mount Hood. The pack must now face this new threat, even while helping Hood River recover from the aftermath of the eruption.

- **A Killing Frost:** Ages ago, the first Uratha to settle here made an arrangement with the spirit courts of wind: the wind spirits would blow the deadly ash of Mount Hood away from their territory, making one refuge in the otherwise inhospitable region, and the Uratha would sacrifice their blood at the command of certain omens outside either group's influence. As a result, what would become Hood River grew fertile and safe.

Generations later, when the volcano began to sleep and the area around it became more fecund than deadly, Hood River was even more so. Fertility spirits quickly grew mighty and arrogant. No longer sure what the pact (already old) with the winds comprised or willing to stop the sacrifices that protected them, the Forsaken made an effort to reduce the power of the fertility spirits by encouraging the frost and cold spirits — still an incredibly fertile place. Hood River was no longer about to be overrun by spirits that would rather kill the humans and let their nature spread unimpeded.

With the advent of modern growing techniques, the fertility spirits of Hood River are suddenly able to access more power than before. Once they realized the possibility, they (led by Flowering Judgment) began a whispering war to increase the bounty of the harvest and release the shackles on their power. Orchardists who defy the spirits find their trees turning weakly and growing rotten fruit. When the spirits have built their power base enough, they intend to wage an open war on the Forsaken and their pet humans, turning the valley into the spirits' playground.

Whether or not this fuels Mouth Under the Mountain enough to trigger its "birth" is a whole new can of worms.

THE FORESTED WILDERNESS

What is a forest? For some, a forest is a resource to be exploited, nothing more than a source of timber to fuel the growth of human industry. For others, a forest represents a natural heritage we must preserve, even if doing so might prove to be inconvenient. And for still others, a forest is a source of peace and recreation, a way to escape the trials and tribulations of modern life. In the World of Darkness, however, a forest is something altogether different. It reminds us of the world that used to be, and of the majesty and power the forest-spirits once claimed as their own. A forest is bursting with power, filled with the energies of life and death alike, and is humbling to behold. In the World of Darkness, the forest is alive. And it is watching. And it is waiting.

And it is unfriendly.

OVERVIEW

Wilderness territories are among the most primal and basic of those at a werewolf's disposal, and wilderness territories are also among the most difficult to understand. Most werewolves come from an urban upbringing, and as the world's wilderness areas continue to shrink as time goes by, it becomes more and more difficult for people to relate to the wilderness areas — even if those people happen to be werewolves. Wilderness territories should not be overlooked, however, for they are a source of great power. In the process of learning to understand the wilderness, a werewolf learns to understand himself, and that makes these sorts of territories immensely attractive.

For most people, the wilderness is a place outside. The wilderness is outside of their homes, beyond their neighborhoods, removed from their lives. For the most part, people don't live in the forest; it is too far removed from their sense of normal, and lacks the amenities they consider essential for basic survival. But this does not mean the forest is empty — far from it. People visit forests for all sorts of reasons, most of them centered around recreation. People come to the forest to hunt, fish, camp, hike and learn about the world they've left behind. They want to feel as though they are in touch with nature, so long as nature can't touch them back. In the World of Darkness, however, nature is often uncooperative; this is where the horror begins.

MAKING THE WILDERNESS HORRIFIC

One of the scarier aspects of the wilderness in general and forests in particular is the feelings of isolation they

engender in visitors. While getting away from the rat race of modern civilization on occasion can be nice, that very escape also cuts visitors off from their support networks; they can no longer call the police or the fire department in case of an emergency, and if one of the forest's more unpleasant denizens chooses to make a snack of them, there's precious little they can do about it. Forests can be particularly spooky in this regard, since they offer so many wonderful hiding places for would-be predators, whether real or imagined.

Forests are also scary because of their ambiguity; while the local Uratha pack might know the landscape well, to the casual visitor one tree looks just like any other. This makes getting lost painfully easy, which works in tandem with the feelings of isolation described above to create an atmosphere of great tension. Savvy Uratha can use this to their advantage, but even seasoned werewolves can find the ambiguity of a territory used against them — particularly if it's someone else's territory.

One of the scariest aspects of a forest, at least from an Uratha's perspective, is the fact that a forest simply doesn't operate according to the same rules as cities do. This is to be expected, of course; humans and their cities are, after all, relative newcomers to planet Earth, so it stands to reason that their way of doing things won't be the norm for spirits around the world. But, even still, an Uratha will find a forest's *Hisil* to be shocking if she doesn't know what to expect. She will find the spiritscape dominated by animalistic needs instead of human beliefs and concerns, and she will learn that loci develop and are nourished by the vigor of the forest instead of by the tremor of human emotions. The forest is the *Hisil* at its best and worst, and certainly at its most primal, and it will consume the unwary in an instant.

CUSTOMIZATION

When most people think about a natural setting, a forest is what immediately comes to mind. This is understandable, but what makes one forest different from another? Forests are not all the same, after all, and taking note of their distinctive features is important if one is to make the setting memorable and significant to the story. Perhaps more importantly, who says a wilderness area needs to be a forest? Deserts, plains and scrubland are becoming more and more common as the world's forests disappear, and these territories can be every bit as rewarding as a more traditional forest setting.

PHYSICAL TERRAIN

One of the easiest ways to customize a wilderness territory is via physical terrain. Physical features are easy to notice and remember, and they serve as excellent landmarks for navigation. Consider the following:

- **Rivers and Lakes:** Rivers form natural boundaries between territories, and tend to be focal points for activity within the territory. If a territory has a river within it, how is the river used? Who or what is affected by this use? Humans use rivers for transport, industry and recreation, while plants and animals use rivers as a water source and potentially as a means of escaping enemies. What does this mean for the pack that claims the territory as its own? Lakes are even more influential; depending on their size, they might be focal points for entire regions, with events in and around the lake affecting multiple Uratha packs.

- **Mountains and Hills:** Mountains and hills tend to make patrolling a territory difficult, since they reduce visibility and make navigation hazardous. By the same token, however, they also offer multiple hiding places from pursuers, and, therefore, can be quite defensible. Mountainous terrain tends to be sparsely populated, since it has to be modified a bit before humans can get any real use of out of it. If the pack is lucky, this might mean the territory is of little interest to other parties, but that is by no means a given; a mountainous region might prove to be popular as a ski resort, for instance, and human industry has no compunctions about leveling a hilly territory if doing so suits their purposes.

- **Caves:** Caves are easily one of the most distinctive features a territory can possess. While they are generally of little use to the local flora, animals of all sorts use caves for both shelter and privacy. For humans, they are sacred spaces, representing horror and comfort in equal measure; either way, caves give rise to loci easily, due both to the regularity of the caves' use and the intensity of the emotions associated with such use.

CULTURAL INFLUENCES

One of the most important questions to ask when designing a territory concerns the people who make use of the territory. Different cultures use forests in different ways, and it's important to keep this in mind when designing the territory. In the United States, for example, people use forests primarily for industry and recreation. By contrast, people in developing countries might use forests primarily for survival — the people hunt for meat instead of for recreation, harvest trees for warmth and for cooking instead of for timber and so on. This variation might exist even within a culture; Western hunters might value the forest for its recreational value, while Western industry cares more about the financial gains associated with timber harvest. As such, the local culture will have a heavy influence on how the territory is used, and this, in turn, will dramatically affect the pack.

LOCAL HISTORY

No matter the forest's current state, the forest probably wasn't always so. Who has been using it, and what have they done to it? Has it been subjected to natural disturbances of one sort or another, such as fires, storms or floods? Has it been designated a national forest or, perhaps more significantly, a national park? If so, that will have a big effect on the pack's freedom of movement within their new home.

WILDLIFE

What wildlife inhabits the forest? This can vary considerably from place to place, particularly where big mammals are concerned. Wolves, for example, can be found in Canada, Minnesota and a few other northern states, but are otherwise absent in the United States. Deer are plentiful in some areas and entirely absent in others; while the black bears of the eastern United States are of little concern, the great brown bears of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska are frightening, even by werewolf standards. A forest's fauna can have a big impact on the forest's overall health and viability, and the fauna will play a role in how the characters need to manage their territory.

VARIANT ECOTYPES

While the default territory described here is a forest, players need not be restricted to such if they would prefer something more exotic. Wilderness areas of all sorts have a great deal to offer a werewolf pack, and if deserts, coastlines or rolling plains are more palatable to the troupe, a Storyteller should feel free to adapt this material to a more desirable environment. Some of the characteristics of alternative landscapes are given below.

- **Deserts:** Seemingly hostile and unforgiving, deserts cover close to 20% of the Earth's landscape and occur where the rainfall is very low — typically less than 20 inches per year. People see deserts and think them barren wastelands, but a closer look reveals that they are instead filled with a surprisingly rugged diversity of life. The spirits that live in deserts are no different; vast and powerful, these beings are adaptation given form, and they tend to be among the most resourceful of all the *Hisil's* denizens. Humans who make the deserts their home gradually come to appreciate their stark beauty, even as the humans learn to live with the deserts' harsh and unforgiving natures.

- **Mountains:** From the rolling hills of the Appalachians to the mighty peaks of the Himalayas, mountains are some of the oldest and most awe-inspiring of all wilderness areas. The spirits here are proud and resilient, and there is nothing they cannot endure. Apart from the more noticeable features, mountainous regions are also noteworthy because of the impact they have on the world around them. Their mere presence affects the weather patterns and overall climate for entire continents. It stands to reason, then, that understanding mountains and the

spirits that guide them can tell a werewolf much about the world around him.

- **Oceans and Seas:** While it's difficult to imagine an Uratha pack claiming an ocean as a territory, werewolves can control gateways to that body of water, and the bounty they provide. The most interesting and dynamic parts of an ocean lie along the continental coastlines, and this is where humans — and quite possibly werewolves — interact with the sea. Coastal-spirits are vibrant and dynamic, representing the food stocks the sea provides and the tempestuous nature of the ever-changing coastline. These are the spirits the Uratha know, but these spirits are not alone; farther out, in the middle of the deep blue sea, there are older spirits, spirits that are mysterious and cruel. What secrets might they hold, and how might the Uratha benefit from those secrets?

- **Old Growth Forest:** Old growth forest is very old, and because of this, its spirits are very powerful. This is forest that has remained relatively untouched by modern civilization, and is becoming rarer and rarer in the modern era. Old growth forest is teeming with life, and, left to its own devices, this forest offers a stable ecosystem for wildlife and spirits alike. Unfortunately, such forests are rarely left to their own devices; human influences often prove to be disruptive, and this means the forests' ecology either suffers or, in extreme cases, breaks down entirely. Old growth forest take centuries to fully mature, and because of this, such forests take a long time to recover once disturbed.

- **Grasslands:** More than any other region, grasslands are classic wolf country. They run thick with prey, offer ample cover and cover huge swaths of land. Perhaps more importantly, grasslands recover quickly from disturbances — wildfires are relatively common, as are thunderstorms and every sort of foul weather imaginable. The spirits of grasslands are among the more approachable from an Uratha viewpoint, as the spirits' dynamism leaves them open to exploring new ways of doing things. This does not mean these spirits are friendly, however; indeed, they are capricious and unpredictable, and often demand much in return for their services. But grasslands-spirits, nonetheless, have much to offer, so long as they are approached correctly.

- **Rainforest:** Easily the richest and most diverse biomes on the planet, tropical rainforests are also among the most vulnerable. Uratha prize them as territories due to the fact that they are essentially vast repositories of spiritual knowledge; virtually everything in the spirit realm can be found in a rainforest's *Hisil*, and it's easily accessible to anyone who knows where to look. Unfortunately, such rainforests are both uncommon to begin with and critically endangered; human conflict and expansion threaten the tropical rainforests' very existence, and this makes holding territories in rainforest regions extremely difficult.

Temperate rainforests are another matter. They are even rarer than the tropical variety, but are preferred as territories since they are primarily located in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia — they are, in essence, ancient, primeval, powerful territories located within spitting distance of all of the niceties of modern civilization. For the werewolf who wants everything, a territory in temperate rainforest is all he can ask for and more.

- **Wetlands:** Easily dismissed as swamps and bogs, wetlands are much maligned but critically important terrestrial habitats. They control flooding, purify water, reduce the effects of erosion and wave action and serve as feeding grounds for all manner of birds and fish. Wetlands also have significant cultural value, providing recreation and literary inspiration for humans of all stripes. Small wonder, then, that wetlands' reflections in the *Hisil* often serve as waypoints for travelers and crossroads for information exchange. Small wonder, too, that wetlands are thick with spirits obsessed with secrets — either keeping them safe or hiding them from others.

STARTING OUT

Wilderness territories are attractive to werewolves for many reasons. To begin with, these territories exist largely outside of the bounds of human society, which means the werewolves can easily avoid the scrutiny of curious or intrusive humans. Apart from providing some much-needed privacy, this also allows the werewolves to go about their work without having to worry about triggering the Lunacy in nearby onlookers. Wilderness territories are popular for other reasons as well; they call to a werewolf's more primal instincts, and offer werewolves a terrifying clarity of purpose that is absent in more urbane settings. Wilderness areas are often battlegrounds in the Forsaken's war with the Pure, and thus offer ample opportunities to hone one's skills in battle. The wilderness offers plenty of food for the werewolf looking to maintain her Harmony, and the wilderness operates in ways completely divorced from the hectic lifestyles of the civilized world. Wildernesses are, to put it mildly, rather popular areas.

Of course, few werewolves are actually born in the wilderness. They are usually born in cities and towns just like everyone else, and this means they are generally accustomed to life in urban, or at least rural, areas. This means that the first challenge in claiming a wilderness territory lies in finding (or forming) a pack of like-minded individuals, people who want to escape to the wilderness and dedicate their lives to maintaining a territory there. This is no small task, no matter the rewards such a territory might offer.

BEQUEST

One of the simplest methods of obtaining a wilderness territory is to inherit it. Werewolves are not immortal, and they are as eager to pass their holdings to their



offspring as any human. Even Uratha with no biological kin might readily pass their territory to an up-and-coming pack that has managed to capture the Uratha's interest (the troupe, for example). No matter the method of inheritance, obtaining a territory in this manner carries with it a number of benefits and pitfalls.

To begin with, at least one member of the pack is likely familiar with the territory to a greater or lesser extent. He might have visited his uncle's cabin as a child, or spent summers in his family's hunting lodge or even just visited the place on holidays when getting together with family. The rest of the pack is not as lucky, of course, and even the newfound owner of the territory still needs to learn about the whys and wherefores of the territory's spiritscape. Still, the process is a bit easier than coming into the territory cold.

Of course, this sort of familiarity cuts both ways; just as the packmember is familiar with the territory, so, too, are the territory's other inhabitants — primarily spirits — likewise familiar with him. This might give the pack an advantage when claiming the territory, and it might not; either way, it's something the pack should consider before the packmembers get too carried away.

Another potential pitfall with territorial inheritance is, naturally, the baggage that comes with the territory. While this isn't as much of an issue as it might be in more urban territories, a piece of wilderness land might have all sorts of legal issues associated with it — conservation

easements, mortgages, debts and so on and so forth. While the story would certainly suffer if the game got too bogged down in the details of real life, throwing a complication or two of this sort in the players' direction can help to remind them that the human world is still an important factor in their lives, no matter how far removed they might be from the trappings of civilization.

CONFLICT

Most wilderness territories don't simply drop in a pack's collective lap. Instead, packs have to work for these territories, and hard, and that means building themselves up to the point where they can challenge a territory's owners for control of the place. These rivals might be members of the Pure, but, more often than not, they will be Forsaken (taking territory from the Pure is generally not a hot idea, given that doing so invites reprisals both from the vanquished pack and any allies they might be able to scare up). This means any challenges that come to pass will be as much political as physical, and this, in turn, means that gaining a territory can amount to a story in and of itself.

If the characters do decide to wrest the territory from the Pure, or if their challenge to a Forsaken pack becomes physical, they're in for a tough fight. This might seem odd at first, given that the battle will take place in, well, the wilderness. There are no potential witnesses, no innocent bystanders to worry about, no noisome police officers making a nuisance of themselves. Where is the difficulty? The answer lies in the fact that the current proprietors of the

territory know its spiritscape in ways the troupe does not, and said spiritscape is primal, hostile and difficult to navigate. Further, the troupe cannot scout the territory out as the characters would in a city, since they cannot hide behind the masses of humanity — the characters' foes will quickly learn of any scouting attempts, and that means that, when the time comes, the troupe will be fighting blind. This makes a direct assault very dangerous.

Fortunately, the pitfalls of taking a wilderness territory by force can be mitigated with a judicious amount of planning. If the pack can manage to woo a few local spirits to the pack's side, that will help matters enormously, and if the packmembers can draw their foes into battle on their terms (possibly even outside of the territory proper), the characters can partially negate the enemy pack's home field advantage. The troupe is in for a messy fight no matter what the characters do, but they can make it a winnable fight if they know their shit and have a fair bit of luck on their side.

STEWARDSHIP

Sometimes, owning a territory outright just isn't in the cards. This is particularly true with wilderness territories, since they are often areas controlled by local and/or regional governments. In this case, the characters have to settle for being unofficial stewards of the land, tending to the territory as best they can and doing their best to avoid official entanglements. Tending these sorts of territories can be exceptionally difficult; while it's true that possession really is nine-tenths of the law, the troupe will nonetheless have to manage the territory without upsetting the local spirits or humans or getting involved in annoying legal entanglements. This means that, in order to claim the territory, the characters will have to be every bit as clever, subversive and determined as they would be with an urban territory, since they will have just as many constraints binding their actions.

Making a stewardship claim on a territory is tricky, but not impossible. On the spiritual side of things, matters are simple; spirits rarely have a firm grasp of human laws and mores to begin with, and so they rarely give much thought to the legal status of their home. The human side of the equation is a bit trickier, as the characters will have to do some research to determine what sorts of things they can and cannot do in their new home. The characters might need permits to even visit the land to begin with, and they will certainly have more laws to deal with than they would in other sorts of wilderness territories.

Legal entanglements aside, setting up shop on someone else's land is not without its perks. First and foremost among them is the fact that the characters are not legally responsible for maintaining the territory — someone else gets to pay taxes, arrange for upkeep and do all the other things that go along with owning a territory. The characters are free to do whatever they want (so long as they don't rock the boat), and this gives them a sort of freedom that they wouldn't have in more traditional territories. The characters can never truly call the territory their

own, but if they work at it, they can do a good job maintaining the territory just the same.

FEATURES AND ADVANTAGES

Wilderness territories offer a staggering number of advantages to a pack, and many of these are quite subtle. Chief among these, of course, is privacy. Humans don't tend to inhabit the forest in any appreciable numbers, and that means an Uratha pack can go about its business relatively unmolested. No police will come chasing the packmembers at the first sign of trouble, and the supernatural competition for common resources (such as loci) is greatly reduced with the lack of those entities that rely on human camouflage. The packmembers really are the top predators in the wilderness, and that can be very empowering.

Apart from abundant privacy, wilderness territories may also offer a pack excellent hunting opportunities; indeed, good hunting is one of the primary reasons werewolves want wilderness territories to begin with. Good hunting is not, however, a given. Suburban territories that run thick with deer in the eastern United States are prime examples of good hunting territories, and the same is generally true for coastal territories (via fishing). Rainforests, on the other hand, are not great territories for hunting (this is particularly true if the prospective prey animals are endangered), and deserts are right out. Even otherwise idyllic hunting grounds might have low prey populations for some reason (an outbreak of disease, for example). Still, if properly managed, most wilderness territories can provide a modicum of good hunting during at least part of the year.

DEER POPULATIONS RUN AMOK!

Apart from hunting's role in maintaining a character's Harmony hunting in wilderness territories is also an essential part of territory maintenance. Since large predators are all but extinct in many developed regions of the world (particularly in the eastern United States and most of Europe) the herbivore populations in such regions rage out of control. Hungry deer eat everything in sight and in doing so retard forest growth, destroy critical habitat for other animals and eventually starve themselves into oblivion. Controlling the growth of these herds normally falls to civilian hunters and state and regional game control officers, but there's no reason a savvy werewolf pack can't work its way into the system and do its part to help. This results in a win-win situation for everyone: the humans have fewer herbivores to manage, the forests remain healthy and the werewolves gain a steady food supply. Even the deer benefit, as they receive a quick death at a werewolf's claws instead of the slow death of starvation.

WILDERNESS TOTEMS

If a werewolf pack wants a strong nature totem, the wilderness is the place to go. Big predator-spirits are all but gone, of course (this is particularly true with wolves, but less so with bears and mountain lions), but many other sorts of spirits exist in abundance. Snake-spirits are common, for example, and they are skilled in the healing arts. Tree-spirits are resilient (once you wake them up, at least). Fox-spirits are rare and difficult to bring to heel, but they teach extraordinary feats of cunning. Songbird-spirits know nothing of war, but they know more about the health of the forest than anyone. Mustelid-spirits (including weasels, ermines, otters, fishers, wolverines and so on) are savage fighters, and skilled at overcoming great obstacles. Even humble rodent-spirits have much to offer, as they know a thing or two about the territory's secret places.

The trick with wilderness-spirits, of course, is the fact that they are only comfortable in, well, the wilderness. If the pack travels to the city for some reason (and the pack will likely have ample reason to do so over the course of a chronicle), the spirit will feel weakened and generally out of sorts. The pack would thus be well-advised to keep its urban adventures to a minimum, and to make them short and sweet when they do come up.

LOCI

Wilderness loci differ from urban loci in many respects, chief among these being the nature of their formation. While urban loci form as a result of strong human emotion (or perhaps due to the actions of other supernaturals), wilderness loci form more often due to wholly naturalistic processes. This means wilderness loci form more slowly, since the needed Essence takes longer to accumulate, but they are every bit as potent and useful as their urban counterparts. General descriptions of a variety of wilderness loci are given below, as well as examples of each.

THE CAVE

This locus has been used by predators for quite some time, as it offers protection from the elements, easy access to several good hunting grounds and plenty of privacy. Perhaps a pack of wolves has used the cave as a den, or perhaps a bear uses it every winter to hibernate. Regardless, the cave has become a locus of primal emotions, and is thus appealing to werewolves.

The Bear Den

Rating: ●●●

Resonance: Security

Bears have used this cave as a den for many years, hiding themselves from the world during the winter and sheltering cubs here during the spring. This has continued for generations, and the bears that use the cave today are of the same line as those that began using the cave all those years ago. It radiates feelings of comfort and security,

and attracts spirits of the same type. The cave is present in the *Hisil*, and has been there long enough to form a Glade. Numerous bear-spirits defend the Glade from interlopers, and they are immune to the Glade's effects when doing so.

THE WATER HOLE

Everything has to drink sooner or later, and this makes water sources such as lakes and streams surprisingly strong reservoirs of spiritual power. Feelings of satisfaction and contentment abound, the end result of animals slaking their thirst, and, in some areas, the locus might even feel somewhat playful — a bear and her cubs might have spent the summer here, or perhaps a wolf pack chased ravens back and forth during the winter. Regardless, such loci tend to focus heavily on themes of rest and rejuvenation.

The Babbling Brook

Rating: ●

Resonance: Rest

This innocuous little brook sees an awful lot of activity, and because of this, the brook has accumulated enough spiritual energy to form a small locus. Animals of all sorts stop here to drink, rest for a short while and then move on. The spiritscape reflects this activity in an unusual fashion: any spirit may stop by to drink from the locus, but none may remain long enough to drain it. In game terms, spirits and werewolves alike may gain only one Essence from the locus, no matter how many successes they roll when making the attempt. They then feel an overwhelming urge to move on (they can spend a Willpower point to resist the urge, but there isn't much point).

THE MOUNTAIN PEAK

Mountain peaks are often home to powerful loci, though it is unclear how they grow in strength and power. They may gain power simply by enduring, and that they need no other explanation. The least of these are Rank 3 in power, while the strongest are Rank 5. Note that these loci are found only on mountain peaks; the mountains themselves are home to great power, but it is not focused enough to be usable as a locus.

The Alpine Meadow

Rating: ●●●●●

Resonance: Power

Easily one of the most powerful loci in the world, this mountain wilderness is resplendent in its glory. The surrounding mountain peaks are achingly beautiful, the skies are a rich azure hue and the animals themselves regal and magnificent. Even in the physical world, one can feel the raw power of the place, ensuring that this locus will be the crown jewel in the territory of anyone bold enough to claim it. Doing so will not be easy, however; a number of powerful Jagglings call the locus their own, and they have no intention of yielding it to anyone — much less an upstart pack of werewolves with entitlement issues — without one hell of a fight. On the upside, those Jagglings are

the only foes the werewolves will have to face; no other spirits dare set foot in the place, as the Jagglings would eat them for breakfast.

THE ANCIENT TREE

This is an unusual sort of locus, since it's stationary (as most loci are) and yet is centered on a living thing (meaning it has a spirit of its own). The spirit within the tree is awakened when it becomes a locus, and that means this particular fount of power cannot simply be claimed — the tree must be bargained with. To gain control of the locus and drink of its power, a spirit (or, as the case may be, a werewolf pack) must gain the tree-spirit's trust and goodwill. This is difficult even for spirits, and particularly so for werewolves. Happily, most ancient tree loci are powerful enough that they're well worth the bother.

Great Sequoia

Rating: ●●●●

Resonance: Wild

Great Sequoia is a spirit as well as a locus, and some say he's actually the first tree-spirit ever born. As the years rolled by and his power grew, he changed in form to become as the sequoias are, magnificent and tall. Since his locus is bound to a spirit instead of a place, his locus is highly protected, and thus not freely accessible. Many spirits would like to control him, of course, but when an Incarna says "no" there's not much you can do about it. Great Sequoia will share his Essence with those he deems worthy, but that's a fairly select bunch; fewer than a dozen spirits receive his blessing each generation, and, while Uratha packs have managed to gain his favor in the past, they are few and far between.

GREAT SEQUOIA

Great Sequoia was born with the first red wood and he has remained rooted in the ground ever since. That was a long time ago. He was ancient when humanity was a bunch of chattering apes and to him the Uratha are young punks who are generally beneath his notice. Uratha don't take kindly to that but well he's an Incarna so he doesn't really care. What he does care about is his forest. If the Uratha manage to impress him he'll at least deal with them. If they *really* manage to impress him he might even let them drink a bit of his locus' Essence. But that's unlikely.

Getting Great Sequoia's attention is a matter of patience and perseverance as well as unwavering dedication. A werewolf must prove to him that she *belongs* in his forest before he'll consider her worthy of his patronage and that will take a long, long time. There are no specific benchmarks in game terms but a healthy investment in Wisdom renown and Nature Gifts wouldn't hurt. Gaining the respect of the bulk of the forest's

spirits would also help matters along enormously. But the main factor is time. It takes time to earn an Incarna's trust and doing so in this case might be the capstone to a long and glorious chronicle.

