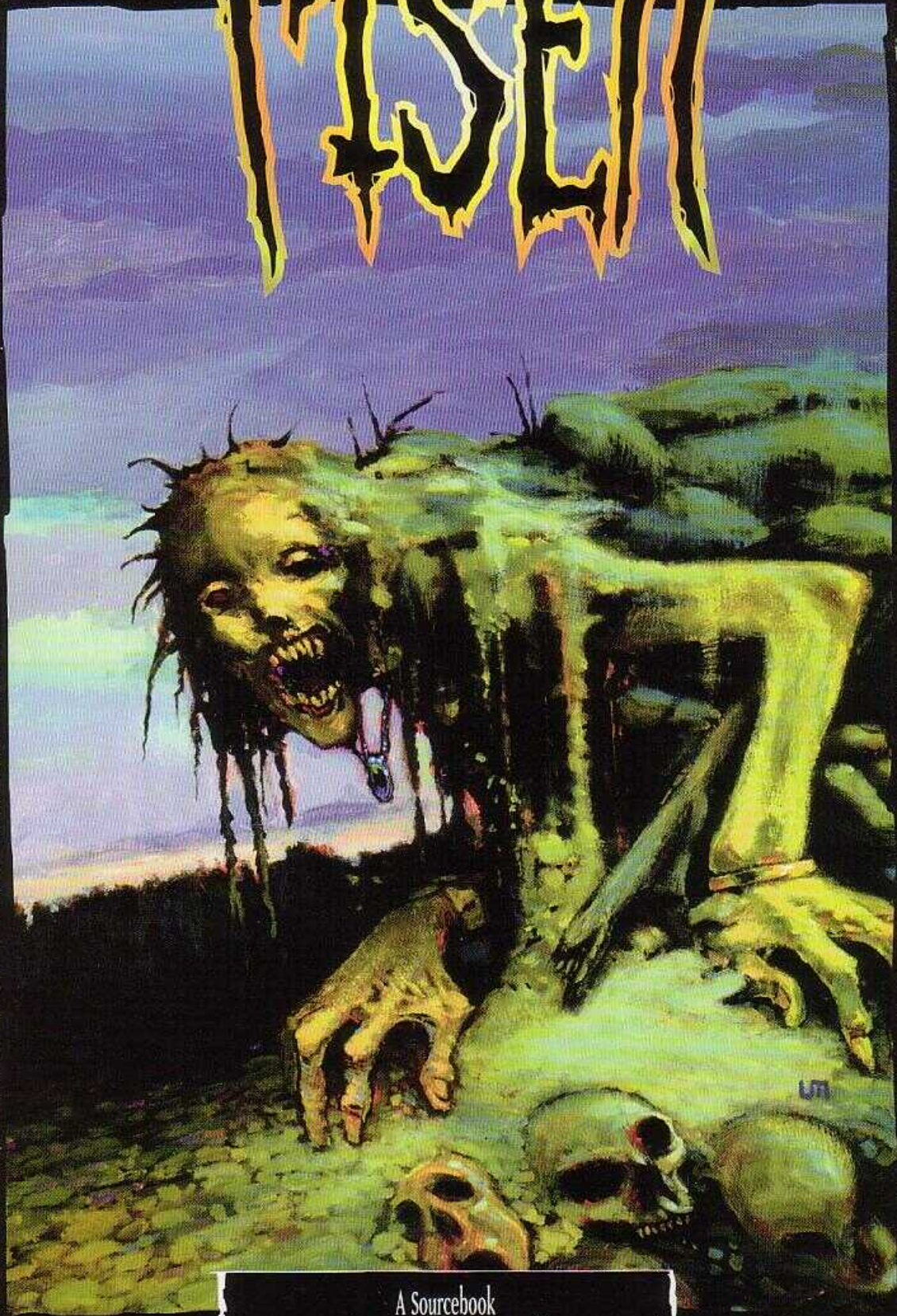


# THE MONEY

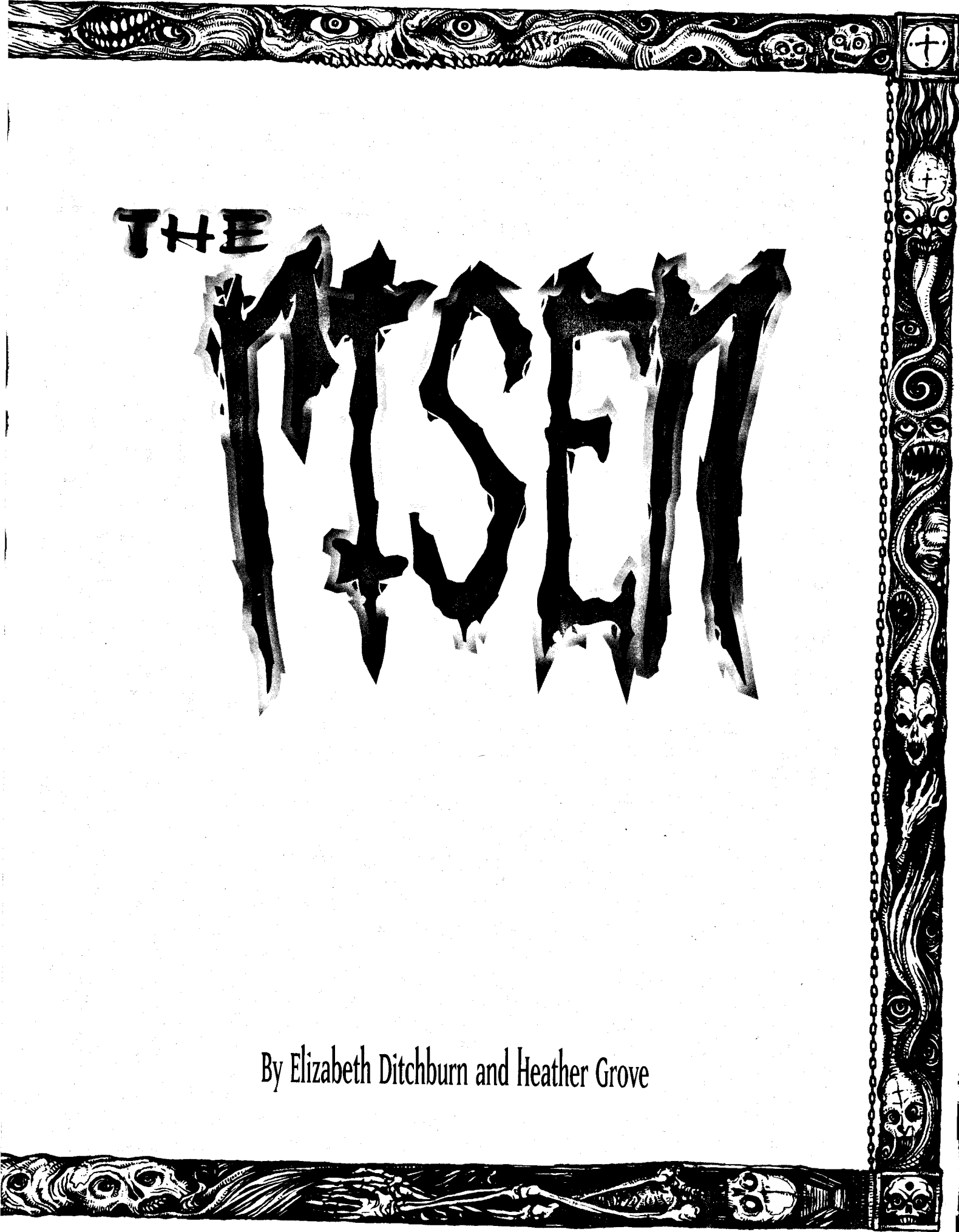


A Sourcebook  
for Wraith: The Oblivion™

THE

# ROSEY

By Elizabeth Ditchburn and Heather Grove



I came out of the darkness  
Holding one thing.  
- Suzanne Vega, "Wooden  
Horse Caspar Hauser's Song"







## Credits

Written by: Elizabeth Ditchburn and Heather Grove  
Additional Material by: Richard Dansky  
Development by: Richard E. Dansky  
Editing by: Cynthia Summers  
Vice President in Charge of Production: Richard Thomas  
Art Direction by: Lawrence Snelly and Aileen E. Miles  
Art by: John Cobb, Eric Lacombe, Brian LeBlanc,  
Andrew Ritchie, Joshua Gabriel Timbrook  
Cover Art: Larry MacDougall  
Cover Design by: Matt Milberger  
Layout and typesetting by: Matt Milberger  
Playtesters: Joe Boerjes, Roger Dingleline, Chris Douglas,  
Jeffrey Howard, Charles Scott Hubler, Larry Lenhoff, Harold  
S. MacKiernan, Sybil Shearin and Cris Shuldiner

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THE

# RISEN

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RITCHIE



# Ghost Story: A New Life



It started eight years ago, on the day that I died. But to leave out what came before would be to paint only half of a picture.

When I was 20, I was a junior at Boston College. I had gone to Catholic schools all of my life, and it never occurred to me that I could have gone to a secular college. There were so many new people to meet, though, so many new things to do. I found myself gradually getting caught up in the parties and activities, although I was careful not to neglect my classes. I studied computer science, and my professors all told me that I was headed for a promising career. Until, that is, I became pregnant.

I came from a very religious family; sex before marriage I could justify to myself because my parents didn't know about it, and because it simply felt so damned good. But abortion? Or the prospect of becoming a single mother? Those were the roads to Hell. My parents had very vividly painted pictures of every bone-wrenching torment I would endure if I let them down, and the mere thought of telling them that I was pregnant terrified me. I could still remember the strap my father

kept beside his bed, and I knew he would use it on me again, whether or not I was an adult. I hadn't thought seriously about marrying Eric before, but suddenly there I was, dropping out of college, moving to Vermont. I'd worried at first that he might not want to marry me, but my fears were soon allayed; he was understandably upset, especially about having to halt his chemistry studies, but there was never any question in his mind about the marriage.

Eric had grown up in Vermont, and though his parents had been dead for some years, we were able to scrape together enough to buy a small, cheap house from some old friends of his family, the Petersons, on a farm they kept. They told us straight out that the cottage was supposed to be haunted by the ghost of an old woman who'd been killed there many years before, but that they'd never seen anything odd themselves. We didn't have much of a choice, so we took it.

I hadn't thought there was anywhere left in America where a family could live on one person's income, but there it was. The Petersons let us take whatever we wanted out of the garden as long as we were willing to tend it, and we had fresh milk from their cows, so the money Eric made working





as a janitor at a local ski resort was just sufficient. Once the baby was born, I took care of the garden and did regular babysitting for an older couple who lived a few miles away. Eric helped out when he could, but he was working 12-hour days six days a week and had very little energy left when he came home.

Sean was a model child. He was quiet, intelligent, sweet and loving. When I was married, my mother gave me a locket, a miniature mirror, and I kept my boy's picture in it, ever close to my heart. It wasn't an easy life, and I missed my studies and my college friends. I was always tired, and sometimes I cried myself quietly to sleep while Eric snored on, but gradually I became convinced that I had done the right thing. Nothing could compare to the happiness of holding Sean while he nursed at my breast. Nothing was as gratifying as watching Eric bounce Sean on his lap, talking in nonsense syllables all the while and smiling broadly.


Then Eric hit me.

It was over something foolish — a broken plate, maybe, or a burned dinner. He hadn't had a day off in over a month, he spent all of his free time chopping wood for our heat, and to top it all off, Sean hadn't been sleeping much lately and had taken to screaming all night. I know that Eric had hoped to continue some of his studies on his own — he'd brought several boxes of his books with him — but he hadn't even had time to touch them. I'm sure he didn't mean to hit me;

the look on his face was proof enough of that. He stared at me for a long moment, tears on his face, said he needed some fresh air, and walked outside. I cried for a while, and then called my mother for comfort and wisdom. She told me these things happened, and that it was my duty to be a good wife. She reminded me that marriage is a sacrament, then she said she had laundry to do and hung up.

In some ways I hated my parents. They'd raised me in an atmosphere of strict, oppressive religion that didn't much help with real-world crises like this. It didn't matter what I wanted; it only mattered what God wanted for me. I didn't care what God wanted for me any more. I only wanted what I'd once had, the peace and happiness of those first months of marriage. But it was gradually fading away, to be replaced by a surliness and edginess on Eric's part, as well as a slowly shortening temper. He'd been very apologetic after the first time he'd hit me, and even bought me ice cream — a real luxury for us. He was back to his old loving self for almost a full month afterward. But it was only for a month, and then things started to go downhill.

I tried to give Eric the benefit of the doubt. I knew what a strain everything was on him — the constant work, his failure to continue his studies, Sean's screaming. His health had begun to fail a little, and he could be heard coughing loudly every morning after he woke up. I felt that it was my fault, and I tried to make it up to him by being quiet and staying out of the way. It wasn't enough.



I finally realized, one icy January morning in Sean's second year, that I just couldn't do it any more. I sat crying in our cramped kitchen, bruises on my wrists where Eric had grabbed me, burns on my legs already blistering from the contents of a skillet of sizzling bacon he'd thrown at me, and I knew I had to leave. The situation had escalated so quickly from maybe-forgivable to absolutely intolerable that I'd almost failed to react in time.

Once I'd bandaged my legs, I called my mother. Eric was chopping wood again outside, and I was sure that he wouldn't let me leave if I just tried to walk out. If I could get my parents to come pick me up, though, surely he wouldn't dare to do anything while they were around.

"Answer the phone, mom, answer the phone." I didn't even realize I was talking out loud, I was so preoccupied. Neither did I realize that the sound of the axe hitting the wood had stopped, nor that the door had very quietly opened, and that Eric was standing right behind me.

"What do you want to talk to her about?"

I jumped, dropping the phone, and turned. There was Eric, dressed in a plaid work shirt and scuffed jeans, tiny icicles forming on his scraggly blond beard, his axe held in one gloved hand.

I panicked.

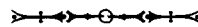
I ran, forgetting even about Sean in the next room. I ran out the door in only a bathrobe and slippers, dead grass crunching under my feet. I ran for the woods, too terrified to think, only caring about escape. I heard him behind me, his boots loud on the path. He yelled at me to stop, and his pleas quickly became threats. Of course I wasn't dressed for the outdoors; eventually I tripped on a rock and fell. I tried to get up but he was already there, his body blocking the sunlight, the axe raised.

It hit my arm first — the arm I had instinctively raised in an attempt to ward off the inevitable. The blunt end of the axe splintered the bone with a loud crunching, and I had a brief vision of my hand and upper arm hanging at an insane angle, jagged shards of bone protruding from the skin, as he raised the axe again. I tried to scream, but my entire body was numb. I couldn't move. Blood and gristle splattered my face as the axe slammed into my body again and again, shattering bones, rending muscles. I felt something deep inside me give, and then everything went dark.

Nothing happened to Eric. He, his boyish charm and his oh-sheriff-you-remember-my-father-don't-you? attitude got away with it. He killed me and didn't spend a single day in jail. He even took my locket off my still-warm body, washed it and gave it to a liquor store owner in the next town in return for some whiskey. I wept, unable to face the idea of a stranger having my Sean's picture.

The spirit of the old woman who was supposed to haunt our house found me as soon as I came through the Shroud; she tore away my Caul and took me under her wing. She was like a mother to me, and she began to explain things, to teach me how to manipulate this shadow-world. Slowly I adjusted to my new home.

At first it was difficult for me to accept the lack of any Heaven or Hell, but eventually I had to believe in the evidence of my own senses. I had left so much undone that it was impossible for me to just leave life behind, and my guilt and fear for Sean once I wasn't there to take the brunt of Eric's anger kept me always by my child's side.



I had what I wanted, at least some of the time. In the Shadowlands, my other half was weak, and I could sometimes take control — actual physical and mental control. It was wonderful! It made everything worthwhile: the beatings, the pain, the helplessness. But there was still something missing. I watched my husband, in our house, with our brat, and I couldn't help feeling that he'd won, gotten everything he wanted without price or trial. I needed my revenge. I wanted to hurt him. I wanted him to know that there was nothing he could do to save himself from me. Most of all, I wanted him to feel the way he'd so often made me feel — utterly and completely helpless.

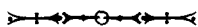
So I learned.

I learned how to affect the physical world, even though I was no longer of it. I learned how to affect the living, though I was no longer one of them. It was difficult. Monumental. But it was worth it.

Eric had gotten away with murdering me. A heavy snowfall that evening wiped out all traces of any tracks I might have made, and Eric had carefully buried the bloody mass of skin and bones that was my body under a pile of rocks deep within the woods, where no one except for the occasional very lost hiker went. He reported me missing to the police, recovering the old college charm that had attracted me to him in the first place as he convinced them that "we had a little argument" and that I'd left afterwards. He told them he'd thought I was just trying to teach him a lesson, and that I'd be back, but that he'd begun to worry when night fell. He pretended guilt, crying as he told them that it was his fault for being angry with me.

It made me sick.

The police were naturally a little suspicious to begin with; they even searched the backyard for signs of excavation in case Eric had been stupid enough to bury me there. But the sheriff had his priorities, and they didn't leave much room for one lost woman — especially when the only available suspect was an old friend of the family.



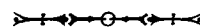
The old woman, Mae, couldn't teach me everything I needed to know, but she did have friends. They visited once or twice a year and stayed for a while. She called them Renegades. She said that her house was everything to her and that she didn't want to leave it to help them against the Hierarchy, but that she agreed with their cause. Thus, she pretended to be a good Hierarchy servant most of the time, but she kept the house safe for her friends.



There were five Renegades who usually visited, and I learned everything I could from them. I would have traveled with them in order to learn more, but I couldn't stand the idea of being away from my child.

The first thing I learned was how to communicate with my son. He was all that really mattered to me now, and I was determined to remain a part of his life. I was a quick learner and I had every reason to study as hard as I could. I soon learned how to attune myself to Sean, and it became easier and easier to whisper in his ear. Eventually I even learned how to manifest myself, albeit intangibly, to his sight.

Sean was frightened at first, but he'd begun to be even more afraid of his father's temper. Eric's frequent girlfriends just made him nervous, so he had nowhere else to turn. I was afraid that we would grow apart as he grew older, but he was a shy child, and he never developed any real friends. The law required that Eric send Sean to school, but it didn't require him to take Sean to games, or buy him toys, or hold him when he cried.

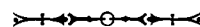


Eventually Eric began to take his insecurities out on Sean. I cared little for the pest, but Eric didn't deserve a child at all. I wanted nothing more than to kill my husband, to see his eyes grow dim, to feel his skin cool beneath my hands.

For a couple of years a certain Renegade named Steven Ardwright had been coming regularly to the house. He intrigued me — I felt as though he was staring right through to me, as though he knew exactly what I was and what I wanted. One day he said that there was a way to go back to the land of the living, and that he could teach it to me, for a small price. I knew I had to learn it. I craved my revenge.

Eric's abuse of Sean was inevitable, of course, but my other half refused to accept this, shadow-tears streaming down her face as our son called our name. And in her refusal I saw my chance. We had learned what Ardwright had to offer, and I now knew that there was a way in which we might both achieve our goals: that she might save our child, and I might have our revenge.

Thus was the covenant made.



It was difficult at first. My muscles were unused to movement, and there were three feet of rocks and frozen dirt between myself and life. But the strength of the dead is greater than that of the living, and before long I was in the woods, crawling through the grass and rocks while my bones reknit as best they could.

The first thing I did was to go to the liquor store. I was lucky that it was late and dark, a week night and a rural area. Nobody saw me. When I got there, I broke a window with a rock and went inside. Unfortunately I hadn't counted on the owner being there. Lucky for me he was drunk off his ass, so it was easy to hit him over the head with the same rock I'd used

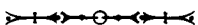
to get in. There was a satisfying crunch, and he just folded over onto the counter and bled quietly. In a way it was too easy — it terrified me that I might have just killed someone and I hardly felt guilty at all. Where was all of the religion I'd been brought up on? Where were my moral values? Had eight years of death been enough to counter everything I believed in during 20 years of life?