Description: Great Sequoia is tall. Nobody's quite sure just how tall; his physical form is that of a giant sequoia tree but his spirit form — well nobody knows. He is very tall. He is also extremely powerful and impossibly old with gnarled branches and deep deep roots and a trunk the size of a house. Irritating him would be unwise.

Great Sequoia

Rank:

Attributes: Power ; Finesse ; Resistance

Willpower:

Essence: (max)

Initiative:

Defense:

Speed: (tree)

Size:

Corpus:

Influences: Forest ●●●●

Numina: Chorus Elemental Mastery Insight Mastery Material Vision Nature Mastery Reaching Weather Mastery Wilds Sense

- **Insight Mastery:** Great Sequoia can use all Insight Gifts as Numina. This Numen counts as two Numina for purposes of spirit creation and is available only to spirits of Rank or higher.

- **Nature Mastery:** Great Sequoia can use all Nature Gifts as Numina. This Numen counts as two Numina for purposes of spirit creation and is available only to spirits of Rank or higher.

HUMANS

One of the nice things about wilderness territories is the fact that people are, for the most part, relatively rare. The teeming throngs of the city are almost entirely absent in the wilderness, and even state-managed parks and forest only receive a fraction of a city's population in any given year. This makes the territory's human population relatively easy to manage, even if there are occasionally a few bad apples that desperately need pruning.

SPIRITUAL CONNECTIONS

In urban territories, spirits influence, and in turn are influenced by, the presence and actions of human beings. This influence is greatly reduced, if not entirely eliminated, in wilderness territories. The spirits there are much more primal, and often much simpler in the way they do things. This does not mean they are friendly, of course; indeed, if anything they are more hostile toward the Uratha than their urban kin, since these Uratha are

more likely to remember the way things “ought” to be. But their goals and desires are easier to understand, and this can make life much easier on a pack seeking to claim the territory as its own.

TERRAIN

While it’s true that many wilderness territories have great spiritual power to offer, it’s also true that that power is next to useless if it cannot be easily defended. Sometimes this amounts to natural defenses, such as rocky fortifications, shifting quagmires or tall trees that offer good vantage points. Just as often, however, a pack will look for the means to enhance the territory to suit the pack’s purposes. If the packmembers are free to build in and tinker with the territory as they see fit, the pack will naturally find the territory much more attractive. If such building would invite unwelcome scrutiny, however (as might be the case in a national forest or park), the pack may be forced to abandon it even if it is appealing for other reasons.

SAMPLE PERSONAE

Even a wilderness has residents, and an expanding pack will need to get to know them if the pack hopes to manage the territory effectively. These residents run the gamut from ordinary civilians to government employees to all manner of supernatural folk. Some examples are given below.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Government employees generally have a small but powerful presence in wilderness territories, and they are the ones who are most influential when it comes to a territory’s development. They often clash with local residents over land use issues, and, as a result, many locals have no love for the government and its interfering ways. This does not make such representatives bad people, naturally; they are simply stuck in the unenviable position of enforcing local and regional laws that might have been written by people who live far, far away.

Government employees are typically legal-minded people who are looking to manage, protect or otherwise administer a territory, and they often become embroiled in local controversies because their goals conflict with those of local residents. Examples include federal employees (such as members of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service), local/state employees (such as members of state departments of natural resources), park rangers (typically tied to the USDA Forest Service) and intermediaries working with native groups (such as officers in the Bureau of Indian Affairs).

OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS

In contrast to government employees, outdoor enthusiasts typically show more interest in enjoying the outdoors and less in worrying about public policy. The

problem is that different people enjoy the great outdoors in different ways, and this occasionally brings them into conflict with one another. Some people enjoy hiking and bird watching, while others enjoy extreme sports, hunting and outdoor recreation. Most of the time they can manage to get along, but sometimes their interests conflict — particularly once endangered species enter the mix.

Members of the troupe might have any number of opinions on these issues, but they’ll have to deal with tourists one way or the other no matter their personal beliefs. The pack will have to figure out who is using their land, how they’re using it and what that means for the *Hisil* and their own Uratha-related activities.

PERMANENT RESIDENTS

No matter where you go in the world, you can generally find someone living nearby. This is the inevitable result of large-scale human expansion, and the Uratha have to deal with it for better or worse. To this end, it would behoove a werewolf pack to learn as much as possible about the permanent residents living within their territory, as these individuals will typically have a much greater impact on the *Hisil* than any visitors could ever hope to manage.

Examples of permanent residents include the old man living in a cabin by the lake, the proprietor of the local market, the researcher who’s involved in a long-term study of the local wildlife and the park ranger who spends most of his waking hours maintaining the forest.

WOLF-BLOODS

In contrast to most territories, virtually anyone in a wilderness territory has the potential to be wolf-blooded. Whether they’re visitors or permanent residents, government employees or scientists or local proprietors, everyone in the territory is presumably there because something about the wilderness calls to them. The classic trope here is the park ranger, but that is only one among many. Think about the group of rock climbers who visits from the city every weekend to “get back to nature,” or the drifter who crashes in the trailer park and never quite gets around to moving on or the survival nut who thinks the government’s out to get him and turns his cabin into a fortified bunker. The possibilities are endless.

EXPANSION OPTIONS

Since wilderness territories tend to have fuzzy borders to begin with, expansion (or contraction) is a matter of course. Federal and state legislation changes (changing people’s ability to modify their properties), borders of national parks and forests are redrawn and parcels of land are bought up by NGOs or private individuals either for conservation or private, regulated use. Things change among werewolves as well; rivals increase their power, the Pure make trouble for everyone and the characters

themselves become better equipped to do their jobs. They may or may not have control over these sorts of changes; it depends on whether or not they own the territory outright, and how much influence they have over the people who use it.

SIMPLE EXPANSION

Sometimes, a pack has to start small just to get a handle on properly managing the local *Hisil*. If the characters are inexperienced, and have little influence in the worlds of humanity and the Forsaken, they can't expect to find and control an ideal territory right off the bat. But once they become more experienced, and learn how to properly manage spirits, werewolves and humans, the characters might well find that they can control larger and larger territories with no real loss in efficacy. Uratha are rarely given the luxury to expand on their own, but if the pack is lucky enough to have a wide territory open to them, then so much the better.

CONQUEST

While overt battles with the Pure are relatively rare, small skirmishes are another matter. As the characters begin to establish themselves as Uratha of note, the Pure will be an ever-present thorn in the characters' sides — one the characters will only tolerate for so long. If a Pure pack happens to share a border with the troupe's territory, the time will come when the troupe wants to silence the Pure once and for all. If the troupe manages to do so, the characters can add the Pure pack's territory to their own, and deal with all of the problems that entails. This can be a challenging task; the Pure's idea of a well-maintained spirit world differs markedly from that of the Forsaken, and the spirits may not like being forced to change their ways. By contrast, the human population might be accustomed to being battered and traumatized, and the influence of their fear on the *Hisil* might be a challenge even for veteran werewolves.

RIVALS

The median case between simple expansion and conflict with the Pure, gaining land via conflict with rivals is also the most likely scenario the troupe may encounter. As the characters gain influence within local Uratha society, they will gain the clout needed to challenge their rivals for bigger and bigger pieces of the territory pie. They will also gain the skills they need to make good on their territorial challenges. This can be problematic, however, if not handled carefully. First and foremost are simple legal concerns — you can't simply waltz onto somebody's property and steal it from them. Even in the wilderness, word will get around. And while eliminating a Pure pack might go relatively unnoticed, attempting the same on a Forsaken pack just isn't in the cards. This means seizing a rival's territory has to be handled legally, and very carefully; this in

turn makes the task a challenging endeavor. Fortunately, an expanded territory is usually worth it.

POTENTIAL THREATS

The typical forest is filled with potential threats, ranging from crazed or territorial spirits to rabid animals to human interlopers. Few forests will have all of these threats, of course, but a healthy sampling of the various possibilities is presented here to serve as inspiration to players and Storytellers alike.

FOREST-SPIRITS

There are many types of forest-spirits, and most of them are unfriendly. The spirits here are divided into two main categories: spirits of the land, which include both tree-spirits and more generic forest-spirits, and wildlife-spirits, which are consumed either with doing what their kind does or with taking vengeance on whatever happened to kill one of their ilk.

At one time, forest-spirits might have been... well, not benevolent, but certainly less openly hostile than they are now. Before humanity and its passions spiraled out of control, forest-spirits were disturbed only by age or the occasional natural disaster. With humanity's growth and development, however, these spirits are constantly under siege. Humans harvest them directly for timber and fuel wood, and, because of this, the forests and their way of life are shrinking dramatically as time goes by. The spirits are unhappy about this.

Direct consumption is the most direct cause of the forests' destruction, but is not alone in its effects. Since humans, in their infinite wisdom, decided to wage a war on predators in decades past, the herbivores the predators controlled — deer mostly — now overrun the forests, eating everything in sight. While deer are supposedly a part of nature, the truth of the matter is that the forest is not built to spec; if something goes wrong, the forest does not have a divine hand looking to set things right. And so the forests are harmed by humanity's shortsightedness as well as humanity's greed. They are unhappy about this as well.

FOREST LORDS (AUK DIR EN)

Forest Lords are powerful Jaggings that watch over and protect entire forests. Forest Lords are keenly aware of the goings-on within their domain, and are effectively a gestalt of the numerous tree-spirits within the forest, the animals that inhabit it and the land on which it rests. At one time, Forest Lords were much more powerful, but usually quiescent; they were content to slumber most of the time. As forests have shrunk in size in modern times, however, more and more tree-spirits have awoken. These, in turn, whether by accident or design, began to waken the Forest Lords of which the tree-spirits were a part. Some Forest Lords have fallen into a state of violent despair, and now pose a threat to anything that trespasses within their chosen woods.

Forest Lords are neither hostile nor benign; they are at once predatory and weak, beautiful and hideous, violent and calm. They are not capricious beings, mind, just... complicated. This complexity makes them extremely difficult to understand, and even canny Ithaeur must exercise great caution when dealing with Forest Lords.

Description: No two Forest Lords look alike. One might appear as a great stag, another as a wandering tree-spirit, and still another as a chimeric beast. Some have even appeared as human beings, typically from tribes that are strongly attuned to the forest and its inhabitants. No matter a Forest Lord's appearance, the Forest Lords has a powerful presence that commands respect.

Rank:

Attributes: Power ; Finesse ; Resistance

Willpower:

Essence: (max)

Initiative:

Defense:

Speed: (or f or highly mobile spirits)

Size: Variable

Corpus:

Influences: Forest ••••

Numina: Blast Call Water Discorporation Forest Communion Harrow Materialize Material Vision Nature's Vengeance Plant Growth Reaching Speak With Beasts Wilds Sense

- **Blast:** This manifests differently for each Forest Lord. A humanoid spirit might throw a spear while weather oriented spirits might let fly with bolts of lightning. If appropriate a Numen more appropriate for the spirit's form may be substituted for blast. A stag might have Furious Charge (described below) for instance while a wolf might have Death Grip. Chimeric spirits can have just about anything.

- **Call Water:** As the one dot Elemental Gift

- **Forest Communion:** As the three dot Nature Gift

- **Nature's Vengeance:** As the five-dot Nature Gift.

The Forest Lord need not roll to activate this Numen; doing so is automatic. If the spirit spends an extra Essence the Numen is treated as an exceptional success.

- **Plant Growth:** As the two dot Nature Gift

- **Speak With Beasts:** As the one dot Nature Gift

Note that more unusual wilderness spirits might have different arrays of Numina. The lord of a desert might have Weather Gifts for instance.

Ban: While Forest Lords must certainly have a ban the exact nature of said ban varies considerably from spirit to spirit, and is always difficult to discern. Some wonder if Forest Lords are banned from interacting productively with others but most agree that while it would fit the facts of their interactions reasonably well, such a ban would be... perverse at best.

BROKEN TOOTH (Z'IRA ZU)

Broken Tooth is a savage puma-spirit, spawned by victims of the war on predators that swept America during the early part of the 20th century. Every time a puma fell to a hunter's traps, Broken Tooth became a little bit stronger, to the point where it has now become a lesser Jaggling stalking what's left of North America's forests. It is a hungry spirit, but it pays no mind to other spirits, animals or even werewolves; only the blood of hunters can slake Broken Tooth's thirst, and these it pursues with awesome determination.

Broken Tooth is a spirit of violence, but he is not one that's likely to bother werewolves so long as they leave him alone. If they interfere with his hunts he will attack them, but otherwise he doesn't really care what they do. It's worth noting that he does make a distinction between those who kill for food and those who kill for sport/money; he won't attack Uratha who hunt their prey as wolves, but he will attack those who hunt using firearms, traps or the like.



While Broken Tooth is a North American spirit, similar spirits roam the wilds of Siberia (in the form of rabid wolves), Central Europe (speculation by those in the know indicates that the legendary Beast of Gevaudin might have been one such spirit) and Africa (though perhaps these are simply the ghosts of the infamous man-eaters Ghost and Darkness). All of them share similar statistics.

Description: Broken Tooth appears as a powerfully built mountain lion with a broken lower tooth. Its fur is mangy, and it often bears the scars of a hunter's traps: bullet holes, mangled paws from bear traps, contorted muscles as a result of exposure to strychnine and so on. It weighs in excess of 300 pounds.

Rank:

Attributes: Power ; Finesse ; Resistance

Willpower:

Essence: (max)

Initiative:

Defense:

Speed:

Size:

Corpus:

Influences: Wrath •••

Numina: Discorporation Harrow Materialize Material Vision Reaching

Ban: Despite its thirst for hunters' blood Broken Tooth cannot abide the blood of innocents. It will not attack a foe who has never killed another (though "another" in this case is interpreted fairly loosely)

HUNGRY-DEER-SPIRITS (STARVEDOES, SASUHA LULIM)

Legend holds that at one time, the greatest of deer-spirits were mighty stags that aided tribes of humans either in battle or during great hunts. Frequently, however, deer-spirits of a different sort have been manifesting — spirits of greed and gluttony. These spirits are especially common in the forests of the upper Midwest in the United States, but these spirits can be found in forests around the world.

Starvedoes rarely interact much with humans or other supernaturals, since these spirits are fed primarily by the multitudes of deer infesting modern forests. Starvedoes will fiercely protect the lives of deer under the spirits' influence, and will lash out at anything, human, animal or otherwise, that threatens a deer's life. Since these spirits also urge deer to consume as much as possible, Uratha typically view Starvedoes as pests that must be exterminated.

Description: Hungry-Deer-Spirits appear to be ordinary deer, but for one minor detail: they do not appear to have a stomach or intestines. Rather, their ribcage gives way to an empty hole, and, therefore, the spirits appear to be almost comically incomplete. Their appetites for foliage are endless, but every time they eat, the masticated food falls out of their torsos soon thereafter.

Rank:

Attributes: Power ; Finesse ; Resistance

Willpower:

Essence: (max)

Initiative:

Defense:

Speed:

Size:

Corpus:

Influences: Consumption •••

Numina: Discorporation Flight of the Stag Furious Charge Living Fetter (deer only) Materialize Material Vision Mighty Bound Wilds Sense

• **Flight of the Stag:** As the two dot Father Wolf Gift Father Wolf's Speed

• **Furious Charge:** By spending an Essence point the Hungry Deer Spirit doubles its damage on a successful charge attack. The Essence is spent before the attack is resolved and the Numen's effects last for one turn.

• **Mighty Bound:** As the two dot Strength Gift

Ban: The Hungry Deer Spirit must eat and it must eat continuously. While it may strike out at those who harm deer or to defend itself, it may engage in no other activities.

SENILE-BEAR-SPIRIT (OLD DULLFANG, LIFER LILTAHMSA)

There can be few fates worse in the world than losing one's mind. To know you were once vital and alive, capable of so much more than you are now — that is surely the height of despair. Sadly, such a fate is not limited to humans. Spirits occasionally experience such things as well, often as a result of some great trauma. Such is the case with the senile-bear-spirit.

At one time, this bear-spirit was like any other; it claimed a spirit Glade as its own, sought to consume other bear-spirits to increase its power and eventually hoped to inherit guardianship of a much larger Glade — the whole of its forest home. Unfortunately, such was not to be; thanks to a combination of human interference and untimely natural disasters, the spirit's Glade was completely destroyed, and the spirit's dreams of spiritual ascension permanently derailed. Madness is all that is left to it now.

Old Dullfang is hostile and unpredictable; it will lash out at anyone who approaches it, rending them to pieces with supernaturally potent claws. It cannot be appeased, for its dreams and desires are little more than ashes now. A sufficiently motivated Uratha pack might be able to bind it to a new spirit Glade, but even that is a challenge of heroic proportions; the bear's madness has consumed it utterly, making recovery all but impossible.

Rank:

Attributes: Power ; Finesse ; Resistance

Willpower:

Essence: (max)

Initiative:

Defense:

Speed:

“FERAL” URATHA

People in the wilderness don't tend to talk to one another much, and because of that, the few who happen to Change generally know little, if anything, about the Uratha (to say nothing of the Forsaken or the Pure). Naturally, this can make these newly Changed ripe for conversion, but unless a Forsaken or Pure pack happens to be in the area when the werewolf Changes, such a happy event is unlikely. Instead, the nascent werewolf has to navigate his new identity all by his lonesome, and that can lead to some rather peculiar Ghost Wolves.

Feral Uratha tend to keep to themselves, as is the norm for werewolves of all stripes. If the feral Uratha have been in the territory for a while when the troupe claims it, they might be well along on the road to madness, or they might have come to some accord with their werewolf natures and the newly discovered spirit world. Either way, they'll have their own ideas about how an Uratha “ought” to behave, and they might react strongly to the presence of an entire pack of werewolves in their territory.

Not surprisingly, feral Uratha are generally no match for a pack of Forsaken; Ghost Wolves have little understanding of the spirit world, and hence no real affinity with Gifts or other spirit resources. More importantly, these feral Uratha have no pack to call their own, and this means they lack the unity and strength that comes with a pack. This does not mean, however, that they do not represent a threat; the fact that they do not understand their true natures

means they know nothing of the Lunacy or the need for secrecy, and this means they might attract all sorts of unwanted attention (both for themselves and any other werewolves in the area). This in turn means that they have to be dealt with quickly and quietly, and doing this in a way that maintains a werewolf's Harmony might prove to be... difficult, at best.

GOVERNMENT AGENTS

Packs that claim wilderness territories have an advantage when it comes to dealing with the government, since its agencies are primarily concerned with policing human affairs — which, in turn, means the agencies focus most of their attention on cities and suburbs. This has changed somewhat in recent years, however; survivalist camps might be training camps for terrorists, after all, and, with the increasing technological sophistication of the world's

Size:

Corpus:

Influences: Madness ●●● (Note that applying its influences will generally be an unconscious act; the bear hasn't the wits to act with any real intent)

Numina: Death Grip Discorporation Forest Communion Harrow Materialize Material Vision Rage Armor Savage Rending Wilds Sense

- **Death Grip:** As the three dot Full Moon Gift
- **Forest Communion:** As the three dot Nature Gift This Numen is activated with a – penalty given the bear's current state
- **Rage Armor:** As the four dot Full Moon Gift
- **Savage Rending:** As the four dot Father Wolf Gift

Ban: The spirit's madness has effectively become its ban. Clarity of thought is denied Old Dullfang until someone manages to calm its insanity

governments, hiding bizarre activities from prying eyes is becoming increasing harder and harder.

Government agents might turn their eyes to the pack for any number of reasons. If the pack eliminated a human for some reason, the agents might show up to investigate. Alternately, the agents might be acting as proxies for more influential people who know, or at least suspect, that there are supernatural agencies at work in the area. Either way these sorts of agents will ask many questions, and they will not go away. Eliminating them will, naturally, raise even more questions, and create a nightmare the characters will be hardpressed to escape.

Government agents are a threat primarily because of the resources they can bring to bear when dealing with a problematic situation. Most don't know anything about the supernatural, of course, but some do — indeed, there might be shadow agencies running around explicitly dedicated to rooting out and dealing with supernatural threats. This means the Uratha do not have anonymity on their side, and that their hunters might be able to bring serious firepower to bear when bringing them down.

SURVIVALIST HUMANS

The wilderness has a habit of attracting humans who want little to do with human society, and, for the most part, these people are a non-issue. They may not be happy, law-abiding sorts, but they keep to themselves and mind their own business. Some, however, take it upon themselves to mount a pro-active program of self-defense, and that means neutralizing any potential threats before they have the opportunity to do harm. Naturally, werewolves count as one such potential threat.

Most of these self-styled survivalists operate alone, since getting away from other people was part of the reason survivalists entered the wilderness to begin with. These are no real threat to werewolves; between the Lunacy and a werewolf's supernatural toughness, the humans are little more than irritants. Sometimes, however, a number of individuals will band together, and this is when they start to become dangerous. Between sharing information (often of dubious accuracy), silver bullets and, perhaps most importantly, good ol' human ingenuity, a band of survivalists can be a real problem for a werewolf pack.

Their martial dangers aside, survivalists are dangerous for another reason: they tend to attract attention. While most authorities don't take survivalists seriously (writing them off as trigger-happy nutcases and the like), they can still catch the ear of tabloid journalists, government agencies that *do* take the supernatural seriously and even other supernatural threats, such as the Pure and the spirits they serve. This makes survivalists a threat the pack cannot ignore, and also means the pack has to deal with that threat in a timely fashion.

EARTHEN VENGEANCE

Earthen Vengeance is a pack of young Predator Kings, all of them possessed of a burning hatred for the modern world and all that it entails. Bound together by their extremist ideology, they have embarked on a crusade to undo the works of humanity in all their varied forms — one corrupt individual at a time. The impossibility of their task means nothing to these Predator Kings; they have been bathed in the fires of purity and righteousness, and nothing will sway them from their path.

Although they have enjoyed great success in their efforts so far, the pack's extremism has earned it few friends — even among the ranks of the Pure. While the packmembers' passion is admirable, their methods are so troublesome that few can bear to have them around for long; so it is that they hop from territory to territory, stirring up trouble in the spirit world even as they slay the humans that so offend them. The path they follow clearly will ultimately consume them, but, until it does, they will continue to bring havoc to the lives of all who encounter them.

Currently, the pack has taken refuge in a cave or a sheltered valley on the outskirts of the troupe's territory, and it is from here that the packmembers will begin to work their "magic" on the forest within. This work consists of awakening the spirits of the forest and sending them on a spiritual rampage, destroying the works of Man whenever possible and killing humans who have any association with modern civilization (which basically amounts to any humans they encounter). The packmembers will show particular interest in factories, timber mills, housing projects and anything else they feel is intruding upon the sanctity of the forest. This, naturally, includes other Uratha, who, of course, know nothing about properly managing a forest territory. The pack is bound together by The Antlered Devourer, a monstrous stag-spirit that feeds on the bodies of humans who have been buried alive.

GABRIEL WARD

Gabriel Ward is the charismatic alpha of Earthen Vengeance, and he is easily the most seasoned member of the pack. Before his Change, he was an environmental studies major at UC Berkeley, and even then he was unstable; he had unhealthy ties to fringe environmental groups, most of whom were more interested in acts of violence than in effecting any real change in the world. Once the Predator Kings recruited him and opened his eyes to the *real* history of the world, his crusader tendencies only intensified; he set out to scour humanity from the face of the planet, and recruited a number of violent Predator Kings fresh from initiation to aid him in his "work."

Gabriel's efforts to date have resulted in considerable loss of life, and untold amounts of property damage.

The human authorities are naturally quite interested in detaining both him and his pack, but thanks to the use of Gifts, rites and clever planning, he's managed to escape capture thus far (the fact that his pack interacts with human civilization as little as possible naturally helps a great deal). His luck may be running out, however; he's angered an awful lot of people, and many of them have supernatural allies. He may think he can do no wrong, but it's only a matter of time before his delusions slam into the brick wall of reality.

Tribe: Predator Kings

Mental Attributes: Intelligence Wits Resolve

Physical Attributes: Strength (/ / /) Dexterity (/ / /) Stamina (/ / /)

Social Attributes: Presence Manipulation (/ / /) Composure

Mental Skills: Academics (Environmental Studies) Oc
cult (The Hisil)

Physical Skills: Brawl Stealth Survival

Social Skills: Animal Ken Empathy Expression Per
suasion (Oratory) Subterfuge

Merits: Language (First Tongue) Totem

Primal Urge:

Willpower:

Harmony:

Max Essence/Per Turn: /

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Wrath

Health: (/ / /)

Initiative: (/ / /)

Defense: (/ / /)

Speed: (/ / /)

Renown: Glory Honor Purity

Gifts: () Speak With Beasts The Right Words Warning
Growl Wolf Blood's Lure; () Father Wolf's Speed Sand
in the Eyes

Rituals: ; **Rites:** () Rite of Dedication Shared Scent; ()
Call Gaffling, Cleansed Blood; (3) Wake the Spirit

THE CITY BLOCK

One of the most common Uratha territory types and certainly the most familiar, the urban city block is in many ways the archetype of modern werewolf territories. The city block offers a balanced mix of human and spiritual needs, and of the physical world and the *Hisil* they so greatly influence. Thus, the roleplaying opportunities the city block offers are nearly endless. But what is an urban territory, really? What is at stake when one is maintaining it? What rewards does it offer, and how might a savvy pack reap them?

ANATOMY OF A CITY

An urban werewolf's territory is influenced by a number of different factors, and the most important of these is location. Most cities are not uniform in their construction; they have areas dedicated to commercial enterprises, to industry and to living space, and werewolf territories will naturally vary considerably according to which area they happen to inhabit. Territories are also heavily influenced by local history; an old, rundown neighborhood will have a very different character from a recently renovated one, and this affects both the spiritscape and the general attitudes of the people living in each. Packs must understand both of these factors and how they interrelate if the packs are to make any sense of the territories at their disposal.

ZONING ISSUES

There are many sorts of urban zones in a typical modern city, and virtually all of them are suitable for werewolf territories of one sort or another. Some zones are industrial, and dedicated solely to manufacturing concerns. Some are commercial, and filled with businesses and the support structures that cater to them. Some are recreational, dedicated to parks and entertainment. Some are purely residential, seeking only to house the city's residents. And some zones are municipal, working to protect and manage the city and promote issues of interest to all. Understanding how these various zones interact, as well as how that interaction affects the people and spirits within a territory, is crucial if a pack hopes to manage a territory effectively.

INDUSTRIAL ZONES

A city's industrial sectors are dedicated to the manufacture of various goods, and may be subdivided into light, moderate or heavy industrial zones. These are the bread and butter of a city's economy; they may not be terribly flashy, but without them, the city would wither and die.

The industries involved vary considerably; they may be as simple as a paper mill or an automobile plant, or as sophisticated as a scientific research complex.

No matter their form, industrial zones are founts of creation; whether making paper or cars or scientific research, these zones are always dedicated to the creation of some end product. As a result, both the zones themselves and the *Hisil* they shape are unusually dynamic. Packs claiming a territory in such a zone will find that spirits of creation, transformation and growth dominate the area, and that nothing remains the same for long. While this is not a bad thing in and of itself, it can make managing a territory in such an area difficult, and it is something packs need to bear in mind when setting up shop.

COMMERCIAL ZONES

While industrial zones are dedicated to the manufacture of various goods, commercial zones are dedicated to buying, selling and moving such goods. This is where the bulk of the middle- and upper-class citizens of the city come to work each day, staffing restaurants, business offices, shopping malls and so on and so forth, and their drudgery leads to the tedium that defines much of modern existence in the Western world. Their work is so far removed from the actual creation and use of the goods they manage that they often feel disconnected, both from the world they live in and from one another. This, naturally, has implications for the spirit world.

The spirits of commerce are many and varied, but they are most commonly associated with feelings of greed, frustration or tedium. In most cases, this makes these spirits remarkably easy to deal with; they are so bored that simply piquing their curiosity or, in the worst case, bribing them is all one needs to do to ensure their compliance. This is not always the case, however; in some areas, particularly those associated with handling money and making important decisions, the spirits are as cutthroat and Darwinian as can be. Their ability to exert their influence in such areas is staggering, and even seasoned Uratha packs find them difficult to manage. It should come as no great surprise, then, to learn that werewolf territories in such dynamic commercial areas are extremely rare.

RECREATION ZONES

Recreational areas include city parks, stadiums, museums, concert halls and other areas of common public use. People visit such areas to rest and to have fun, and they are unique in the fact that people from all walks of

life interact freely while using them. No matter a person's background, he can enjoy a ballgame or an art exhibit just as much as anyone else, so recreational areas tend to be more dynamic and interesting than other zones.

The spirit world of recreational zones tends to be rather innocuous, since the spirits that accumulate there are more interested in having fun than in wreaking havoc. Still, they can be a rowdy bunch; no one likes being told what to do, and this is especially true when you're hanging out in an area where people come to play. While this is not cause in and of itself to dismiss such territories outright, it should be enough to give a nascent pack pause when considering its options. Recreational areas are fun and light-hearted, but managing them can be a real hassle.

RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Easily the most common form of urban werewolf territory, residential areas are the places where people come to rest after they are finished with their work and play. Such zones come in several different forms, ranging from single-family homes to large apartment complexes. These zones are more focused than other zones, since residential zones are concerned solely with providing living space for people; how they do this isn't as important as the fact that, at the end of the day, all people must sleep. This makes residential zones easy to understand, and, while they may not be the most exciting of areas, they are nonetheless the ones most in need of a werewolf's attention.

The spirit world of residential areas is complex. All of a person's hopes and dreams and nightmares take flight when she goes to sleep at night, and these create a potpourri of resonance that interacts strangely with that of everyone else in the neighborhood. The name of the game here is subtlety; a werewolf pack might find peace and tranquility around the home of a serial killer, or chaos and madness around the home of a seemingly ordinary housewife. The only constant is that no one is who he appears to be, and that vigilance is a must if the troupe hopes to make sense of the ever-changing chaos so typical of these areas.

MUNICIPAL ZONES

Difficult to understand and nightmarish to manage, municipal zones encompass all elements of the city that might be considered the public sector. The police, fire department, city council, utilities, postal service, justice department and many other local and state institutions are all municipal sites, and they are scattered about the city as needed so that they can maintain order and facilitate interaction among the other zones. Most also interact with the bulk of the city's population in one fashion or another, and, in so doing, they serve to link people together who might otherwise never have cause to interact with one another. This interconnectivity is part of what makes managing municipal areas so difficult.

The spiritscape of municipal areas is likewise an exercise in frustration. Most branches of government

are horribly underfunded, and, as a result, they often fail to function correctly. This naturally leads to feelings of frustration, anxiety and even despair, and spirits of these sorts feast on the energies thus generated. These spirits also tend to feast uninterrupted, since werewolves (and, for that matter, other supernatural beings) find it difficult to operate in such areas without being detected.

HISTORICAL ISSUES

History may not be terribly important to young people in the here and now, but it's very important to spirits and the towns they inhabit. A town's history lends itself heavily to its sense of identity, and this, in turn, influences both the nature and the abundance of the spirits roaming about in the town's territories. This history is generally of two different sorts: the first is history in the traditional sense, which contributes to an area's cultural legacy. This is the sort of information that "everybody knows," and it helps to establish the general mindset of the town's citizenry. The second sort of history is focused more on current events, or on smaller issues that affect only a portion of the town's area. Both sorts of history are important, and can affect a territory in unexpected ways. Consider the following:

- **World Events:** If a neighborhood or town played a significant role in the unfolding of events that went on to shape the world, the neighborhood or town's citizenry (and its spirits) will react accordingly. The neighborhood of Watts in Los Angeles, for example, might not be noteworthy on its own, but its role in the civil rights movement of the 1960s is monumental. Similarly, the town of Los Alamos gave rise to the world's first nuclear weapons, while the city of Versailles is known mainly because the treaty ending World War I was signed in its palace in 1919. Many cities, towns and neighborhoods have similar stories, and recognizing these stories does much to make these areas come alive.

- **Origins:** While global events do much to shape the history of a town, the story of its birth is equally important. Why was the town formed to begin with? Who founded it, and why? How has it grown and changed in the time since? Has its growth steadily increased, or has it progressed in fits and spurts over time? Is it healthy now, or creeping toward obsolescence? How do the answers to these questions affect the people living in the town, and what does that say about the spirit world they influence?

- **Recent History:** Not all of a town's history is earth-shattering. Indeed, the most significant events in any given territory might have nothing more than local significance. Perhaps the local auto shop closed down, or perhaps an outsider recently moved in. What has happened to the town in recent memory, and why is it important? These are questions that directly affect the pack, and answering them is the first step when they set to managing their newfound territory.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: SAMPLE URBAN TERRITORIES

While simple and straightforward territories located in purely industrial, commercial or residential territories do indeed exist, the most valuable werewolf territories combine elements from several different zones to create a cohesive whole. Each territory naturally has its own history associated with it, and once the pack figures out how the geography and history of the territory interact, the packmembers can begin to manage it effectively. Territories of this sort are easily scalable, since they can be found in small towns and large metropolises alike, and the diversity these territories offer makes them both familiar and unpredictable. Examples of such integrated territories are described below.

THE BUSTLING CITY BLOCK

At the heart of the modern city is the city block, which is home to the city's major centers of commerce and the various infrastructure needed to support them. In the heart of the city, these blocks host towering skyscrapers, staggering feats of engineering that allow thousands of people to work together in close proximity. They are not alone, however; everything from restaurants to department stores to parking garages lends them some measure of support, and allows them to function in an urban environment no matter the hour. As one progresses outward from the city center, the blocks become slightly more modest, with towering monoliths giving way to mini-marts and gas stations and apartment complexes. The blocks' basic function does not change, however; no matter the scale, the city block is meant to give humans a place to live and work, and to provide the amenities they need to do so in relative comfort.

The spiritscape of a city block is, as one might imagine, a cornucopia of sensations. There is laughter, despair, joy, hope and everything in between. Nearly anything can happen in such an area, and this is part of what makes these sorts of territories attractive. But there's something else you find in a city that you don't tend to find elsewhere: spirits of community. These are emergent spirits, typically Jagglings, formed from the emotional resonance of large numbers of people. Werewolves often find that such community-spirits are indicators of the general health of a community as a whole; if the spirit is happy, the community is healthy. If the spirit is angry or sad, something is adversely affecting the community. The pack thus finds that managing the community is just as important as managing the spirit world that community creates — unfortunately, the packmembers also find that the one is nowhere nearly as simple as the other.

THE INNER-CITY NEIGHBORHOOD

At one point, years or decades past, this neighborhood was a residential area for workers in the city's industrial center. As the affluent began to move to suburbia,

however, the neighborhood began to decline. The industries that kept it alive in the past are now abandoned, sacrificed on the altars of expansion and progress. The people who remain have tried to adapt as best they can, but it's hard going for most; their skills are no longer needed, and they have no reliable way to learn new ones. The result is despair and misery, and this is where the horror starts.

The spiritscape of the inner city is bleak and hopeless, characterized as it is by the many broken dreams of its residents. It is not without hope, however — at least not yet. The people here still have dreams of a better future, of escaping from their current circumstances, but, in the meantime, all they have to drive them is bitterness and anger. Reclaiming such a territory might be possible, but doing so would be an enormous undertaking. It is certainly beyond the capabilities of any single pack, but if the pack has enough influence in the human world to generate interest in the neighborhood, all sorts of things become possible.

THE OLD INDUSTRIAL TOWN

Human beings are industrious beasts, of that there is no doubt. Sadly, however, their penchant for progress has unintended side effects, and nowhere is this more evident than in the old industrial town. Such towns are fairly common, and are defined by their devotion to producing one particular type of natural resource — an ore of some sort, or coal, or timber or something similar. At one time, the town was probably bustling with activity, but as technology advanced, the town became less and less important. Today, it is but a shadow of its former self, and the people who live there are struggling just to make ends meet.

The *Hisil* of such a town is bleak and foreboding, but is not the dark pit of despair that the inner city is. Paradoxically, however, the old industrial town is also an even poorer candidate for rejuvenation. The inner city can be saved by philanthropy and hard work, but once an industry is no longer needed, a town is hardpressed to reinvent itself through force of will alone. Werewolves of such a town, and the people they shepherd, will ultimately find themselves forced to move on if they hope to find any measure of prosperity.

GAINING TURF

Gaining control of a territory in a residential area is no small matter. Inner cities are often controlled by gangs and criminals, and most city blocks have icons of one sort or another calling the shots. These people often have history on their side, and attained their current status via connections of some sort or twists of fate that are not easily undone. Whether or not these people are wealthy is, oddly, a side issue. What is important is the fact that they have power, and will exert it to maintain their position. They might also have the law on their side, and that will make things even more difficult. If the troupe hopes to



gain control of an urban territory, the characters will have to figure out how to take these sorts of individuals down, or at least find some way to co-opt their influence for their own ends. There are a number of ways the troupe might accomplish this.

VACANT LOTS

If the characters are lucky, they'll seek to claim a territory and find no one standing in the way of their goals. This sort of situation might arise for several reasons: the area might be sparsely populated, meaning there's no one trying to call the shots, or it might simply be disorganized. The characters might even be victims of particularly good timing, arriving on the scene when other, more influential individuals have departed or been removed. No matter the reasons, the territory is theirs for the taking. At first glance, gaining a territory in such a fashion might seem a bit dull, and, for Storytelling purposes, it usually is. But if the troupe is more interested in maintaining a territory than in establishing one, keeping things simple might save the group an awful lot of time and hassle.

Naturally, the spiritscape of a territory claimed so easily will be similarly uninspiring; if the territory had no previous tenant, the land might very well have no permanent residents to speak of, and even if the land does, they probably aren't terribly influential. Naturally, this can change; the characters' arrival might trigger the emergence of other, previously dormant spirits, and even a dull

paradise can prove to be exciting once something arrives to threaten it.

TAKEOVER

If the troupe isn't lucky enough to inherit their territory outright, they might very well have to take it by force. This can happen in many different ways, and needn't involve a pack versus pack conflict; indeed, the battle for control need not be supernatural in nature. The conflict can manifest as a gang war, a labor strike, a police action reclaiming a lawless territory or even open warfare. Regardless of the methodology employed, the main pitfall to hostile takeovers is the amount of fallout they generate; people in charge tend to have friends, and those friends tend to react badly to news that their allies have been eliminated. While this is unfortunate for the characters, it needn't be a bad thing from a Storytelling perspective; indeed, the process of laying claim to a territory might amount to a story in its own right as the players learn about their enemies and how best to neutralize them.

Naturally, the hostile takeover of a territory has dramatic repercussions for the spirit world. Spirits are usually accustomed to doing things in a certain fashion, and once a new werewolf pack shows up, they often have to change the way they do things. In the short term, whether the changes are good or bad doesn't really matter, since they're stressful either way. The pack will thus encounter a great deal of resistance from the locals until they manage to establish their dominance in the territory, and they'll have

to deal with subversive elements within the *Hisil* for a long time to come.

BORN TO POWER

Rather than take down the dominant group in the neighborhood, the characters might start out as members of said group. If an inner city is ruled by a particular street gang, for instance, the troupe's member might have joined that gang prior to their first change. Alternately, the characters might be steel workers in an old steel town, or movers and shakers dominating the city's policy decisions. No matter their background, the newly changed Uratha prowl the streets on their own or, if few in number, form the nucleus of a much larger group. They thus receive their territory by dint of history or association, and needn't invest much effort in securing their claim.

In many ways this scenario represents the easiest transition for the spirit world. Rather than being forced to adapt to the whys and wherefores of a new group of werewolves they are instead being asked to submit to those they've known for quite some time, people who might even be the successors to the current pack managing the territory. While the spirits never particularly enjoy submitting to a werewolf pack, going about it in this fashion at least makes it as painless as possible.

COOL DIGS

One of the nice things about urban territories is the fact that they have lots of perks working for them. This is particularly true with urban neighborhoods; they are filled with people and spirits aplenty, and that means they tend to have lots of loci. Buildings make for excellent defensive positions in a fight, and large numbers of people make it easy to conceal one's nocturnal meanderings... provided they're properly managed. On the downside, the high number of loci makes urban territories attractive to hostile spirits, and the crowds of people can make keeping a low profile difficult. Still, the advantages generally tend to outweigh the disadvantages, and that's why Uratha are urban predators more often than not.

SPIRITUAL RESONANCE

It's no secret that human beings generate a huge amount of spiritual energy. While it's true that they lack the resilience of mountains or the raw power of a thunderstorm, it's also true that these failings are offset by the sheer number of the buggers in existence. There are a lot of humans in the world, and they congregate in groups. That means they generate loci very quickly, and those said loci can get to be awfully powerful.

Werewolves investigating a newly acquired territory may find loci in any number of places, but their most common haunts are gathering spots — coffee houses, city parks, war memorials and the like. In economically depressed neighborhoods, loci tend to be loci of hope or

despair depending on the circumstances, while more well-off neighborhoods generate loci of dynamism and comfort instead. In most cases, the loci are fairly public and easy to find.

The downside to urban loci is that they don't tend to be very strong — they form quickly but usually lack the intensity of emotion needed to make a really powerful locus. Most are only Rank 1 in strength, while the more powerful ones are typically limited to Rank 3. There are exceptions, however. A pack might investigate an abandoned apartment building and discover that it was used as a serial killer's haunt, which might result in a very powerful locus. The same is true of memorials; people who visit them do so with strong emotions in their hearts, and can thus contribute to the formation of extremely powerful loci.

GATHERING PLACES

The most common loci in urban areas form in communal gathering places, such as coffee shops, nightclubs and stadiums. These loci are shaped more by the general atmosphere of such places rather than any specific events that take place therein; as a result, loci in gathering places tend to be a bit weaker than loci associated with more specific acts and feelings.

The Corner Coffee Shop

Rating: •

Resonance: Contentment

Since city goers can't live without their coffee, coffee shops are an ubiquitous sight once you hit the city center. These places radiate feelings of contentment even in the physical world, as busy commuters stop buy for a cup of joe and a few minutes' rest. The specific locus in such a place is the front doorway, as it is here that people first catch the whiff of coffee and begin to let their worries fade away (at least for a little while). Spirits of contentment dominate this particular place, feeding on the resonance of the people therein and perhaps urging them to seek greater and greater comforts.

THE WORKPLACE

No matter the position, human jobs all have one thing in common: they generate stress. There are always deadlines to meet, annoying people to manage and uncertain futures to contemplate; these things combine to create feelings of anxiety and frustration in workers around the world. Spirits naturally love to feast on such powerful emotions, and, with some urging, the workplace can create the spark needed to form a locus.

The Conference Room Table

Rating: ••

Resonance: Anxiety

Projects are designed, deals are made, careers are destroyed. This happens every day, and the one to bear witness to it all is the conference room table. This is where people come together to pitch ideas, to argue

about accountability, to save face and to congratulate one another on a job well done. For good or ill, this table sees more stress than any other part of the building, and the *Hisil* here is more Darwinian than anywhere else on the planet. The table is also nigh impossible to manage except in the rarest of cases, which makes the table a tasty treat that werewolves find maddeningly out of reach.

MEMORIALS

Humans are capable of great acts, both positive and negative. A memorial might signify many things: the losses endured in a conflict, the triumph associated with a great achievement or perhaps simply an important date. No matter the significance, memorials tend to be powerful loci, as they are visited by generations upon generations of people who often display powerful emotions when they stop by.

The War Memorial

Rating: ●●●●

Resonance: Grief

Wars are a ghastly business, and the price for waging them is measured in human lives. The grief and suffering that accompanies such loss is enormous, and in an effort to manage it — and, also, to remember those lost — the survivors create memorials. These are often centers of intense emotional energy, associated with grief, loss and pain. Oddly, however, memorials that become loci aren't necessarily reservoirs of negative energy. Some are steeped in feelings of catharsis, pride and healing. Such resonance, while certainly tainted by loss, is ultimately positive in nature, and is attractive to spirits of duty, pride and patriotism.

HUMAN DOMESTICATION

It is said that one should never underestimate the stupidity of humans in groups, and, for the most part, that statement is true. While they are certainly capable of critical thinking, humans are generally loath to engage in the activity; it forces them to recognize some ugly truths about themselves and the world around them, and that's something they would very much rather not do. And so they play follow-the-leader, avoiding responsibility whenever possible and doing whatever they have to do to make sure they're left alone. Not all humans are like this, of course, but the failing is strong enough in most of them that controlling an urban territory is a fairly simple matter.

The key, of course, lies in identifying the people in charge and learning how best to manipulate them to your own ends. This need not be a subversive venture. It can amount to making friends with the local community leaders and offering them suggestions for improving the neighborhood (suggestions that will, coincidentally, also help to improve the spirit world). Where leaders go the rest will follow, and in this way the pack can shape the neighborhood's resonance without manipulating it directly.

Apart from a community's leaders, the pack must also identify the specific needs of the people under its charge. In a ghetto, for instance, the people will be skittish and afraid, so accustomed are they to the predatory influences of gangs and criminals. The pack cannot ignore such people, as doing so will only encourage the fearful resonance they generate to accumulate. Rather, the pack must draw the people out and make them part of their surroundings once again, and, in so doing, improve the overall health of their territory. Naturally, the truth of this lesson extends far beyond the ghetto — and applies equally well to suburbanites who are accustomed to keeping their secrets or to rat race commuters who think they're just another statistic.

THE URBAN WILDERNESS

Urban territories offer predators and prey two types of cover, and most of each don't take full advantage of either. The first is obvious: hard concrete. Buildings, sewers, roads and the vehicles they carry all offer attack and escape options to those who recognize the potential. This is particularly true in underdeveloped neighborhoods, where buildings may be abandoned and hence serve as ideal hiding places (for both predator and prey).

The second type of cover is perhaps less obvious, but no less useful: human beings. Uratha aren't the only supernaturals who have a vested interest in remaining hidden from the masses after all; even the most avaricious Azlu recognizes the need for secrecy, and will do everything in her power to avoid detection by the populace at large. A savvy Uratha pack can use this to its advantage, avoiding surprise attacks and staging counterattacks that use the packmembers' foes' paranoia to best effect. The packmembers can escape into a crowd, trigger retaliatory strikes from the locals (this is especially true in gang-infested neighborhoods), bring the authorities to bear in volatile situations and so on and so forth. Most such usage has to be subtle to be effective, but that doesn't change the fact that it often is just that — effective.

URBAN TOTEMS

One of the more intriguing things about urban territories is the strange and, perhaps, unexpected diversity of totems they provide. A nascent werewolf pack, fresh from the rites of passage and growing accustomed to the bizarre worldview imparted upon the packmembers by their animistic natures, might be forgiven for thinking their totems should take the form of wolves or other sorts of animals. In the heart of the big city, however, this is anything but true. Consider the merits of Lights-Blurring-Past, a totem of speed and cunning, or of Electric Thunder Radio, a totem of culture and sophistication (or the lack thereof). And what of animals not to be found in the wild, from the ragged toughness of a stray cat to the devotion of a dog-spirit? The possibilities urban totems provide are endless, and emblematic of the face of animism in the modern age.

Urban totems do have their downsides, however. To begin with, they're generally accustomed to one specific sort of environment, and they can be picky about where they and their pack operate. The children of Lights-Blurring-Past, for instance, had better spend a lot of time on the open road, and anyone who chooses to follow a stray cat totem will feel very uncomfortable in polite society. As with all relationships with totems, the pack has to pay the price to gain a spirit ally. Packs can work around these failings, of course, but they're something to keep in mind when initially investing in the totem.

LOCALS

The typical city block is populated by all manner of colorful people, and most packs will find that knowing who's who and what they want makes managing a territory a hell of a lot easier. Such folk might be perfectly innocuous or decidedly unpleasant, but, either way, knowledge is power. Sample personae are given below; for other potential contacts, see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 203.

THE CREEPY DRIFTER

Everybody knows him: he's the creepy drifter who snarls at everyone and causes a fuss every time he shows up. Maybe he has a criminal record, maybe he doesn't (most people think he does even if he doesn't), but, either way, he doesn't get along with folks and generally just wants to be left alone. Most people think that's just fine, since they don't want to be around him anyway. What he probably doesn't know, and what everyone else certainly doesn't know, is that he doesn't fit in with the crowd for a very good reason: he's a wolf-blood, and, therefore, the teaming throngs of humanity just don't call to him as they do to everyone else.

Asshole or not, the creepy drifter can make an intriguing contact for a nascent werewolf pack — provided, of course, that they can win his confidence. This is no small challenge, of course, but if they manage it, he'll prove to be an able ally who can face down the supernatural with the best of them and still hold down a day job (which is not to say that he will, but he can manage it a lot more easily than most werewolves).

Abilities:

Firearms (dice pool 7) — Ex-con or not, he knows how to shoot.

Intimidation (dice pool 6) — He's serious when he says he wants to be left alone.

THE DRUG DEALER

A common sight in inner-city neighborhoods, drug dealers are the scourge of communities everywhere. They ruin lives and destroy communities, and there is no question that the world would be better off without them. But werewolves don't necessarily look at these people as targets. Some werewolves decide they might as well make use

of drug dealers. Drug dealers tend to be superb informants, and they know more about the city's seedier goings-on than most anyone. Drug dealers aren't friendly, and their services don't come cheap, but the information they can offer often can't be found anywhere else.

Crummy as they may be, drug dealers can also serve a greater good in their communities. The successful ones are good at keeping the competition to a minimum, and that means they bring order to their little chunk of territory. No one fights, no one messes with the residents, no one does business there without the dealer's say so. He may be a tyrant, but he looks out for "his" property, and that's something to consider before one takes up arms to oust him from the neighborhood.

Abilities:

Subterfuge (dice pool 6) — Honesty isn't the best policy in this trade.

Streetwise (dice pool 7) — Life on the streets is rough, and a successful dealer knows the streets better than most.

THE GUARDIAN OF THE PEOPLE

Not every neighborhood has one, but those that do consider themselves blessed. The guardian of the people is a champion, someone who fights for the neighborhood's interests against the government, greedy corporations or even the freaky shit nobody talks about. This archetype is typically a blue-collar worker who has decided he's had enough. He's taking a stand for his friends and family (and perhaps co-workers as well), and he will fight for them with every means at his disposal. The more peaceful examples of such figures lead protests, wage legal battles and try to increase general public awareness of their people's plight through use of the media. More militant sorts might blow up factories, sabotage government works and generate all the hate they can muster against the targets of their ire.

When defending a neighborhood, werewolf packs will find the guardian of the people an invaluable ally — his loyalty to his community is absolute, and he'll throw all his support behind the pack if he understands its goals and how the packmembers relate to the neighborhood. His support only goes so far, however; if the pack seems to be more of a bad influence on the area, he may well mark these strange, potentially violent people as "undesirables." This is all the more likely if he finds out what their *real* story is....

Abilities:

Persuasion (dice pool 6) — Sound arguments are the guardian's bread and butter.

Expression (dice pool 7) — The guardian of the people is all about rallying support for his cause.

THE STREET KID

When faced with chronic abuse or neglect, children often run away from home in search of better lives on the

road. They typically meet tragic ends, but if they're lucky, they might be rescued by well-meaning folk and put into foster care or group homes. While this does little to address the cause of the runaway's problems, it does open up some interesting roleplaying opportunities. Of course, not all street kids are runaways; some might have an interest in local street life (such as an older brother in a gang), or they may spend as little time as possible at home to avoid an abusive relative.

If the pack manages to become friendly with an urchin of some sort, the packmembers may find she can be an invaluable source of information. People generally don't pay much attention to kids, so the sneaky little bastards make excellent spies. Naturally, this relationship can only go so far — the kid will be useless whenever a supernatural being shows up on the scene, even if she is a wolf-blood, and she won't be at the characters' beck and call whenever they need an extra set of eyes and ears.

Abilities:

Stealth (dice pool 5) — People just don't pay much attention to kids, and they're small and sneaky to boot.

Streetwise (dice pool 5) — Kids know how to get by on the streets. Maybe if you take them seriously, they'll decide to share what they know.

URBAN AVATAR

The urban avatar is the spirit of the community given form, an amalgamation of the community's hopes and dreams and fears, coupled with all the little niceties and worries that go along with everyday life. The urban avatar is people and cars and buildings and pet goldfish and anything and everything in-between. The avatar of a place can be hidden or overt, but interacting with it is always difficult; it is, after all, the personification of an abstract concept, and mortals (even werewolves) have difficulty grasping such things (let alone interacting with them).

If the pack can successfully locate and engage the avatar of the pack's territory, however, the packmembers' jobs can become easier — if they're genuinely working to make the place "better" in a way that matches the avatar's goals. While the avatar is not an open book, eager to answer the pack's questions, the avatar is, nonetheless, interested in keeping the community the avatar represents healthy and whole. If the packmembers can prove to it that this is what they seek, it will help them in any way it can (though such help may be limited or somewhat cryptic).

Rank:

Attributes: Power ; Finesse ; Resistance

Willpower:

Essence: (max)

Initiative:

Defense:

Speed: (species factor)

Size:

Corpus:

Influences: Community •••

Numina: Chorus Communion with the Land Discorporation Materialize Material Vision Possession Reaching Technological Mastery Wilds Sense

• **Communion with the Land:** As the five-dot Knowledge Gift

• **Technological Mastery:** Urban avatars can use all of the Gifts on the Technology Gift list

EXPANSION

Managing an urban territory is no simple task, but a sufficiently diligent pack will find that doing so is certainly possible. Once the pack does, it'll be looking to expand its influence, and, given the nature of urban territories, this is a fairly simple task. In the best-case scenario, the characters can simply expand their territory block by block, continuing until they run out of city, spread themselves too thin or run into obstacles they don't care to address. Even in less-than-ideal circumstances, the modular nature of cities makes expansion a relatively easy task (at the very least, the characters will know what they are dealing with and have a general idea of where it resides). There are some considerations to bear in mind when contemplating new growth, however.