I made myself a promise not to harm anyone else. I would just take Sean, maybe scare Eric a little, and go.

But first I had to get the locket — the locket that called to me, pulled at me from the depths of a locked strongbox on a back shelf. The padlock bent and twisted out of shape at my newfound strength, and soon I had what I needed. I felt strange as I put it on; I felt stronger, but there was an odd, almost dark, quality about it that made me a little uneasy.



My relief as I was reunited with my other half was great; I had no wish to spend my brief life as a trinket in someone's collection. It was bad enough that I had to use the locket as my portal to the living world in the first place. I wanted a body. I could do some things with this one, but it was mostly under her control, and that angered me. I hated her for having what I wanted. Yet for the moment our goals were the same, and soon we were underway.

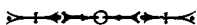


Before long I reached our back yard, and I pulled a sheet off the clothesline. I wrapped it about myself in place of the decayed tatters of my bathrobe, thankful that Eric's latest girlfriend did laundry.

When I neared the house, I heard with my death-sharpened senses the sounds of my husband and his companion breathing the slow breath of sleep, of my son snoring softly. I worked the unlocked door open and stumbled slowly to Sean's room. With the amount of noise I was making I was lucky that the master bedroom was at the other end of the small house. Still, after a moment I heard Eric's voice, muffled with sleep, over the low tones of the radio he liked to keep playing while he slept.


"Go find out what that damn kid's up to this time."

There was a murmur of assent in a woman's voice and then movement. I left Sean's room and waited in the shadows nearby. I could hear that Sean was awake, but he was probably too frightened of his father to open his door. Even before the woman came into view, I could hear Eric snoring loudly once again. Then an intense jealousy arose out of nowhere, a realization that Eric had killed me but this slut was allowed to live, and rage swept over me.



I grasped a heavy bookend in my twisted hands and swung it at her as she came out of the hallway. Before she even knew I was there, she was on the floor, bleeding from a gash in her





skull. I lifted up the bookend and brought it down again — and again, and again, and again, until her head was a bloody mass of skull fragments, brains and hair. I giggled at the sound of her skull cracking until I remembered that I didn't want to wake Eric just yet. It was a good thing that he slept soundly — I could still hear him snoring.

I went to Eric's room as slowly as possible, trying to keep from waking him with my stumbling gait. His breathing was slow, soft, peaceful. His blond hair was mussed; his mouth was slightly open. He looked, for all the world, innocent.

It pissed me off.

I climbed slowly into our bed, taking care not to move the mattress too much. He mumbled a little and rolled onto his back, and I held myself absolutely still for what seemed an eternity. If I'd needed to breathe in the first place I would have stopped then. I maneuvered until I was curled up beside him, almost as when I was alive. My hands were cold from the October earth, so I warmed them between the sheets before I touched him.

I slid my hand gently over his stomach, fingers barely grazing the skin. My lips pressed against his shoulder, then his chest, leading a trail toward his navel. He moaned low in his throat and shifted slightly, but he didn't wake up.

I smiled.

Patiently I worked the sheet down off his body. He was already stiffening as I reached his groin, his body remember-

ing the touch he knew so well. Carefully I began to caress him, my dead flesh wandering over him in all the ways that used to please him.

"Oh, that's so good..." He stopped in mid-sentence as he woke up, suddenly cognizant of where and when he was, and of the fact that there was a woman in his bed, that it was his wife, and that he had murdered her himself.

His scream was every bit of Heaven that I could have wanted.




It was so difficult to keep myself from killing him. Almost impossible. But I did it. He helped by jumping out of the bed and running, completely naked, into the night. There was blood on his belly from where I'd scratched him as he'd moved, and I could hear his screams echoing throughout the house as he ran.

I called the police. I said that I'd been driving by this small house and heard screams and the sounds of a man yelling. He sounded very angry. Could they please check it out? Well, certainly, they'd be right up, and thank you very much for calling, ma'am. As I spoke with them I heard an announcer on the radio say that there'd been a break-in at a local liquor store. The proprietor had been found injured and taken to a hospital for treatment. I breathed a sigh of relief at that, thankful that I had not actually killed him.

I wished that I could say the same thing about the woman.

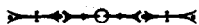
I wept when I saw her lying there, naked, Eric's footprints in a line through the blood, but I had little time to





spare for mourning. I went to Sean's room, a little afraid of how he would respond to me, but all of my efforts to keep in touch with my child had paid off. He was a little frightened at first, and he didn't want to get close to me, but he knew me and was more than willing to leave with me. I led him out, careful to shield the sight of the dead woman from his eyes, and we ran into the woods.

At last, Sean and I were alone. No matter the problems to come I intended to raise my child, the most important thing in the world to me.



I couldn't believe it. All of that effort was for nothing; he'd gotten away. I was furious. Yes, he was in jail for the murder of his girlfriend, but what did that accomplish? Jail

was a picnic compared to what I'd had planned for him. I could have stretched out his torment for days, at least, if not weeks. I would have taught him the true meaning of Hell.

Now I might never have that chance, because I was stuck taking care of this mewling brat of a child. It was his fault I'd gotten into this mess in the first place. If he hadn't been born, I wouldn't have been in Vermont. I wouldn't have been married to Eric. I wouldn't have been getting the shit kicked out of me every night.

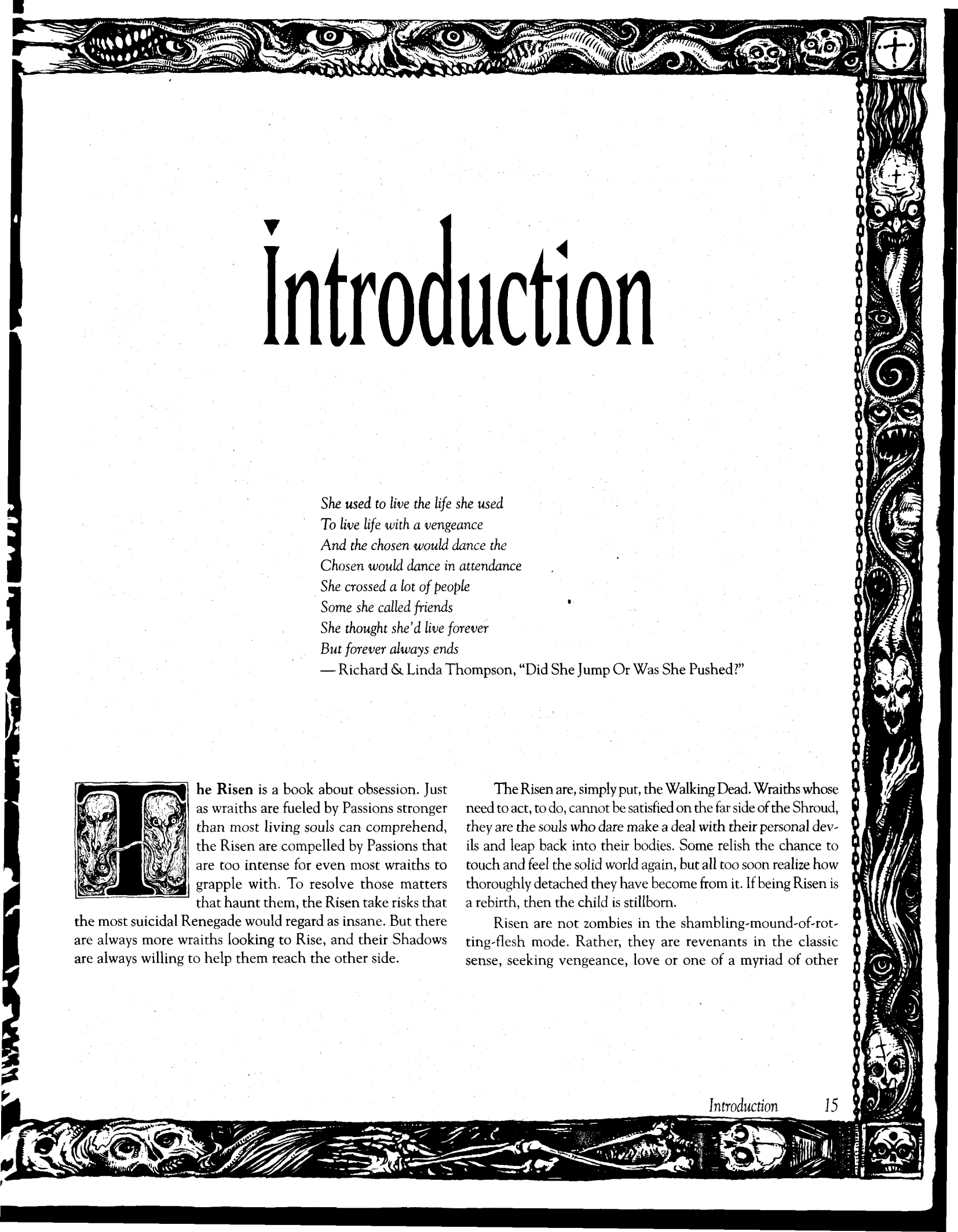
Sean gasped as I took his throat in my hands. The icy cold of my fingers and the ragged edges of my nails cut into his flesh, leaving deep marks.

"Mom?"





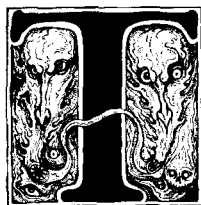
RITCHIE



# Introduction

*She used to live the life she used  
To live life with a vengeance  
And the chosen would dance the  
Chosen would dance in attendance  
She crossed a lot of people  
Some she called friends  
She thought she'd live forever  
But forever always ends*

— Richard & Linda Thompson, "Did She Jump Or Was She Pushed?"



**T**he Risen is a book about obsession. Just as wraiths are fueled by Passions stronger than most living souls can comprehend, the Risen are compelled by Passions that are too intense for even most wraiths to grapple with. To resolve those matters that haunt them, the Risen take risks that the most suicidal Renegade would regard as insane. But there are always more wraiths looking to Rise, and their Shadows are always willing to help them reach the other side.

The Risen are, simply put, the Walking Dead. Wraiths whose need to act, to do, cannot be satisfied on the far side of the Shroud, they are the souls who dare make a deal with their personal devils and leap back into their bodies. Some relish the chance to touch and feel the solid world again, but all too soon realize how thoroughly detached they have become from it. If being Risen is a rebirth, then the child is stillborn.

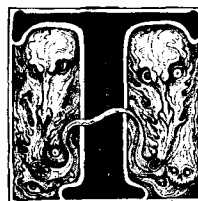
Risen are not zombies in the shambling-mound-of-rotting-flesh mode. Rather, they are revenants in the classic sense, seeking vengeance, love or one of a myriad of other





emotions strong enough to break the grave's grip. Risen do not drip moldering flesh; many pass quite well for humans (or at least vampires). Most can speak quite well instead of in a graveyard moan, and the only ones to wear chains do so as a deliberate fashion statement. The Risen can come from all walks of life, and they are bound not by stereotype or legend, but by obsession and the knowledge that they walk very close to the edge of Oblivion indeed.

## What's In This Book?

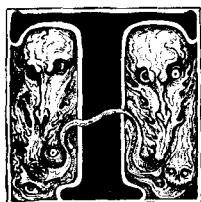


**T**he Risen is all about those wraiths who dare to cross the Shroud, against both their better judgment and Hierarchy edict, and re-inhabit the bodies that were theirs in their living days. It details what precisely a Risen is, how a wraith becomes Risen, and the perils involved. Conduits, those Fetters which house the Shadow (or the Psyche) in the Skinlands, are discussed, as are the ways in which Skinlands existence strengthens a wraith's Shadow.

Also included are the rules for Risen character generation, and ways in which an existing wraith character can become Risen. Merits, Flaws and Arcanoi unique to Risen are detailed, as are the methods by which a Risen can learn certain vampiric Disciplines. Five Risen templates are featured, as well as four of the most potent — and feared — Risen.



# Suggested Source Materials



The legend of the revenant is centuries old, if not millennia. The following stories and books are recommended for helping Risen players and Storytellers fit their Walking Dead into the World of Darkness.

Clive Barker — **The Damnation Game.** The character of the Razor-Eater is as vile a Risen as one could wish for, complete with a Dark Passion stronger than death itself.

Ambrose Bierce — “**The Night Doings at Deadmans.**” Perhaps a bit dated, but eerily effective.

Ray Bradbury — “**Pillar of Fire.**” Included in the **S** is for **Space** collection, it’s the story of the last dead man in the world and how his hate fuels him to take on the living.

H. P. Lovecraft — **The Case of Charles Dexter Ward**, “**Herbert West — Reanimator**,” “**The Thing on the Doorstep**” and “**Cool Air**” — Lovecraft had a unique flair for walking corpses, with or without heads.

Robin McKinley — **Deerskin.** More of a pure fantasy, but excellent for mood.

Toni Morrison — **Beloved.** A brilliant retelling of the revenant legend in historical context.

James O’Barr — **The Crow.** Less coherent but more compelling than the film (which is also highly recommended).

Mary Shelley — **Frankenstein.** The first modern tale of a dead man walking, the creature’s obsession is Risen-like in its intensity.

Dan Simmons — “**The River Styx Flows Upstream.**” From **Prayers to Broken Stones**, it details what having the dead out of their graves does to the living.





FLIP'S  
STUFF  
(BREAKABLES)

RITCHIE



# A Lust for Life

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,  
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,  
O sweet and bitter in a breath,  
What whispers from thy lying lip?  
— Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "In Memoriam A.H.H."

To: Theodore  
From: Lucinda  
Re: Your queries about deceased adversaries.

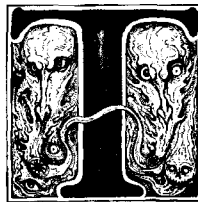
## Whispers in the Shadows



Some dead do not stay in their graves. I have seen them, and as I have learned over the years about the Restless Dead, I have also learned about those who return to their bodies. These wraiths who have the strength, luck, knowledge and fury to break through the Shroud and re-inhabit their bodies are known as the Risen. They do not call themselves such, but named thus by those who dwell in the Shadowlands. They are much feared, and hated, and perhaps even envied by other wraiths, for they dare much in their madness.

I first came across them when studying the *Mabinogion*, but tales of the Risen can be found everywhere. There are fictional accounts in so many places, from the stories of that Providence hack of whom you are so fond to Toni Morrison. The real stories, masked in the tall tales and urban legends, are harder to discern. Even among the dead, the masses do not know the truth.

## Persephone



The oldest known Risen is Persephone, whose tale is occasionally whispered in the Shadowlands. She has not been seen since before Charon's disappearance, but none of my enthralled wraiths have heard anything of her being destroyed or consumed by Oblivion. She may still be in the world, on one side of the Shroud or the other. I do know that your cousin Angelo has been searching for her for over a hundred years, with no success.



# A Meeting With Persephone

## A Tale Once Heard Among the Sandmen

It was two years ago, or maybe three. Time passes so strangely in the Shadowlands that it's hard to tell sometimes. I was passing through the Tempest — a tricky endeavor at the best of times — when I saw a girl. She was young, maybe early teens, but she had a strange sort of dignity about her. She stood ramrod straight, her head held high, and her eyes had a queer light to them.

I approached her, as I have always had a most unhealthy curiosity. She just watched me, unmoving and unblinking. I asked her who she was, and whether I could help her in some way. I was almost surprised by her voice when she spoke. A part of me had expected to hear a young girl's voice, light and a little high, not the measured, low tones she spoke in.

"I want to see my mother, but it isn't time to go back yet."

I asked her what she meant, but she merely replied that there were rules to be followed. Then she held up something that looked a lot like a pomegranate, smiled thinly, turned around and walked away. It wasn't until the next day that I thought of the story.

In the lands of the Quick they tell the tale thus: Many long years ago, Persephone, daughter of Demeter (goddess of agriculture), was kidnapped by Hades (god of the underworld and the dead), who had seen her and fallen in love with her. He took her away to live in his kingdom as his queen. There she was offered food and drink, but she neither ate nor drank — until, out of politeness, she ate six seeds of a pomegranate. For each seed she ate, she was condemned to spend one month of every year in the land of the dead. During this time, her mother would mourn, and the land would become cold and barren. At the end of the six months, Persephone would return to her mother and the living world. Demeter, in her joy, would cause the climate to warm and the plants to grow and bloom again.

On the surface, it is a simple tale of despair, triumph, compromise and of course, the origin of the seasons. But what of the other half of the story, its Shadow?

About a decade after my own death, I heard another, more sinister version of the tale. In it, Hades was no god but a powerful wraith, who fell in love with a living girl named Persephone, and arranged for her untimely demise so that he could have her company in death. Demeter was no goddess, but a talented mage instead. The "pomegranate" was theoretically a relic, whose exact nature has long since been

forgotten. This same relic supposedly helped to provide Persephone with the power necessary to drag herself back into the land of the Quick.

## A Love Story?

A part of Persephone fell in love with Hades, and she crossed back and forth between the realms of living and dead as her love waxed and waned. She would flee from Hades when his possessiveness and jealousy became too confining for her, and return when her loneliness overpowered her. Most of the dead I've spoken with say that she eventually went mad, ultimately succumbing to the same dark power that had enabled her to return from the dead again and again.

According to the lore of the Shadowlands, Persephone was the first of the Risen. No one knows exactly how she discovered the way back to the Skinlands, only that her urgent need to escape her captor and return to her mother drove her to try until she succeeded. There is much speculation, of course, and no one has yet answered the question as to why she's supposedly still at it. After all, Demeter must have died millennia ago.

Most people say that the knowledge Persephone obtained in the Shadowlands and subsequently shared with her mother the sorceress enabled Demeter to use her magic to help Persephone open the way. Others wonder about the nature of the so-called pomegranate. There's no way to know, really, just how much of the myth is fact and how much is allegory. The relic could have been anything.

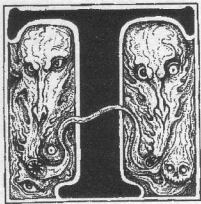
Still, there are other wraiths who reject these theories. They insist instead that it was Hades himself who sent his queen back. Out of his love for Persephone and his guilt over having caused her grief and loss, he in his great knowledge and wisdom showed her how to open the way. This strikes me as a little too sentimental, but it makes some people happy to believe it.

Some denizens of the land of the dead say that Persephone still passes between the Shadowlands and the Skinlands every six months like clockwork. Many insist that they have seen or even spoken with her. While some of these reports are obvious hoaxes, and I admit that I used to believe that all of them were, a lot of the stories are strangely similar. They are much like my own, in fact, and I cannot help wondering if it was truly Demeter's daughter whom I saw and with whom I spoke.

There's also the matter of the rumor that Persephone went progressively more insane as the years progressed, growing worse every time she passed between the worlds. It is true that those who claim to have seen Persephone have usually said that she has the peculiar light in her eyes that the mad seem to share, and that when she speaks she makes little sense. Then again, that doesn't mean much these days.

Whatever the means or her ultimate fate, once Persephone found a way to cross over into the land of the living, it was as though a door had been opened. Many, many of us, far more than the Deathlords would care to admit, have followed her through it. I did.

## The Hierarchy's Prohibition



The legend of Persephone, and indeed all information about the Risen, is actively suppressed by the Hierarchy. To become a Risen is a violation of the Dictum Mortuum, the code of laws the Hierarchy imposes on the Restless for their own good.

The so-called Deathlords consider the Risen to be the sort of flagrant interference with the living that gives the dead a bad name, and so they act to suppress it. Any

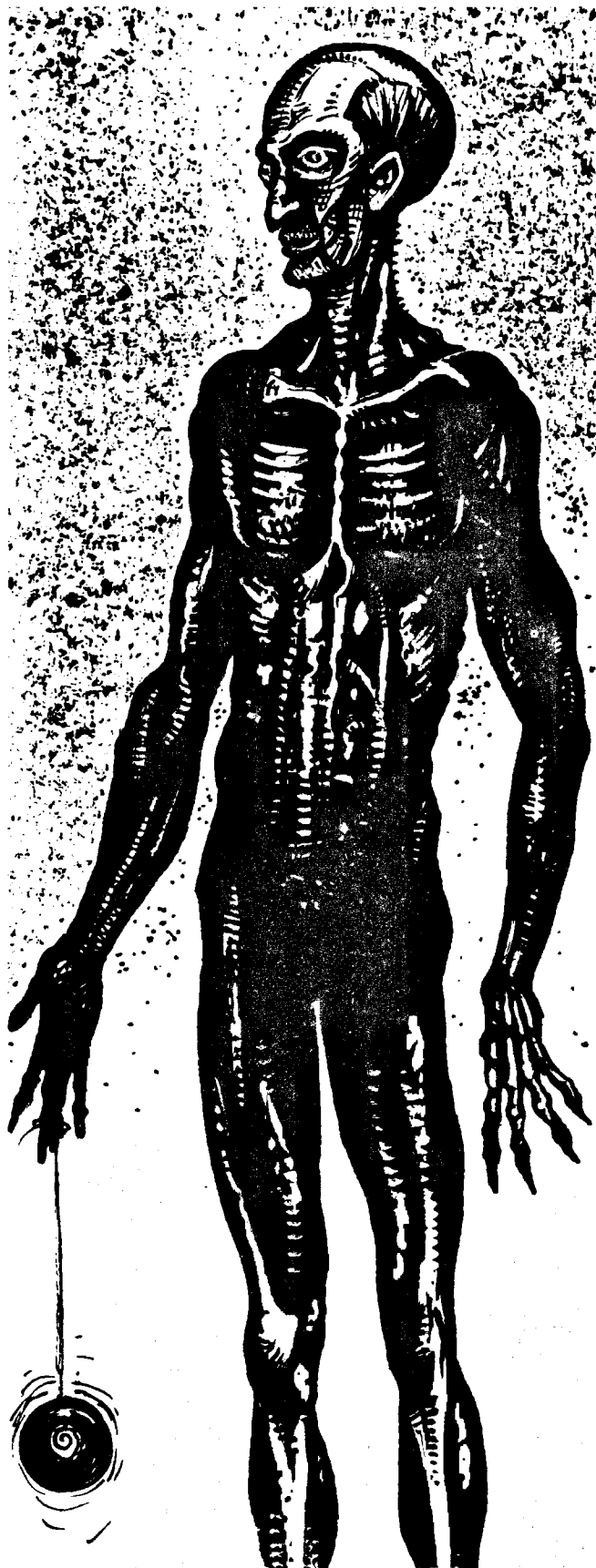
wraith found to be trying to become a Risen or imparting the knowledge of how to do so can be summarily soul-forged into an obolus or an ashtray. Obviously, it's difficult to enforce this law after the wraith actually digs her body back out of the ground, but a Risen who returns to the Shadowlands would do well to stay clear of the Legions and their forges.

The fact that Risen interfere with mortal affairs is not the only reason the Hierarchy has for repressing knowledge of them. The Risen pose a serious threat to the Hierarchy, at least symbolically. By returning to the Skinlands, a Risen is escaping wraith society and the control that the Hierarchy likes to think it has over that society. The greatest threat to any repressive society comes in the form of expressions of individuality. In my three centuries of this life, I have seen it time and again; the more repressive the dictatorship, the more they fear those who stand out as individuals. Becoming a Risen is an extreme expression of individuality, an embrace of the needs of the individual over the dictates of society. Every Risen is a chink in the Hierarchy's armor, and the Deathlords are well aware of this fact.

## The Renegades' Acceptance

The self-titled Renegades have a much more open opinion of Risen. While views vary among individuals, most have friends who have, at some point at least, become Risen. It is among the Renegades that the tales are told, passed among friends, and so is the knowledge of how to return to one's body.





Many Renegades understand how dangerous the Risen can be to the Hierarchy, and how useful an agent in the Skinlands can be. More than half of the Risen I have seen have had some favor for a Renegade commander added to their agenda.

## Heretical Notions

Each Heretic cult (and there are approximately nine billion, it seems) has its own opinion of the Risen; they vary from unreasoning hatred to open encouragement. The only common thread is that each cult does have an opinion, and almost always a strong one.

One cult of Restless in particular seems to have an unhealthy interest in the Risen. The "Path of the United Being," as it is known, has as its central teaching the idea that in order to Transcend, a wraith must reunite with her body and overcome death. They seek for each member to become a Risen. By reclaiming their flesh in the Skinlands, they believe they will achieve Transcendence. Every wraith I have enthralled who is not a member of this "Path of the United Being" denounces the cult as a nest of insane, extremist fanatics. I imagine it must be because their doctrine makes too much sense.

## The Puppeteers

In my studies of the Risen, I have found that in each case the wraith who returned had some knowledge of the Arcanos known as Puppetry. My research on the matter indicates that it is necessary for a wraith to know the rudiments of this Arcanos before becoming a Risen, but I'm beginning to believe that there is more to it than that.

The Puppeteers Guild seems to actively encourage some wraiths to become Risen. They would appear to have set up a sort of boot camp for prospective Walking Dead, offering training in the rudiments of Puppetry as well as other aid to some of those who wish to become Risen. Those whom I've put to the question won't say what the Puppeteers want in return for their "kindness," (in fact most say they asked for nothing) but I am wont to be suspicious.

## The Determined Few

**M**ost Risen do not last long among the Quick. They fall to Oblivion most often, as the Skinlands are too full of anguish for the Restless Dead. Some fall to mortal — or not so mortal — hunters. Some even admit failure and retreat back to the Shadowlands. The wraiths I have interrogated have tried to explain each failure away, but there is a pattern in the wreckage, if you know where to look for it.

You must understand two things to comprehend why few Risen last. The first is that the Shadowlands are a desolate place, devoid of color, warmth and the primal pleasures we know so well. Those who dwell there cannot experience the thrill of being alive under a star-filled sky or standing in salty ocean breeze as even we still can, but they remember in torturous detail what it was like. The second thing, the heart of the matter, is that Risen are the Walking Dead, with emphasis on the word "Dead." They have bodies, but no life. They forget that they are not coming back to life, only changing the status of their deaths when they come back as Risen. Perhaps it was best summed up by the Risen who said, "My body isn't mine any more. It's a *thing* that I move like a marionette." They return to the world, to their body, and yet they are constantly reminded neither is truly theirs anymore. To most it is more than a mere disappointment; it is a profound loss of which their Shadows take every advantage.

Wraiths who wish to become Risen are warned by their friends of the potential disappointment. They are also warned of the extra strength the Shadow will gain. They are warned of the hardship of digging out of the grave, of the initial clumsiness, of the hunters and of the likely reaction of their former friends. Who among our kind has listened to the all-too-similar warnings upon her Embrace? As many of us were foolish enough to think that we were too clever or blessed for such things to trouble us, so many wraiths ignore the hazards and become Risen.

## The Shadow

A wraith's Shadow is the key to his ability to return to his body. The Shadow has the power to keep the wraith tied to the Shadowlands, and so the wraith must somehow get the Shadow to acquiesce to his mad idea of returning to the lands of the living.

I'm sure you must be wondering why an intelligent entity, who longs chiefly for the end of its existence, would agree to return to the waking world. On the surface it would seem odd that the Shadow would ever aid the wraith in this endeavor. What you must remember, though, is that while the Shadow is self-centered and self-indulgent, it is most assuredly not stupid. The Shadows to which I have spoken were quite aware of the warnings that their Psyches did not heed. They knew that by returning to walk among the Quick, a wraith reopens old wounds and leaves himself more vulnerable to the Shadow's machinations. Furthermore, with the additional distractions of the (ahem) Skinlands, many wraiths tend to keep a slack watch on their Shadows — and often their Shadows make them pay for this. Throw in the fact that many Shadows can extort terms from their Psyches before the twain ever leave the Shadowlands, and suddenly the proposition looks much more attractive for the Shadow. One







finds oneself wondering why the wraiths themselves are ever foolish enough to attempt it.

There are other reasons that a Shadow might have for allowing the return. In a few cases I've seen, it appeared that becoming a Risen was the Shadow's idea initially. As each wraith is an individual, each Shadow is also distinct. Some are almost as obsessed with the destruction of others as they are with their own descent into Oblivion, and agree to return to the Skinlands so that they can wreak havoc among the living as well as the dead. Having a potent, near-indestructible body to control when they take over the Psyche is enough to make many Shadows go to extreme lengths. One Shadow-driven Risen I had the misfortune to run across racked up a body count that would put any Sabbat War Party to shame.

## Evidence of a Body

For a wraith to become a Risen, she must have a body to inhabit upon her return to the Skinlands. This is an area of extreme interest to me, since even the most thoroughly abused body is healed upon the wraith's returning to it, but there must be a body for the spirit to re-animate.

A wraith cannot return to a body that has been cremated. I'm sure you are aware that many cultures still burn the bodies or the dead to keep the restless spirits from returning; now you may understand of the logic behind the superstition. Decapitation has also been employed to keep the former owner of a body from returning, though this is not always successful. The heart and brain are the two things that seem to be important, and which would seem to hold the key to controlling the resurrection process. Separating the two usually works, but it is only certain if the head is then buried far away from the body. No doubt you've heard tales of ghosts who carry their heads around with them; not all of them are yarns told to frighten impressionable fools.

I'm certain that with your fertile imagination you must be imagining scenes from B-grade horror films as you ponder what a Risen looks like once it emerges from the grave in a body that has been rotting for 10 years, and which may or may not still have everything attached. Strangely enough, they usually aren't that much the worse for wear — indeed, many can pass quite easily for humans. From the outside a Risen looks much as she would have before death. Any trace of decomposition of the body is miraculously removed (aside from a faint, but noticeable odor of decay). The wounds that

were the cause of death are visible as heavy scar tissue, as if the Risen had survived the wounds and spent several years healing messily. Severed limbs remain severed, of course, and it goes without saying that they have no breath, no pulse, no heartbeat and no body heat. I will also note that the lack of circulation makes them rather pale, especially if they were embalmed.

## The Conduit

It is not enough that a wraith persuade her Shadow and have a suitable body if she wishes to be a Risen. She must also have what the Walking Dead call a Conduit.

I first heard the term "Conduit" from a loquacious, and rather indiscreet Puppeteer of my acquaintance. I might add that soon after the conversation he ceased to be of anyone's acquaintance, though I suspect not because he used the term, but rather because I managed to persuade him to enlighten me as to some of the metaphysics behind the functioning of a Conduit, and thus he incurred the displeasure of his Guild elders. I won't bore you with the esoteric details — the gist of it is that the Conduit serves as the bridge across the Shroud, and is the center of each Risen's power.

Each Conduit is unique to each Risen. Most often the Conduit is one of the Risen's Fetters, something that exerted a particularly powerful hold over the wraith in life. It is usu-

ally a small item, as the Risen must always have the Conduit nearby and this is rather difficult if the Fetter in question is, say, an office building. Occasionally some Risen decide to use animals as their Conduits; this tends to produce the most disturbing-looking stray cats and mutts I've ever seen. These cases are less common because only the Puppeteers know how to displace the spirit of the animal with the Shadow. They tend to be stinting with their knowledge.

In any case, the item selected becomes the Conduit when the wraith passes out of the Shadowlands and becomes a Risen. At this time, the wraith's Psyche *should* find itself in its old body, while its Shadow should take up residence in the Conduit. It doesn't always happen this way; sometimes things get reversed. Plus, there's nothing to keep the two from flip-flopping places every so often. I'm told it happens frequently.

It's ironic, really, given the battle of wills wraiths must constantly fight with their Shadows, that the first thing a Risen must do is find her Conduit, which holds the consciousness of her Shadow. Without it her Corpus will slowly disintegrate, generally over a period of a few days. Stranger still is the fact that the same holds true for the Shadow, for when the Shadow is in control, it possesses the body and the Psyche is trapped in the Conduit, yet the Shadow is unable to destroy the Conduit and will suffer unbearable pain if separated from it. I should add that the wraiths I spoke to on this matter did not share my amusement over this little paradox.



# The Undead Identity Crisis



I never cease to be amused at those who mistake the Risen for our kind. It seems that many of those who have learned of the existence of the supernatural are quick to assume that anything that doesn't breathe also sucks blood and sunburns easily. Many vampire hunters and some of the Kindred themselves have made this mistake. I shall never forget the look of shock and consternation on the face of a certain FBI agent when the "vampire" he'd just staked through the heart turned around and proceeded to rip his lungs out.

Such a mistake, while usually fatal, is understandable. Risen and Kindred do not eat, breathe or age. If you can observe auras, you will notice that just like us, the Risen have pale auras, though the trained eye will note that one color of a Risen's aura is usually very bright. When you become particularly good at Auspex, you may also notice the aura of the Risen's Shadow, which is centered on the Conduit. Most of the Shadow auras I have seen resemble a spilled set of paints, muddy brown with few discernible swirls of color.

# Different School, Same Curriculum

Risen and Kindred share many of the same abilities. Just as we can heal our bodies rapidly, so can they. They simply power their healing with "Pathos" instead of blood. Many Risen also have the preternatural strength, speed and endurance that some of our kind possess. I once saw the Risen that I spoke of earlier put his fist *through* the kevlar breastplate of the FBI agent who was harassing him. The fist also went through said FBI agent, but that feat somehow pales in comparison.

Oddly enough, the physical Disciplines possessed by both vampires and Risen (such as Potence or Celerity) would seem identical, so much so that a Risen could teach them to one of the Kindred. The more intellectual Disciplines, on the other hand, are a different matter. Many of the Disciplines available to those of the blood are unavailable to Risen, and certain of their talents are barred to us. Then again, certain of their abilities mimic ours. For example, since the Risen retain their acute senses and the abilities of Deathstight and Lifesight from beyond the Shroud, their perceptive powers are as strong as those of the more sensitive vampires. On one occasion, this led a certain Toreador to assume that a Risen of my acquaintance was a fellow member of his clan, based





on my acquaintance's powers of perception. Mind you, neither of us bothered to disabuse him of the notion, but that's another story.

I suppose I should point out the obvious: that the Risen suffer no ill effects from sunlight, unless you wish to count the unflattering tinge it gives to their skin. A prudent Risen avoids natural light if at all possible, but for reasons far less pressing than you or I. Fire is an effective weapon against them, much as it is against us. However, the Walking Dead are immune to the *Rötschreck*. I think I envy them that.

## When in Rome...

By now you may have begun to suspect the reason for there being so little information about the Risen in general circulation. Most Risen who last in the world of the living are mistaken for Kindred. After all, they are pallid and have no pulse. What more proof do most need? What you may not have guessed is the fact that this masquerade (*sic*) of theirs is no accident.

Most Risen who come into contact with other supernatural beings, or anyone else likely to notice their lack of a pulse, pass themselves off as Kindred. A substantial number even seek out the Kindred population of whatever city they resurrect themselves in, attempting to burrow into the commu-

nity of Cainites. Aside from the rather touchy tactical question of letting others know that most of your close associates are non-corporeal, there are several potential benefits to passing for a member of the Kindred community. For one thing, there is the fact that one Walking Dead alone stands out, while a Risen in a crowd of vampires is much less of an oddity (or target). Second, there is the fact that our kind tends to have the power to protect — or destroy — a Risen's Fetters effectively, and it's worthwhile for a Risen to cultivate allies in that position.

Finally, it seems that the wraiths who call themselves Puppeteers encourage the Risen to pass themselves off as Kindred; I'm uncertain as to the reason for this. Fomenting trouble among our kind, perhaps, or keeping tabs on their most powerful puppets? Who knows.

## The Drinking Problem

Risen have a slight problem when it comes to passing themselves off as vampires — they do not drink blood. It is, in fact, impossible for the Risen to ingest anything, even vampiric blood. The presence of any substance in a Risen's mortifying stomach will cause him painful, debilitating cramps until the substance is regurgitated. This means that no Risen

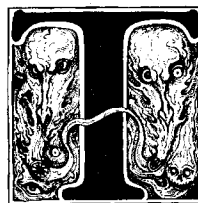


can become Blood Bonded to a vampire, but the problems caused by this limitation far outweigh this small benefit.

I should also point out that our kind cannot, or at least should not, drink from the Risen. Bodies buried under normal circumstances these days have embalming fluid in their veins, so any poor fool attempting to feed from a Risen drinks what is essentially antifreeze. There's not much nourishment for us in that.


I do know of one case where, as an experiment, a Brujah attempted to drink from a Risen who had not been embalmed and thus actually had blood. The results were extremely unpleasant for the vampire. I'm told that drinking blood that has been dead for even a few days, is like drinking a mixture of curdled milk and vinegar, and this Risen had supposedly been dead for three months. The Brujah in question ended up going into what appeared to be the world's first nausea-spawned *Rötschreck*. She also took time to heave up several pints of blood, far more than she could possibly have taken from the Risen before the adverse effects set in.

## The Bottom Line



Although many people cannot tell the Risen from the Kindred, you would do well to always remember that they are really very different creatures. We die as part of becoming what we are, but never leave our bodies behind. For us, death is merely part of the journey to immortality. We live an existence in which we become increasingly removed from our former lives, and which (among the Brujah, for example) may have no higher purpose than avoiding death a second time.

Risen, on the other hand, have experienced death more thoroughly than we can imagine. On the other side of the Shroud, they have watched the world they once inhabited but could no longer affect. Many have even watched their own funerals, looking on as the body that they once took for granted was buried beneath six feet of earth. To come back



from the dark knowledge that one's life is over, to be so obsessed with a task left undone that even death can not stand in the way — that takes a rare intensity of passion. Risen possess an obsession with their mortal lives that most vampires can not even begin to comprehend. I can see that madness in their eyes; it is the reason I can never mistake one of the Risen for anything else.

If you insist on trying to hunt down these Walking Dead, take these lessons to heart. I would recommend you forget the matter for a few decades, but if you persist, I wish you luck.

I, of course, expect to be among the first to be informed as to what you discover.

Affectionately,

Lucinda

### Don't Eat or Be Eaten

Due to the severe cramps caused by introducing anything into their digestive tracts, a Risen who has ingested anything will be at -2 for all actions until they manage to regurgitate the substance. To purge himself of the food or drink, the Risen must make a successful Stamina roll (difficulty 6), and then spend a round in the process of excising the offending matter from his system.

Any vampire foolish enough to drink from a Risen will immediately become sick to her unliving stomach. If the Kindred was lucky, the Risen from whom she attempted to drink was embalmed, in which case the vampire rolls Stamina + Fortitude (difficulty 7). Subtract the number of successes from five; the result is the number of Blood Points she immediately heaves up, in addition to whatever blood she took from the Risen. If the Risen was not embalmed, the unlucky vampire has ingested dead, clotted blood, making the difficulty on the Stamina roll 9.





RITCHIE



# The Art of Rising From the Grave

*He stood in the graveyard, hating. He walked through the world and yet could not taste nor smell of it. He heard, yes. The wind roared on his newly opened ears. But he was dead. Even though he walked he knew he was dead and should expect not too much of himself or this hateful living world.*

– Ray Bradbury, “Pillar of Fire”



Risen character can enter a chronicle as either a new character or as a new way to play a pre-existing wraith. Playing a Risen is not to be undertaken lightly, as they are designed for those players willing to roleplay a driving Passion so strong that it subordinates everything else they do.