VISIBILITY

As a pack's influence in an urban setting grows, the pack's visibility grows along with its influence. Apart from increasing the risk of accidental exposure to ordinary humans, this also means the pack's enemies will find it easier to harass the pack, and that the pack's allies and the spirits they govern will place more and more demands on the pack's time. While this puts an upper limit on the amount of territory the characters can ultimately control, they can lower their profile in any number of ways.

DELEGATION

As the characters grow in power, they can assign the maintenance of parts of their territory to subordinate packs or, in some cases, even ordinary humans (who might or might not understand the characters' true nature). Storm Lords and Blood Talons tend to favor this approach, as it creates a clear dominance hierarchy and chain of command. It also allows the pack to maintain firm control of the whole of the territory, no matter how large it may be. Unfortunately, this approach can also be quite hands on, meaning the pack will be awfully busy most of the time.

INDIRECT INFLUENCE

A favored tactic of the Iron Masters, rule by proxy is an effective if less-than-glamorous way to rule a territory. Why fight for a territory when you can simply buy it outright? Let the humans rule themselves, and save the patrolling for threats that simply cannot be ignored. This approach greatly reduces the territorial demands on a



pack's time and resources, but runs the risk of leaving the packmembers more and more out of touch as time goes by.

THE SUBTLE APPROACH

While some werewolves favor rule by proxy, others completely abandon the idea of direct control over a territory. This is a common tactic among the Hunters in Darkness and Bone Shadows, who are often more interested in knowing what's going on in a territory than they are in calling the shots themselves. This is also an excellent way to survive in a territory nominally ruled by other supernaturals; vampires, for example, have no quarrel with werewolves who mind their own business and don't rock the boat.

CONQUEST

Sometimes, crushing your neighbors is just the way to go. Newly formed packs generally have to start small when it comes to territories, but nothing says they have to stay that way. This is particularly true when their territories border those of enemies of some sort; once the pack has enough experience under its belt, the notion of crushing the neighboring Pure pack and salvaging its territory holds a lot of appeal, and the same logic holds true when the a vampire coterie gets a little too big for its britches or when a cabal of mages starts to monkey with things better left undisturbed.

Naturally, expansion via conquest carries with it many of the same difficulties associated with claims via conquest, as described above. The difference, however, lies in the fact that the expanding pack has much more experience dealing with the spirit world, and likely knows more about the area than a pack of neophytes likely would. This means the expanding pack will be better prepared to clean up the mess the packmembers make when they launch their attacks, since they'll be able to soothe the ruffled feathers of spirits and humans alike.

Naturally, this doesn't make conquest in this fashion a matter to be taken lightly; it simply makes it doable so long as the pack acts responsibly.

ALLIANCES

If the pack lives in an area with a relatively high concentration of werewolves (a large town or small city, for instance) the packmembers might find it worthwhile to form alliances with like-minded packs. This is much more easily said than done, of course; werewolves are territorial, temperamental beasts, and they don't like sharing their territory with anyone outside of their pack. The key here is to ensure that each pack has its own area of influence, and its own territory to call home. If the packs limit their association to sharing information and collaborating on major projects, they also limit the potential for inter-pack friction. Particularly clever packs might even combine multi-pack alliances with some of the large-scale management suggestions given above; if a pack of Hunters in Darkness contents itself with gathering information about the goings-on in a city while a pack of Bone Shadows concerns itself with maintaining the city's *Hisil*, the two might control a much larger territory than either could manage on its own.

FISSION

One of the characteristics of any successful werewolf pack is growth. As packmembers grow older and establish families of their own, they will inevitably give birth to children or grandchildren who wind up following in their elders' footsteps. These progeny can join the pack up to a point, but before long the pack's numbers will grow too large to be sustained by a single territory; members will start getting on one another's nerves due to a combination of boredom and sheer proximity; the easiest way to cope with the problem is to allow the younger members of the pack to expand into a territory of their own. If the pack's elders have any foresight, they'll prepare territories with this eventuality in mind, and thus make the transition painless for everyone involved. In the absence of such foresight, however, things might get... messy. Conflict might erupt between members of the pack, members might be forced out and the process of claiming a territory might

begin anew. This is, naturally, the scenario most Uratha would rather avoid, but it happens much more often than they'd care to admit (indeed, the Brethren War was a result of exactly this sort of situation).

HUMAN CONCERNS

Like it or not, humans are the de facto rulers of planet Earth, and this is especially true in human cities. State and local governments call the shots on just about every scale imaginable, and the city decides who owns what and how they go about doing it. This means an Uratha packs might well have to jockey with city officials in order to control a territory, and will almost certainly have to do the same if they ever hope to expand their influence. This interaction can take many forms: the pack might have to deal with urban planners or zoning boards when building/acquiring a new building, or the pack might have to deal with the police when expanding the turf of an urban gang or the pack might have to deal with wealthy industrialists who want to build right on top of a city park (one that just happens to contain a powerful locus). Try as the pack might, the human factor simply cannot be ignored; the characters will have to adapt, and, if they refuse to do so, they'll wind up losing ground instead of gaining it.

THREATS

The urban jungle has many threats lying in wait for the Uratha, and most of these threats are maddeningly subtle. The least of them are ordinary humans, who are usually harmless in a physical sense but can prove to be nuisances in many other ways. Supernatural threats are even more alarming, since the ones that are well adapted to surviving in cities know full well how to escape the notice of vigilant werewolves. This makes detecting these supernatural threats difficult, and destroying them next to impossible. But, of course, the greatest threat facing an urban werewolf is simple exposure — it's hardest to keep the herd ignorant when hunting where the herd is thickest. Even still, a werewolf in full Gauru form invokes the Lunacy in city dwellers with the best of them, and even hardened urban denizens will tell stories about the sights they half-remember or recall incorrectly.

THE POLICE

Faceless and numerous, the police are ubiquitous in most urban areas, shying away only from the worse parts of the inner cities. Police officers are paragons of order if not virtue, and in the World of Darkness, they tend to be on the lookout for strange stuff. This is not to say they have any knowledge of the supernatural, mind; most are as ignorant of it as the average Joe on the street. But they are more likely to listen to stories about strange or unusual occurrences than are officers in the real world, and that means their chance to interact with the pack in some fashion is not trivial.

Police officers in the World of Darkness can serve either as supporting cast or outright threat, and Storytellers are encouraged to explore both possibilities. Making police corrupt or otherwise tarnished in some fashion might be tempting, but that need not be the case — they might also be well-meaning folk who just want to do their jobs, and who aren't about to tolerate any tomfoolery in the process. Such individuals can be just as threatening as the crooked sorts, but they can also be invaluable allies if approached correctly.

Abilities (Beat Cop)

Investigation (dice pool 4) — Even beat cops have some investigative abilities, and they're trained to spot the out of place or the unusual.

Firearms (dice pool 5) — All police officers, at least in the United States, are armed with a firearm of some sort. This pool can be replaced with Melee as appropriate in other countries.

Abilities (Detective)

Investigation (dice pool 7) — Investigation is a detective's stock in trade.

Firearms (dice pool 6) — The average detective has a bit more experience under his belt than the average beat cop, and hence might easily be a better shot.

BESHILU GUERRILLA

While the Beshilu have no connection to human terrorists of any stripe, the Beshilu are nonetheless ideally suited to the role of wreaking havoc in any urban area. This ratling is no exception to the rule — the thickened Gauntlet so typical of urban areas fuels his mad desire to gnaw, and the roots of his umbrage are so primal that even the Uratha find them incomprehensible. He is unusually savvy for a Beshilu mob; he will never show himself directly, instead choosing to use his swarm form to infiltrate buildings and gnaw through the Gauntlet from within the heart of the city. This leaves the troupe in the role of firefighters, constantly playing catch-up as they patch the rat's holes and wonder why he's evading them so easily.

The key to making the Beshilu guerilla work lies in portraying him as both an intelligent and immensely alien being. He is as smart as any human, and yet he is driven by urges even he can barely begin to understand; he cannot be bargained with, he cannot be reasoned with and he will not stop — ever. His only driving goals are survival and the dissolution of the Gauntlet between worlds, and yet he is not a mere machine — he is capable of forethought, of laying traps for his foes and of studying the behaviors of his enemies. This is what makes him frightening. While the Uratha may find common ground with humans and even with spirits, this is not so with the Beshilu. He is simply a force of nature, one whose intelligence and foresight make him the deadliest of foes.

Abilities

Occult (dice pool 6) — “Know thy enemy” seems to be this rat’s mantra, and it makes him damnably clever when it comes to anticipating his foes’ movements and objectives.

Athletics (dice pool 7) — Beshilu are adroit at going places where living things aren’t really meant to go, to say nothing of evading pursuit.

Stealth (dice pool 9) — The sneaky little bastard can go anywhere and everywhere, and it doesn’t seem like anyone can track his movements until after the fact.

VAMPIRE BIKERS

Werewolves generally have no real problem sharing their territory with vampires, but this mob will surely test the pack’s patience. Why they’re slumming in the Uratha’s turf is a mystery, but slumming is exactly what they’re doing; they’re feeding with abandon and ignoring the counsel of their elders, and they don’t seem to care a whit about borders or any semblance of decorum. They just want to wreak havoc, and the consequences be damned.

A threat of this sort works nicely for characters who are just establishing their territory, and are thus unfamiliar with all of the advantages it might have to offer. This will turn the characters from predators into prey, making this one of their earliest tests while in control of their turf. The annoying thing about this group is the fact that they aren’t just a bunch of dumb punks — they have some real power at their disposal, and they have numbers on their side as well. The pack had best be careful, lest its members find themselves schooled like a bunch of rank amateurs.

Abilities

Brawl (dice pool 8) — The gang is well skilled in the art of busting heads, and is eager to share the love with anyone who gets in their way.

Intimidation (dice pool 7) — They may not be the sharpest knives in the drawer, but the bikers know how the scare the bejesus out of folks even without tapping into their vampiric natures.

THE URBANE SPIDER WOMAN

Most Azlu content themselves with being predators of flesh and spirit, feasting on the humans, spirits and (in rare cases) Uratha who congregate around the city’s more powerful loci. Not so this spider; she is smart enough to understand the ins and outs of human society and the constraints said society places upon the activities of the city’s supernaturals. She has also learned to weave her webs in innovative fashion, strengthening the walls of the Gauntlet in ways that are all but undetectable. Perhaps she is an interior decorator, designing homes with her own special brand of *feng shui*. Or perhaps she is a tattoo artist, weaving her webs into the very artwork she creates. The possibilities are endless, but there is one constant — they are all subtle. She knows that discovery means death, and so she has become very, very good at hiding her tracks.

MADAME X

Madame X is the moniker used by the owner of Ink a seedy tattoo parlor located in one of the worst parts of town. Madame X appears to be a woman of indeterminate origin; indeed her customers have found that nearly every aspect of her appearance is mutable and subject to change. Sometimes she appears to be a dark skinned African woman while at others she appears to be Vietnamese, Caucasian or Latino. No one knows why or how she changes her appearance so drastically on such a regular basis, but her penchant for doing so has turned her into a minor celebrity in many of the neighborhood haunts. Complicating matters is the fact that nobody ever seems to see her outside of her tattoo parlor; she must have a life outside of course, but where and how she spends her time remains a mystery.

Unbeknownst to the locals, the original Madame X was devoured a long time ago. The creature in her skin is an Azlu of great skill and artistry. Her tattoos are a means of binding her Gauntlet Webs to living, moving beings, and they allow her to strengthen the Gauntlet while minimizing her risk of exposure. Her tattoo business allows her to meet all sorts of new and interesting people, and she uses the information gleaned from such encounters to identify tasty, new potential victims.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence, Wits, Resolve

Physical Attributes: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina

Social Attributes: Presence, Manipulation, Composure

Mental Skills: Crafts (Tattoo Artist), Medicine, Occult

Physical Skills: Athletics, Stealth, Survival

Social Skills: Animal Ken (Spiders), Expression, Intimidation, Persuasion, Subterfuge (Misdirection)

Merits: Danger Sense, Resources, Striking Looks

Willpower:

Morality:

Essence:

Virtue: Prudence

Vice: Pride

Health:

Initiative:

Defense:

Speed:

Numina: Chorus, Discorporation, Gauntlet Webs, Skin Stealing, Speak With Beasts, Wall Climb

• **Gauntlet Webs:** Madame X has discovered a particularly insidious use for this Numen: she

binds the webs directly into the tattoos she crafts. This makes the webs difficult to destroy, as they are both mobile and bound to the life of the person wearing them; destroying the webs requires destroying the person who wears the tattoo. However, webs of this sort are not as powerful as typical Azlu webs; the strength of their effect on the Gauntlet is measured both by the complexity of the tattoo and by the number of tattooed individuals in the vicinity. Typically, the difficulty to step or peak through the Gauntlet in a yard area increases by one for every three tattoos in the vicinity. If the tattoos are particularly complex, fewer may be needed to have the same effect.

- **Skin Stealing:** As the four dot Mother Luna Gift
- **Speak With Beasts:** As the two dot Nature Gift. Note that this Numen only works with spiders.

THE WELL-CONNECTED SLUMLORD

The urban slumlord is a disagreeable individual who enjoys making people's lives miserable. Any nascent werewolf pack that discovers one in its territory will want to dispatch him on general principle, but this one has a trick up his sleeve: he's got connections. He knows a few people in City Hall (which is why he's managed to evade

prosecution for his underhanded deeds to begin with), and they would ask some... uncomfortable questions if he suddenly up and disappeared. The characters will either have to work around him or find some way to deal with him without tipping their hand.

The slumlord fills two main roles as an antagonist: first, he is a reminder that power isn't everything. There's no question that the characters could kill the bastard if they wanted to, but that is just as assuredly not the way to resolve the problem he represents. Neutralizing him will be a long and difficult process, and it will remind the characters that subtlety has its merits. More importantly, however, the slumlord reinforces the fact that mortals aren't to be taken lightly. Their lack of supernatural powers might make them seem like harmless obstacles, but there are other sorts of power one might possess that are just as dangerous as any Gift. Characters need to act accordingly.

Abilities:

Subterfuge (dice pool 8) — The slumlord is naturally a crafty liar. He's also spent a great deal of time covering his tracks at City Hall.

Allies (●●●●) — The slumlord has dirt on many key individuals in City Hall, and they make annoying things such as building codes and lawsuits disappear. His Allies are not altogether thrilled about the prospect of doing so, naturally, but there's little they can do until the situation changes somehow...



SUBURBIA

The houses here are identical. Even longtime residents can get lost, especially at night, when confronted with row after row of brown-and-white two-stories with neatly manicured and specially treated laws. Drive on a main road for a few miles and you travel through several towns, but pass the same restaurants in the same sequence. The people who live here don't know each other, but seeing the same cars and the same faces in the same routines every day creates an eerie, and somewhat comforting, familiarity. This is life in the suburbs of the World of Darkness.

OVERVIEW

The suburbs are the communities between the cities and the country, infested with strip malls, chain restaurants and sub-developments named after trees. Living in the suburbs usually means a commute to work, and is most popular with people who don't want to deal with what they perceive as the inconvenience and danger of city life but still want some sense of civilization. The crime rates are lower in the suburbs, and tend more toward vandalism, domestic violence and the occasional burglary than the muggings and armed robberies of the city. Still, people lock their doors and install expensive security systems. They want to feel safe, but cannot shake the feeling that they are in danger.

At first glance, the suburbs might seem too light a setting for **Werewolf: The Forsaken**. Digging deeper into the milieu of the suburbs and adding the subtle shading that makes the World of Darkness what it is, however, shows suburbia to have great potential as a werewolf territory. Consider the following:

- **Ambiance of the suburbs:** Suburbia has a labyrinthine quality to it. Becoming lost in a neighborhood in which all of the roads' names include some variant on a single word ("Hoofbeat," "Sycamore," "Briar," etc.) is all too easy. Chain restaurants spring up like mushrooms in suburbs, and strip malls tend to include the same or similar shops. Therefore, residents know their way around, but visitors might feel that they have passed the same coffee shop or fast food establishment several times. What this does to the spiritscape of the suburbs is discussed anon.

Suburbs also generate a false sense of community. People live close together in identical houses, but they don't necessarily know anything about one another. The nature of suburban life often demands that people leave their homes in the early morning and commute to the

city, then head straight home afterwards to have any chance of family life. In the winter, it's not uncommon to leave one's house before sunrise, work indoors all day and return home after dark. As such, people can live next door to each other but never meet until something changes radically enough to force this kind of interaction (a fire or other natural disaster, a violent crime in the neighborhood, a new arrival that most of the neighborhood finds objectionable, etc.).

Of course, not all suburbs harbor this kind of isolation. Some neighborhoods are very tight-knit, holding block parties and organizing carpools and other community functions. These neighborhoods hold special dangers for the Uratha, because the people in them *know* one another, and so can recognize who belongs in the neighborhood and who's a stranger. This is discussed further under "Potential Threats" on p. 124.

- **The rot beneath:** In the World of Darkness, the true horror of the suburbs is that everything is covered with a layer of respectability and safety. The pack might patrol several neighborhoods and never see anything resembling a threat. That's not because the threats don't exist, however. The suburbs have their spirits and loci, and therefore the suburbs have Ridden, Hosts and all of the dangers that the cities or country do. But for the same reasons that werewolves must be cautious (which are discussed below), these beings hide themselves from human sight. If an Azlu hollows out a human being to use her body as a vehicle in the city, the Azlu can just dump the shell when it becomes inconvenient. Doing so in the suburbs isn't as easy, however, and so the Azlu must develop methods of keeping the body around longer or making sure it won't be missed. The suburbs force the werewolves to be careful, persistent and, above all, subtle hunters — and not all packs are suited for it.

- **Lighter tone isn't bad:** While it's true that **Werewolf** is a "Storytelling game of savage fury," that doesn't mean that different tones aren't appropriate. Fear and humor are two basic and, in many ways, interconnected emotions, and the most intense horror often comes from the commonplace and even laughable. Thus, a chronicle or story set in suburbia or a pack claiming a territory there might be prone to poking fun at such a set. That doesn't have to lessen the horror, however. It just creates a greater sense of juxtaposition when the characters see what monsters lurk in their idyllic neighborhoods (or, better yet, *become* those monsters).

A number of modern films have achieved a good balance between the straight-laced and somewhat bland ambiance of the suburbs and the classic notions of horror. The original *Halloween* was one of the first, but *Ginger Snaps* (which also has the advantage of being a werewolf movie) and *Scream* are also good picks.

CUSTOMIZATION

It might be tempting to say that all suburbs are the same, but that's not really the case. Suburbs have their points of distinction, but they tend to be subtle, and really only obvious to people who live in a given suburb and can make a good comparison. City dwellers who venture out to the suburbs might be shocked by the eerie sameness of the area, and experience *déjà vu* as they drive through several suburbs, but then suburbanites sometimes feel the same sense of homogeneity when they visit large cities.

When designing a suburban territory for a **Werewolf** chronicle, customizing the territory is important precisely because suburbs can feel so similar. Consider the following points:

- **Physical terrain:** Imagine that the suburb had never been built and that the surroundings are still in their natural state. Would the land be meadows? Forests? Swamps? What changes had to be made before human beings could live in this suburb? Does the suburb consist of large tracts of flat land (which might make stealth difficult in places)? If the area used to be swampy, does the hot and humid summer still bring an increase in stagnant water and mosquitoes? The suburbs, thematically, are spaces between city and country, and so they might also be between natural terrain and development.

Consider, too, what this means for the *Hisil*. The spirit world changes to reflect the physical world, but the change is slow. A werewolf who steps sideways expecting to find spiritual representations of the houses and restaurants of the suburbs is in for a surprise. Mass-produced items don't tend to show up in the Shadow, and so it's not uncommon for a suburban development to be a flat, featureless plane. Of course, once the development has been around for a few years, the people who live in the houses might change the landscape or pour enough emotion into their homes to awaken the spirits. This is a slow process, however. Some suburban packs find that patrolling the spirit world is as simple as finding *any* activity in the local Shadow.

- **Local history:** Has anything of real significance happened in the suburb? Why was the place formed? Some suburbs are quite recent, but some have been around for more than a century and so have a wealth of dirty secrets and interesting stories. Who are the historical figures of the area? Usually, one can find a statue of the city's founder in the town square. The residents of the suburb might all know the name of the founder and one particularly intriguing legend about him, or they might never even

look up at the statue. Either possibility has implications for the chronicle and for the pack claiming the territory.

- **What city?** Suburbs draw a great deal of their identities from the cities they border. A suburb of New York City has a very different feel than a suburb of Chicago. Consider the size and industry of the parent city and to what degree its culture has influenced the suburb.

Likewise, European suburbs are quite different from American ones. European suburbs tend to be older and thus have stronger spiritual presences. Since the specter of franchise and globalization is a relatively new phenomenon, a werewolf pack in a community outside of Moscow might find old, local spirits battling with new, young but numerous entities.

- **Homogenization:** How bland has the suburb become? How many forests have been torn down to create housing developments? Do any locally owned restaurants remain, or have chains bought them out? What about groceries and other businesses? What features of the area stamp this community with its own identity and culture, and how close is the modern world to destroying that identity?

The decision on how homogenized the area has become will probably influence what actions the pack takes. A werewolf pack seeks to mark its territory, to put a stamp of individuality on the area. This is difficult to do if the place has no outstanding features. Therefore, while a pack of Uratha might not particularly care whether fast food chains open franchises in the pack's territory, the packmembers might work to prevent local businesses from being sold or taken over. This isn't necessarily altruistic — a pack might visit the owner of such a business and make it *very* clear that he is not to sell.

METRO PARK REPORT — DEER POPULATION

John: I've spent the week out in the woods in the parks and I drove around through the neighborhoods that turned in the most deer complaints last summer. You were right: there are a lot fewer deer around now. I don't know what changed. The weather's about the same we haven't seen an increase in hunters or car accidents and there's still enough food to sustain the herds.

I didn't see as many sick or starving ones and not very many fawns either. I hate to say this because it's pretty ridiculous but it's almost like we got wolves in the area. I'm pretty sure someone would have seen them though and I didn't find any tracks when I was out looking.

Anyway I really wish I had more time to devote to this but we're stretched pretty thin as it is. I'll keep my eyes out. Maybe somebody from the university wants to run a study?

STARTING OUT

How does a werewolf pack claim a suburban territory? A number of possibilities exist. Something to consider, however, is *why* the pack wishes to claim this territory. The pack might have a connection to the specific area, of course — it might hold a locus that resonates well with the pack's totem or the area might be significant to a given tribe. But more general reasons for claiming a territory in suburbia might also drive the pack.

Suburbia offers a comfortable mix of the features of cities and rural areas.

Most suburbs have parks and forests as well as residential and commercial areas. This means that werewolves can run and hunt as wolves while still taking part in human society. Therefore, suburban domains tend to be popular with packs that have some reason to maintain human identities, be it wolf-blooded family or just a simple desire to do so.

Of course, the suburbs also lack the anonymity of the big cities and the space of rural areas. If a werewolf wants to disappear, she can't just lose herself in a crowd. Plus, she's more likely to be remembered because the population density is lower. A werewolf pack taking territory in the suburbs needs to take this into consideration, as it means operating with a lighter touch than city or country life requires.

HOMETOWN PACKS

It's not unthinkable that a pack might be composed partially or entirely of werewolves who grew up in the suburb, the city it borders or in other surrounding towns. Such a pack faces learning all about its home turf from a spiritual perspective, but because the packmembers already know the physical geography they have a distinct advantage. The desire for familiarity and safety is understandable, and so it makes sense that if enough werewolves from the same area can find each other and form a pack, they would want to claim territory in an area that they know well. Once these locals learn about the Uratha of the area, the locals know which suburbs are unclaimed

territory and can thus choose a hunting ground that doesn't conflict with others' turf. If the packmembers are smart, of course, they will find out *why* a given area isn't claimed, as the suburbs can hide danger in surprising places.

SUBURBANITE TO WEREWOLF

The First Change is a violent and traumatic event for anyone, but suburbanites who undergo the Change have their own specific issues to overcome. Similar to a city

dweller, a suburbanite who Changes is probably in the middle of a popu-

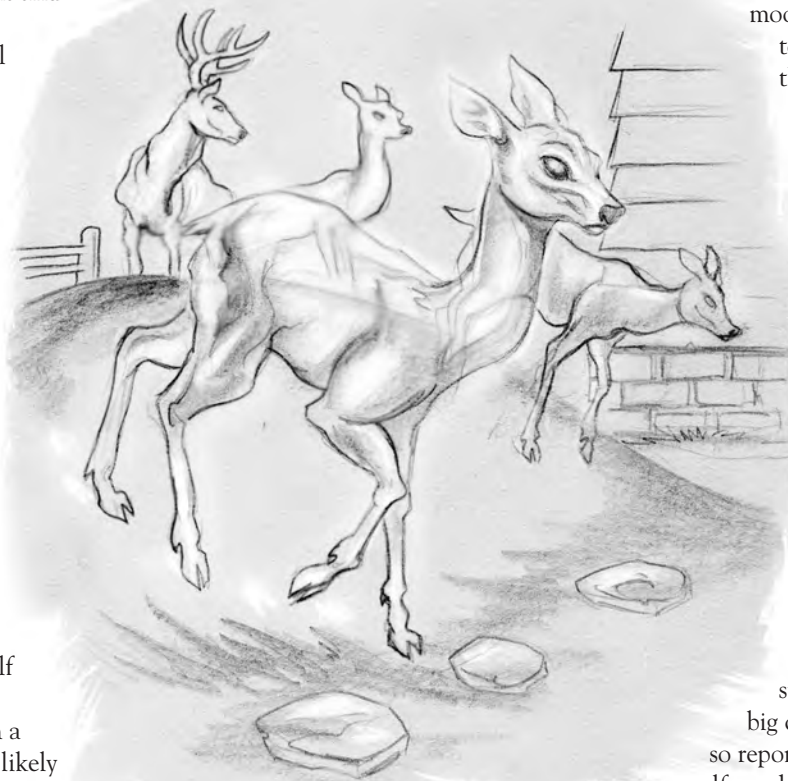
lated area when his auspice moon calls him. Similar

to a country resident, the suburbanite can flee to an unpopulated area after the slaughter is over.

Unfortunately, though, in the suburbs one is never far from human intervention. A new Uratha who runs to the safety of a wooded park can expect to be tracked by rangers (and probably police) within an hour or so. Police officers in suburbs aren't as overworked and stretched thin as their big city counterparts, and so reports of a bear, mad dog, wolf or whatever the Lunacy engenders in the witnesses bring out

a passel of cops. The werewolf needs to find a safe haven, but is probably harried and pursued throughout the course of the night. Hopefully, another pack is around to assist him, but if that isn't the case, he might find himself driven out of the area as spirits subtly nudge pursuers toward him.