There is far more to playing a Risen than simply crawling from the grave and wiping out bad guys. If it were that simple, more wraiths would be doing it.

Vengeance is only one possible motive for the creation of a Risen. Not every wraith has a murder to repay or a violent crime to avenge. Consider the possibility of a man who died without ever telling the woman he loved all his life how he felt about her. The need to say “I love you,” just once, could be enough to stir him from his coffin. The nature of the obsession is secondary. It is the power of the obsession itself that drives a Risen, and which requires a commitment of emotional energy from the player behind the character.





## Returning



If tearing through the Shroud to re-inhabit one's body and Rising from the dead were easy, the world would be filled with the Walking Dead. It takes a combination of skill, luck, driving purpose...and a deal with the Devil. The most important component of a wraith's returning to the land of the living is her gaining the cooperation of her Shadow.


Most wraiths who have Risen do so because circumstances have conspired to make returning the ideal way of fulfilling the Passions of both the Psyche and Shadow. Often these Passions are in direct opposition, and Psyche and Shadow cannot come to an agreement, but there are exceptions. The Shadow may sense a tactical advantage to Rising, as a wraith who has returned to the Skinlands will gain Angst much more quickly, or perhaps merely the increased opportunity to create havoc that a body provides is sufficient incentive. On the other hand, a Shadow may wish to thwart a wraith's return in order to frustrate and weaken the Psyche, or simply because it does not feel the potential gain is worth the pain and risk of the process.

Once a wraith has become a Risen, she instantly finds herself engaged in a much more intense battle with her Shadow. Many do not last long. A wraith re-inhabiting her body will constantly feel the warmth of the world against her cold flesh; it is a stark contrast to having a living body. Seeing the Quick all around her, she knows that her life will never continue on as theirs do. The Shadow knows this as well, and plays on her growing disillusionment and despair.

Even in the brief respite of Slumber, a Risen does not find true rest. To make matters worse, wraiths still have the abilities of *Deathsight*, *Lifesight* and *Heightened Senses* once they Rise. Without the insulation that the Shroud provides, what these powers show can be overwhelming. The Shadow knows how to make good use of these factors. Weak-willed Risen are soon overwhelmed and claimed by Oblivion.

A wraith may become a Risen because he seeks Transcendence. It is not uncommon for a Risen to feel that once he has finished what he left undone in life, he will finally achieve peace. For some, this possibility is worth any risk and any price.

A Risen will do anything to achieve his goals, and that is a large part of the horror of his existence. Once he has merged with his dead body and clawed his way out of his grave, why should he let anything prevent him from completing his mission? He may find that he has to kill, maim or commit other crimes in his quest, and though each act may seem justified, each will weigh heavily in his mind. To make matters worse,



the Shadow is also pursuing its plunge into Oblivion with similar fervor, and if possible it will bring others to their destruction as well. In returning to the Skinlands, the Psyche and Shadow agree to a quick and brutal battle to the end, winner take all.

## The Pact

The Shadow's cooperation is absolutely necessary only at the moment of transition between wraith and Risen. Once a wraith has become a Risen, her Shadow cannot force a her to abandon her body and return to the Shadowlands.

Getting the Shadow's agreement often takes weeks of bargaining. Use of the Castigate Arcanoi can be instrumental, while cajoling, threats and even bribes ("If you let me become Risen, I'll let you destroy one of my Fetters before we cross over.") are equally useful tools in negotiating the transition. While the Shadow is often as eager to become a Risen as the Psyche, this won't keep it from playing hard to get. Almost every Shadow will bargain, regardless of whether it wants to become Risen or not, simply to get what concessions it can.

## Requirements

Aside from the all-important pact with the Shadow, a wraith must meet three requirements in order to return to the realm of the living. She must have a body to inhabit, she must possess an appropriate Conduit, and she must have a certain expertise in the specific Arcanoi necessary for the process. For this reason, most Risen are months or even years in their graves before digging themselves out and setting off on their quests.

In order for a wraith to re-inhabit her body, there needs to be enough of the body left to make possessing it worthwhile. A wraith whose body was cremated or whose body is completely skeletal will never be able to return to it. The corpse does not have to be in perfect working order (if it were, the wraith wouldn't be a wraith in the first place), but there needs to be at least the shriveled remains of both heart and brain or the attempt will fail. Joan of Arc will never Rise, and a heart donor who wishes to become Risen is out of luck. Other missing organs pose no problem — a Risen has no need for working kidneys or a gall bladder — but there is a mystical significance to the heart and brain, even in death.

The matter of the Conduit is more complicated. The Conduit is one of the wraith's Fetters, and must be an object small enough to be carried or transported. If the wraith wishing to become Risen has no Fetters that are suitable for service as a Conduit, another object that was dear to them in life will serve. Such cases are rare, however.

Alternatively, a wraith may choose to use an animal as a Conduit instead of a Fetter. The secret of turning a living creature into a Conduit is the province of the outlawed Puppeteers Guild, and very few wraiths know even this much. It has been speculated that the Puppeteers use a modified version of the Puppetry art Obliterate the Soul to insert the Risen's Shadow into the Conduit-animal after destroying the beast's spirit, but neither those supposedly destroyed spirits nor the Puppeteers are talking. What is common knowledge among those who know about the Risen is that the Puppeteers will happily perform the process if the price is right.

A certain amount of knowledge of specific Arcanoi is necessary in order to rise from the grave, with the most important being Puppetry. Though this particular Arcanoi is frowned upon by the Hierarchy, all those who seek to become Risen must have at least the ability to Skinride in order to get themselves back into their body. In addition, a wraith needs a certain amount of understanding of the world, the Shroud and life itself in order to make the transition back into the Skinlands. To reflect this understanding, the wraith must have at least two dots distributed among Lifeweb, Inhabit and Embody. These abilities are not particularly useful to the wraith in the Skinlands, but they reflect the wraith's skill at interacting with the physical world.

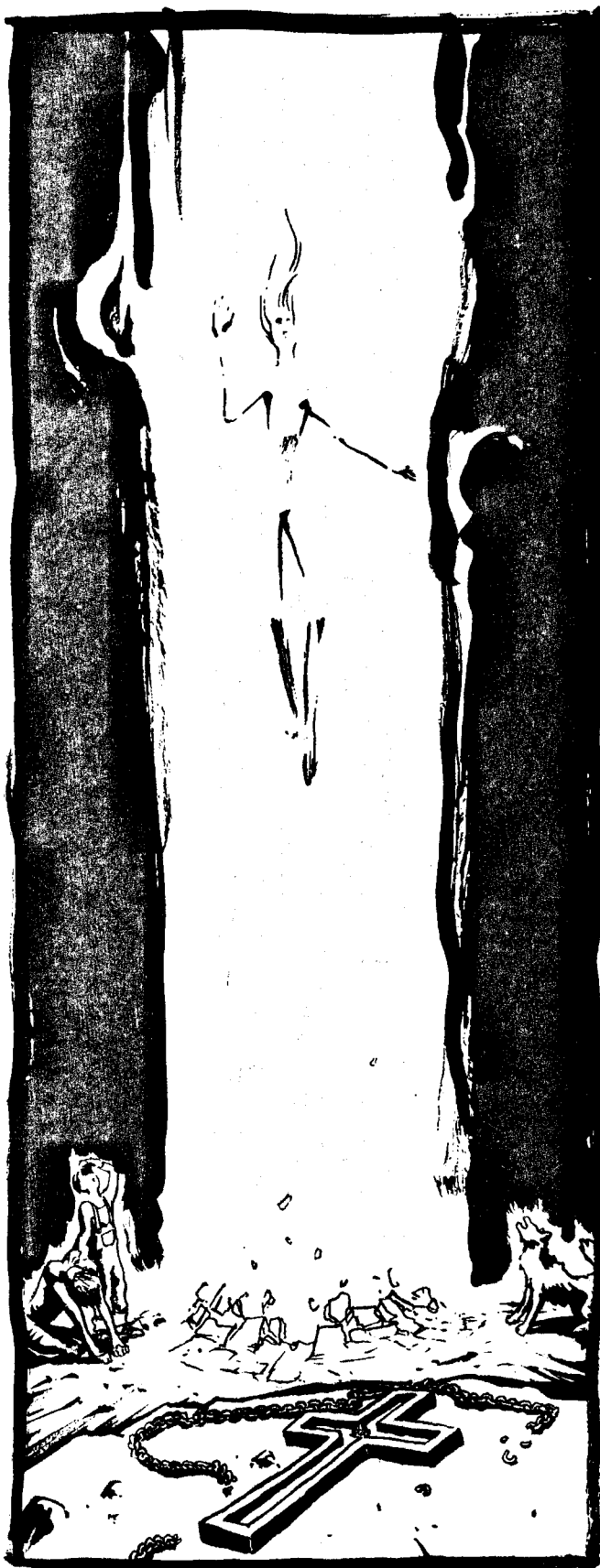
This requirement primarily affects existing wraiths who are in the process of becoming Risen. Otherwise, simply assign the appropriate Arcanoi to a new Risen during the character creation process.

## Becoming a Risen



Existing wraith characters may become Risen if the circumstances are appropriate, though the Storyteller may wish to think carefully before allowing this, since running a story with both normal and Risen wraiths can be problematic. On the other hand, a wraith's quest to become a Risen can be a very engaging and dramatic plot involving many sessions of intense roleplaying and character development. A Storyteller should consider what effects it might have on her chronicle before allowing an existing character to become a Risen.

Making the bargain with the Shadow to return and become a Risen should be roleplayed with the Shadowguide. The player needs to convince the Shadowguide of the importance of returning, for without the Shadow's consent, the journey back is impossible.



Perhaps helpful is the fact that the Shadow knows of the opportunities that returning presents to it. The Shadow may be even more eager to return than the Psyche, but, it will mask its true desires in order to drive as hard a bargain with the Psyche as possible. After all, the Shadow has its own motivations and Dark Passions which may be fulfilled more easily as a Risen, but that doesn't mean that it's going to give the Psyche the satisfaction of going along meekly.

In all cases, the Shadow will consider the very real risks and benefits of returning, as well as the pleasure of thwarting the Psyche's wish to return and Angst that the denial of the request is likely to generate. Some Shadows may even goad their Psyches to attempt to become Risen, only to deny them at the last minute out of pure sadism. Often the Shadow later agrees, but only after milking the Psyche for all of the rage and frustration the situation is worth.

## The Process of Rising

Once the Shadow agrees to Rise, the wraith must travel to where her body is buried. She must then attempt to meld with her body as if she were Skinriding a mortal. This requires that she spend one point of Pathos and roll Dexterity + Puppetry (difficulty 6). In addition, she must spend a Willpower point (to break through the Shroud) and make a Willpower roll at difficulty 8.

If both rolls are made successfully, the wraith will find herself back in her old body, her Shadow tucked into her Conduit. If the Skinride roll is failed, the entire operation is a failure, and the wraith remains in the Shadowlands. If the Willpower roll is failed, the Rising is a success, but the Shadow assumes control of the body and the Psyche is forced into the Conduit. If the Willpower roll is botched, the Shadow not only gains control, but also a point of permanent Angst for each 1 rolled beyond the number of successes.

## Success!

The wraith is now a Risen, but is in all likelihood separated from her Conduit. Her first objective will be to find the Conduit, for she is at a -2 difficulty on all Dexterity based rolls until she finds it. A Willpower point must be spent for a Risen to take any action besides hunting down her Conduit, as regaining that connection will be the initial driving force in her new existence.

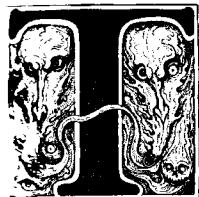
Upon her initial awakening, a Risen will always know where her Conduit is. Getting there, however, is another matter, especially with six feet of dirt and a solid wood coffin to deal with first. (See Page 50 for the penalties associated with separation from the Conduit)

Thud! Thud! Thud!

Perhaps sparked by fear of the dead rising from their graves, morticians and gravediggers have taken some extraordinary measures that pose tremendous obstacles to newly Risen wraiths. Metal caskets, concrete grave liners and stone slabs over tombs and above-ground graves present almost insurmountable difficulties for some Risen. These unfortunates never muster the strength to break free from their resting places and, in their rage and frustration, soon succumb to Oblivion.

In order to escape their graves and tombs, most Risen are forced to call upon their Shadows for assistance. Few are strong enough to punch their way out of a metal casket or through a half-ton concrete slab without the help of their darker side. However, Shadows are often more eager to lend aid in this situation than one might suspect. After all, a Risen trapped in a metal coffin is in no position to retrieve her Conduit, and neither Psyche nor Shadow wants to deal with the consequences of that circumstance.

## Character Creation



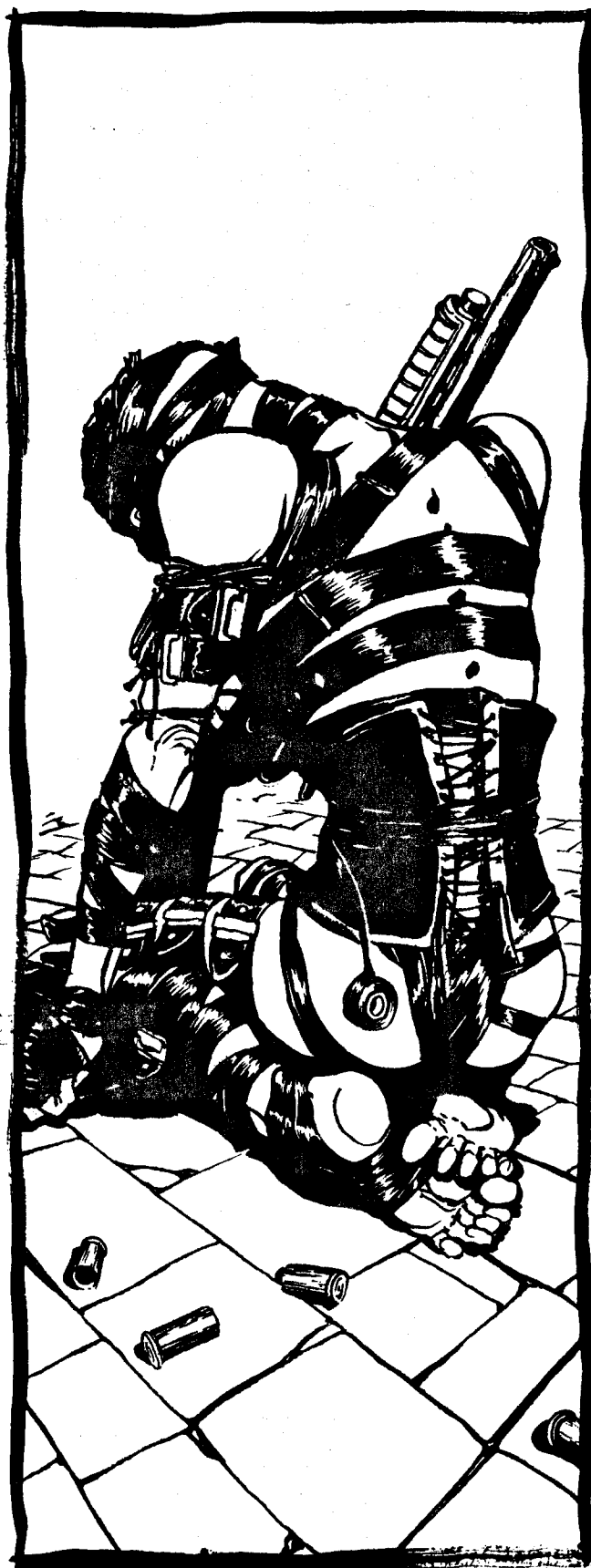
The character creation process for Risen is nearly identical to that used for wraiths. (For more information see **Wraith: The Oblivion**) If you are starting a new character off as a Risen, she will be fairly inexperienced, likely having spent no more than a year or two as a wraith. Less time in the Shadowlands does not allow sufficient time to gain knowledge of the necessary Arcanoi; much longer than two years usually renders the wraith's body unusable.

### Step One: Concept

The most important part of character creation is coming up with a strong concept. Risen characters are driven, obsessive and sometimes desperate. What was it about your character's life and death that gave her the impetus to become a Risen? Why has she come back? How far will she go to accomplish her goals? The answers to these questions will help determine the rest of the necessary information for your character.

### Nature and Demeanor

Choose your character's Nature and Demeanor from the archetypes listed in **Wraith: The Oblivion**. Keep in mind that certain Natures, such as Bon Vivant and Child, do not make





sense for a Risen character. Choose a Nature that is compatible with someone who will do anything to accomplish his goals.

## Step Two: Attributes

Select Attributes as you would for a normal wraith character. Keep in mind that Risen must dig themselves out of their graves without wearing down their fingers to bloody nubs. With that in mind, a Risen's Strength should be at least three. Also, Risen cannot have an Appearance score higher than three. No matter how much preservative is pumped into a corpse, no one can look that good after spending a year or two in a grave.

## Step Three: Abilities

Select Abilities, prioritizing the three categories as in **Wraith**.

## Step Four: Advantages

### Arcanoi

Risen must have Puppetry as one of their initial Arcanoi, and must spend another two of their dots among Lifeweb, Inhabit and Embody. These Arcanoi are less useful to Risen

than normal wraiths, but reflect the knowledge necessary to become a Risen. Once the character has purchased the required Arcanoi, she will have two dots left to spend on others. These may be spent either on any of the existing Arcanoi or those specific to the Risen.


There are certain limitations on which Arcanoi Risen may utilize in the Skinlands. See Arcanoi: Page 40 for more details.

### Backgrounds

Besides having the distinct disadvantage of being dead, Risen are restricted to five points in Backgrounds. Risen cannot purchase the Background Artifact, and any Mentors or Status they have remain in the Shadowlands. Risen taking Allies, Contacts or Wealth must specify whether the Background applies to the Shadowlands or the Skinlands. After all, very few convenience stores take oboli, but your character may well have been buried with some jewelry which could be pawned for some ready cash....

### Fetters and the Conduit

Create 10 points worth of Fetters as per **Wraith**, the most important of which should be the character's Conduit. The Fetters of a Risen can be either resolved or destroyed. In fact,



Risen tend to resolve their Fetters more frequently than most wraiths, as the opportunities presented by physical existence aid in the process immeasurably.

If the Conduit is not a Fetter, then it should at least have some link to one. For example, if a Risen has her old home as a Fetter and chooses a stray cat as her Conduit, the cat should be one found near the Fetter, perhaps scrounging in its garbage cans or living under its porch.

You should also give your Risen 10 points worth of Passions. The most powerful of these Passions should be considered the Risen's driving Passion, and the reason she has come back from the Shadowlands. Once a driving Passion is resolved, a Risen's sojourn in the Skinlands is generally finished.

## Step Five: Finishing Touches

### Vampiric Disciplines

Risen may spend Freebie points to gain some of the Disciplines listed in *Vampire: The Masquerade*. They may learn Celerity, Fortitude, Obfuscate and Potence.

### Pathos and Willpower

A Risen starts with an initial Pathos rating of five and an initial Willpower of six. These can be raised using freebie points.

### Freebie Points

You may now spend 15 freebie points for purposes of rounding out whatever aspects of your Risen you feel are lacking. Freebies can be spent according to the chart.



Abilities	2 points per dot
Arcanoi	5 points per dot
Attributes	5 points per dot
Backgrounds	1 point per dot
Disciplines	7 points per dot
Fetters	1 point per dot
Passions	1 point per dot
Pathos	1 point per two dots
Willpower	2 points per dot

### Spark of Unlife

Once you've finished spending your points, there are some details that you should think about. These are the little things that make a character seem like a real person rather than a collection of marks on a piece of paper.

### Appearance

Since Risen are physical beings, their appearance is tied to the condition of their body. The wounds that killed your character will be visible on the body as scars. What will others see when they look at your character? Is there a grouping of circles left by a small caliber handgun, or a ragged trellis of knife wounds? Are all the fingers and toes still accounted for? Have fun describing you character to others, but keep in mind that it is better roleplaying to say, "There is a scar running across my neck from ear to ear," than to say, "You can tell that I was killed by having my throat cut."

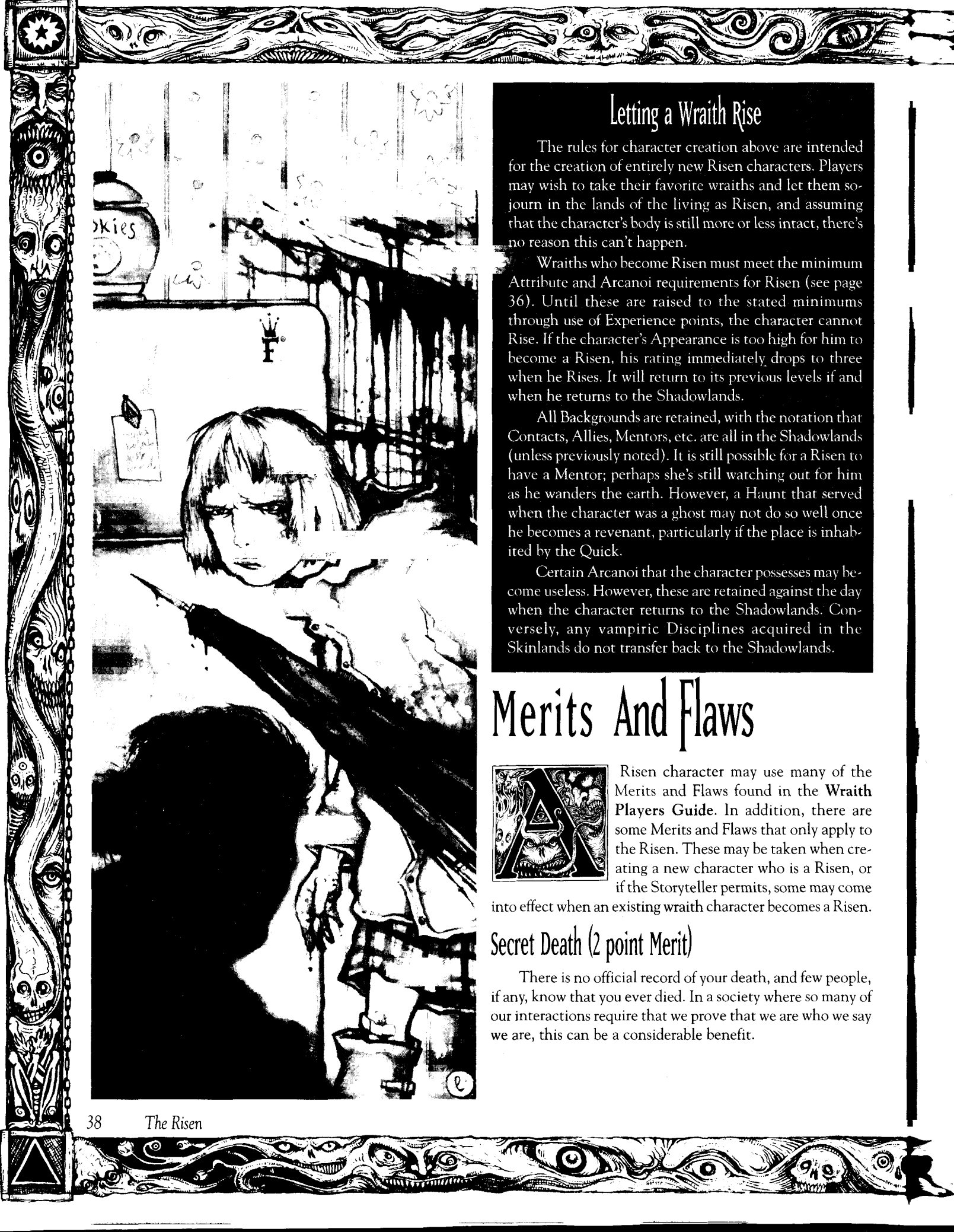
Furthermore, many Risen have decomposed, been pumped full of preservatives, or otherwise changed since their deaths. How much of this is apparent? Is your character still wearing the clothes she was buried in, or has she found new apparel? Is she wearing any jewelry or other accessories? Is she vampirically pale, or does color suffuse her cheeks? Answering these and other, similar questions fleshes out your character's look and allows others to know better how to react to her.

### Idiosyncrasies

There's a lot that can make your Risen unique. Does she walk with a limp, or can the grinding of bones be heard when she turns her head a little too far to the left? Does she speak at all, or is her voice hoarse from a crushed larynx? Does she compulsively try to get grave dirt out from under her fingernails, or does she carry around a piece of her coffin for luck? Details and mannerisms like these help distinguish your character from the ruck and run of the Walking Dead, and help make her special. There are no rules for coming up with quirkish habits, so go wild. Your imagination is the only limit.

### The Shadow

Your Risen does have a Shadow, whether it be banished to the Conduit or in control of her body. The Shadow should be created in accordance with the rules for Shadow creation in *Wraith*, with an Archetype, Temporary and Permanent Angst scores, Dark Passions, Thorns and 10 freebie points. Certain Thorns, such as Tainted Relic and Shadow Call, are inapplicable in the Skinlands. Others (Trick of the Light and Devil's Dare, in particular) acquire new power in the lands of the living, and can be devastating when the Shadowguide chooses to employ them.



## Letting a Wraith Rise

The rules for character creation above are intended for the creation of entirely new Risen characters. Players may wish to take their favorite wraiths and let them sojourn in the lands of the living as Risen, and assuming that the character's body is still more or less intact, there's no reason this can't happen.

Wraiths who become Risen must meet the minimum Attribute and Arcanoi requirements for Risen (see page 36). Until these are raised to the stated minimums through use of Experience points, the character cannot Rise. If the character's Appearance is too high for him to become a Risen, his rating immediately drops to three when he Rises. It will return to its previous levels if and when he returns to the Shadowlands.

All Backgrounds are retained, with the notation that Contacts, Allies, Mentors, etc. are all in the Shadowlands (unless previously noted). It is still possible for a Risen to have a Mentor; perhaps she's still watching out for him as he wanders the earth. However, a Haunt that served when the character was a ghost may not do so well once he becomes a revenant, particularly if the place is inhabited by the Quick.

Certain Arcanoi that the character possesses may become useless. However, these are retained against the day when the character returns to the Shadowlands. Conversely, any vampiric Disciplines acquired in the Skinlands do not transfer back to the Shadowlands.

## Merits And Flaws



Risen character may use many of the Merits and Flaws found in the **Wraith Players Guide**. In addition, there are some Merits and Flaws that only apply to the Risen. These may be taken when creating a new character who is a Risen, or if the Storyteller permits, some may come into effect when an existing wraith character becomes a Risen.

### Secret Death (2 point Merit)

There is no official record of your death, and few people, if any, know that you ever died. In a society where so many of our interactions require that we prove that we are who we say we are, this can be a considerable benefit.

## Innate Vampiric Ability (3 point Merit)

All Risen can learn some vampiric abilities, but wraiths with this Merit have a special knack for a particular Discipline. The cost for learning this Discipline is five times the current rating, rather than the normal six. In order to take this Merit, the Risen must also buy an initial level in the Discipline in question.

## Vampire Friend (3 point Merit)

You have a friend who is one of the Kindred. They may or may not quite know what you are, but they are understanding of the special needs of someone who is no longer among the living, and are willing to help you in times of need.

## Eat Food (1 point Merit)

Like vampires with this Merit, you can ingest food or drink without it coming back up violently at inappropriate times, though you gain no benefit from eating. You may not take this Merit if you take the Flaw *Autopsied*.

## Unhealed Deathwound (2 point Flaw)

The blow that killed you did not heal upon your rising from the grave. While it doesn't particularly trouble you, it is unsightly, and will leak bodily fluids if you engage in combat or other rough physical activity.

## Autopsied (1 point Flaw)

Your body was autopsied after you died. The wounds healed when you rose from the grave. However, the autopsy scars, like the scar from your any wounds you had when you died, are clearly visible. An autopsy leaves a distinctive Y-shaped scar covering the entire torso, and anyone with any medical knowledge who sees the scar is likely to think it looks suspiciously like an autopsy incision.

### On Modern Embalming Practices

Part of the process of becoming Risen is a regeneration of the uninhabited corpse. Sludgy muscles knit themselves back together, tears in skin close, and certain structures, even if they have been removed, will recreate themselves. In particular, it has become common practice during embalming to remove the eyes of the deceased and insert a clip on the inside of the eyelid in order to keep the lid shut during the funeral. It can be assumed that should a Risen's body have had this indignity forced upon it, the missing eyes will regenerate and the clips will tear away when the wraith re-inhabits her mortal shell.







### Mortal Fame (1-4 point Flaw)

You were famous in life, and your tragic death was widely mourned (or at least widely publicized). People whom you meet on the street are likely to recognize you, or at least say, "You look just like... but you can't be, he's dead." This makes it difficult to remain inconspicuous, and nearly impossible not to rouse the attention of those who would hunt you down.

### Scent of Decay (2 point Flaw)

The smell of the grave, of death and decaying flesh clings to you, following you wherever you go. The difficulty for all social interactions is increased by two. This Flaw is similar to the Thorn Death's Sigil, and characters taking both must have a distinct effect for the Thorn in addition to the stench of the grave.

### Decapitated (7 point flaw)

Your head is no longer attached to your body. Aside from the obvious problems with social interactions, the difficulty for any actions involving Dexterity is two higher than normal because your eyes aren't in the right place relative to your body. You must also be careful not to let your head and body move too far apart from each other, lest you lose track of your body.

## Arcanoi




Not all of the Arcanoi can be used by the Risen; their presence in the physical world makes some arts impossible or unnecessary to employ.

The Risen can use Castigate, Fatalism, Flux, Intimation, Keening, Mnemosynis and Usury normally. Argos, Embody, Phantasm, Moliate, Outrage and Puppetry cannot be used by Risen, though they may possess levels of skill in these Arcanoi from their time in the Shadowlands.

The Conduit allows Risen to continue to use Pandemonium, however using these powers exacts a harsh emotional toll on Risen. By using Pandemonium, they are bringing the darkness of the Shadowlands into the Skinlands, and there is a price to be paid. Each time Pandemonium is used, a point of temporary Angst is gained above and beyond any that is gained normally.

Risen may use Inhabit, but each use costs an additional Pathos above and beyond whatever Pathos must be used normally. When using Inhabit, the Risen is extending his Corpus beyond the bounds of his body, which is reflected by the additional Pathos necessary. Empower may not be used by Risen.



Only some of the Lifeweb arts may be used by Risen. Sense Strand, Web Presence and Splice Strand may be used, while Sever Strand and Soul Pact may not.

## Arcanoi of the Risen



Here are two new Arcanoi which the Risen may learn. There are no Guilds associated with these Arcanoi, and as there are few Risen to teach them, it is rare that they are passed along. Still, many Risen seem to find ways to discover their arts for themselves.

### Fascinate

Fascinate is the ability of some Risen to affect the minds of the Quick by inserting some thought or compulsion that the person cannot banish. It is similar to Keening, working with simple thoughts instead of pure emotion. This ability is frequently used when a wraith's Passions can be fulfilled by coercing a mortal into performing some action they might be already be inclined to take.

**Storyteller Note:** The use of Fascinate is a very intimate interaction with a mortal. To use Fascinate, the wraith must make eye contact with the target, and the ability is more difficult to use if the two are not alone. Fascinate will not persuade a mortal to do anything against his nature. Instead it is a tool of persuasion, wearing on the target's nerves and will until he complies.

### Basic Abilities

**Tuning In:** By whistling or humming a sequence of notes, the wraith can implant the tune in the target's mind so that they can't get it out of their head. The victim will have trouble concentrating on tasks, and may well be driven to odd acts in order to get the song out of his head.

**System:** The player must roll Fascinate + Performance (difficulty: target's Willpower). Each success represents an hour during which the target will hear the tune in the back of his mind when not actively concentrating on something else.

**Deja Vu:** Most of us are surrounded by the faces of strangers, many of which never worm their way into our recollection. By using this ability, a wraith can make a person remember having seen them before, regardless of whether or not this is true.

**System:** To use Deja Vu, the player rolls Charisma + Fascinate (difficulty of the target's Willpower). If the target had seen the wraith before, he will remember, though the level of

detail is dependent on the number of successes and the strength of the current interaction. If the target has never seen the wraith before, he will feel that he knows the wraith from somewhere, though he can't quite remember where.

### • Distraction

The wraith can make the target suddenly remember something else that she has to attend to, breaking her concentration, if only briefly.

**System:** Roll Manipulation + Fascinate (difficulty: target's Willpower). The number of successes gained determines the amount of time the target is distracted.

- 1 success Target is only momentarily distracted.
- 2 successes Target turns away for a turn.
- 3 successes Target's thoughts are elsewhere for at least three turns.
- 4 successes The target's attention is completely diverted.
- 5 successes The target suddenly remembers urgent business elsewhere.

A person may only be Distracted once per scene. There is no cost for this art, but a botch renders the target immune to all future Distractions.

### •• Remembrance

This art insures that the target will remember a simple thought, phrase, object or errand. A wraith who has mastered this ability need never fear that those they use it on will forget those simple things like telephone numbers, umbrellas or addresses. This will not work on any concept that cannot be described in a simple sentence.

This art is not always obviously useful, but with a little bit of creativity it can be quite effective. Using Remembrance to insert a particular address of which the target has no previous memory can be an excellent way to lure the target to that site. Conversely, a Risen with a Fetter in danger may use Remembrance to cause the individual to remember something about the Fetter that makes it worth saving.

**System:** Roll Manipulation + Fascinate (difficulty: target's Willpower). The number of successes gained determines the amount of time the target will focus on this matter.

- 1 success Target will remember for a three turns.
- 2 successes Target will remember for a scene.
- 3 successes Target will remember for a day.
- 4 successes Target will remember for a week.
- 5 successes Target will remember for a month or more.

After the time period for automatic memory is over, the Storyteller may make an Intelligence roll for the target to see if they remember.



Using this art costs one Pathos. A botch will either implant a memory other than the one which the Risen intended, or excise another memory entirely.

### ... Charge of Duty

The Risen can give her target a simple, one-concept statement that they must take to heart, so long as it is both relevant and in tune with their Nature. For example, this art could be used on a woman who feels guilty over the fact that she has been neglecting her child. The idea that she should be spending time with her daughter instead of drinking at bars and clubs could be successfully implanted in this case, as the notion is one that is already on her mind. In actuality, this art is a method of taking subconscious urges and making them conscious (as well as borderline compulsive).

**System:** Roll Charisma + Expression (difficulty target's Willpower); the number of successes correspond to the strength of the reaction. A botch will result in the target realizing that someone is trying to manipulate them

### .... Driving Urge

With this art a wraith can implant an obsession on a mortal, related to undertaking a simple, repetitive duty. The duty cannot be anything that directly puts the mortal directly in harm's way, or that would cause harm to anyone close to the target, but otherwise the sky's the limit. A Risen with the art of Driving Urge could drive a mortal to an obsessive behavior, *a la* Lady Macbeth's phantom hand washing, or condition her target so that he stopped by a particular building to check on it every day.

**System:** Using Driving Urge requires the investment of one Willpower point and one point of Pathos, and gives the Risen a point of temporary Angst. To implant the obsession, the Risen rolls Fascinate + Intimidation (difficulty is the target's Willpower). The more successes scored, the more feverishly the implanted obsession will be obeyed. A botch can produce anything from derangements in the target to the creation of obsessions in the Risen himself.

### ..... Target Lock

Target Lock fixates its subject on one item or person to the point of mania. It can create stalkers out of mild-mannered accountants or focus normally level-headed citizens on the tiniest minutiae. It creates in its target an obsession that mirrors the Risen's own.

**System:** Target Lock costs one Pathos point, one Willpower and the acquisition of two points of temporary Angst. To use the art, the Risen must be in sight of her target. Once the victim has been selected, the Risen rolls Fascinate +

Manipulation (difficulty is the victim's Willpower rating) and vocalizes the obsession she is attempting to insinuate into her victim's mind. Each success strengthens the obsession, and the more successes are achieved, the more complex the implanted obsession can be. Botches boomerang the effect of the art, giving the obsession to the Risen who attempted to use Target Lock.

## Serendipity



Serendipity is the art of being in the right place at the right time, of making fortuitous discoveries, of knowing what to do with happy accidents. Risen with this art are able to make sense of the thousand little coincidences that happen every day, and divine which connections are important and which are not. More importantly, they seem to find a way to always take advantage of those coincidental opportunities that others let slip by.

### Basic Abilities

#### Right Place, Right Time

All Risen with Serendipity often find themselves in the right (or at least most interesting) place at the right time. While Right Place, Right Time does not replace research and legwork, it will generally place a Risen in the rough vicinity of where she needs to be in order to further her goals.

**System:** There is no system *per se* for this Basic Ability.

#### Key Player

Like Right Place, Right Time, this ability is always on. A Risen with Key Player will instinctively know if she is in the presence who is important to her in some capacity. The Risen will have no idea what importance the individual who triggered the art has; in a crowded locale she may not even be able to determine who caused the response.

**System:** All that needs to be done for Key Player to be activated is for someone important (or potentially important) to the character walk across their field of vision. No rolls are necessary.

#### Fortuitous Wandering

By using Fortuitous Wandering, a Risen can get a general idea of where to go in order to pursue one of her Passions. She has no control over which Passion she will end up pursuing when using this ability, and a Fortuitous Wander in the direction of one Passion may take her away from another



of equal importance. However, this art is a good way to make progress with little information available.

**System:** The Risen rolls Serendipity + Awareness (difficulty 6). The number of successes achieved determines how pertinent the Risen's new destination is to her current concerns.

**Note:** The Storyteller randomly determines which of the character's Passions Fortuitous Wandering targets.

## •• Flashback

This art allows a Risen to conjure up images of a scene of import that occurred in or near one of his Fetters. The Risen must be in contact with the Fetter in order to use this ability. The scene that Flashback will recreate is usually the most pertinent one taking place near the Fetter since the Risen in question died. For example, if a Risen's sister is one of his Fetters and she were assaulted, he could use Flashback while holding her hand. If he were successful in his use of the art, he would get an image of the assault in progress (not to mention the faces of the assailants).

**System:** When using Flashback, a Risen rolls Serendipity + Awareness. The difficulty of the roll is 9 minus the rating of the Fetter upon which the art is being used. The number of successes determines the vividness and duration of the visions gained through the art's use. A botch strikes the Risen blind for a number of minutes equal to the difficult of the roll.

To use Flashback, a Risen must invest one Pathos.

## ••• The Face in the Crowd

With this ability, a Risen can tell whether or not a person that she has met is connected with one of her Passions or Fetters. The Risen will not be able to tell what the connection is, but if skilled may divine which Passion or Fetter is involved.

**System:** To use this art, the Risen rolls Serendipity + Empathy while speaking to her target. The difficulty of the roll varies, depending on how intimate the conversation is. A request for the time yields a difficulty of 8, while a heated argument over the local political scene may yield a difficulty as low as 3. The art costs one Pathos to use.

A single success will let the Risen know whether the person is tied to one of her Passions or Fetters. Multiple successes will give them some idea of which Passion or Fetter the target might be connected to, and how important that connection is. A botch provides possibly dangerous misinformation.