A werewolf's initial rampage can cause highly visible and distinctive destruction. This is bad enough in a city, but city dwellers are typically more jaded. Plus, the pace of city life requires that the evidence be covered and repaired quickly, but this isn't true in the suburbs. A person who Changes and escapes might return home (or wherever he was when the Change hit) and be forced to see for weeks what he did. If the Uratha has received no instruction, no context and no contact with others of his kind, the constant reminder of what he did can destroy his sanity.



Werewolves who were suburbanites pre-Change develop in a number of different ways as suburban predators, depending on how they viewed their homes before becoming Uratha. A suburbanite who hates the area and longs to live in the big city or move out to the country probably doesn't like the suburbs any better as a werewolf. Assuming that such a character still has a compelling reason to live in the suburbs (fear of the big city, pack decides to claim territory in the area, family that he feels beholden to, etc.), he might find it harder to keep his Rage in check. Surrounded every day by a territory that he detests, it's probably only a matter of time before he either endangers or exposes his pack.

Alternately, a character who loved living in suburbia pre-Change might find life there challenging, but not insurmountable, as a werewolf. Subtlety is key, and such Uratha learn when they can safely sneak through developments, when the local stores close (usually fairly early) and how best to dodge police and other obstacles. The suburbs can be an Irraka's dream territory just because they demand so much in the way of stealth.

OVERPOPULATION FROM CITY/COUNTRY

If a pack living in a city or in the rural countryside grows too large, members might split off and form a new pack. Likewise, a single member of the pack who meets other, less-experienced werewolves might leave his old pack in order to take an alpha role in a new one. Whatever the reasons, the suburbs make an interesting place for such a pack to establish itself. If desirable territories in the city or country are already claimed, or if the pack is simply ill-equipped to claim such territories, the suburbs make a good middle ground.

Interestingly, this can lead to a central pack of werewolves living in the city, with packs including former members, members' relatives and members' friends claiming the surrounding suburbs. The packs probably aren't entirely loyal to one another, but they know about each other and a loose community exists. This results in extreme xenophobia among the werewolves, and any outsider pack trying to claim territory faces challenges, interrogation and surveillance (at the least). Lodges particular to the area might form, and if the majority of the Uratha belong to the same tribe, they might develop philosophies based on the tribal totem's vow that other members of the tribe find heretical or offensive. Of course, the community comes together when threatened, which means that creatures such as the Hosts are either non-existent or *extremely* subtle in their machinations.

TAKING OVER

A pack of Uratha might seek to steal a suburban territory away from the current werewolf overseers. This works much the same way as territory claims normally do — the invading pack needs to find a way to drive out (or assimilate)

the resident pack without killing the packmembers, or risk the degradation of their souls. In the suburbs, however, there can be no midnight brawls in dark alleys or howls of battle echoing faintly from distant plains. The human population sleeps only yards away from where the Uratha battle, and no matter how much the resident pack wants to defend its homes or the new pack wants to take the territory, both must remember: The Herd Must Not Know.

Battles for territory in the suburbs, then, are largely fought in the *Hisil* or in ways that humanity can't identify as supernatural. Brawls can be fought in *Hishu* or even *Dalu* form, provided that the combatants are willing to spend a night in jail or have an easy escape route. Invader packs find the areas of the territory that the residents are trying to change or improve and work to stifle their efforts, forcing the residents to split their attention between repelling the invaders and keeping their efforts on track. Invaders might hunt down and kill wolf-blooded belonging to the residents, or, if the invaders balk at murdering *uragarum* (some werewolves count them as the People), intimidate them into leaving the area.

The spirit world can be a battlefield where packs clash without worrying about discovery by humans, but the packs do run the risk of powerful spirits entering the battle after the Uratha have wounded each other. Depending on what the area's loci are, reappearing in the physical world can carry the risk of discovery. The *Hisil* is always dangerous, and settling territorial battles there grants the advantage to the resident pack.

FEATURES AND ADVANTAGES

The suburbs boast a few advantages not found in the cities or country. First, the human population, while not as practiced in looking the other way as city dwellers, isn't likely to take up arms against the Uratha. Suburbanites are used to being protected, to hiding behind security systems, neighborhood watches and responsive police forces. As such, when a suburban family hears the snarls of a werewolf fight near the family home, the family members aren't likely to load up a few shotguns and go looking for the source. Instead, they call the police and huddle together, waiting for aid. Of course, given the hair-trigger tempers of the Uratha and the fact that bullet wounds don't slow them down much, this response is probably the best possible one. It also gives the werewolves time to resolve whatever they are doing and flee the area before the police actually arrive.

Second, though it's a small point, werewolves are likely to be the only real predators in the area. Some suburbs boast coyotes or foxes, and sometimes even large wildcats or bears looking for garbage, but, for the most part, such animals have long been driven from populated

areas. Since suburbanites rarely keep livestock, predators don't have much call to bother humans (other than to root through their trash), but this doesn't stop deer, rabbits and other herbivores from breeding out of control. Werewolves, therefore, can hunt the suburban forests for game and not worry about running afoul of a wolf pack. They must be careful to conceal their hunts from the local humans, but as long as the werewolves aren't spotted, the humans probably won't suspect wolves in their midst.

Suburbs don't have much in the way of nightlife. Some boast bars, clubs or coffee shops that are open late into the evening, but most shops and restaurants close relatively early (compared to the city, which remains active all the time). Therefore, provided that the werewolves avoid the few suburbanites who keep late hours, the Uratha can go about their business unnoticed.

The problems of taking a suburban territory were discussed above, but what about defending such a territory? Physical terrain plays a role, of course, but an invading pack probably targets the places in the territory that the resident pack holds dear. This might be the packmembers' homes or the homes of their families, loci that they commonly use or even restaurants or bars that they frequent. The biggest advantage that the resident pack has, though, is that people in suburbs notice outsiders. The more affluent the suburb, the faster an invading pack will be noticed and probably harassed by the police. Of course, some werewolves are adept at blending in with humans, and any pack that wishes to claim territory in a suburb had best learn how to do so. Fortunately, suburbs rarely have the closeness between residents that small towns generate, and so as long as the Uratha can suppress their tempers and develop social skills to outstrip the effects of Primal Urge, they can remain undetected.

TOTEMS

Packs hunting for a totem spirit in the suburbs find a greater degree of spirit diversity than they might expect. Yes, deer-spirits and rabbit-spirits abound, but they don't tend to be healthy since their physical counterparts are typically overpopulated. A perceptive pack, though, can find snake-spirits, dog-spirits (not every pack would consider such a spirit, but they are extremely loyal and helpful once won over), cat-spirits, crow-spirits and raccoon-spirits. Consider the local fauna when presenting options for spirits. A particular species that the locals know and that serves as part of the cultural identity of the area assuredly has a strong spiritual counterpart.

Animal spirits aren't the only option, of course. Spirits of vehicles (SUVs are especially appropriate in the suburbs) and even buildings can serve as unorthodox pack totems. Packs that take such totems must be careful when traveling, however. The more uniquely suited to the suburbs a totem is, the more uncomfortable (and, potentially, weaker) it becomes outside the territory.

No matter what the form of the totem, suburban spirits often help their Uratha packs remain hidden and go about their business without exposing the existence of the People. Vicious, combative totems aren't easily found in suburbia, and if a pack with such a totem takes a suburban territory, the totem will need to be reined in lest it disrupt the local spiritscape.

PACK TOTEM:

WASP THE VENGEFUL BUILDER

Attributes: Power ; Finesse ; Resistance

Willpower:

Essence: max

Initiative:

Defense:

Speed: (species factor)

Size:

Corpus:

Influences: Perseverance •; Wasps •

Numina: Material Vision Unspoken Communication (as the Gift)

Bonuses: Crafts (given); Stealth (given); Essence pool — points (story)

Ban: The pack cannot let visitors into their home without inflicting pain upon them, even something as minor as an overly firm handshake.

Cost:

Wasps make their homes under the eaves of houses, outside swimming pools, in hollow logs in backyards and anywhere else they find suitable. They can build a new nest in less than a day, and when called to defend it, they are vicious. A pack that follows Wasp the Vengeful Builder will be industrious in the improvement and defense of its home, and the packmembers will never forget a slight. The pack's living quarters probably swarm with the insects, even during colder months, but the Uratha never seem to get stung.

LOCI

Suburban loci aren't necessarily more common than urban or rural loci, but suburban loci do tend to be easier to find because the rest of the landscape feels so bland from a spiritual perspective. From the *Hisil*, especially, finding loci is easy because the terrain tends to be flat — the natural landscape is gone due to human influence, but the human-made structures don't have enough invested in them to appear strongly.

Thus, objects in the suburbs aren't likely to be loci simply because of their physical locations. The emotions and situations required to turn a simple object into a locus are many and varied, and so no commonality exists among "suburban loci." Below are three possible loci to use in suburbs, but feel free to customize them as necessary for your troupe's territory.

THE GAZEBO AT THE CENTER OF TOWN

Rating: ●●●●

Resonance: Varies

The “center of town” rarely corresponds to the literal geographical center of a suburb. Rather, the term refers to wherever the two main streets intersect. City hall is usually in that area, as are a variety of shops and restaurants (or, if the suburb has fallen on hard times, a number of boarded-up storefronts). Normally, a wooden gazebo can be found in this area as well. Summers might find a band playing in that gazebo, while during spring people take shelter there to smoke cigarettes. Couples might rent the gazebo for weddings, while younger couples use it for other sorts of rendezvous during the night.

The gazebo makes for a good locus, but the resonance of such a locus varies based depending on what kind of activity takes place there. For example:

- **The Sex Gazebo:** The gazebo at the center of a suburb of Portland, Oregon, is hidden by a copse of trees and not visible from the road. It’s also just a short walk from the high school, and, as a result, randy young people like to sneak into the gazebo to satisfy their lusts. It’s become a kind of rite of passage to “do the gazebo,” and the Essence that the locus produces is tinged with lust. The *Hisil* surrounding the gazebo crawls with lust-spirits, waiting to feast on the couplings of the locals. Sometimes one of these spirits Urges a student, but none have yet Claimed one. The ground around the gazebo in the spirit wilds is always grassy and a pleasant temperature, even during the dead of winter. The grass is soft and inviting, and the air is fragrant. Spirits around the gazebo don’t attack Uratha, normally, though some spirits have been known to use their Influence to nudge werewolves into forbidden trysts. Local Uratha even tell stories of female werewolves impregnated by lust-spirits, and giving birth to spirit-children who grew up to be incubus-like creatures who could drain the life from their lovers.



- **The Bloody Gazebo:** In Bramton, Tennessee, the gazebo was once a gallows. Some of the same timbers used in that gallows were used to construct the gazebo in 1950. People say that the gazebo is haunted, that if you stand in the exact center and jump up a few inches, you’ll feel a pain in your neck and hear a horrible snapping sound. The Essence this gazebo produces is tainted with pain and terror. Whether or not any actual ghosts linger in Twilight around the gazebo, the Shadow is nightmarish. An immense bonfire burns constantly near the gazebo, and spirits of fear, death and hate swirl about. A terrifying spirit called the Hangman appears every half moon, and more than one Elodoth come to speak to it or Rahu come to kill it has ended up swinging lifeless by his neck.

- **The Rallying Gazebo:** The center of a small town outside Hartford, Connecticut, served as the point where a small band of men and women fended off an enemy in the late 1800s. That’s what local lore says, anyway. The truth is that the people fought and killed two crazed Uratha, but Lunacy and time have muddled the story so much that no one, not even local werewolves, know the truth. Whatever the case, the gazebo there is now a locus, and the Essence it produces resonates with valor and community. The spirit world around the center of town is bright and vibrant. Spirits of bravery and sacrifice abound, and even animal-spirits have a certain nobility. What’s more, the spirits in the area hate the Uratha with a blistering passion, and so a pack using the locus to step sideways had best be prepared for a fight.

Stepping sideways at any gazebo is chancy because the structure tends to be in plain sight of several buildings, and possibly the whole town square. Entering the *Hisil* isn’t usually too much of a problem, but exiting is difficult because the Uratha so rarely know exactly what is happening in the material world. Even at night, there tends to be some traffic in the center of town, and so werewolves are advised to find an alternate route or at least be prepared to run.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD DOG'S COLLAR

Rating: •

Resonance: Protection

No one's sure where Buddy came from. Some people think he escaped from the local animal pound and was unofficially adopted by the neighborhood, others think he belonged to an old man and refused to leave the area when his master died. Whatever the case, Buddy is a slim, old mutt, white with brown splotches, and he loves people. He is especially fond of children, and he likes to hang around the local public pool during the summer, watching the kids swim. Everybody has a story about how they watched Buddy jump in and save a drowning child, but the parents say it's just a myth.

The truth, as usual, has elements of many of the legends. Buddy did once belong to a member of the community who died, but his owner was a young boy. The child made a collar for him out of leather, and the two of them were seldom seen separately. The kids in the neighborhood learned to recognize the jangling sound that Buddy's collar made, and over time the collar became a weak locus.

The animal warden did take Buddy away once. Buddy's owner, on a dare, rode his bike out of his neighborhood and into the city. There, the boy was assaulted, beaten bloody and left in the gutter. Buddy, trying to keep up, arrived too late to help the boy, and sat howling until the police arrived. Buddy spent a night in the pound, and it was during that night that Buddy became Ridden. A dog-spirit possessed the mutt, and the natural loyalty Buddy felt toward children merged with the loyalty common to many canine-spirits. When Buddy returned home the next day, he refused to enter his old house, but patrolled the neighborhood guarding the children.

The dog-spirit possessing Buddy has made him stronger and faster than most dogs, and given him the ability to sense fear, hatred and other malicious emotions. Buddy doesn't age and doesn't need to eat, though he gratefully accepts the treats the neighborhood children bring him. Anyone who enters that neighborhood with the intent to harm the people who live there faces an unlikely but extremely vicious foe.

The collar Buddy wears is still a locus, but can only manifest its power when Buddy has remained in the same place for a week or so. Buddy has attracted a pack of dog-spirits, however, and they guard him from rival spirits and bring him food and water to discourage him from roaming. They are capable of Materializing if the need is great enough.

Buddy

Mental Attributes: Intelligence Wits Resolve

Physical Attributes: Strength Dexterity Stamina

Social Attributes: Presence Manipulation Composure

Mental Skills: Investigation Occult

Physical Skills: Athletics (Running) Brawl (Bite)
Stealth Survival

Social Skills: Animal Ken (Dogs) Empathy (Kids)
Intimidation Streetwise

Merits: Direction Sense Fleet of Foot Iron Stomach

Willpower:

Essence:

Health:

Initiative:

Defense:

Speed: (species factor Fleet of Foot included)

Size:

Aspects: Chorus (dog spirits) Father Wolf's Speed (as the Gift)

Weapons/Attacks:

Type Damage Dice Pool

Bite (L)

THE CRAWLSPACE

Rating: •••

Resonance: Fear

The house was built in 1878 for the richest family in Detroit, Michigan, the Haywards. They built outside the city proper, of course. The family consisted of both parents, 10 children, three servants, two grandparents and a wayward uncle, and the house was large enough to hold them all. The youngest daughter, Emily, was only six years old when the Hayward family moved in, and she found the crawlspace after only five weeks. Three weeks after that, two of her brothers held her in the crawlspace until she suffocated. They weren't sure why they'd done it, and since the family was so rich, no charges or official reports ever surfaced.

The wooden beam in the crawlspace, the one that Emily had clutched and clawed while she died, became a locus. It might have remained weak, had not the other children dared each other to crawl into the tunnel and touch it. The locus took in their fear, their dread and their guilt over what happened to Emily and grew in power over time.

The Hayward family passed that house down through generations, and every generation of children slithered into the crawlspace to touch the beam. Then, in 1988, the family finally went bankrupt. The house was far too big for a single family to purchase, but it worked nicely as a bed and breakfast. Wealthy couples from Detroit ventured out to the suburb and stayed in the old house, marveling at the quaint decorations. Their children, though, always seemed to find their way to the basement, and returned later, clothes dirty and disheveled and a haunted look in their eyes.

The house is present in the Shadow, but many of the walls are missing. As the Haywards' possessions were sold off to pay the family's debts, the spirit representation of the family, bound up in the house, suffered, too. The beam, however, remains as strong as it ever was. Spirits of

mice, rats and other house vermin flock to it, and fear-spirits consume them like hawks. A werewolf using the beam to step sideways only needs to be in the basement to do so, but in the *Hisil* the basement is a much smaller space. Urhan or Urshul are more comfortable for negotiating the spirit world around the beam than Dalu or even Hishu. Although the basement is accessible from the outside in the material world through a wooden staircase and double doors, in the spirit world the only exit leads into the house. The spirits of the house are old, angry and senile from years of slowly being stripped of their finery, and they don't take kindly to interlopers.

SAMPLE PERSONAE

The following characters are examples of the kinds of people suburban characters might meet. Because suburbanites can come from anywhere, moving to the area with a new job or following family, any of these people could be wolf-blooded — or even *nuzusul* — and the pack won't know it until it becomes obvious.

JUSTINE FOWLES, THE LOCAL HISTORY EXPERT

Quote: *That house was built in 1853. Of course, in those days ...*

Background: Justine is a lifelong resident of the suburb. She went to college at the local university, married a local man and watched sadly as her children left the area for other states. She worked all her life in the public library, and when she finally retired, she took a job at the Historical Society. She now works to preserve century homes (houses built more than 100 years ago), historical landmarks and the general sense of identity of her town. Watching local business owners die or retire with no one to succeed them hurts her, and she wishes she had the money and the energy to buy and restore some of the grand properties. Although she doesn't know it, some of these properties contain loci (and she might well know stories about a "cursed locket" or a "magical statue," even if she doesn't know the truth).

Description: Justine is a kindly, but stern, woman in her early 80s. She wears her hair short and still regards it as a rebellious act. She is thin and frail, but her mind is whip-sharp and she remembers almost everything she hears or reads. She does enjoy pretending to be deaf on occasion, especially when people offer to buy the house in which the Historical Society meets.

Storytelling Hints: Justine wavers between being happy about her long, full life and worrying about what will happen to her town once she's gone. She's of a strong enough constitution that the revelation of the supernatural wouldn't kill her, but experiencing the Lunacy assuredly would. She considers herself a moral person, but is more interested in preserving the spirit of her town than abiding by every law.

Abilities:

Local History (dice pool 9) — Justine knows almost *everything* about her town. Dirty secrets, rumors, historical fact, scandals — she either remembers it or can find the book that details it.

Politics (dice pool 7) — She also keeps abreast of current events, and makes sure she knows what local and statewide political candidates are going to do about commerce laws and conservation.

DON "BUTCH" BAGROWSKI, THE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH LEADER

Quote: *OK, remember: Treat all guns like they're loaded, so don't point them at anything you wouldn't shoot.*

Background: Butch joined the Marines right out of high school and served his country well for eight years. When he returned to his hometown, he was horrified. His old neighborhood was a wreck. Stores were boarded up, houses were in disrepair and the population was dropping as people left the area. Butch, a natural leader and an obstinate man, refused to stomach it. He took a job coaching football at the local high school, and, recruiting help from the student body, soon had his neighborhood looking beautiful again. Stores started returning; when he found a man trying to sell fast food franchises, Butch ran the salesman out of town with bluster, volume and good old American intimidation.

The town's on the rebound, now, but Butch isn't half done. He wants the town to be the way he remembers it growing up, and that means keeping the high school kids out of the bars, the filth out of the video stores and the developers out of town entirely. He doesn't have the schooling in law or business to know exactly how to proceed, but he's tenacious and driven, and so has been hitting the books. Meanwhile, he trains the locals in gun safety, home defense and empowerment. "Doesn't matter how the town looks like if we don't feel safe," he often says.

Description: Butch is a burly man in his late 40s. He's a bit plump around the middle (civilian life isn't as rigorous as military life, and beer is much easier to come by), but still very strong. He has a hard gaze and a bone-crushing handshake, and is never without his coach's jacket.

Storytelling Hints: Butch is a no-nonsense guy. He hates being called "Don" or, worse, "Mr. Bagrowski." He doesn't consider businessmen, especially franchise operators, to be real people, but rather parasites getting rich off other folks' ideas. He's always keen to hear ways to make his town some money or about business ventures, but the minute the word "franchise" comes up, he breaks off talks. Talking about football, the military or the sorry state of the country is a sure way to get his attention.

Abilities:

Brawl (dice pool 6) — Butch stays in shape by boxing, and is proficient in hand-to-hand combat. He's wiser about getting into fights than he was in his youth, and if

faced with a stronger or faster opponent, breaks bones and fights to immobilize.

Intimidation (dice pool 6) — Butch is a large and frighteningly intense man.

Firearms (dice pool 7) — While never a sniper or marksman, Butch visits a local range often and has a license to carry a concealed pistol.

MIKE LEWIS, THE VANDAL

Quote: *Shit, I didn't know it would burn that fast!*

Background: Mike has never been the best-adjusted kid on the block. He never tortured animals or anything so extreme, but he did like to tie his action figures to bottle rockets, throw rocks at car tires and paint graffiti. His parents would love to believe that he's just intelligent and looking for an outlet or that kids at school pick on him and he's displacing his rage, but neither of those theories have much evidence. Mike's not stupid, but he's by no means brilliant. He's not the most popular kid in school, but he isn't the class whipping boy, either. Mike's in the middle of everything, and perhaps *that* is why he likes to "mess with people."

His parents have tried to keep him from sneaking out at night, but he's good at it. Mike isn't creative enough to think up new and interesting ways to commit vandalism, but the Internet gives him a constant stream of ideas. He's lately taken to putting dry ice in plastic bottles and then sticking them in mailboxes (when the vapor from the ice builds up too much pressure, the bottle explodes, usually taking the mailbox with it). He's especially interested in houses whose owners he rarely sees.

Description: Mike is 15, skinny and pockmarked with acne, and otherwise nondescript. He wears band T-shirts and baggy jeans, but never seems to fit into any particular style. He carries a lighter and a small pack of firecrackers except when at school (the security guards tend to search him often).

Storytelling Hints: Depending the story you want to tell, Mike could be a troubled kid who needs help, a budding serial killer, a potential Ridden, a *nuzusul* or just a nobody snooping around the pack's territory. If he's wolf-blooded, of course, he has a better chance of remembering the characters and their true nature. He might demand that the characters make him a werewolf, or he might just try to find someone online who believes him.

Abilities:

Stealth (dice pool 7) — Mike is quiet and easy to overlook, and practiced at sneaking around.

Larceny (dice pool 6) — Years of sneaking out of his parents' house and shoplifting vandalism supplies have made Mike light-fingered.

OFFICER BEN "MAC" MACDONALD, SUMRY COP

Quote: *I'm telling you, they put needles in the coin slots of phone booths. It's not just an urban legend!*

Background: After graduating from the local university with an English degree, Ben MacDonald looked around in the city for a job and came up short. He thought about returning to school, but wasn't sure what graduate program he'd pursue, and didn't feel like racking up any more student loans anyway. A drunken conversation with his cousin, a cop, at a family picnic led him to apply to the police academy. Ben figured that as a cop in the suburbs, he had little chance of getting shot on the job, and the work would be steady.

He was right, up to a point. During his rookie year, he responded to a call about a fight in a parking lot. He arrived to find one man lying on the blacktop with a sharpened stick protruding from his chest and another man running away into the darkness. Mac gave chase, but couldn't catch up with the man. Returning to the scene of the crime, he found the "corpse" gone — but the stick, red with blood, was lying on the ground.

From that moment, Mac's easygoing demeanor disappeared. He had been reading horror novels since grade school and knew a fair bit about folklore. He started asking questions of other cops, and found far more of these odd stories than he was prepared for. He now works the night shift, terrified of what he might find, but even more terrified that it might find him unprepared.

Description: Mac is in his early 30s. He is athletic, with a slim runner's build. He has a nasty facial tic that flares up when someone asks him to take a day shift. Mac used to be handsome, but he's too on edge to be attractive now, and the lack of sunlight has given him a washed-out look.

Storytelling Hints: Mac isn't terrified all the time, just whenever he stops to think about it. He often has his nose buried in a book of folklore or in a horror novel (he figures that horror authors must have *some* idea what's really going on, and writes them letters constantly). Despite it all, Mac is not a coward, and considers his profession honorable and necessary.

Abilities:

Awareness (dice pool 9) — Mac is extremely hard to surprise. He is used to watching shadows and corners.

Firearms (dice pool 8) — Mac practices his marksmanship daily. He doesn't wish to lose his cool when he finally has to confront "them."

HENRY SMITH, THE WITNESS

Quote: *No, we haven't met. I just have one of those faces.*

Background: Enrico Belucci was an up-and-comer in the Mafia. He never killed anyone, though he was quite adept at scaring the hell out of people. When he was pinched for the first time, he was almost 30 and quite sure he could do a few years for the family. The cops threatened, offered and cajoled, and finally hit on a way to break him. They threatened to reveal that he was gay.

Knowing that his conservative Catholic family would have him shot for being a rat or for being homosexual, Enrico decided to save his own life. He ratted out some guys he never liked anyway, took his place in the Witness Protection Program and moved to a suburb across the country. He'd never admit it to the Feds, but he's actually enjoying it. The suburb he lives in is liberal enough that he can be "out" without having people glare at him, and he finds that being openly gay keeps people from guessing the truth.

Of course, Enrico — or "Henry Smith," as he's now known — didn't share everything that he knew about the family. Some of the things his family was involved in were too gruesome ever to be revealed.

Description: Henry has olive skin, but keeps his black hair lightened. Now in his early 40s, he lives alone but is a fixture at the local bookstore and coffee shops. Years of living with organized crime figures taught him to "play straight" remarkably well, and so most people don't realize he's gay unless he tells them.

Storytelling Hints: Happy in his new life, Henry vaguely worries that the family will track him down and kill him. It's been almost a decade, though, and so far he's seen no sign of them. He knows that the Italian Mafia has been losing influence, and he reckons that the family probably has little time to waste on him. He's wrong. The family has been searching for him, but not because he squealed on him. A certain branch of his family has been dabbling in the occult for centuries, and they need the heart of a traitor to perform a rite that will supposedly return them to glory. They already have the traitor picked out — they just need to find him.

Abilities:

Persuasion (dice pool 8) — Henry is an extremely approachable man. He's easy to talk to and people often find themselves agreeing with him without noticing.

Intimidation (dice pool 7) — Henry doesn't have to shake people down anymore, but he remembers how.

REV. DAVID LOGAN, THE PROFITEER

Quote: *The building expansion's on schedule. I just need the permits. And a few more donations, of course.*

Background: David Logan is a Protestant minister who has done great things for his community. When he arrived, the church was a tiny affair, barely large enough to hold the few people who bothered to show up. David had some money, though, and he spread the cash around town. He visited everyone who moved into his neighborhood or any of the surrounding ones, and he put up fliers anywhere he was allowed. His flock grew, slowly but surely, and he passed the collection plate at least twice per sermon. Five years after he arrived, he had enough money to expand the church. And, as it happened, to build an in-ground pool on his property, but Reverend Logan was private about his home life, so no one noticed that.