Using The Face in the Crowd costs two points of Pathos.

## •••• Fortuitous Meeting

This art allows the Risen "run into" someone whom he really wants to see. This ability may not work if the target simply cannot be influenced by fate to wander into the Risen's



path (i.e., is in prison, has just had both legs amputated, etc.), but under most circumstances the subject will find herself making a wrong turn, or going out for coffee at just the right time to cross the Risen's path. Under no circumstances will the target be aware that she is in fact being pulled toward a rendezvous, and the very idea will seem ludicrous to her. Instead, things will somehow just work out so that in the course of her daily routine, the target will manage to find herself face-to-face with the Risen who had been searching for her.

**System:** To use this art costs one Willpower point and one point of Pathos. It is necessary for the Risen using the art to have met the target at least once, but she does not need to be anywhere near the Risen for the art to be activated. To do this, the Risen rolls Serendipity + Manipulation against a difficulty of 7. The number of success determines how quickly the Risen finds the subject. A botch, in addition to giving the Risen a temporary point of Angst, will instill uneasiness in the target and may convince her to find an excuse to leave town.

Fortuitous Meeting has a range of 100 miles in all directions. If the target is in New York and the Risen in question is in Dallas, the art will have no effect, even though the Pathos and Willpower will be expended.

### ..... The Coincidental Gathering

This art is similar to Fortuitous Meeting. However, it gently coerces multiple targets to run into each other regardless of whether or not the acting Risen is present. The Risen using the art has the option of choosing whether her targets simply bump into each other, or into each other and her as well.

**System:** The Coincidental Gathering has the same distance limitations and requirements as Fortuitous Meeting. For this art, the Risen spends one point of Pathos and one point of Willpower for each person he wishes to gather. A Serendipity + Manipulation roll (difficulty seven) is made for each target.





RITCHIE



# In the Skinlands

*The body on the table had risen with a blind and terrible groping, and we had heard a sound. I should not call that sound a voice, for it was too awful. And yet its timbre was not the most awful thing about it. Neither was its message — it had merely screamed, "Jump, Ronald, for God's sake jump!" The awful thing was its source.*

*For it had come from the large covered vat in that ghoulish corner of crawling black shadows.*

— H. P. Lovecraft, "Herbert West — Reanimator"

## Past the Shroud



In the Shadowlands, wraiths can use Arcanoi and have certain innate abilities. By becoming Risen, wraiths lose some of these abilities and gain access to others which are normally denied the Restless Dead. This section details how the powers of the Risen deviate from those of normal wraiths.

## Basic Wraith Abilities

Risen still have the innate abilities of Death-sight, Lifesight and Heightened Senses. These abilities can sometimes be a detriment to a Risen wraith, as they make it impossible for him to ignore the pain and suffering of the waking world. With such unavoidable anguish everywhere, most Risen's Shadows feast on the suffering.

As they now possess corporeal forms, Risen no longer have the advantage of insubstantiality. Nor do Risen go incorporeal after taking Corpus damage; their flesh remains irreducibly solid.





Risen also have the ability to know, more or less, the location of their Conduit, and can gain vague impressions of the area in which the Conduit rests from the Shadow imprisoned therein. Normally this is not an issue — few Risen are foolish enough to let their Conduit out of their sight — but from time to time it happens. The impressions returned by a Conduit vary, depending upon whether the Conduit is animate or not. Living Conduits often return intimations of smell and sound as well as sight, while inanimate ones tend to provide spatial impressions such as might be given by radar. A Risen with an inanimate Conduit would be able to tell whether their Conduit was in a larger room or a small box. They would also know if it were in motion, and if so in which direction it was traveling. An animate Conduit, on the other hand, would give a much clearer impression of the particular space in which it is located, but would not be able to place it in context.

If a person other than the Risen holds the Conduit, the Risen can use Arcanoi on that person that normally require physical touch or eye contact. The Arcanos in question must be one that the Risen can normally use in the Skinlands, such as Usury or Fascination.

## Fragile Trunks

The bodies of the Risen are dead. They do not tire normally, though Risen may seek Slumber for other reasons. Immune to the necessities of breathing existence, Risen do not need to eat or drink, nor do they breathe. In addition, Risen are immune to extremes of temperature, feeling neither heat nor cold. Unlike vampires, they do not have to worry about their blood freezing (most Risen are filled with embalming fluid, a.k.a. antifreeze, anyway).

Risen also do not feel pain the way living creatures do. They register the sensation of pain, but it doesn't occur to their brains that they should mind. Pain is a distanced sensation to a Risen, and this enables them to continue functioning long after suffering damage that would leave even a vampire writhing on the floor in agony. Only aggravated damage done to a Risen or her Conduit will produce actual, immediate pain. (Note: Risen will also feel very uncomfortable if they ingest anything, though the sensation is more akin to incapacitating nausea than pain.)

## Learning Vampiric Disciplines

The Risen have the ability to learn certain vampiric Disciplines. Some even have an innate talent for one Discipline or another. Not all Disciplines can be learned; those that can are Celerity, Fortitude, Obfuscate and Potence. It should be noted that, due to the nature of Lifesight, wraiths cannot use Obfuscate to hide from other wraiths. Instead, Lifesight will show wraiths the aura of an Obfuscated Risen (or, for that matter, vampire).

Instead of using blood to fuel these abilities, Risen use Pathos. When a Risen's Shadow is in control, it may use any Disciplines that the wraith knows, fueling them with Angst instead.

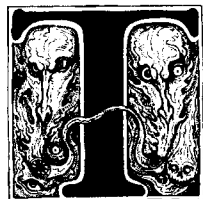
In certain esoteric circles, there is much debate as to why Risen can learn these skills. Popular speculation at the moment suggests that Risen and Kindred may not in fact be uti-

### Buying Disciplines

An initial level in a Discipline may be purchased during character creation for seven freebie points. After character creation, Disciplines may be learned at a cost of 10 experience points. Subsequent levels cost six times the current rating in the Discipline, and often require a vampire tutor for instruction in the finer points of their use.

lizing the same powers, instead walking different paths to achieve similar effects. Such debate has kept certain occult scholars — those few privy to the secret of the Risen's existence — busy for centuries.


## Skinlands Perils



The World of Darkness is a dangerous place for all its residents, but it can be especially perilous for Risen, whose Shadows have increased power over them. Isolation and pain are the rule, not the exception, for the Walking Dead, and these are meat and drink that the Shadow feeds upon. Even worse, most Risen must face the numbing pressure alone. There are very few Risen in the world, all intent on their own obsessions, and few have either the time or the inclination for socializing. As for non-Risen, most are put off by the almost palpable aura of death that hovers around the Walking Dead, making companions difficult to find in even those rare times when they are desired.

Risen have good reason to fear both the outside world and their Shadows, and it is often difficult to determine which is the greater threat. The outside world, with both hunters





and other supernatural creatures, poses a more immediate danger, but the omnipresent Shadow is even stronger in the Skinlands. Risen need to constantly guard against both threats, and many are simply not quite vigilant enough.

## Angst

Walking among the living in a cold, dead body is not an easy thing. The return to the Skinlands is traumatic, and interacting with the living takes its toll. Risen are at a much higher risk than normal wraiths from their Shadows, and gain Angst much more quickly.

For Risen, any Angst gained as a result of using an Arcanos is automatically doubled. In addition, the difficulties on all dice rolls to gain Angst are lowered by 1. In this way the Shadow tends to acquire Angst much more quickly, allowing it greater leverage over the Psyche and making the Psyche choose its actions very carefully in order to avoid giving additional power to the enemy.

## Damage to the Conduit

A Risen must protect his Conduit at all times. If his Conduit is damaged, the Risen's link to the Shadowlands is compromised, and their ability to function in the Skinlands is jeopardized. As such, most Risen are exceedingly protective of their Conduits. It is one of the ironies of the Risen's experience that they usually spend most of their energies protecting that which houses their Shadows.

A Conduit has 10 Health Levels, regardless of the Conduit's physical form. A Conduit in the form of a glass pendant is no less difficult to destroy than one in the form of a steel pencil case or a black cat. When all 10 Health Levels are gone, the Conduit is destroyed.

If his Conduit is damaged, a Risen's ability to regain Corpus is compromised. Wounded Risen are not be able to heal themselves above the current health rating of their Conduit, so a Risen whose Conduit has taken seven levels of damage can have no more than three Corpus Levels until he repairs his Conduit. If aggravated damage is done to the Conduit, the Risen will take aggravated damage equal to that done to the Conduit.

A Conduit can not be healed or repaired normally. In order to repair the Conduit, the Risen must successfully meditate and spend a Willpower point, a Pathos point and gain a temporary Angst point. No more than one Health Point may be restored to a Conduit per day, and the Risen must Slumber before attempting any further repairs.

It is very important for a Risen to keep his Conduit nearby. Not only is damage to the Conduit a grave risk for any Risen, but mere separation from the Conduit is damaging. If a Risen is separated from his Conduit, he will obsess

on recovering to the exclusion of all else, and with good reason. For each hour the Risen has no physical contact with his Conduit, he loses one level of Pathos, and that loss cannot be regained. Indeed, without his Conduit, it is impossible for a Risen to harvest Pathos at all.

If a Risen is separated from his Conduit for more than 24 hours, his body will start to decompose at the rate of one Corpus Level per day. This damage can not be healed, and does affect all dice pools. If the Conduit is not recovered before Corpus reaches zero, his Psyche immediately plunges into Oblivion without even the last chance of a Final Harrowing.

## Risen in Combat

*If you address a ghost as 'Thing!'*

*Or strike him with hatchet,*

*He is permitted by the King*

*To drop all formal parleying—*

*And then you're sure to catch it!*

— Lewis Carroll, "Phantasmagoria"

Risen can be deadly in combat. Physical pain does not slow them much until the point where they suffer actual structural damage. While Risen do feel pain in an abstract way, it is merely sensory input to them as opposed to crippling agony. A broken arm does not mean intense pain to a Risen; it simply means that the arm in question may no longer bend well enough to be useful at the moment. Furthermore, since Risen are capable of such rapid healing, even shattered limbs and the like rarely slow them down for long — so long as they have Pathos upon which to draw.

## Risen and Aggravated Damage

The following cause aggravated damage to one of the Walking Dead:

- Fire
- Werewolf claws and teeth
- Vampire fangs and claws from the use of Protean

Silver, holy water, garlic and other traditional means of defending one's self against a supernatural being do not cause aggravated damage to Risen, nor do regular rounds of ammunition.

## Risen and Damage

Since pain will not incapacitate her, a Risen will not suffer a penalty to her dice pool when she has taken damage unless that damage is aggravated. After all, a bullet to the gut is only a high-velocity impact when internal bleeding and ruptured organs are no longer concerns. On the other hand, a Risen who's had her leg muscles carbonized by a bath from



a flame-thrower will not be able to move effectively until healed, and as such will take a dice pool penalty of -1 die per wound level (to a minimum of 2 dice). In most cases, though, a Risen is capable of continuing to fight full tilt until her body literally falls apart.

The health of a Risen is measured by her Corpus rating, effectively giving her up to 10 Health Levels. A Risen's Corpus rating corresponds to the health of her body. Damage to a Risen's Corpus can be healed by spending Pathos, and a Risen is capable of restoring one Corpus point per turn. If a Risen is wounded while her Shadow is in control, the Shadow can effect healing by spending Angst instead of Pathos.

If a Risen loses all of her Corpus Levels, but still has Pathos, she is considered to be unconscious, and will lie unmoving until such time as she has begun to heal her Corpus. During this apparently quiet time, the Risen is actually undergoing something similar to a Harrowing, as a bitter struggle for control is going on between the Psyche and the Shadow. The winner will take control of the body when the struggle is over; the loser is banished to the Conduit. Sometimes Psyches will even voluntarily relinquish control to the Shadow if the Shadow appears to have a better chance of extricating their shared Corpus from whatever predicament it is now in. Of course, this sort of deal carries with it its own risks....


## The Struggle

The conflict between Psyche and Shadow in the body of an unconscious Risen is both quick and vicious. It can be resolved in one of two ways: roleplaying or systems. Should the Storyteller wish to have the conflict resolved through roleplaying, both player and Shadowguide should feel free to go at the other hammer and tongs in order to convince the other to relinquish control.

If the Storyteller wishes to have a systems resolution instead, a contested roll is made. The player must roll her Willpower (difficulty is the Shadow's temporary Angst). At the same time, the Shadowguide must roll her permanent Angst against a difficulty of the wraith's current Pathos. Ties go to the Psyche.

Of course, if one side wishes simply to surrender, their opponent will take control of the Corpus and can begin the process of restoring it to consciousness without interference from that pesky voice in the back of her head.

The length of time a Risen is unconscious varies. When determining how long his character will be out, the player must roll Stamina + Fortitude. The difficulty of this roll is 10 minus his current Pathos rating; if the difficulty is reduced to



one or zero, the Risen awakens immediately. The number of successes gained on the roll determines how quickly the Risen awakens.

Successes	Time Unconscious
Five or more	One turn
Four	One scene
Three	10 minutes
Two	One hour
One	Six hours
Zero	12 hours
Botch	A day — or more

An unconscious Risen is indistinguishable from a corpse, and may well be carted off to a morgue before anyone realizes the mistake.

A Risen who has burned off all of her Pathos but retains at least one level of Corpus must undergo a Catharsis roll. If the Shadow wins, it takes command of the Risen's body while the Psyche is forced into the Conduit. The Shadow draws upon the untouched reserves of Angst to fuel her actions. Many hunters who thought that they'd worn down a Risen to a "safe" level have experienced unpleasant — and fatal — surprises. It is one thing for a hunter to deal with a weary, dispassionate Risen, entirely another to face a Risen controlled by a bloodthirsty and potent Shadow.

If a Risen loses all of her Corpus levels and Pathos, her tenure as a Risen has ended, and her body will revert to the state it was in before the wraith became a Risen. Complete destruction of a Risen's heart or brain will also destroy her, though this task is easier postulated than accomplished. Once a Risen is destroyed, her Psyche plunges straight into Oblivion and undergoes a Final Harrowing. If she survives this, she returns to the Shadowlands and can no longer become Risen; if she fails she is utterly annihilated.

## Slumber and Healing

Since Risen have physical bodies and cannot fade into their Fetters, they have difficulty Slumbering. In order to achieve Slumber, a Risen must be in physical contact with one of his Fetters for the full eight hours of slumber. If contact is broken before the eight hours Slumbering normally takes, the Risen will wake prematurely and will not gain the full benefit of his rest.

The benefits of Slumbering are severely reduced for Risen. To heal normal damage through Slumber, a Risen must make a Stamina roll at difficulty 9. One Corpus level is regained for each success. Fortunately, this roll cannot be botched.

If a Risen's Conduit is destroyed, whichever of the wraith's personalities was inhabiting it at the time is destroyed as well. The remaining personality in the animated body is now free of the other half, though only for the relatively few hours it will take to decompose.

## The Conduit Alone

From time to time a Risen's body is destroyed, either by damage to the body or separation from the Conduit, and the Conduit itself is left behind, undamaged. When this happens, the Conduit becomes something very powerful, and very dark, an empty link to the Shadowlands.

A Conduit is a potent object — it is a bridge between the worlds of the living and the dead, imbued with the remnants of an often malicious personality. As such, its uses for a mage or other individual seeking knowledge or power are many. Even those unaware of the true nature of the Risen may well be drawn to the sheer power radiating from an abandoned Conduit.

The potential uses of a Conduit are somewhat limited, but among the informed few, there is a steady demand. Members of Clan Giovanni in particular find Conduits useful in their studies, and many Tradition mages with morbid personality quirks have found uses for them as well. On the other hand, Euthanatos mages regard an abandoned Conduit as an abomination, and will destroy one on sight.

There will always be an echo or resonance of the destroyed personality in the lone Conduit. Sometimes the resonance is weak, other times it is not. If the entire Shadow remains, woe betide the unfortunate soul who discovers the Conduit. The Shadow (now technically a Spectre) will do its utmost to corrupt and destroy the Conduit's owner. Often, they succeed.

## Travel Between the Worlds

Some Risen are strong enough to travel back and forth between the Skinlands and the Shadowlands. Such travel is risky, and comes at a high price, but there are those who are willing to pay when it suits their purposes.

If a Risen wishes to return for whatever reason to the Shadowlands, she would be well advised to find a safe place to store her body for the duration of her journey. Returning to the Shadowlands, she will leave her body in the Skinlands where it begins decomposing naturally. The physical representation of the Risen's Conduit remains in the Skinlands, but the Shadow re-integrates with the Psyche.

To travel to the Shadowlands, a Risen must spend a point of Willpower and a point of Pathos. She must then make a Willpower roll (difficulty 7). If successful, she returns to the Shadowlands and gains a point of temporary Angst. To return to Skinlands, a Risen visiting the Shadowlands must once again attempt to meld with her body using Skinriding (Dex-



terity + Puppetry, difficulty 5). In addition, she must spend a Willpower point to break through the Shroud and make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8). If this roll is failed, the return to the Skinlands is successful, but the Psyche will find itself in the Conduit and the Shadow will assume control of the shared body. If the roll is botched, the attempt fails and the Shadow gains a point of temporary Angst for each 1 rolled above and beyond the number of successes.

It should be noted that if the Shadow chooses, it can prevent any return to the Skinlands simply by refusing to cooperate. Each time a Risen wishes to return to her body, the Shadow's cooperation must be gained. This is the primary obstacle to Risen traveling back and forth across the Shroud — there are only so many bargains that can be struck with one's Shadow — and Shadows cannot be counted on to be anything but hostile.

## The World of Darkness

**M**ost denizens of the World of Darkness are unaware that the Risen even exist. A group of anarch vampires may get a kick out of watching a movie about a rock singer crawling out of the ground to waste the guys who killed his fiancée, but they'd never dream that something very similar might be skulking through the alley behind the theater. On the other hand, those beings who know of the Risen give them a great deal of thought indeed.

### Vampires

*I don't know what the fuck it was, and I don't fucking care! It took a full clip in the chest and stood there, leaking green shit outta the holes, like it was a walk in the effing park! I've been Sabbat for 10 years, I've seen all kinda shit in my day, even an effing Baali, but nothing ever put the fear of God in me like that thing.*

— Joseph Ordonez, Sabbat pack priest

*They're easy to fool and great camouflage. If you can get the vampires to accept you as one of their own — and most of them can't conceive of you being anything else — you're got a leg up on finishing the job you came to do.*

— Jimmy Moore, Risen and Brujah impersonator

### Lupines

*Stay out of their way. I've seen three of these walking corpses in my time, and heard tell of a dozen others, and none had a quarrel with us unless quarreled with first. It is best to let them find their own path, and not stand in the middle of it.*

— Angela Dalsimer (Collects-Old-Tales), Ragabash of the Fianna



*It's rare when I've had to wander into their territory, and I don't like doing it even when I have to. They are tough, and they don't back down from a fight. Wish they did. Then again, I think a few of them are wishing the same thing since the last time I ran into them....*

— Monica Cromwell, Risen and former Alchemist

## Mages

*Some are overdue for the Good Death, some bring it to others who are quite deserving. Observe them, and judge each on his or her own merits. But if you choose to act, do so swiftly and without mercy, for if you hesitate, you may receive a gift from them instead.*

— Marti Redford, Euthanatos

*A lot of them seem compelled to stand up to whatever comes along. Mostly the skinny kids dressed in black, but some of the others, too. With them, it's pretty simple: if they see you coming, you're in trouble. If they don't, it's magic brains all over the wall.*

— Christobel Mumford, Risen, former Centurion of the Emerald Legion

## Changelings

*I saw one of those things rumble with a redcap once — it was neat! First the redcap bit it, and all this disgusting stuff came out, and then he made this really funny face, and then the guy he bit just, like, grabbed the redcap's hand and started squeezing, and then...*

— Blongus the Red, satyr childling

*Faeries? What do I think about faeries? You mean to tell me that you think there are faeries out there? Oh, please.*

— Peter Dalby, Risen and Renegade

## Spectres

*Wraiths attempting to Rise from their graves are the ripe fruits of Oblivion, just waiting to be plucked. Teach them anything they need; be as helpful as you know how. If they succeed in Rising, it only serves to strengthen the seeds of Oblivion within them; if they fail, then their grief and anger at that failure can often cause them to walk our road to Oblivion anyway. Either way, they will eventually be ours.*

— Andrew Karshon, Doppelganger

*Spectres are a truly terrifying breed. Still, many of them are willing to teach the things we need to know and cannot find elsewhere, so you have to make a deal with the Devil. Use them for their knowledge, but don't listen to them otherwise. We know that our purposes are far more important than the lines drawn between wraith and Spectre, but even we must tread carefully. Control your dark side; do not allow it control you.*

— Beth Malkus, Risen, formerly of the Artificers Guild

## Hunters

*What the hell is it, sarge? I just shot it 14 times, and all it did was flip me the bird and walk off. Sheee-it!*

— Pfc. Howard Angell, United States Army, attached to the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces in Bosnia

*Get the hell out of my way (sound of cranium impacting with windshield).*

— Phil Simmons, Risen and former professional legbreaker.