The years crept by, and Logan bought the land surrounding the church. At the time, the land was forested, but Logan began harvesting that wood and selling it almost immediately. He drew up plans to build a small community center on the land (run by the church, of course), and squeezed his growing congregation for the money. And, once again, he got enough to build the center and renovate his kitchen, too.

The Reverend has received complaints, of course, from the people living around his church about the destruction of the forest and the noise of the construction machines, but he's adept at making anyone who stands in his way seem un-Christian. His next project, he's decided, is to buy the land across the street from the church and clear it. He isn't sure what he'll build there, but those trees that grow there now don't serve any purpose.

Description: Logan is a fat, jowly man in his early 50s. He has a ready smile and a pleasant demeanor, and shies away from fire-and-brimstone, preferring to focus on people's "responsibilities as Christians." He has been married for over 20 years, but he and his wife have never had children.

Storytelling Hints: The Reverend isn't a malicious person, but he is greedy and self-righteous. Most of the local leaders — city council members, mayor and so on — attend his church and donate to his causes. He shies away from political debates, wishing to keep his church as broadly accessible as possible. The outdoors make him nervous, though he isn't sure why, and he expresses this by buying and building whenever possible.

Abilities:

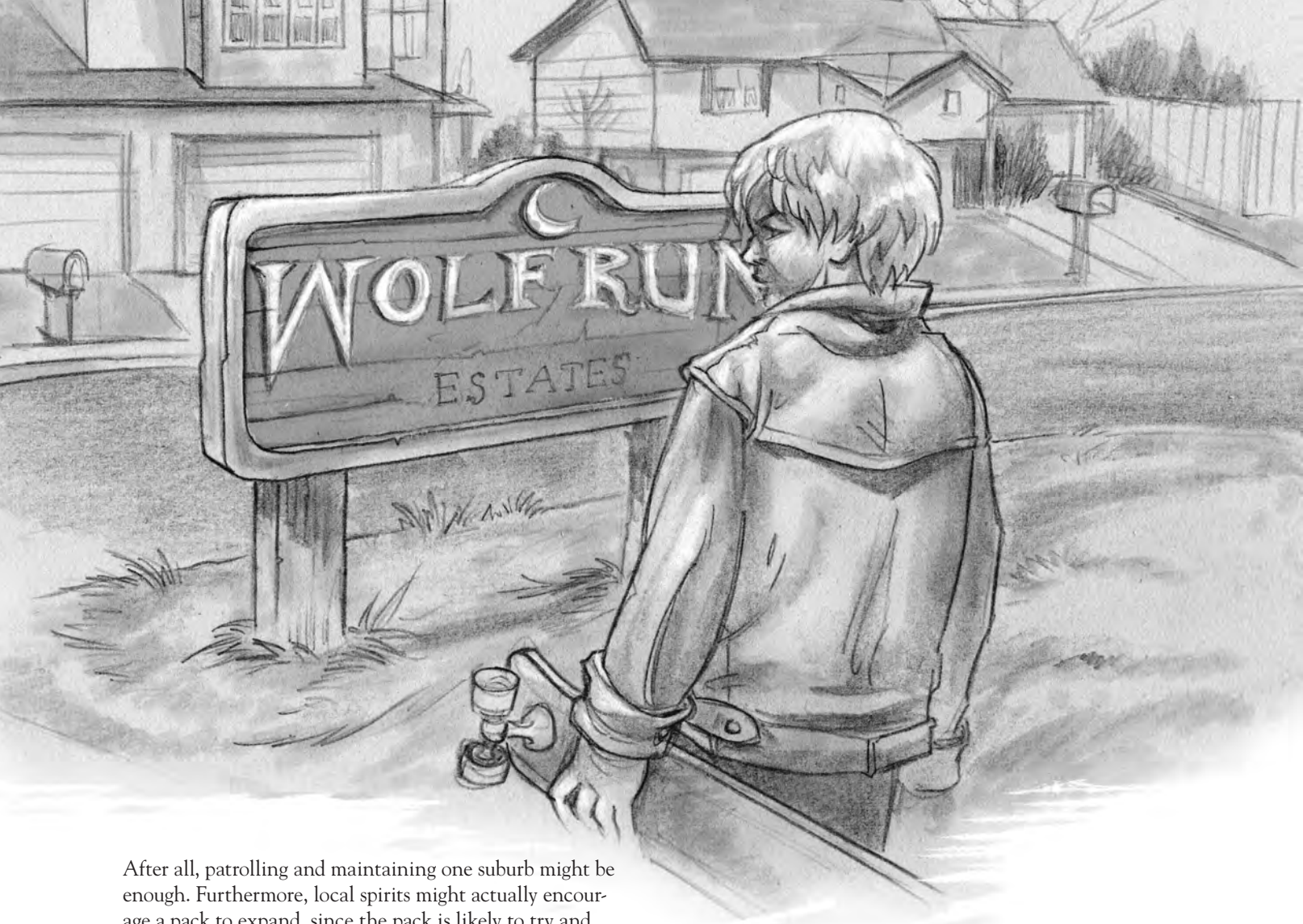
Oration (dice pool 6) — Reverend Logan gives a good, if bland, sermon. He's pleasant to listen to and rarely challenges people to believe or think more than they want.

Finance (dice pool 8) — The Reverend is a skilled financier, and it would take a lot of careful searching to find that he had misappropriated any money.

EXPANSION OPTIONS

The borders of a suburban pack's territory are nicely delineated, as long as the werewolves are willing to use human maps to represent those borders. A pack can easily claim one suburb as their territory, although if the suburb includes a park or forest that crosses into a different township (as is often the case), the pack might stretch its territory to include the entirety of that feature. If no other packs are around to contest the borders, it doesn't much matter, but if other Uratha are or become present, the pack needs to be able to enforce its claims. This is also true if the pack wishes to expand its territory.

Not all suburban packs feel the need to do so, however. Suburbs are microcosms — they typically include everything that a community needs to function. The pack, therefore, doesn't necessarily wish to claim more land.



After all, patrolling and maintaining one suburb might be enough. Furthermore, local spirits might actually encourage a pack to expand, since the pack is likely to try and make the spiritscape consistent throughout its territory (which thus expands the spirits' areas of influence).

If the pack does decide to expand, however, benefits to claiming two or more suburbs do exist. For one thing, each suburb typically has its own, albeit small, police force. Rivalries between neighboring forces are common, and communication isn't always a given. A pack can therefore retreat to one suburb after causing trouble in another without an area-wide manhunt being called, depending on what the pack did, of course. Having a larger hunting ground speaks well of the pack's skills, provided that the packmembers can maintain the territory, and claiming large areas of suburb territory is likely to give the pack a reputation for its ability to hide among humans.

But a suburban pack doesn't necessarily need to claim more suburb territory. What if the pack wishes to push into the city, and claim whatever urban territory borders the pack's own? Or, conversely, suppose the pack moves further out and claims rural territory in addition to the pack's suburban hunting grounds? In such cases, the pack often regards as its non-suburban turf as its "true" hunting ground, where the bulk of its fighting and hunting is done, while the relatively safe suburbs are where the pack meets, relaxes and resides. Of course, the pack needs to

devote time and energy to maintaining (or at least staying aware of) the spiritual balance in the suburbs, lest enemies the packmembers didn't even know about attack them at home.

POTENTIAL THREATS

A suburb can boast many of the same threats as a rural area or a city. Vampires, mages, Ridden, Hosts and hostile spirits can all lurk in the towns between the concrete jungle and the country, though these beings must take extra care to avoid detection. That said, the suburbs boast some special dangers and considerations.

SECRECY

Perhaps the greatest threat in a suburban territory is exposure. People in the suburbs don't have the knowledge of their neighbors' lives that small-town folk have, but suburbanites certainly don't have the layer of callousness that residents of larger cities develop, either. Suburbanites are xenophobic, but the definition of "stranger" is somewhat different from "a person we don't know," since a great deal of familiarity simply isn't present. Werewolves, of course, fit nicely into the suburban definition of "stranger." They just seem dangerous, even if they own property, and they

don't follow normal routines. A group of people walking around in a neighborhood after dark raises eyebrows in the neighborhood watch, meaning that the Uratha might be followed or questioned by the local security force. Residents of suburbia are often told to wave to or otherwise acknowledge strangers in their neighborhoods, just to let them know that they have been seen and noted. A werewolf pack claiming territory in suburbia needs to be stealthy and well trained in blending in with humans.

A NOTE ON URBAN FORM

A wolf is not a dog. A wolf *might* be mistaken for a large dog if the witness only saw a canine form darting across a street. Someone walking a wolf on a leash however is going to leave an impression no matter how much she claims that her pet is a "wolf mix" or a "husky." Suburbanites who see wolves in their neighborhoods are very likely to call animal control or the police (and remember that suburban police are often well armed and bored) and one never knows which otherwise meek denizens of the suburbs are avid hunters or combat veterans. Best to stick to Hishu form unless absolutely necessary. The Partial Change Gift is a must for suburban packs just to allow tracking without changing shape.

What happens to a werewolf pack in its suburban territory if the local populace becomes aware of the pack-members' existence? The Lunacy probably prevents true awareness. The suburbanites aren't going to start carrying silver knives around or hunting the Uratha after dark. Instead, police presence in the area might increase. Violent crimes that are similar in nature draw the attention of federal agents investigating serial crimes, since these agents believe (often correctly) that suburban police forces are ill-equipped to handle such occurrences. While a small squad of humans, even well-trained and well-armed humans, isn't much of a threat to a pack of werewolves, the Uratha can't just kill the humans and leave it at that. When suburbanites go missing or turn up dead, people notice, and the momentum that this kind of fear generates can force werewolves out of their territory.

Consider: A pack of werewolves runs afoul of an enemy, and the fight gets out of hand. The police arrive, but the Uratha slaughter them as well. To avoid having bodies with huge claw marks lying around, the Uratha drag the corpses into the *Hishu* — but now the police have simply vanished in the middle of a call about an animal fight. In a matter of days, pictures of the police officers adorn every bulletin board. The community bands together, wearing ribbons or forming tight neighborhood watches. Fund-

ing and support for the police swell, and, of course, the story is picked up by the media and repeated far and wide (which might well draw werewolf hunters to the area). Citywide curfews may even take effect, and they are easier to enforce in the suburbs than in the cities because there isn't much nightlife anyway. In the end, there isn't an easy way to resolve this situation, other than either leaving the territory or avoiding any suspicious activity for several months. In the suburbs, an ounce of prevention really is worth a pound of cure.

CULTS

Wealthy suburbs are a good breeding ground for cults. A large group of people, many of whom attend the same church and are active in the same sorts of leisure activities, is a captive audience to a persuasive enough leader. While in a small town a cult might grow large enough to encompass most of the citizenry, in the suburbs the cult's strength comes from two sources: its invisibility and the influence of its leaders.

The cult might meet in one member's home, but if most of the other members live in the same neighborhood, it won't even be apparent that the house is hosting a gathering. In a development of large, almost identical houses, the members can lose themselves amidst the twisting streets with little problem (being tracked by scent, of course, can thwart this). The cult might not be involved in anything illegal, but if one of the members is an influential police officer or even a city official, the cult can get away with all manner of crime.

Werewolves can usually tear through cult members, unless membership in the cult comes with spiritual or magical perks (perhaps members become Ridden, or perhaps the leader is a vampire feeding his most devoted followers on his blood). The real danger of such cults comes in the spirits that they might attract and in the possibility of those spirits attacking or converting mortals connected to the pack. Cults have also been known to indulge in unsavory practices such as cannibalism and demon summoning, however, and so might be more formidable than a pack would initially assume.

STORY HOOK — THE NAKED CIRCLE

Boredom makes people do strange things. In the tiny Los Angeles suburb of Happy Valley a handful of wealthy, lonely and bored people formed a sex cult called the Naked Circle. All of the members are married and the cult's laws strictly forbid both partners in a marriage belonging to the cult. The Naked Circle is about primal animalistic *need*. The cult's figurehead was, up until recently, a man named Frank Pike. Pike was at one point a gifted writer but years of drug and alcohol abuse dulled his mind until he's now only

capable of repeating the same hackneyed phrases and arguments He'd found though that they sound good the first time, and that's enough to convince bored wives into his circle

The cult takes occasional camping trips into the nearby Angeles National Forest where cult members spend weekends indulging in their lascivious whims The cult is non threatening or it was until Rita Govern joined Rita the daughter of a Mexican immigrant married an important Los Angeles businessman but felt some vital passion missing in her life and that longing led her to Pike While in the woods with the cult however her magical prowess exerted itself Rita is now a mage and shows a strange predisposition toward spirit magic The camping trips are now becoming orgiastic rites designed to put the Circle members in touch with their "spirit totems " but the truth is that Rita is carelessly disrupting the *Hisil* in the area Sooner or later something is going to notice



SUBURBAN SPIRITS

As discussed previously, the suburban *Hisil* tends to be flat and unimpressive, due to years of human development and mass-produced houses and goods. That doesn't mean the Shadow of the suburbs is safe, however, or that the spirit denizens aren't dangerous. As with almost everything suburban, the *hithim* simply tend to be subtler. Uratha studying suburban spirit denizens might notice the following traits.

SPIRIT PREDATION

One effect of human development on the suburbs is a reduction in biodiversity. That is, some species die out while no new ones are introduced. Prey species such as deer, rabbits and even some forms of insect therefore breed unchecked, and their spiritual analogs also become more numerous. This can have two different effects.

One possibility is that the spirits of a given descant feed voraciously on each other, resulting in fewer spirits, but greater power in those spirits that do exist. Since spirits become more specialized and unique as they grow in power, it's not uncommon for a suburb to boast one herd of deer-spirits, but for each of those spirits to have a special name, ban and personality. Such spirits might even claim territory, especially if two buck-spirits exist. One might brave the highways, daring car-spirits to catch him, while another creeps into people's yards and consumes the spirits of gardens. A pack of Uratha might laugh at the notion of a "powerful and deadly deer-spirit," but the werewolves would be well-advised to remember that spirits do not operate under the same rules and *modus operandi* as their physical counterparts.

Conversely, the spirits of a specific descant might run unchecked. Spirits of rabbits, for instance, feed on spirits of grass and other plants, and spawn more of their own kind with each passing month. This makes finding one particular rabbit-spirit nearly impossible, since the spirits rarely gain enough power to rise above the rank of Gaffling. If a pack offends the rabbit-spirits of the area, however, the packmembers might find the Shadow of their territory undermined with tunnels or picked clean of vegetation. While weak spirits such as these don't normally attack Uratha, it's not out of the question, particularly if the spirits can catch a wounded werewolf alone.

BITTER PREDATORS

Humans don't feel safe with wolves, bears and other large animals roaming amidst their homes. Most now-suburban areas were once home to these animals, but the species have been killed or driven off by human encroachment. The spirits of these predators sometimes die off as well, but sometimes the spirits refuse to leave and instead find other methods of survival.

It is not impossible for a spirit with no physical analog to survive, preying on the spirits of its natural prey (wolf-spirits on deer-spirits, for instance, or bobcat-spirits on rabbit-spirits). Since these predator-spirits aren't likely to find other members of their own descant to consume, however, these spirits must either travel to find such spirits or convince Uratha to track down such spirits for them. Doing so can be a way for a pack to strengthen its totem, and can also be a method of chiminage for a werewolf who wishes to learn a Gift.

Displaced predator-spirits have another option, of course: become magath. The suburbs have a plethora of spirits to consume, if the predator is willing to hunt outside its own descant. A pack might face the spirit of a fox that has been preying on cat-spirits, a bear-spirit prone to eating the spirits of SUVs or a wolf-spirit that has taken to slipping into garages and feeding on tool-spirits. While most magath have only two "component" spirits, suburban predator magath might have three or more, depending on how old they are and how their chosen prey has evolved. The bear-spirit mentioned previously might have started with station wagons, then moved to minivans and only now begun feasting on SUVs. The common thread, of course, is large vehicles are often used to transport families, which plays into the bear's role as a guardian of cubs.

SAMPLE CONFLICT: HOMOGENEITY

The following section isn't a sample story per se, but merely a the framework for a conflict that would work best in a suburban setting. It uses some of the characters and places mentioned in this chapter, but the Storyteller can (and is encouraged to) alter these details to best fit her chronicle.

Locations, be they stores, playgrounds or even cities, have spirits. These spirits, as mentioned on p. 266 of **Werewolf: The Forsaken**, can grow in power by consuming spirits within the physical space the location represents. The suburbs have spirits, too, often resembling the spirit of the city that the suburbs border with a few subtle differences.

The suburb-spirit in question is hungry and ambitious, and wishes to consume *all* of the spirits within the borders of the town. This is a monumental undertaking, and requires finding and devouring every animal-, vehicle-, building-, elemental- and ideological-spirit in the area. Such an act would surely take years, if not decades, and every gust of wind can bring in new spirits. The suburb-spirit has a plan, however, and the humans in the area are playing right into it.

Making the suburb resemble every other suburb allows a certain homogeneity in the spiritscape, which, in turn, allows the suburb-spirit to draw power from a wider base. In theory, if the suburb resembles the towns that border it closely enough, the spirit could consume *those* suburb-spirits as well, growing to the level of Minor God. The assimilation of all of the minor spirits in the area would still take time, but if the spirit could extend its Influence to every store (or, worse, every branch of a chain) in that area, the spirit could conceivably devour any spirit that ventured too near. In effect, the suburb-spirit becomes a perverse combination of weed and predator, spreading through the Shadow like kudzu and consuming the spirits the suburb-spirit catches.

Of course, not every human being in the suburb is an unknowing accomplice. People such as Justine Fowles and Butch Bagrowski are actively working to keep the unique facets of the area. Vandals such as Mike Lewis cause destruction and chaos, shaking up the material world

and the *Hisil* alike. Beings such as Buddy, the dog-Ridden or the Hangman-spirit of the Bloody Gazebo also have a vested interest in thwarting the suburb-spirit. Any of these beings can clue a Uratha pack in to what is happening (either by telling the packmembers outright or just getting their attention), but can also act as adversaries to the werewolves if the beings feel that they would aid the suburb-spirit for any reason.

THE SUBURB-SPIRIT

Depending on how powerful this spirit has grown it might take any number of forms. At early stages the suburb spirit might look like a normal human or animal resident of the suburbs but drool as though constantly hungry or possess an elongated maw or limbs the better to snatch spirits out of the air. A suburb spirit that has reached the level of Minor God might simply blend in to the background in the *Hisil* and communicate with Uratha by rearranging letters on street signs speaking through the mouths of passerby or manipulating sounds such as wind the hum of insects or the background noise of traffic.

The spirit's ban probably depends on the city in question — a spirit representing a suburb of Chicago is likely to have a very different ban than that of a suburb of Orlando. The pack might have to journey into the city itself to learn the ban research the history of the suburb or find a spirit or werewolf who remembers when the town was founded.

WAR ZONE: THE ORGAN PIPE CACTUS NATIONAL MONUMENT

OVERVIEW

About 550 square miles of land, give or take, the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument was proclaimed in 1937 to protect and preserve the only region of land where the organ pipe cactus and several other rare plants grow naturally in the United States. Located in the Sonoran Desert and sharing 30 miles of the United States-Mexico border, the monument is a beautiful tourist attraction in southern Arizona, and also an occasional destination for American naturalists and botanists. A place of great beauty, it is also the focus of great rage and pain.

Long arms of the organ pipe cacti eclipse the sun in the spirit-reflection of the Monument, even though its rays scorch every last inch of the ground. Small cacti and other plants of all local varieties dot the landscape, and even the tallest flora don't obscure vision of the horizon, many miles away. Two of the tallest organ pipe cacti, also present in the real world, are loci of natural Essence. Each is a paragon of its species, green arms towering into the pale blue sky with needles sharp enough to pierce armor. As someone approaches, they glisten with apparent deadliness, communicating threat effectively. From just beyond the defending cacti, *things* look on from their positions of safety, their attentions nervous and angry at the same time.

Exploring the Shadow further reveals the tumult there. Between the two loci, two spirit courts fight each other for control of both. Bolts of pure Essence fly across the no-spirit's land, and some alliances shift as easily as sand. At the same time, a new spirit of great power from the southern border treads slowly across the Pipe Cactus territory, burning any lesser spirit that refuses to swear to it and leaving a trail of spirit-glass in its wake. In time, this creature may force the warring courts into a temporary allegiance against it.

Within the spirit park, only the Kris Eggle Visitor Center stands as evidence that humans have ever stepped here. Named for a Border Patrol agent killed by a drug

runner, the Visitor Center stands out sharply in the spirit desert, now a minor locus resonant with honor and regretted loss. Every bench and door is reminiscent of a mausoleum, and the insects' hum in the background sounds like a lazy dirge. The cacti are sparse here, and the ambiance more relaxed.

South, at the border, the Shadow landscape takes a different form. Plants droop and the sky dims to gray, despite the always-clear daytime. Within three miles of the border itself, there is no reflection of the bountiful life in the physical world. Flat, featureless desert displays no characteristic marks to a visitor. Even the insignificant river that shares the border between Arizona and Mexico for a short five miles is absent. The place *feels* as desolate as it looks, and a werewolf might recognize it as a shoal. Shoals are common along the border in this territory, and dark spirits watch from their depths, miserable or ambitious, waiting for their opportunity to lash out at the joyful part of the world. Interspersed between the shoals are worse places, places that emanate feelings of horrible fear and loss.

Returning to the physical world, the war-hows of werewolves under Rage echo over the park nightly. Border Patrol agents die regularly, shot by smugglers or (more often) torn apart by the angry Uratha that the territory's pack can smell on the winds every night. Forsaken and Pure, not from this territory, fight on the southern border at least every week; the pack that claims the territory may not always see them, but they leave their scents behind. Paranoid Pure Tribes to the north of the territory make regular raids on the Forsaken pack living here, acting to prevent the potential "blood contamination" that letting the Forsaken packmembers breed might cause. Other Forsaken, seeing the dangers of letting the territory run its own course, try to drive even other Forsaken tribes away, believing that only their own guidance can correct the place's troubles.

Evidence of war is everywhere, if one only looks in the right place.

IN THE EYES OF MAN

The United States-Mexico border causes only trouble for the National Monument. Citizens of a half-dozen countries across the world use the border to enter the United States illegally, and the Monument's qualities make it a good choice for the attempt. The National Monument is not nearly as busy as Tijuana or Nogales, where the thousands of potential illegal entries keep the Border Patrol busy. Only the small town of Sonoyta has a significant population on the Mexican side of the border. Unlike Tijuana and Nogales, Sonoyta doesn't sit on the border itself; the town isn't more than a two-mile drive to the border checkpoint, but the fact that people hoping to emigrate can't look 100 feet into the United States makes a big difference.

But Sonoyta isn't the problem. The problem is the drug runners and coyotes (slang for people-smugglers) who discovered the lax security around the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument some decades ago. They've been taking advantage of the area since, and the Border Patrol has met that activity with a corresponding amount of attention. Today, the Patrol sends a couple cars past each day to watch for undocumented entries, and there are two or three agents observing several trouble spots every night. Barely a day goes by that the agents don't catch and process three to 10 people — usually Mexican, but occasionally of other nationalities — trying to become illegal aliens in the United States. Coyotes are harder to catch, but the Patrol still captures at least three in an average week. No one believes the drug smugglers are more rare than the people smugglers, but the Border Patrol still finds only one or two a week, and arrests are even less common. Shootouts occur as often as every other week, whenever the smugglers are truly desperate enough to risk the greater penalties and the physical harm.

MORE ON ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Immigration into the United States via the Mexican border is an oft discussed subject with a great deal of complexity. Some people believe Mexico is scheming to reclaim California and Texas and others just worry about the effects of NAFTA and other border policies on the United States' economy. For more information, some of which is clearly biased, check out these resources:

The Gatekeepers, film

The Silent Invasion book Scott Gulbransen

Dying to Cross book Jorge Ramos

United States of America: Human Rights Concerns in the Border Region with Mexico report Amnesty International

Tensions run high on both sides of the border. To the south, hundreds of immigrants a month stop briefly at Sonoyta, hoping to find a new life in America but afraid of getting caught by the Border Patrol. They are unsure of what will happen if they are caught, especially after hearing horror stories about beatings, murders and rape, but they are also uncertain of what to do if they get through successfully. Coyotes are bitter; the prices they demand are very good for a night's work, especially in Mexico, but all are aware that the risks they take could land them in a bad prison. And every coyote knows a colleague or two who have disappeared or, worse, been shot or beaten on the job. What are vague nightmares to hopeful immigrants are solid consequences to the coyotes. Drug smugglers have two sources of fear: the Border Patrol and any consequences they represent and the quiet, strong concerns for which the smugglers are working. Getting caught on the job is a good way to get beaten by the Patrol and then beaten or killed by one's employers, and refusing to cross is a better way to earn that employer's wrath.

North of the border, Border Patrol agents share some of the same fears. *Will tonight be the night I get shot by a smuggler?* But many of them feel anger as well. They resent the illegals whose activities force the Patrol to be vigilant and, occasionally, take an American life. Furthermore, some Americans believe that there is a directed movement in Mexico to infiltrate the southwest United States with immigrants, slowly returning the region to Mexico's control. The more conspiracy-minded believe that the Mexican government is acting in concert with other enemies of the United States, such as North Korea and China. Disproportionate numbers of these people manage to get positions within the Border Patrol. Because they feel more strongly about it, more of them apply, and superior officers who would prefer an agent be unbiased are unable to weed them all out.

All this fear and hatred pushes the people who meet at the border beyond their normal limits. Consciences and morals are forgotten as rage takes over, giving rise to the too-many dangerous incidents at the border. Drug runners, driven by fear of reprisal, gun down Border Patrol agents. Frustrated by their resentment and feelings of impotence, agents of the Patrol abuse captured illegal immigrants with beatings, withheld sustenance, ridicule and rape. Members of "American protection" civilian patriots' clubs perform their own patrols outside the scope of the law, paranoia and anger fueling their efforts to discourage immigration.

Sociopaths are no more common among Mexican smugglers and paranoid Americans than they are in the rest of society. No normal man can torture, utterly humiliate or kill another human being without feeling guilt and struggling with the act, however justified it felt at the time. The players in this drama leave a great deal of guilt behind them in the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, though more follows them home.

East of the National Monument, sharing its eastern border, lies the significantly larger Tohono O'odham Indian Reservation. One of the largest reservations in the American southwest, the ancestral lands of the Tohono O'odham (Papago) people are recognized by both the United States and Mexico. The treaty that mentions this also specifically allows O'odham Indians to cross the international border for the purpose of their traditional ceremonies and celebrations. Unfortunately, this simple statement has triggered misunderstandings and resentment.

Agents of the Border Patrol, trying to do their duty in a difficult and dangerous situation, have made the mistake of apprehending members of the Papago tribes as they try to return to the United States. With no special identification to indicate their heritage — and since many members of the tribe are no more than one-fourth or one-eighth O'odham — the protestations of the wrongly imprisoned meet little more than ridicule and the usual assortment of maltreatments.

After many years of such poor treatment, the Tohono O'odham are no longer willing to stand by while their rights are ignored and they are abused. Some of them, mostly small groups of younger tribe members, are angry and just looking for an opportunity to fight back. Groups of such youths sometimes stalk through the night, looking for an excuse to loose their rage on a hapless Patrol agent. They rarely do more than brandish a knife and throw some stones, but Patrol agents are under orders not to offend the politically powerful Tohono. Even so, the conflicts slowly escalate, and some young Papago are flaunting guns.

WEREWOLVES

However beautifully cactus blooms rise to the sky, they cannot conceal the chaos in the territory. Every pack of the Forsaken Tribes recognizes that the region is trouble and needs help. Nightmares bleed into the *Hisil* around the territory. Spirits of fear congregate beneath the border and spread out into the National Monument to the north and Sonoyta to the south. Anger- and hate-spirits are not as ubiquitous as those of fear, but are all too familiar to the local Uratha.

Pure Tribes keep out of the Pipe Cactus territory for the same reason that the Forsaken *need* to take it. The spirits have had their own run for a long time, and they don't want any interference from the People. Pure packs, with their different perspective on the Shadow Realm and its inhabitants, leave it to the spirits as part of their diplomacy. The Forsaken cannot afford to let the spirits continue unhindered, especially as their war is beginning to cause casualties in the spirit world.

When a Forsaken pack moves into the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, the spirits ignore the pack until the werewolves act against the spirits' interests. That's when all hell breaks loose. Aid comes in the form

of angry Pure, responding to requests from their spirit allies. Each day, more blood spills than the last, as Predator Kings slay humans to complicate their foes' lives and Fire-Touched launch vicious, visible attacks at every opportunity to scare the damnable Forsaken.

There is much to do.

Loci need to be controlled by the Forsaken; doing so will limit the strength of the warring spirit courts and reduce the size of the conflict. Of course, the spirits guard their loci with as much strength as they can muster. Even if they can't take the loci, the werewolves have a duty to repair the devastation being caused by the war and prevent more. Stopping the war is a very complex political action, and unless the loci are permanently removed from the spirits' grasps, hostilities will eventually return.

In the south, a great spirit of flame chaotically ruins everything it touches. The pack must learn the spirit's intentions and whether they can treat with it or it must be put down. Other spirit courts there are not involved in the war; if they are waiting to scavenge land and loci from the weakened victors, things will only go downhill if the war continues.

The southern loci, which fuel guilt and fear, reinforce themselves on the border. Not only must they be destroyed — an act sure to enrage many — but the pack must change the border conditions, or else the loci will return. Though immigration is a longer-term concern, the pack will eventually have to take a stance on immigration, the Border Patrol and how to handle them. Whatever choice the packmembers make will surely earn them some enemies.

Pure Tribes won't stop harrying the territory without cause. Forsaken may try to cut a deal with spirit courts in the Pure's territories, but it takes a great bargain or a lot of wheedling to get most spirits to go against the Pure. Less complicated is fighting the Pure directly and forcing them to respect the pack's strength — but it may well be more difficult, if not impossible. The local Pure are old and mighty, and defeating them directly may be more trouble than a new pack of Forsaken can handle.

Some Immigration Options

Any pack trying to claim the Pipe Cactus territory eventually concerns itself with the "immigration problem." Some packs want to eliminate it completely, thus depriving the negative loci near the border of their source. Eventually, such an act would make it easier for the Forsaken to curb those loci and eliminate them completely. Another pack might encourage immigration, wanting to claim the loci. After chasing off the many spirits that sip of the loci daily, the werewolves would have immense power at their disposal. For whatever purpose, a pack needs to shape the region's immigration even as the packmembers deal with nightly raids from the Pure and a Shadow war.

To do so, the werewolves must make an effort to manipulate both the local Border Patrol and the immigration and drug efforts on the other side of the border. Making

the Border Patrol do what one wants might be as low-key as becoming known to the locals and buying the agent a doughnut while one's pack helps a Mexican family across the border (or tears them to shreds and buries them). On the other hand, it could be as intricate as giving the Patrol valuable tip-offs on enough occasions to gain the agents' trust while simultaneously befriend the local anti-immigrant league and playing the two against each other to achieve one's goals. In the long term, the pack can try to influence locals to different ways of thinking, but few locals actually live within the Pipe Cactus territory; other werewolves, many Pure, would take fatal offense at any such attempt.

Affecting the drug smugglers and coyotes requires a different effort. Integrating with humans outside the pack's territory is hard, so the packmembers must instead create consequences that forge the proper actions. One potential tactic would be to "close" the border. A vigilant pack could locate and rebuff (or kill) every drug mule and immigrant smuggler who tries to enter the United States. After a few months to a year, the National Monument would acquire such a deadly reputation that the number of people who tried to cross would drop immeasurably. In turn, that would reduce the tension and soften the feelings of the Border Patrol, weakening the pools of negative emotion and Essence.

Alternately, the pack can facilitate crossing, helping the Mexicans evade capture. If no immigrants ever die or fail, the region's reputation changes. First, without deaths or frightening, hate-filled encounters, support for the pain loci is reduced. Second, the region acquires a more positive reputation on the other side of the border, and illegals no longer approach the journey with such nervousness. Patrol agents may begin spreading other emotions around, but embarrassment and shame aren't as dangerous as murderous rage and guilt.

Keep in mind as players consider these options that the Pure don't stop attacking and Shadow wars don't cease just because the Forsaken are being humanitarian. If anything, the Pure and the spirits take the opportunity to ratchet the threat upwards.

WOUNDS!

Ithaeur who investigate the territory's border may question what made the many negative incidents there form loci instead of Wounds. A close examination of the mystery can reveal interesting story hooks:

A spirit wise in the way of pain and misery shaped the emotions into wellsprings of Essence instead of tears in the *Hisil*. Strangely he is not reaping the benefit of his work. Why not?

The geomantic placement of the nearby loci (the Organ Pipe loci and the Visitor Center) caused the layered negative Essence to erupt

outward instead of collapse inwards. If this arrangement can be studied and duplicated, future Wounds could be prevented.

Each negative locus is founded on the body of a Spider Host. The entity is barely alive but is sustained by an unknown force. What ritual did this? Will killing the Host bring the locus crashing down to become a Wound? And why is an Azlu tied to the creation of a locus of all things?

Wounds begin as loci. Only after it becomes too powerful for the negative Essence to continue pouring into the physical realm does a negative energy locus turn into a Wound — almost as stars become black holes. These loci did not reach that level of strength before spirits found them and began to drain the loci's power. But are they still gaining strength?

MOVING THE BORDER

You can easily transport this territory to any place in the world where sensitive conditions cause emotions to run hot amidst dangerously escalating conflicts. Borders are unnecessary, though they help to focus the ideologies. Israel is an ideal choice. China and some of the nations that broke away from the Soviet Union may also still have quite tumultuous borders that may invoke a great deal of tension among those nearby. Africa could play host to any number of high-tension borders, or even outright wars. Changing the names of the nations and locations on either side of the border is easy. Any of these can be good places to relocate the National Monument and its troubles.

The characters in this section have mindsets and motivations easy to translate. The Border Patrol agent with a smoldering anger at the Mexicans becomes an Israeli soldier whose siblings died in a Palestinian bombing or a Central African Republic border guard with a grudge against the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The vicious nationalist, instead of organizing a hate group against immigrants, discriminates against his nation's neighbors. The smuggler knows how to cross into or out of Uzbekistan without getting caught.

Supernatural dangers are likewise flexible. The natural spirit lord has a mysterious backer; his Influence may be based in local plant life, but he may be a sand-spirit in Israel or a spirit of great apes in Africa, and his spirit war is just as dangerous in China as it is in Arizona. The Ivory Claw pack is still obsessed with the purity of its bloodline, but the outside race is different. The Predator Kings represent a local human tribe, present in the region since time immemorial but still deprived of some ancient or otherwise forgotten rights. The array of fear and hate loci still mark the territory's border, and the dangers that accompany them as well.

WAY DO THEY WANT IT? (FEATURES AND ADVANTAGES)

The Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument may have its good points. Beautiful land with rare plants and the spirits that want them to grow. Three usable, if not strong, loci that don't harm their surroundings. Decent desert hunting, especially in the wildlife refuge to the west, even if it is mostly small game. But really, with the strongly structured and resistant spirit courts monopolizing the loci and the *Hisil*, and the utter blight that covers the southern border and is growing almost quickly enough to see, why would any werewolf want to claim this territory?

Prestige. The Forsaken pack that tames this wilderness, forsaken in its own way despite its beauty, will earn Renown enough to earn the pack's place in the songs and howls of generations to come. Such a pack will possess the respect of every Forsaken within one, maybe 200 miles, because the Pipe Cactus disaster area is well known to local Uratha. Even if young, the pack that bests the Monument will become a sort of instant elder. Other werewolves will ask of the packmembers advice, and boons, and fear them. At least, that is what ambitious werewolves tell themselves.

Duty. Even if the packmembers are unable to fix the territory's many problems, a pack of the Forsaken Tribes may be able to keep the area, and its many evil loci, out of Pure hands. The Pure have fewer compunctions about using the hate- and pain-tainted Essence that comes from the southern loci. Pure werewolves are happy to use any source of power to help them destroy their brethren who forsook Father Wolf so long ago. Some, Predator Kings especially, are even sickeningly pleased to use the suffering of the human prey as a weapon against the hated Forsaken. The better relationship that Pure have with the world's spirits helps them make use of the negative loci without having to drive off the flocks of entities clamoring to feed from them. For this reason alone, holding the Pipe Cactus territory is a worthy effort for the Forsaken, even if they are doing so only by the skin of their claws.

Power. Some Forsaken don't care about the pain that the humans suffer to create the southern loci, seeing them only as potential sources of great power. Pure Tribes are all around the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, and using every weapon available to crush them is a fitting aim. Such packs only make the effort to secure their access to the territory's more powerful loci, those around the border. These packs cajole and bribe spirits for a turn at one fountain, and they destroy entire fiefdoms to clear another for their use. And after they grow drunk and strong on Essence, they take the battle to the enemy in the nearby Pure territories. This is precisely the reason that the Pure want the territory, and while no Forsaken werewolf completely forgets that fact, many submerge the thought while performing the same abuses that the Pure

would. Over time, a pack that draws its strength from these loci finds itself more bloodthirsty and less inhibited, more willing to cut down a human when it doesn't need the human alive. Werewolves might begin to sympathize with the ideologies that fed the loci from which they drank — most begin to feel the urge for security and freedom (which encourages them to destroy the foul loci that endanger and bind them), but some may begin to feel more protective of their territory, paranoid about everyone who enters it or any other relevant emotion. Uratha so affected feel as if they arrive at the belief naturally and logically, though people who know them well might notice that it's an abnormal change.

Personal reasons. An Elodoch from southern Arizona could easily carry over her sense of balance to preventing incursions on the border, and, over time, such peripheral efforts may grow into a passion for the werewolf. Werewolves who grow up south of the border may have lost relatives to the border's violence, and Uratha from the north may still feel a nationalism from their days as a pre-Change American.

There are no real "most common" tribes that try to occupy the Monument. Only the Iron Masters avoid it. After all, there is a reason that immigrants choose to cross there and the Patrol agents feel the way they do. And most Iron Masters believe that they must *honor* those reasons, which prevents them from addressing most of the ailments that plague the territory. Such an interpretation of the tribe's credo is not universal, of course, so some Iron Masters packs may be attracted to the region in order to better the human condition. They choose to honor their territory by making it a less foul place for the Mexican to immigrate and the Patrol to guard.

Among the other tribes, there is a motivation for each to take the territory as its own. Storm Lords who learn of the park see it as a great challenge. Leaving it to the Pure would be a fatal error, and letting another pack brave its dangers would be like admitting that the Storm Lords cannot do it. It would be weakness, pure and simple, so Storm Lords packs have their eyes on the territory. Storm Lords would be among the most likely to abuse the negative loci as a source of pure power. Hunters in Darkness see it another way. The humans, in a rare show of wisdom, saw fit to recognize the importance and primal beauty of the region, with its cacti and natural desert. It doesn't hurt that, as a national park, the Pipe Cactus territory is mostly off-limits to the various human activities that often plague werewolf packs; the Hunters even recognize that the Predator Kings likely prize the area for the same reasons. But their arbitrary national borders have given rise to such damage that the area itself may never recover. It is the cactus loci that the Hunters in Darkness wish to defend, with everything that entails.

The Bone Shadows recognize the ubiquity of spirit courts in the region. Should they meet no resistance in their attempts to completely rule an area of such impor-

tance, the shadow entities would surely gloat over their success and spread. The Forsaken cannot allow such behavior to go unpunished, and Bone Shadows are the ones to do it. Blood Talons, on the other hand, are often just looking for a good fight. And for any Talons from the Sonoran Desert, the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument is the front line. If they go there and earn glory, it is good. If they fall defending the ways of the Forsaken from encroaching spirits and the Pure, so be it. Blood Talons, like the Storm Lords, may be willing to use the fear and hate loci as a source of strength.

TAKING (AND HOLDING) THE TERRITORY

Playing **Werewolf** set in this (or a similar) territory can begin either with the pack already in control of the region or about to take it. The former is easier — the game can begin with the assumption that the Forsaken pack made a clever and brave attack on the pack that held it before, driving the pack out, or that the Forsaken pack surprised those packs that had absorbed the territory into their own territories with their claim and their surprising ability to defend it.

Starting before the pack takes the Pipe Cactus territory, on the other hand, requires the players to have a compelling reason to take on the responsibility. Beginning with the territory makes it their responsibility, gives them an obligation; before that point, the players could always back away.

In this situation, having one pack claiming the region as an add-on to the pack's main range is easiest; with a reasonable show of force, the Forsaken pack could convince the other werewolves that it's too costly to keep. If many different packs have all claimed chunks of the territory, the effort to take it becomes more political. A rare young pack that could take multiple packs on in combat and force them all to retract their borders is rare.

Either way the game starts, the territory's new protectors have a lot to do. The pack's members must be able to protect the many loci in the territory, tame the spirit wilds, effectively control illegal immigration as their ethics demand and defend the location itself against the Forsaken and Pure who want it. Others consider failing in any one of these categories evidence that the dominant pack is incapable of holding the territory, proof that the pack should be ousted.

Each criterion is itself fraught with complications. Keeping a single locus safe from the unwanted attentions of mischievous spirits, the Pure Tribes and any unfamiliar Forsaken is hard. Spirits approach through the *Hisil*, drawn to the locus, hoping to drink deep of its Essence and gain the power they desire. Some spirits work together to occupy a locus and keep it safe from werewolves, hiding amidst the resonance and ambushing the Forsaken after luring one or more close. Even if the pack sacrifices the

spirit side of the locus to the spirits — abandonment of duty, to be sure — the pack will still have to guard the locus as a point of entry for angry, ambitious spirits to cross over. Protecting the locus against werewolves is more difficult. They may assault the point from within the spirit or physical worlds, and they have myriad Gifts at their disposal. Any stealth they use is theirs, and not that of the locus, but employing stealth means that they are probably skilled at it.

If the pack can do all of that, it must then be able to protect the locus with less than a few hours' dedication a day. The werewolves' other responsibilities, including the protection of other loci in the territory, cannot be ignored.

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument's spirit wilds would scare "city wolves" if they weren't prepared for the sight. As part of the Sonoran desert where few have lived since... ever, there were rarely enough Uratha nearby to effectively tame the spirit world. Until today, in any case, and today the People are too busy trying to stop the rampant afflictions on the territory to pay too much attention to any but the most dangerous and infectious shadow parks or foul spirits.

Lords of the Monument's spirit world have gone too long without any effective interdiction from the Uratha to stand for it now. While the spirit lords wouldn't mind seeing the shoals cleaned up from the southern border, since that sort of miserable resonance only brings unsavory spirits, the spirit lords will fight to the last for the loci they consider theirs. Any dealings with minor spirits in the territory will eventually draw the attention of the spirit lords here, who have become all the more wary since werewolves started paying attention to the area.

And there are deadly traps around the border for any creature, werewolf or not, who dares to approach them. Powerful loci of fear, suspicion, hate and pain have sprung up there, birthed from the hundreds of emotion-ridden altercations between people from either side of the border or, occasionally, the same side. Isolated from the attention of man and spirit for so long, the escalation of the problems over the last few decades escaped unnoticed for many years, which gave the Essence plenty of time to solidify into powerful founts of negative Essence. Once spirits with tastes for that resonance discovered the loci, they began to draw from them and the loci ceased growing in power.

WHY A PARK?

Why is the great disaster area of the United States Mexico border in a national park? Why not Nogales or San Luis Colorado? While those large cities are indeed the location of many many more illegal crossings into the United States than the mile border of the Pipe Cactus territory they also have many other things going on. Sitting right on the border Mexicans live work

celebrate and die there and many thousands of them do not try to enter America. Every emotion known to man expresses itself there where cities meet the border.

People near the border of the National Monument with the nearest city is at least five miles away, are either crossing illegally or patrolling to stop it. That is when they feel their fear and resentment the most and there is nothing else to cancel the feelings out. So the emotions drip into the spirit world pool and fester.

SAMPLE PERSONAE

Few people live within the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument's borders. Only the towns of Lukeville and Quitovaquita are officially there, and both have fewer than 20 inhabitants. But there are several people who pass through it regularly or somehow have influence on the area.

LUCAS GEMELO, BORDER PATROL AGENT

A Quitovaquita native, Lucas Gemelo was only seven when his Uncle Job, a Border Patrol agent, had the bad luck to catch a bullet in his leg. The round shattered a bone, and the local doctor was neither skilled enough to fix it nor wise enough to send the patient to a better doctor. When the bone healed poorly and Job Gemelo realized that he would be crippled for the rest of his life, he turned down a desk job to resign from the Patrol, too overcome with self-disgust and humiliation. Without any other relatives, there was nothing for Job to do but move in with his sister Anita, Lucas' mother.

At his uncle's knee, Lucas learned the dangers of living so near the border. Desperate immigrants would kill to enter America illegally so that they could earn more money than they needed to survive in Mexico. Drug smugglers would kill anyone who got in the way of their foul trade and then sell their Mexican diseases-in-a-bag to anyone with two dimes to rub together. It was, Job insisted, one of these who shot him in the leg and effectively

killed him. He lamented that he would never be able to put away another illegal immigrant or kill another piece of drug-running scum. Job ignored that the Patrol shipped illegal aliens back into Mexico for another chance after a week or so and that he'd never actually shot at a smuggler, even on the night one shot him. With all this, Job instilled in Lucas a hatred for the Mexicans who tried to cross the border, and his uncle's eventual suicide only anchored it at the center of Lucas' psyche. On the day when he was sworn in as a Border Patrol agent, it was his fervent belief that his uncle would be proud.

Lucas is five-foot-nine with short, dark brown hair and brown eyes. Third-generation American, he still shares the genetically tanned skin of his Mexican ancestors. When on the job, 22-year-old Lucas is all business, and when talking to immigrants — in his eyes, anyone of Mexican descent who can't speak good English, at least until he knows differently — he is rudely brief. With his friends, though, Lucas is animated. He enjoys discussing sports and going out with his friends to shoot empty beer cans while emptying more. Under the influence, Lucas becomes more and more likely to start making disparaging remarks against Mexicans and immigrants.

Lucas patrols the National Monument once each evening and takes night watches three times a week. He is unnecessarily rough with illegals whom he catches, and he has already received a few reprimands for discharging his weapon without cause. This only makes him sullen, since he was trying to put the fear of God into the damn immigrants.

EDUARDO VASCONCELOS, SMUGGLER

Eduardo has lived all his life in Sonoyta and, despite the fact that he crosses the border illegally several times a month, he doesn't mean to ever leave. All his family, from his toothless grandfather to his two-year-old daughter and his three nieces and nephews, are in Sonoyta. Because of his trade, he and his wife always have enough to live on and, when necessary, to let his family borrow a little. After seven years of ferrying anxious, hopeful Mexicans across the border for what is usually the last of their savings, "the mouse" is beginning to feel the pangs of guilt over his cho-



sen profession. Is it his fault that his childhood meanderings gave him such extensive knowledge of the area that he can avoid any American patrol? Still, Eduardo is beginning to consider retiring from his nighttime profession on his handsome nest egg. He could devote himself in full to being a mechanic in his father's garage, and he would probably inherit it in a few years. It doesn't help that his wife can't sleep for worry on nights when he's out.

Short and slim, Eduardo's build lends itself equally to creeping silently across the dusty ground and snaking between a series of tractor parts to find and replace the problem. Of his two professions, however, *el ratón* is much better at the one that has earned him his nice nest egg. Out with his friends, Vasconcelos is a rascal. He loves practical jokes and gags, playing them on his comrades whenever he can. He plays them on his wife and kids, too, but with a great deal more restraint. After all, he has to live with them.

Even before he started doing it for money, Eduardo loved to cross the border as a game with the Patrol, running back across if they ever pursued him. If he quit now, at 34, he might be able to content himself with long hikes across the desert, but he isn't sure. Neither is he eager to find out.

RANDALL KUBERT, RIGHTEOUS NATIONALIST

Randall J. Kubert, son of Robert Kubert, drank in American supremacy and disdain with his mother's milk. His father was a peripheral member of the Ku Klux Klan — not for whites, per se, but for True Americans — in northern Texas before the family moved west to Arizona over some local scandal. Only three when the family moved, Randall soon picked up the lingo and the ideology from his father. At that rate, it was only a matter of time before Randall started to express it.

Ajo High School, age 16. So upset about the special treatment the school gave to the Mexicans, even those who weren't citizens, he brought a gun to school and threatened one of the Mexican clique leaders. During his suspension, his father told Randall something that stayed with him forever, "The spics ain't going to play by the rules or on top of the table, son. If you do, you'll just make it easier for them." Taking his lesson to heart, Randall got himself on the student body council. Few people knew it, but he was the one making homecoming and prom hell for the Mexican students, with a few well-placed suggestions and simple decoration choices.

Now in his early 40s, Randall Kubert owns a local construction company and grouches about his beer gut in Ajo, Arizona, a short 30 miles from the border. His father died of a heart attack at 60, and though Randall knows he should watch his diet, he can never stop himself from eating what he wants. Losing some of his dirty blond hair on top and fearing a double chin, he does his best to ignore

his physical failings while he runs his company, drinks and watches football with his pals.

Fifteen years ago, Randall founded a quiet organization that he and his "patriots" call America's Protection Society. They subtly track ways in which the Mexicans are "weakening America's economic capability and suborning her infrastructure." Gathering evidence of their southern neighbor's wrongdoing, they will someday... do something. They may tell authorities, publish a book or film an exposé, but they aren't really sure. Mostly, the "patriots" of America's Protection Society sit around in the bar that one of them owns and complain about Mexicans in their town. Sometimes, the "patriots" drive down to the border at night and try to scare illegals back into their own damn country. Still, Randall dreams of doing more, and he's made some contacts. He knows people in similar clubs in Arizona, and he has some sympathetic friends within the Border Patrol, Lucas Gemelo among them.

MANNY GONZÁLES, JANITOR

Manny (Manuel) is just a regular fellow who lives in Why, Arizona, and earns a few extra bucks driving into the National Monument three times a week to clean the Visitor Center. Except that it's not all normal. For several years, sure, it felt like any other set of bathrooms. Swab the floor, scrub the toilets once a week, change out the urinal cakes when necessary. But after a while, Manny began to feel what was different. It was something about history, something about respect. Something about death. Manny started bringing the obits from the local paper and pinning them up on the bulletin board beside fire warnings and important local phone numbers. It felt right. After a few months, he began to collect all the obits he could and pin them there, and when his Aunt Juana died, he got permission to set up a small shrine in the Center, if only for a week. That felt right, too.

He may not know what it is, but he knows there's something unnatural about it. But even Manny is a devout Roman Catholic, that doesn't bother Manny. He can feel it, and something about it feels respectful of the dead. Tinged with sadness, but good. Manny is older now, a bit past 40, and his kids are ready to take care of him. But Manny refuses to give up the janitorial position in the park. It needs him — he once fought off a defiling punk with no more than his mop — and, a little bit, he needs it. It makes him feel like there's still good out there.

EXPANDING THE TERRITORY

On one side of it, the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument territory would appear easy to stretch outward. There are no significant natural borders that provide an easy demarcation for werewolves to notice. All a pack would need do to expand the Pipe Cactus territory is enlarge the range of where its members hunt and mark, and when they came into conflict with another pack they could fight or cease expanding.

It isn't that easy. Not only are many of the nearby territories already strongly held by other werewolf packs, Pure and Forsaken both, but all of those packs watch the Pipe Cactus territory carefully. Anyone who would take or hold it earns her neighbors' attention. The nearby Tohono O'odham Indian Reservation contains several Pure packs who identify with the Papago. Full of hatred for the nation that defiled the Tohono's once-pure ways, the Pure make absolutely certain that no pack holding the Monument may expand in the Tohono's direction. The Pure also watch the pack's stance on immigration and interaction with the Border Patrol, letting that guide them. Pure Tribes also occupy America, to the territory's north, and the wildlife refuge to the west. Ivory Claws and Fire-Touched occupy the town of Ajo, and the Predator Kings rule the wildlife refuge and the uninhabited regions between southern Arizona's towns. Expanding the territory in either of these directions requires a furious war against werewolves who hate the pack, have shown a disturbing amount of cooperation in the past and already launch raids against the Monument often. The pack that could successfully hold the Pipe Cactus territory while striking out against the Pure Tribes would be mighty indeed.

Across the border in Mexico, three Forsaken packs hold the small city of Sonoyta against the encroaching Pure. Only the packs' great understanding of the land has let them hold on despite the Pure's best attempts to flush the packs out and kill them. But a pack holding the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument could change that. Forsaken in the Pipe Cactus territory would most certainly draw the ire of all the surrounding Pure, and the packs of Sonoyta might get washed away in the subsequent storm. These Forsaken believe that the territory cannot be held and that a pack that tries to swallow land south of the border will only open itself to attack by the Pure. For this reason, and the normal territorial concerns, these packs fight any attempt for a southward expansion.

ON ALL SIDES (POTENTIAL TREATS)

KING SPINE, SPIRIT LORD

Blunt Spine was the first name he remembers hearing applied to him. His were the thin needles of the cactus, those that were not yet completely formed or had failed to grow correctly and so were too soft to puncture skin. He could not protect the cactus. Blunt Spine was the epitome of useless matter, a waste, and it rankled him. So, he decided, if he were too weak and useless to defend the cactus, he would betray it instead.