# When All Is Said and Done



nobody's quite sure what happens when a Risen resolves the Passion that draws her forth from the Shadowlands. Witnesses report various, often contradictory, events. Some claim that once the driving Passion is dealt with, the body of the Risen collapses, the Conduit crumbles to dust, and the wraith

Transcends on a beam of pure white light. Others claim that the wraith is immediately shunted back to the Shadowlands with her Passion (and the Fetter that served as Conduit) resolved. A third school of thought holds that the Devil's bill comes due as

## If You Don't Like Ambiguity...

Storytellers are encouraged to use their own discretion in deciding what happens to a Risen who has achieved success in her quest. All of the tools — Harrowings, Transcendence, return to the Shadowlands — are both available and rational explanations for what happens to the wraith after she finishes her unfinished business from life. Hard-earned Transcendence can be a fitting and dramatic end to a Risen chronicle, as can defeat (Oblivion) snatched from the jaws of victory.

However, if the players demand structure at the end of a Risen's road, it is suggested that the Storyteller run an ultimate Harrowing to decide the fate of the Risen character. Success means Transcendence, while failure takes the former Risen screaming into the heart of Oblivion.

soon as the Risen finishes the business that brought her back to the Skinlands, and that the wraith drops into Oblivion as soon as her work on earth is done.

All three theories have their adherents, and it is likely that each is in part correct. None can explain all of the things that have been reported, however, and each is at a loss when asked to rationalize Risen like the notorious Gwynneth Sarbro, who would seem to have fulfilled her driving Passion years ago but who still haunts the American heartland like a demon huntress.

## Story Ideas



Most Wraith chronicles move between Shadowlands and Skinlands, but chronicles involving the Risen take things a step further. Risen can interact more concretely than most wraiths with the other dwellers in the World of Darkness, and this opens up a whole new range of story possibilities. Of course, Risen should also keep one eye on the Shadowlands as well, because they may well have to return there when their adventures in the Skinlands are done.

Below are a few very basic story ideas for Risen chronicles.

### To Become Risen

A wraith's quest to become Risen can serve as a wonderful plot engine for a Wraith chronicle. Discovering that the Risen exist, trying to uncover the necessary Arcanoi and skills, ducking Hierarchy and Heretic patrols in search of treason or blasphemy — all of this can make the time leading up to a wraith's Rise from her grave as exciting as what happens afterwards.

### I Got Your Dictum Mortuum Right Here...

The Risen is part of a Renegade gang who travel with her, trying to help her out in her quest. Odds are the local Hierarchy representative won't take kindly to this flagrant flouting of the Dictum Mortuum, and will do everything in her power to trip up both Risen and wraiths. Of course, the Risen is able to attack a Hierarchy's Fetters more effectively than most wraiths could, but on the other hand, there's not much a Risen can do to help her companions in the Shadowlands, and the Legionnaires are sure to take advantage of that.

### Very Dry Bones

Resurrection has always played a potent role in the religions of the living, and does no less in the faiths of the dead. Some Heretic cults look to Risen as abominations, mocking the deepest tenets of their faith. Others (see Chapter One)





view Risen status as the true path to Transcendence. Heretics can always be relied upon for a strong response to any Risen they come across, though the exact nature of that response depends upon the tenets of the cult in question. They may do everything in their power to aid the Risen's journey, or they may bend their every effort to stopping him. Even worse, they may try to lure him back to the Shadowlands in order to deal with him — permanently.

## To Serve the Deathlords

Ordinarily, the Hierarchy frowns upon wraiths becoming Risen. Every so often, however, there is a service that must be performed for the Deathlords that can only be accomplished by one of the Walking Dead. Such a wraith will be given the finest training and equipment, and be escorted by some of the most talented wraiths the Hierarchy has to offer. Those companions could start to feel some sympathy for the Risen and help her to escape the stifling grasp of the Dictum Mortuum. Then again, they may well be under orders to eliminate the wraith upon her triumphant return to the lands of the dead...

## The Long Arm of Oblivion

Spectres actively seek to encourage wraiths to Rise, gleefully anticipating the dire effects Shadows in Risen form will have on the lands of the living. A Risen could be dogged by a band of Spectres intent on encouraging his Shadow to break free, or perhaps the Shadow-Eaten are taking a more subtle tack by pretending to help while working on their own agenda. They may even be attempting to drag the Risen himself down to Oblivion, all the while being as solicitous and friendly as can be.

## A Parliament of the Dead

Risen are exceedingly rare, but every so often Fate leads two or more of them together. Perhaps the characters are a Risen pack, each helping the other achieve her driving Passion and safeguarding the others' Conduits. The question of whose Passions take precedence, however, could well tear the little group apart, and the ever-lurking Shadows could well be doing their best to subvert each member's trust in the others....

## Suspension and Disbelief

For most denizens of the World of Darkness, the very notion of the Risen falls somewhere between impossible and laughable. If told about a Risen, they will not believe; if shown proof, they will rationalize it. A whole chronicle can be built around various Awakened beings coming across a Risen and attempting to discover what it is and what it wants. After all, it is highly unlikely that even the oldest vampire among them will have ever seen anything like a Risen.

## The Other Walking Dead

Risen are often mistaken for vampires, and in some cases they actively try to blend in with the Kindred. A Risen may attach herself to an anarch gang, seeing her purposes and theirs meshing for at least a little while. Eventually, though, her new friends are going to wonder why she never drinks any blood, and then things could get sticky. Furthermore, the elders of the city may not want any loose cannons in their demesnes, and will come after a Risen with all the force they can muster.

## Into the Woods...

Garou have very little to do with the Risen, so when their paths cross it's always a surprise for both. If the Risen's quest is one with which a pack can empathize, they may well try to help the revenant out (particularly if helping the Risen furthers their own pack goals). Pentex in particular tends to generate a fair number of Risen bent on destroying that which destroyed them. Then again, the Garou may simply see another Wyrn-tainted member of the undead....

## Some Enchanted Avenging

At a base level, the Risen can be powerful engines of destruction. Mages may seek to direct this for their own uses, or may simply be interested in obtaining a Conduit for study. Tradition mages may want to do anything possible to keep a Conduit out of Technocracy hands, and a Risen is likely to present quite an interesting object of study for any Euthanatos who come along.

## The Real Most Dangerous Game

Hunters and the Risen can make a deadly combination. On the one hand, a Risen on the trail of a vampire, werewolf or other supernatural creature will bring all of its formidable powers and will to bear on the matter. Such a Risen will make quite an ally for any hunter, though members of the Inquisition may not want to accept help from such a source. On the other hand, the Risen could be the target of a mistaken bunch of vampire hunters. Even worse, the hunters might know exactly what the Risen is — and what his weaknesses are.





Shareholder  
Meeting  
CANCELLED



# The Shine of Dead Eyes

*I think perhaps somehow you knew I was coming, and you killed yourself to escape me. But I needed you. So I gave you a little of my life, to keep you in my employ.*

— Clive Barker, *The Damnation Game*



There are as many different potential Risen as there are obsessions the human mind can dream up. Below are a few who've climbed from the grave for love, ven-

geance or something worse. These are only the beginning of the roster of the Walking Dead; take them and mold them to your purposes. You can even leave them alone. Some of them might prefer it that way....

# Occultist

**Quote:** "I'm the only real Goth in this city."

**Prelude:** Your life was a search for the exciting, for the unusual, for the supernatural. You spent your time in occult shops, libraries, coffee houses and nightclubs. At age 24 you were a major player in the night life of your city; you knew everyone who was anyone, and you were better than them all. You knew that you would be the one to prove to the world that the supernatural exists. You were certain that if there were vampires, you'd end up one of them before long. After all, how could they possibly resist taking in someone as incredible as you?

When a local Ventrue revealed himself to you and entreated you to join him in the back room of the RIP Club, your favorite haunt, you gladly went with him. You knew that your finest moment had come, and that you were about to join the ranks of the undead. Nothing can express the horror, the rage, the indignation you felt when the bastard drained you dry and tossed your body into a dumpster. He wasn't going to make you one of the undead — he made you one of the dead!

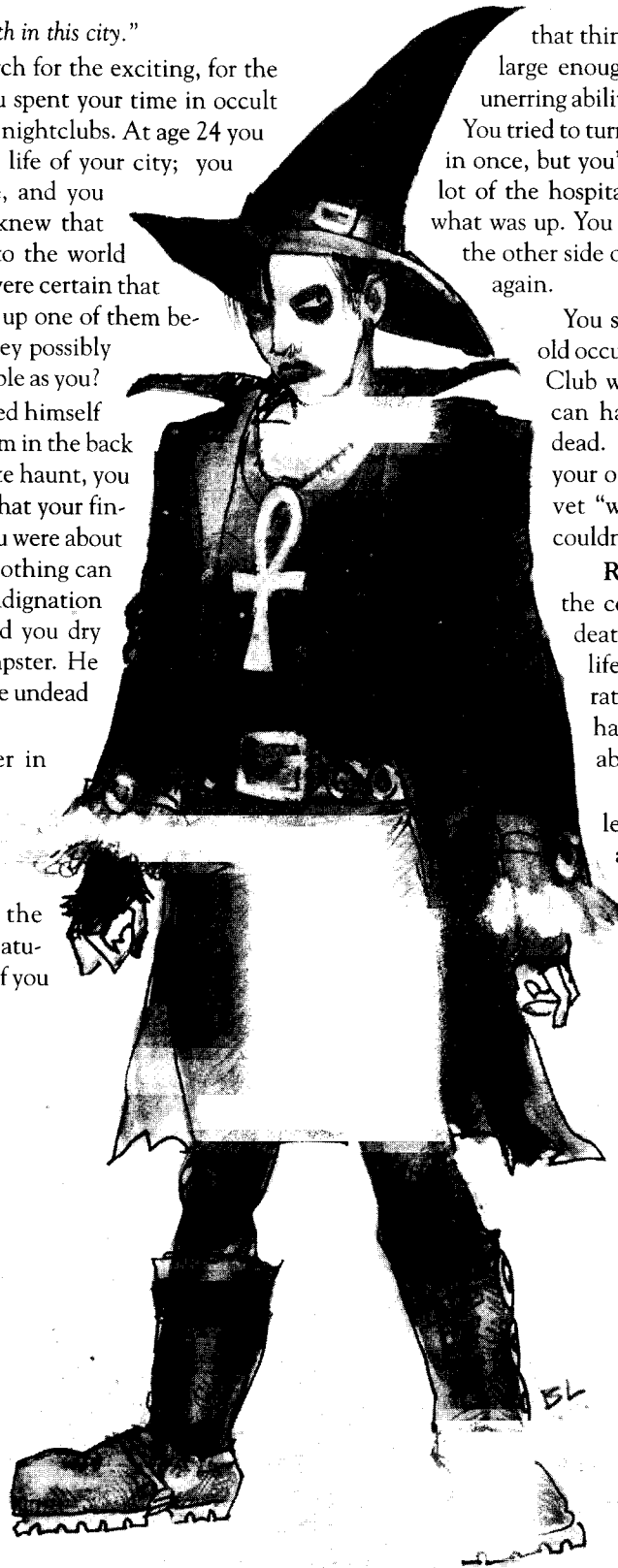
**Concept:** Moldering forever in your twenties, you want to destroy the Kindred who killed you, but you still envy him his unlife. You want to acquire irrefutable proof with which you can convince the whole living world that the supernatural exists, although there is a part of you

that thinks you'll never find something large enough. After all, people have the unerring ability to dismiss anything as a hoax. You tried to turn your own Walking Dead body in once, but you'd barely gotten to the parking lot of the hospital when your Shadow realized what was up. You found yourself, hours later, on the other side of the city. You never tried that again.

You still hang around your favorite old occult shop, the library and the RIP Club with those of your friends who can handle the idea of your being dead. You want to get your hands on your old ritual knife and a black velvet "witch's hat" you saw once but couldn't afford at the time.

**Roleplaying hints:** You're still the coolest thing around, and your death hasn't hindered your social life all that much. You're really rather excitable, but you try very hard to act calm and collected about everything.

**Equipment:** Long black leather jacket, black silk shirt and pants, black boots, heavy silver ankh on a black cord around your neck, deck of Tarot cards.



# THE MISEN

Name:  
Player:  
Chronicle:

Nature: *Thrill Seeker*  
Demeanor: *Avant Garde*  
Shadow: *The Rationalist*

Life: *Occult Poser*  
Death: *Supernatural Causes*  
Regret: *Leading Too Mundane a Life*

## Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception	●●○○○
Dexterity	●●○○○	Manipulation	●●●●●	Intelligence	●●○○○
Stamina	●●○○○	Appearance	●●●●○	Wits	●●○○○

## Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Alertness	○○○○○	Crafts	○○○○○	Bureaucracy	○○○○○
Athletics	○○○○○	Drive	●○○○○	Computer	●●○○○
Awareness	●●○○○	Etiquette	○○○○○	Enigmas	●●○○○
Brawl	○○○○○	Firearms	●○○○○	Investigation	●●●○○
Dodge	○○○○○	Leadership	○○○○○	Law	○○○○○
Empathy	○○○○○	Meditation	○○○○○	Linguistics	●○○○○
Expression	●○○○○	Melee	○○○○○	Medicine	○○○○○
Intimidation	●●○○○	Performance	●○○○○	Occult	●●●●○
Streetwise	●○○○○	Repair	○○○○○	Politics	○○○○○
Subterfuge	●●●●○	Stealth	●●○○○	Science	●●○○○

## Advantages

Backgrounds		Passions		Arcanoi	
<i>Allies</i>	●○○○○	<i>Destroy Vampires</i>	○○○○○	<i>Puppetry</i>	●○○○○
<i>Contacts</i>	●●●●○	<i>(Revenge)</i>	●●●●○	<i>Inhabit</i>	●●○○○
<i>Eidolon</i>	●●●●○	<i>Acquire Magical Items</i>	○○○○○	<i>Pandemonium</i>	●●○○○
	○○○○○	<i>(Greed)</i>	●●●●○	<i>Usury</i>	●○○○○
	○○○○○	<i>Prove Existence of</i>	○○○○○		○○○○○
	○○○○○	<i>Supernatural (Obsession)</i>	●●●●○		○○○○○
	○○○○○		○○○○○		○○○○○

## Fetters

<i>Tarot Deck (Conduit)</i>	●●●●○
<i>Occult Shop</i>	●●○○○
<i>Nightclub (RIP)</i>	●●●●○
<i>Ritual Knife</i>	●○○○○
<i>Witch's Hat</i>	●○○○○
	○○○○○

## Corpus

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## Willpower

●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
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## Angst

●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
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## Thorns

*Shadow Trail (Charisma), Pact of Doom, Freudian Slip*

## Dark Passions

<i>Prevent Discovery of</i>	○○○○○
<i>Supernatural (Vanity)</i>	●●●●○
<i>Destroy Nightclub (Contempt)</i>	●●○○○

## Experience

## Pathos

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Attributes: 7/5/3, Abilities: 13/9/5, Arcanoi: 5, Passions: 10, Fetters: 10, Backgrounds: 7, Willpower: 6, Pathos: 5 + Memoriam, Freebies: 15 (7,5,2,1)

# Abused Child

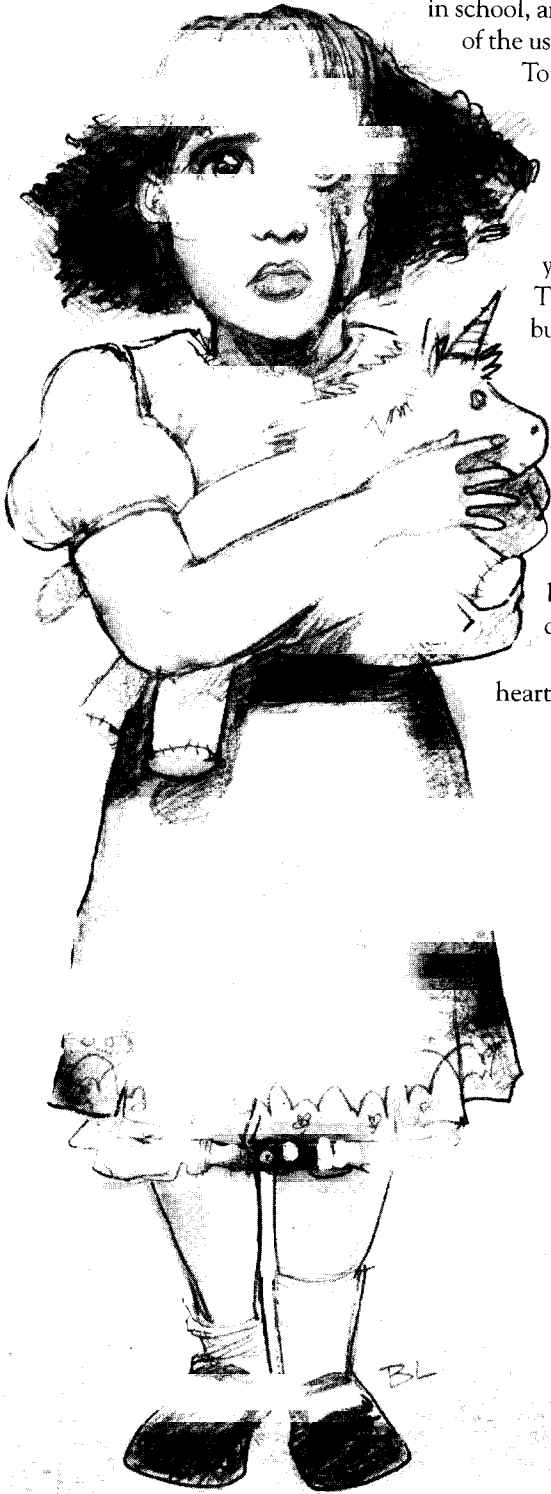
Quote: "What does 'dead' mean, Daddy?"

Prelude: You were a normal little girl with a mostly normal life. You loved your mother and father, you did relatively well in school, and you liked to play with your cat in the afternoons. You experienced all of the usual ups and downs of childhood — you would cry when the school bully, Tommy, picked on you, and you had trouble even saying hello to that boy, Mikey, who always said hi to you in the schoolyard. It was only when your father went away — you never really understood what happened to him — and your mother remarried that things started to go seriously wrong. Your stepfather hit you when you did something wrong, when he was drunk, or when he was just angry about something. He hit you so hard one day that your skull cracked against the kitchen table. Then, not only did he lie about what happened and report you missing, but he kicked your pregnant cat out of the house!