Today, Blunt Spine has become King Spine. He passed through four other incarnations to get there (Little Spine, Tallest Spine, Great Spine and Strong Spine) before he destroyed the lord's popularity with both its liege and its followers to take the office of King Spine, ruler of the local court. King Spine keeps his court in line by

playing them against each other. He creates additional positions and appointments at whim so that the lesser spirits can fight for them, allowing them to waste their energy on each other instead of on him. He enjoys watching their squabbling, especially when they conceive new reasons to fight without his artifice.

The spirit lord rarely takes on any anthropomorphic aspect. Though he refers to himself as male, King Spine rarely appears as anything other than an acre-wide mass of prickly pear cactus plants surrounding a shadowed organ pipe cactus that blocks out the spirit-sun no matter where one stands. In order to approach him, members of his court must tread through 30 yards of spine-ridden cacti; the favor in which King Spine holds one directly influences how painful that approach is. When he must appear as a man, King Spine takes the form of a regally dressed, shapely man of unnaturally perfect symmetry, the only indication of his affinity the hair of cactus spines brushed elegantly back on his head.

His subjects, when certain of their privacy, oftentimes share rumors that he has an unknown benefactor. Some remember their liege from when he was the weakest of spirits, and they recall that he spent much time away from the court consorting with unknown creatures. They whisper that he might owe his meteoric rise to those spirits, or their master. When might he pay that debt, and how do those unknowns still influence the court lord's actions? Envoys from fire and sun courts have noticed King Spine's slight on Helios, and some of his subjects believe he may have support from someone powerful enough to deflect any real retribution from that source.

King Spine rules one of the two cactus loci strictly. Though it feels awkward to his subjects, there are seven books of law governing the locus' regulation. They are all presumably penned by the King on stone and stored in a small, dark cavern beneath the spiritual cactus fields; King Spine uses them to ensure that none but he and his favorites in court can access the Essence at will. King Spine wants to add the other locus to his domain, but the spirits that frequent it have refused his invitations to become subjects and resisted his initial attempts at forcing their subjugation.

For that reason, King Spine began a spirit war. His subjects dig trenches in the spirit world and launch assaults at whomever holds the other locus, and every day more spirits fail to reform after destruction. Any spirit whose Influence could affect the outcome has been wheedled toward one side or another, or press-ganged if they are weak enough. The number of spirits involved escalates daily, despite the deaths. For the time being, the devastation is still contained in the region between the two cactus loci, though it will not be long before the entire territory (and beyond) is embroiled within the Shadow war.

Forsaken who have just taken the territory find the spirit population surprisingly active; the Forsaken don't

take long to realize they straddle a war in the *Hisil*. The battles are devastating to the local shadow landscape. They eventually spill over into the physical realm, as spirits do battle through human and animal hosts and the spirits' deaths change the resonance and make the region less fertile; the spirits may even drain the beneficial cactus loci to the dregs in an effort to win their control. Mitigating this disaster without appearing vulnerable to the nearby Pure is necessary to prevent a complete desolation that might drain the vitality of life in the Monument or even create Barrens in the territory.

Allying with King Spine (secretly, of course) to help him take the other locus would earn the Forsaken his friendship, and the King would probably agree to help rejuvenate the spirit world after the war. But King Spine would not respect the werewolves, thinking them easy marks, unless they drove a hard bargain. And if they betrayed him, finding a way to slip control of both loci out of his grasp, the King would be sure to swear revenge. His cactus court would hide among the territory's spirit wilds and strike out at the pack whenever possible. Denying the King's subjects permission to enter the physical world through "their" locus is another good way to attract King Spine's ire and bring the force of a court already armed for war into the werewolves' physical territory.

Rank:

Attributes: Power ; Finesse ; Resistance

Willpower:

Essence: (max)

Initiative:

Defense:

Speed:

Size:

Corpus:

Influences: Plants •• Law •

Numina: Blast (Cactus Spines) Chorus Discorporation Materialize Material Vision Plant Growth* Reaching Sense Weakness* Wilds Sense

Ban: Unknown

*As the Gift; King Spine can also teach the appropriate Gift

BLESSED-BY-ICE, IVORY CLAWS PACK

Living in Ajo, north of the Pipe Cactus territory, Blessed-by-Ice takes its name from the heat of Arizona. These packmembers are the purest of the Pure, blessed by their heritage to carry and pass on the most sacred bloodlines, and they are as rare as they are great — as rare as ice in an Arizona summer.

The pack, like most, has its own feelings on the nature of humanity and the people around them. Aaron, William, Jonathon and Sarah Masters are all from the same extended "litter"; they are cousins who share descent from a Pure great-grandfather and share the same traits: straight brown hair, blue eyes and a fair, freckled complex-

ion. Their blood is a rare and precious thing, and the Masters claim that their ancestors have been sowing it in this region since the fall of Father Wolf. Humans who share this blood (and there are many) but are not worthy of the First Change are not pure enough, but they make good breeding stock. Blessed-by-Ice plays subtle games with the townfolk of Ajo, manipulating whom loves whom, even getting an unlikely couple drunk to encourage breeding. All to make better breeding partners for the pack.

Only a Masters' blood is pure enough, in the eye of the pack, to be allowed into the Ivory Claws tribe. Aaron goes so far as to say any without their blood should be killed after the First Change, but he grudgingly accepts that he doesn't have the resources to purge the world's werewolves. But the Masters family line has some specific genetic traits — all of which the packmembers show — that Blessed-by-Ice considers signs of good breeding. And with this family, breeding is everything.

Aaron and his siblings go to great lengths to protect their eugenic efforts and their perfect bloodline. In Ajo, people of Mexican descent disappear with alarming frequency. Their families have little recourse: significant portions of the police force and judicial system learned their values from the pack's twisted version of the Ivory Claws' credo. The Masters family, still living on old money, sponsors an anti-immigration program much less crude and absurdly nationalistic as Randall Kubert's. The Racial Purity Group serves as a local political lobby to reduce the permeability of the borders through existing and legal means.

And, when necessary, the pack runs south for a night and kills new immigrants, legal or illegal.

Though the population of people of Mexican descent in Ajo remains high, there are few who don't know not to mix with the Masters, or with white people in general. And those of Mexican descent definitely don't get romantically involved with the Masters or white people.

Blessed-by-Ice can become the Pipe Cactus pack's enemies over any number of tiny slights, as if being Forsaken and of bad blood weren't enough. Encouraging immigration, even indirectly, is a direct threat to the Masters bloodlines. After all, new Mexicans are worse than the old Mexicans, since new Mexicans won't know the rules of living in Ajo, where some are sure to settle. An immensely greater offense is a werewolf of the Forsaken (or any non-Masters, really) mating with one of the humans claimed by Blessed-by-Ice. Discovery of such an act spells instant death for the human (even if no child was conceived, a human with such poor judgment would do it again) and a crusade for the werewolf's death. Nothing else is acceptable.

Build members of Blessed-by-Ice with 5–15 experience points above the characters, unless the players' pack is supposed to be an experienced group.

LOST OBSIDIAN CLAWS, PREDATOR KINGS PACK

On the Tohono O'odham Reservation, there are more than 20,000 American Indians. Despite the indignities of being relegated to a bordered reserve when the land was once theirs, the United States continues to trample the native people's rights time and again. Returning from traditional ceremonies that are on their ancestral land south of the border, the O'odham have been picked up and abused by the American Border Patrol. Assuming the Indians are Mexican, the Border Patrol often treats them even more harshly when they protest.

Lost Obsidian Claws fights for the packmembers' ancestors and hold as their territory the entire Indian Reservation. Werewolf blood is strong in the Tohono O'odham and, though humans be sheep, the Tohono are as near acceptable as any human can be to the Predator Kings. The wolves of Lost Obsidian Claws believes that these humans were at one time acceptable to Dire Wolf, and only the spreading rotten influence of the Forsaken and their soft, stupid people ruined the Papago tribes. Perhaps had the Americans never infected them, the art and tools of the Tohono O'odham would still be acceptable. For that, the Lost Obsidian Claws resists America. For the Border Patrol's insults, the pack *rages*.

Led by Ban Hiinek, the Predator Kings pack strikes out at the Border Patrol often. Sometimes the werewolves pose as American immigrant supporters and sometimes as angry immigrants, but they always whisper the names of their ancestors to the agents they kill. Most Forsaken packs have a problem with a murderous Pure pack entering their territory for any reason, even if it is only to kill humans who are not technically part of the domain. Many of Lost Obsidian Claws' raids takes the pack into the National Monument, so there have likely already been numerous run-ins between the two packs. If the pack holding the Pipe Cactus territory supports the Border Patrol in any visible way, strengthening them or defending them against the Predator Kings, the two packs' clashes becomes much more personal and much, much more vicious.

The Tohono O'odham pack is an older pack. It has successfully defended its territory against dozens of upstarts who would want to take it, a few of whom have been the packmembers' own children. A few of these children, whose efforts pleased their parents, joined the pack and made it stronger; all others fled the reservation to parts unknown.

Ban Hiinek, the pack's alpha, commands complete obedience from his packmates. He is fearless in battle



and without mercy, though he understands there is other value to letting an enemy flee. His daughter Chevor is his second-in-command; when he is gone, others in the pack are to treat her as though she is her father in all ways. Both father and daughter are strangely strict in this regard. Ge'e Mashad cuts an imposing figure. Though he is thin enough that his ribs show sharply through his skin, he is nearly entirely swathed in scars. He claims that each one is a vanquished Forsaken, as he lets each cut him before Ge'e gives his opponent death. Some insist that Ge'e Mashad just cuts himself so he can lie about it. Ban Hiinek, when he hears such talk, just laughs and says that if either is true, Ge'e Mashad would still be valuable for his insanity. Ge'e is not so forgiving. The other members of Lost Obsidian Claws give Ge'e Mashad a lot of space and privacy.

Because nearly all Uratha born to the Papago either join the Lost Obsidian Claws or flee, the pack is larger than most. Eight Pure werewolves make Lost Obsidian Claws a fearsome opponent in any battle. Luckily, the pack's disdain for humanity causes them to send no more than four on any basic raid into Pipe Cactus territory. It is a measured insult to the Forsaken that the Lost Obsidian Claws does not send more, even when the packmembers' expect an incidental encounter with the territory's pack. Only when the Predator Kings are specifically hunting the Forsaken do they attack en masse. The four younger members of the pack should be approximately on a level with the pack trying to hold the territory; the four elder

members should be made with about 50 additional experience points.

MUERTE POR SOMBRA, BONE SHADOW PACK

Ghosts congregate around the events that create them, and spectres formed by similar events may congregate together. There is no more common cause of posthumous grief in north Mexico than the failure to cross the border into America. When Mexicans die in the attempt, a man or a woman, usually with a family, has failed to provide for them and has, in death, failed the last and simple task of entering America to find a last chance. The failure can be torturous, and the border simply teems with the ghosts of failed illegal immigrants, many decades old.

Muerte por Sombra arrived in Sonoyta two years ago, and the pack is following its purpose. The pack's alpha, Feliz Carrera, lost a father to the border; he tried to cross, and she never heard from him again. This inspired her current feelings on immigration: she doesn't care whether it happens legally or not, so long as it happens without deaths. All her packmates feel similarly on the matter of immigration, for various reasons. The act of entering America should not result in deaths.

Feliz and her pack of six claim territory in Sonoyta. They originally moved there to investigate the local border between Mexico and the United States. For a short while, they explored the local ghost population. The ghosts became familiar to them, and the pack to the ghosts. It was only then that the young, idealistic pack discovered that several Pure packs surrounded the pack's new territory and fiercely wanted Muerte por Sombra to join the Shadows they wished to help. The pack's life became a struggle for everyday survival.

Only recently have Feliz and her packmates have attained enough resources to pursue their goals and still keep safe their territory, though Feliz is keenly aware that the slightest overextension will doom her pack. And as strongly as the packmembers associate with the dead, none of them want to be one.

Night is when Muerte por Sombra leaves its territory for the border. Night is the perfect time: the ghosts have an affinity with the night, the werewolves have an affinity with the moon and the darkness aids stealth. Spending the pack's scant free time along the border, the pack meets with ghosts and learns about the entities' plights as best the pack can. The packmembers have successfully released one ghost's bonds, allowing it to dissipate forever, but the others are not so easy.

Unfortunately, every trip to the border is a skirmish. Even the pack's simple fact-finding trips force the packmembers to cross others packs' territories, and the pack's expeditions become fights for survival as Pure nip at the Forsaken's heels in the hope of bringing a weak one down. And, on their arrival at the border, spirits that feed from

the loci of pain and death wait to ambush them, believing that the ghosts are important to the loci's strength.

Strongly opposed to the brutal habits that create echoes of the dead out of flesh and blood immigrants, the pack would normally entreat any Forsaken pack that held the Pipe Cactus territory to help the Muerte por Sombra. Now, frustrated by the many months of effort lost to the Pure and the difficulty of actually helping the ghosts the pack meets, the Muerte por Sombra is likely to eschew the diplomatic approach. Feliz, equally frustrated because she believes her father crossed the border here but cannot find his spirit, is on a short fuse. If the pack in possession of the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument acts to reduce the death of crossing illegally, though whatever method, she will be content and probably leave that pack alone. If not, or if the werewolves there make it worse, Feliz will lead her pack against theirs in battle to chasten them, probably losing herself to *Kuruth* in the process.

Even if the pack in the Pipe Cactus territory doesn't anger Feliz in any way, the Muerte por Sombra still draws battle-ready Pure into the territory after the packmembers as many as three nights a week, and the Pure rarely mind staying behind to do some damage to the *other* Forsaken who are conveniently nearby.

Muerte por Sombra is a young pack, but the danger of staying in Sonoyta has aged them a great deal over the past two years. Create these werewolves with 20–30 experience points above a starting pack.

AMERICA'S PROTECTION SOCIETY, NATIONALIST "ACTIVIST" GROUP

Randall Kubert spends a lot of time away from Mrs. Kubert. He works 35-hour weeks at his construction company, and he works 20-hour weeks as an activist, working to improve America's defense against the many problems that immigration brings. Randall spends at least 10 of those 20 hours discussing the problems and potential solutions with his fellow patriots in the bar. The rest of the time, Randall reads literature authored by others as aware of the problem, writes some himself and even creates warnings on the matter for the unaware.

Usually, Randall and his crew don't do anything really worth noticing by the Forsaken. The "patriots" bitch about the problem in their favorite bars and when their families have cookouts together, and they camp out in their SUVs on a hill some nights and watch for immigrants whom Randall and friends can chastise and chase back into Mexico. Randall and his crew sometimes work together, using photos and video from their "nights out" to work up visual and audio propaganda. These Randall distributes through some of his contacts in Tucson.

Several things could put Randall and his group in conflict with the dominant pack of the Pipe Cactus territory. One of Randall's friends, watching over the border one night, sees the werewolves walking around their territory at night or, worse, returning from some (no doubt

illicit) activity across the border. He alerts the APS, and they double the frequency of their watches, making it harder for the pack to operate privately. Randall may even go so far as to begin calling the Border Patrol, though he thinks them too soft, to discourage these “persistent wetbacks.”

Posing as humans and a part of the human world, even just a little bit, makes the pack a part of the local society. When Randall notices the stance that these “Americans” have on immigration — and if it’s different from his own very specific position — he’ll grow suspicious. As the werewolves begin to successfully shape their territory into what they want, Randall sees the changes in immigration habits and attributes them to the pack’s human personae. (He is a sharp cookie, after all.) Unless the Uratha make very deliberate changes or get very lucky, Randall perceives those changes as a threat to his country’s welfare and reacts poorly. America’s Protection Society, at Randall Kubert’s direction, girds for war. Misguided fanatics all, and well-equipped with firearms, they will do anything they can to fight the pack’s efforts. While they aren’t much of a physical threat (though they could be a fatal inconvenience at an important time), the APS could leverage their influence in the surrounding area to give the pack a great deal of trouble with the police, the Patrol and anyone else they can imagine.

ALL TOGETHER NOW!

As with any of the threats mentioned in this book for the various territories these threats can be used separately or in concert. More so than for any other territory however the threats presented here should be applied in force. One of the attractive features of using this region as a territory in your game is that it is a furious battle almost non stop with too many different enemies to count.

GARBED-IN-FLESH-OF-SHADOWS, LORD OF A SPIRIT COURT

There are few spirits so feared in the Sonoran Desert as Garbed-in-Flesh-of-Shadows, also called Shadow-Garbed. He leads the Court of Lost Hopes, which controls two of the pain-aspected loci along the border. Unlike many court leaders, who control their sworn spirits through guile and cunning, Shadow-Garbed controls them all through fear. None of his followers doubts for a second that he will cut the skin from their bodies and consume their innards whole if they disobey him; the many faces hanging in terror from his hunchbacked shoulders convince his followers all too easily. And they fear even more Garbed-in-Flesh-of-Shadows’ unnamed liege.

Shadow-Garbed was already well-known in the desert when word of the mighty pain loci raised a great cry among spirits. The news created something of a gold rush toward the border. Shadow-Garbed does not hurry, so he was certainly not the first to get there, but several members of his court rushed ahead to keep the little spirits in line and ensure that they did not drain too much Essence from the valuable loci. When he arrived, few dared argue with him about which loci were his; therefore, his are the most powerful. Only after he had claimed two of the loci did others, bound to other lords, bar him from taking the rest.

Garbed-in-Flesh-of-Shadows added many pounds to his shirt that day, but the spirits were loyal to their masters and barred from those loci he remained. None in Shadow-Garbed’s court believe that he could not have destroyed them all, but understand that he chose not to. At least, so they say. Expressing another opinion aloud is a fair way to become clothing.

Today, many spirits in the Court of Lost Hopes and others are surprised that Shadow-Garbed hasn’t made a move on the other loci. All he does is sip daily at those that are already his and enforce outrageous rules about when his followers may partake, which is depressingly infrequently. The braver (or less noticeable) spirits of his court are leaving, heading to places where there is greater potential for expansion and for fulfilling the spirits’ hungers. As his court dwindles, it becomes easier for Shadow-Garbed to do as he wishes — but it also becomes harder for him to hold his loci. He confides in no one, so his plans are a mystery.

Werewolves seeking to control the Pipe Cactus territory may notice Garbed-in-flesh-of-Shadows’ weakening control of his loci and use him as a launching point for their destruction of the negative loci on the border. Unfortunately, Shadow-Garbed is an incredibly able combatant, and he would like nothing more than to add the spirit-portions of a werewolf — or an entire pack — to his ever-growing shirt.

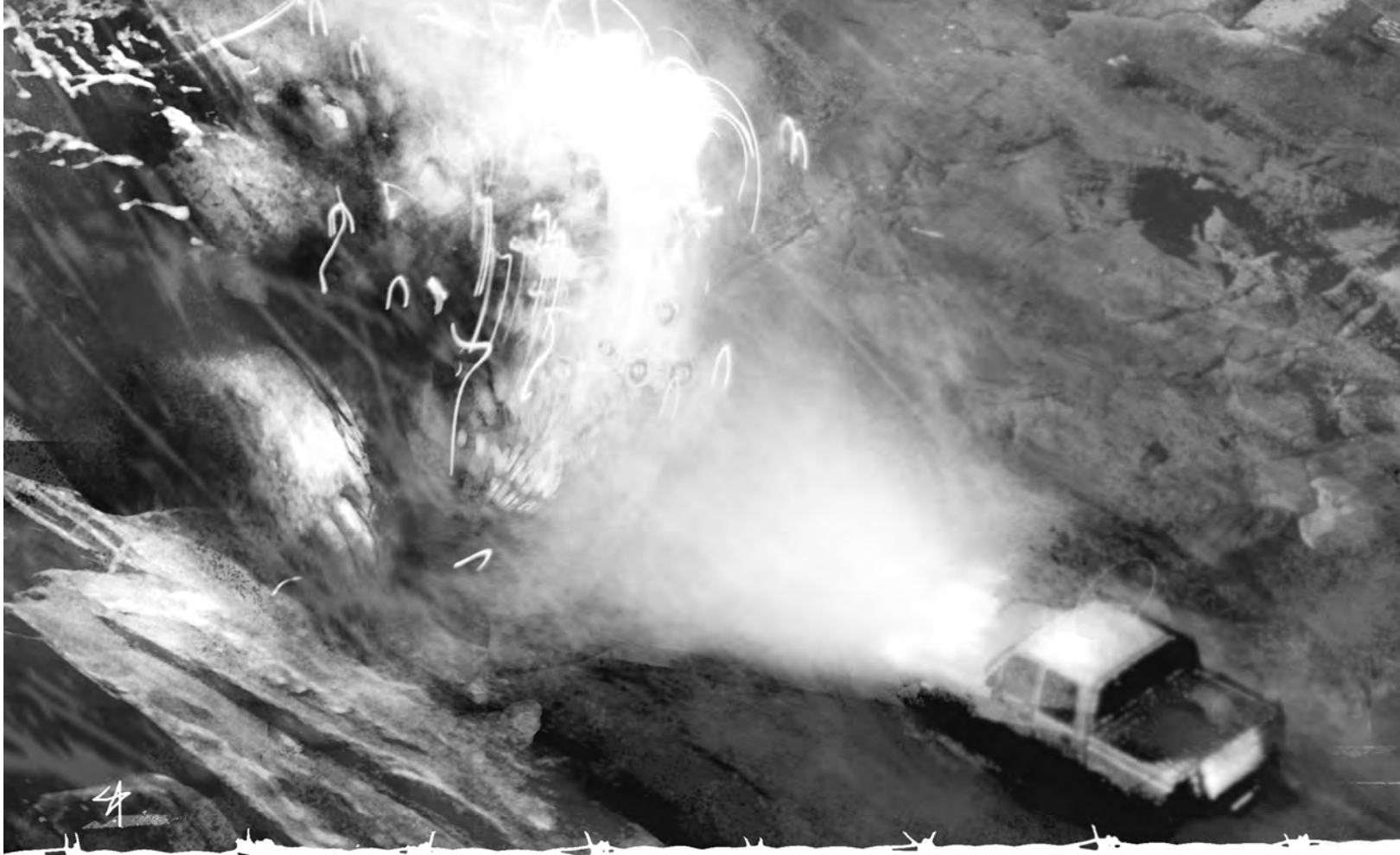
Left alone, Shadow-Garbed enacts his plan to increase the strength of his loci, until they are as mighty as any source of Essence can be. With that power at his disposal, he does what few expect of him: he uses subtlety. With the power of two such powerful loci at his disposal, he easily lures spirits to abandon their courts and join the Court of Lost Hopes. Many come, hoping for better access to the fount of Essence than their current liege gives them, and the ranks of Garbed-in-Flesh-of-Shadows’ followers swell to thrice their original size. He is a viable threat to all the other spirit lords on the border, now, and he wants to take it all. And then he wants to add some wolfskins to his shirt.

Rank:

Attributes: Power ; Finesses ; Resistance

Willpower:

Essence: (max)



Defense:

Speed:

Size:

Corpus:

Influences: Fear ••••

Numina: Blast (Phantasmal Faces Twisted in Horror) Chorus Claim Fetter Gauntlet Breach Harrow Materialize Material Vision Omen Gazing* Wilds Sense

Ban: Unknown

*As the Gift which Shadow Garbed can also teach

BLACK FIRE, INEXPERIENCED FIRESTORM-SPIRIT

For many decades, the great loci of fear and hate went undiscovered by the eyes of spirit or Uratha. When someone did first find the loci, it was Sand-Doused Campfire, a morose little spirit that had been the runt of every spirit court the spirit joined. Unhappy but not ambitious enough to fight for more power, Sand-Doused Campfire wandered away through the Sonoran Desert. Pure happenstance led the spirit to the powerful loci, where, spying unsullied and unclaimed Essence, the least spirit gorged.

It remembers little of that time. Black Fire now guesses that it lost control and consumed as much of the Essence as it could, as its fiery nature drove it to do. As it fed, Black Fire moved from locus to locus, growing as it absorbed huge quantities of untouched Essence. The spirit suspects that it may have drained one or two of the first loci it came upon completely and reduced the strength

of some others before regaining the presence of mind to conserve its new assets. Then, sated and tired, Black Fire buried itself in the sand and slept.

Black Fire only just woke up. After its great binge, it has become a mighty spirit of flame and firestorms. Black Fire has a sadistic craving for the feeling of burning flesh and consuming beloved homesteads, a taste developed through consuming so much negative energy from the loci. But Black Fire is moving slowly. The last thing it really remembers is discovering the first locus as Sand-Doused Campfire, and the spirit needs to spend some time stretching its boundaries before it moves off to seek the great wildfires of California and Colorado.

In the short time since its reawakening, Black Fire has done much. It is playing with its newfound abilities, and its games are dangerous. Besides testing its abilities with control over flame and heat, Black Fire is gathering about itself a rudimentary spirit court. Still unused to being a high-rank spirit, Black Fire is inexperienced at the subtle trades of favors and politics common to the more established courts. When Black Fire sees a spirit, Black Fire usually insists that the creature forswear its current oaths and bestow fealty to Black Fire. The new spirit doesn't know enough to establish what benefits Black Fire offers to its subjects. Only those spirits that are so weak that they know they cannot escape, and those that are too craven to try, bend knee to this strange, awkward behemoth of a spirit. Others, Black Fire is happy to burn to death, though

many escape while Black Fire is still learning the intricacies of using more powerful Numina.

Black Fire is impatient, and wishes to see more things and people burn. It is beginning to experiment with its ability to affect the physical world. Flames burning plants and scorching the desert to glass make these events visible to people in the real world. A short while after this, Black Fire examines the ins and outs of possessing humans and using them to spread the power of flame. An attempt to create a locus resonant with fire follows quickly. If the Uratha do not discover Black Fire and convince it to move, or destroy it, the greater spirit will decimate the entirety of the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument.

Other spirits, cognizant that the lesser members of their spirit courts are disappearing into the clumsy grasp of this upstart, may wage war on Black Fire and the traitors that make up its court. Such an event has echoes of King Spine's war, above, and it is in the best interests of the dominant pack to avoid it.

Rank:

Attributes: Power ; Finesse ; Resistance

Willpower:

Essence: (max)

Defense:

Speed:

Size:

Corpus:

Influences: Fire •• Pain ••

Numina: Blast (Fire and Pain) Chorus Command Fire* Discorporation Fetter Gauntlet Breach Harrow Living Fetter Materialize Possession Rage Armor* Reaching Wilds Sense

Ban: Though few know it (as Black Fire bears little resemblance to Sand-Doused Campfire), sand binds this spirit. It may walk upon and scorch sand but sand used to attack or douse it cut its Defense in half If completely buried in sand Black Fire becomes completely impotent until released

*As the Gift; Black Fire does not know how to teach it



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Who shall
conceive the
HORRORS
of my secret toil as I
dabbled among the
unhallowed damp of the
grave or tortured the
living animal to animate the
lifeless clay?

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— Jack Timber, Blood Talon

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