Concept: A nine-year-old girl who was killed by a drunken and abusive stepfather, the most important thing in the world to you is your cat. You desperately want to see your stepfather arrested, though there is a part of you that would like to see him killed. You want to get even with Tommy, and you would like to find the courage to go up and talk to Mikey.

Roleplaying hints: You're a typical child, good-natured but not bratty, and more than a little shy. You may be dead, but you haven't quite processed this yet. You still have the mind-set and goals of a child.

Equipment: Stuffed unicorn with patches of fur falling off, gold heart-shaped locket your real father gave you, rusty steak knife.



# THE MIKEY

Name:  
Player:  
Chronicle:

Nature: *Caregiver*  
Demeanor: *Child*  
Shadow: *Martyr*

Life: *Child*  
Death: *Domestic Violence*  
Regret: *Love Unfulfilled*

## Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●○○○○	Charisma	●●●●○	Perception	●●○○○
Dexterity	●●●●○	Manipulation	●●○○○	Intelligence	●●●●○
Stamina	●●●●○	Appearance	●●●●○	Wits	●○○○○

## Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Alertness	●●●●○	Crafts	●●○○○	Bureaucracy	○○○○○
Athletics	●○○○○	Drive	○○○○○	Computer	●●○○○
Awareness	●●○○○	Etiquette	○○○○○	Enigmas	○○○○○
Brawl	●○○○○	Firearms	○○○○○	Investigation	○○○○○
Dodge	●●●●○	Leadership	○○○○○	Law	○○○○○
Empathy	●●○○○	Meditation	●●○○○	Linguistics	○○○○○
Expression	○○○○○	Melee	○○○○○	Medicine	●○○○○
Intimidation	○○○○○	Performance	●●○○○	Occult	●○○○○
Streetwise	○○○○○	Repair	○○○○○	Politics	○○○○○
Subterfuge	●○○○○	Stealth	●●○○○	Science	●○○○○

## Advantages

Backgrounds		Passions		Arcanoi	
<i>Allies</i>	●○○○○	<i>Protect Ariel (Love)</i>	●●●●○	<i>Puppetry</i>	●○○○○
<i>Eidolon</i>	●●●●○	<i>Get Stepfather Arrested</i>	○○○○○	<i>Castigate</i>	●○○○○
<i>Haunt</i>	●●○○○	<i>(Revenge)</i>	●●●●○	<i>Embodiy</i>	●○○○○
<i>Memoriam</i>	●●●●○	<i>Get Even with Tommy</i>	○○○○○	<i>Lifelvb</i>	●○○○○
	○○○○○	<i>(Rivalry)</i>	●○○○○	<i>Keening</i>	●○○○○
	○○○○○	<i>Get Mikey's affection</i>	○○○○○	<i>Obfuscate</i>	●○○○○
	○○○○○	<i>(Puppy Love)</i>	●●○○○		○○○○○

## Fetters

<i>Ariel (Cat/Conduit)</i>	●●●●○
<i>Public Garden</i>	●●○○○
<i>Elementary School</i>	●●○○○
<i>Necklace</i>	●●●●○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

## Corpus

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Willpower									
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Angst

●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Thorns

*Devil's Dane, Pact of Doom*

## Dark Passions

<i>Kill Stepfather (Hatred)</i>	●●●●○
<i>Humiliate Mikey (Loathing)</i>	●●○○○
	○○○○○

## Experience

## Pathos

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Attributes: 7/5/3, Abilities: 13/9/5, Arcanoi: 5, Passions: 10, Fetters: 10, Backgrounds: 7, Willpower: 5, Pathos: 5 + Memoriam, Freebies: 15 (7,5,2,1)



# Vengeful Vigilante

**Quote:** "I swear to you Mother, I'll find them. If it takes me a thousand years I'll find them, and I'll kill them all."

**Prelude:** Your mother was a lawyer, and your father was an ex-hitman who ran a grocery store. Mom had refused to marry him until he'd stopped doing "jobs," and he'd been wise enough to acquiesce. Your life and your family were all doing great, until Mom found herself in the wrong place at the wrong time, caught in a crossfire between DEA agents on a bust gone wrong and some drug cartel flunkies. Your father wouldn't let you go into the morgue with him to identify the body, and when he came out he was different — colder. He soon went back to his old ways, along with his old friends. Dad couldn't show affection the way he had before, so he did it the only way he could: training you in everything he and his friends knew. From breaking and entering, you progressed to hand-to-hand combat, fencing and of course, the fine art of the hit. Not only was Dad passing on his knowledge, he was training a protégé for the job that he felt himself too old to take on.

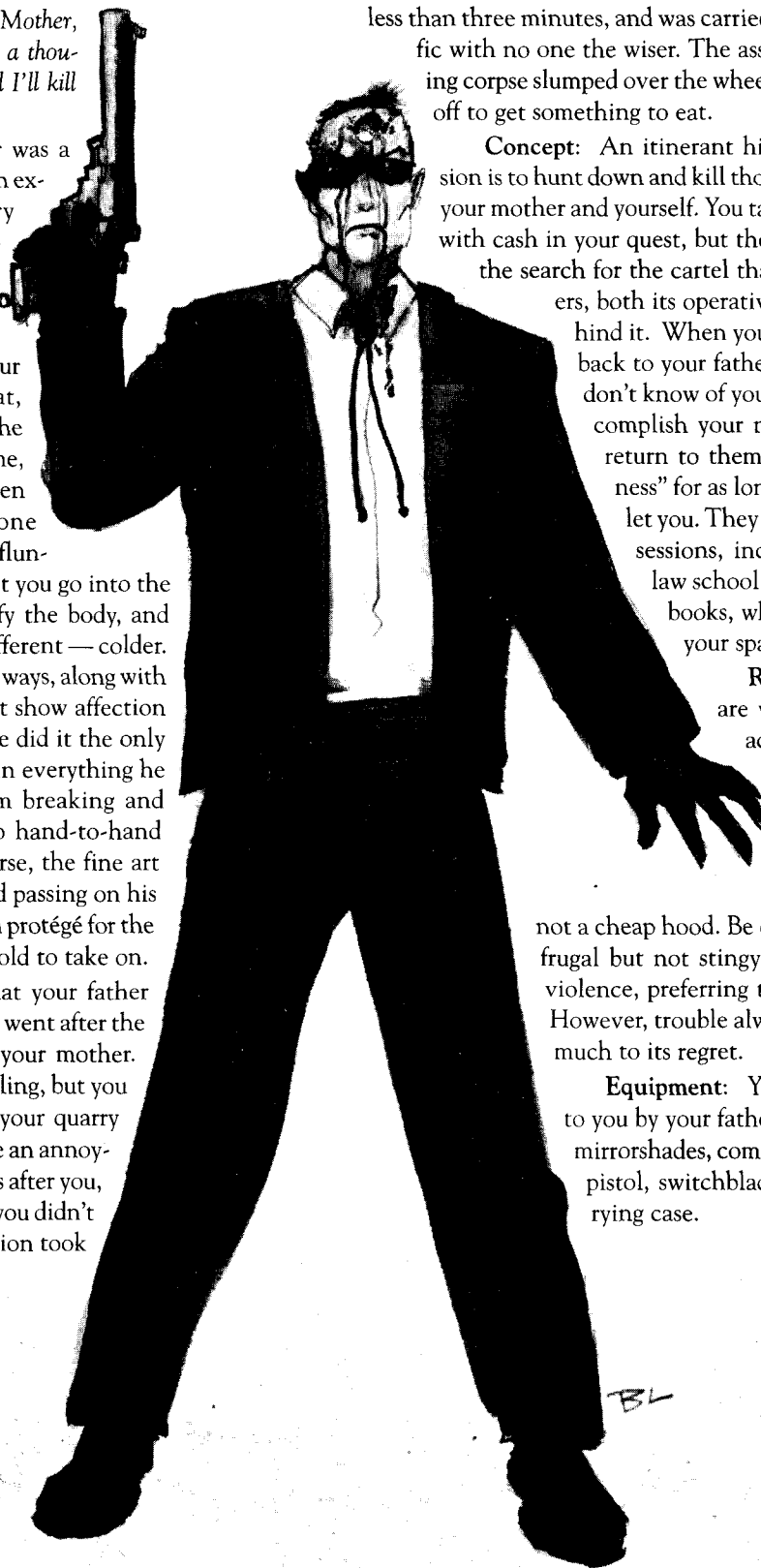
You eventually did what your father had hoped you would — you went after the dealers who gunned down your mother. Your initial success was startling, but you went too far, too fast, and your quarry decided that you had become an annoyance. They sent professionals after you, and as talented as you were, you didn't stand a chance. Your execution took

less than three minutes, and was carried out in rush hour traffic with no one the wiser. The assassins left your bleeding corpse slumped over the wheel of your car, and went off to get something to eat.

**Concept:** An itinerant hit man, your real mission is to hunt down and kill those who murdered both your mother and yourself. You take jobs to provide you with cash in your quest, but the work is secondary to the search for the cartel that sent the executioners, both its operatives and the people behind it. When you can, you send money back to your father and his people, who don't know of your death. Once you accomplish your mission you intend to return to them and join their "business" for as long as your Shadow will let you. They have most of your possessions, including your mother's law school diploma and her textbooks, which you've studied in your spare time.

**Roleplaying hints:** You are young, but already an accomplished killer. You pride yourself on your style and efficiency. After all, you've been trained by professionals — you're not a cheap hood. Be cold but not uncaring, frugal but not stingy. You despise random violence, preferring the premeditated sort. However, trouble always seems to find you, much to its regret.

**Equipment:** Your first pistol (given to you by your father when you were 11), mirrorshades, combat boots, trench coat, pistol, switchblade, sniper rifle in carrying case.



# THE MTSEM

Name:  
Player:  
Chronicle:

Nature: *Cavalier*  
Demeanor: *Loner*  
Shadow: *The Monster*

Life: *Hit Man*  
Death: *Execution*  
Regret: *Revenge*

## Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●●○	Charisma	●●●●○	Perception	●●●●○
Dexterity	●●●●○	Manipulation	●●●●○	Intelligence	●●●●○
Stamina	●●●●○	Appearance	●●●●○	Wits	●●●●○

## Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Alertness	●●●●○	Crafts	○○○○○	Bureaucracy	○○○○○
Athletics	●●●●○	Drive	●●○○○	Computer	○○○○○
Awareness	○○○○○	Etiquette	○○○○○	Enigmas	○○○○○
Brawl	●●●●○	Firearms	●●●●○	Investigation	●●○○○
Dodge	●●●●○	Leadership	○○○○○	Law	○○○○○
Empathy	○○○○○	Meditation	○○○○○	Linguistics	○○○○○
Expression	○○○○○	Melee	○○○○○	Medicine	●○○○○
Intimidation	●○○○○	Performance	○○○○○	Occult	○○○○○
Streetwise	●●●●○	Repair	●●○○○	Politics	●●○○○
Subterfuge	○○○○○	Stealth	●●○○○	Science	○○○○○

## Advantages

Backgrounds		Passions		Arcanoi	
<i>Resources</i>	●●○○○	<i>Destroy Drug Cartel</i>	●●●●○	<i>Puppetry</i>	●○○○○
<i>Allies</i>	●●●●○	<i>(Revenge)</i>	○○○○○	<i>Inhabit</i>	●●○○○
	○○○○○	<i>Protect Family (Love)</i>	●●●●○	<i>Lifeweb</i>	●○○○○
	○○○○○		○○○○○	<i>Usury</i>	●○○○○
	○○○○○		○○○○○	<i>Celerity</i>	●○○○○
	○○○○○		○○○○○		○○○○○
	○○○○○		○○○○○		○○○○○

## Fetters

<i>Rifle (Conduit)</i>	●●●●○
<i>Mother's Grave</i>	●●●●○
<i>Home</i>	●●○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

## Corpus

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## Willpower

●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○
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## Pathos

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## Experience

## Angst

●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
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## Thorns

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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*Spectre Prestige, Tainted Touch,*

*Trick of the Light, Death's Sigil*

## Dark Passions

*Destroy Drugs (Hatred)* ●●●○○

*Show off Killing Style (Pride)* ●●●○○

*Create Unhappiness (Envy)* ●○○○○

Attributes: 7/5/3, Abilities: 13/9/5, Arcanoi: 5, Passions: 10, Fetters: 10, Backgrounds: 7, Willpower: 5, Pathos: 5 + Memoriam, Freebies: 15 (7,5,2,1)

# Navy Officer

**Quote:** "I'll walk five thousand miles to find my family again. Then again, I think I'm going to have to."

**Prelude:** Your family's entire history was Navy; your father was in the Navy, both of your grandfathers were in the Navy, your older sister and brother entered the Navy. All you ever really wanted to be was a musician, but when your time came, your parents wore you down and convinced you to enlist as well. "Navy men always eat," they said. "Guitarists don't." So you went into the Navy.

It wasn't a bad life, but it wasn't what you wanted. Fortunately, you were able to share these feelings — and your music — with Risa, a woman who lived near the base. Flirtation turned to love turned to a whirlwind courtship and marriage, and all was right with the world. You'd hurried the ceremony because you were about to take off on a three-month cruise and by marrying Risa before you left, you ensured that she would be taken care of in case something happened to you.

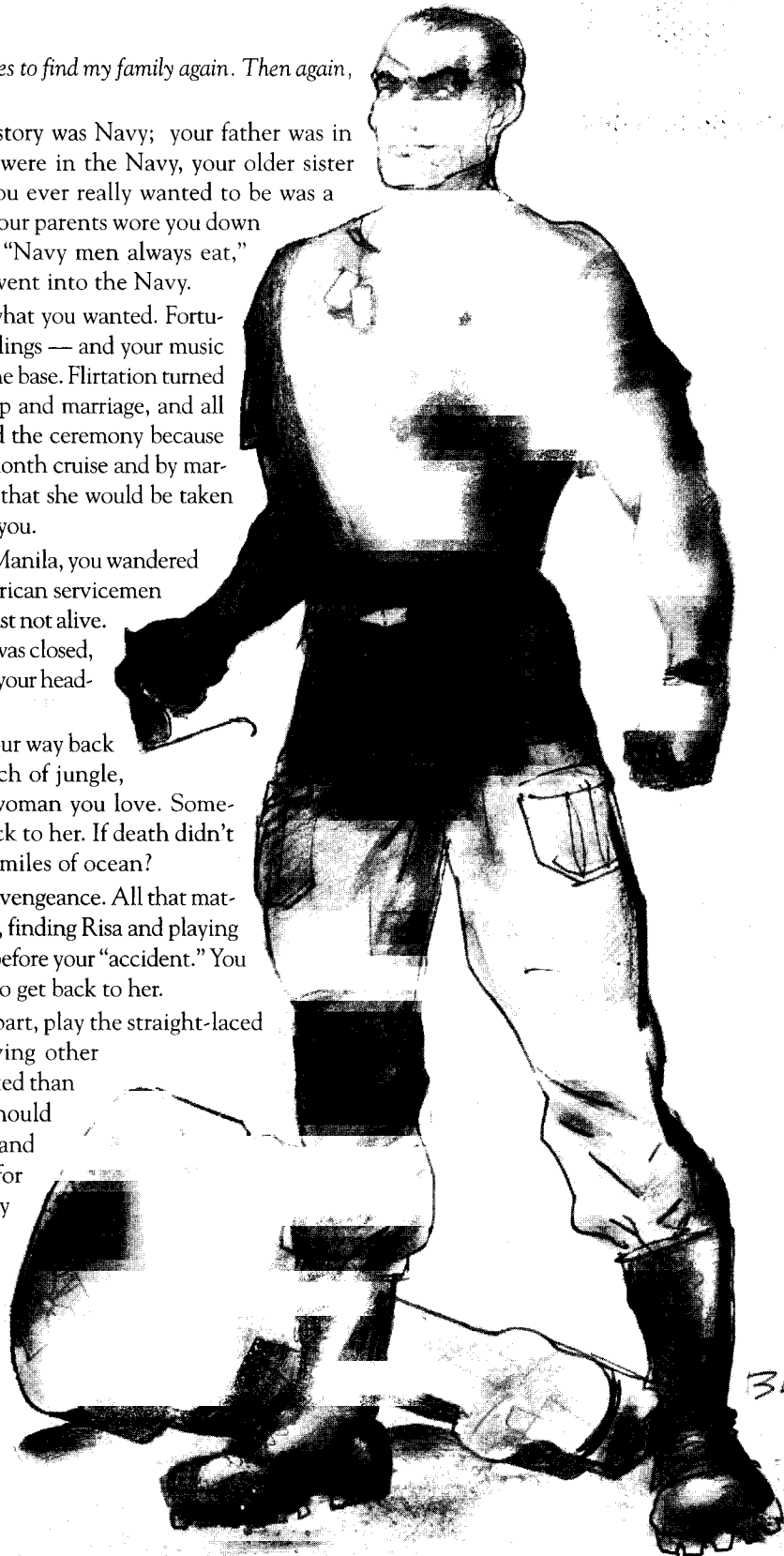
Something did. On shore leave in Manila, you wandered into a bar in a part of town where American servicemen weren't welcome. You never left, or at least not alive. Of course, no one saw anything, the file was closed, and there's an empty coffin buried under your headstone in Washington state.

It was months before you found your way back to your body, rotting in a hidden patch of jungle, halfway around the world from the woman you love. Somehow, you're going to find your way back to her. If death didn't stop you, why should three thousand miles of ocean?

**Concept:** Love motivates you, not vengeance. All that matters is getting back to Washington state, finding Risa and playing her the last love song you wrote for her before your "accident." You miss her terribly, and will do anything to get back to her.

**Roleplaying hints:** For the most part, play the straight-laced serviceman. You really don't like giving other people orders, and are much more relaxed than an even a non-commissioned officer should be. You love music of almost any type, and will gladly play your guitar and sing for anyone who will listen. You have a very good voice and play quite well.

**Equipment:** Well-kept guitar and case, tattered U.S. Navy uniform



# THE MUSE

Name:  
Player:  
Chronicle:

Nature: *Conformist*  
Demeanor: *Judge*  
Shadow: *The Pusher*

Life: *Navy Non Com*  
Death: *Stomped by Locals*  
Regret: *True Love*

## Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception	●●○○○
Dexterity	●●○○○	Manipulation	●●○○○	Intelligence	●●○○○
Stamina	●●○○○	Appearance	●●○○○	Wits	●●○○○

## Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Alertness	●●○○○	Crafts	○○○○○	Bureaucracy	●○○○○
Athletics	●●○○○	Drive	●○○○○	Computer	●●○○○
Awareness	●○○○○	Etiquette	●○○○○	Enigmas	○○○○○
Brawl	●○○○○	Firearms	●●○○○	Investigation	●●○○○
Dodge	●●○○○	Leadership	●○○○○	Law	●●○○○
Empathy	○○○○○	Meditation	○○○○○	Linguistics	○○○○○
Expression	○○○○○	Melee	●○○○○	Medicine	○○○○○
Intimidation	○○○○○	Performance	○○○○○	Occult	○○○○○
Streetwise	○○○○○	Repair	○○○○○	Politics	●●○○○
Subterfuge	○○○○○	Stealth	○○○○○	Science	●●○○○

## Advantages

Backgrounds		Passions		Arcanoi	
<i>Contacts</i>	●●○○○	<i>Protect Wife (Love)</i>	●●○○○	<i>Puppetry</i>	●○○○○
<i>Memoriam</i>	●●○○○	<i>Expose Terrorist (Revenge)</i>	●●○○○	<i>Castigate</i>	●○○○○
<i>Haunt</i>	●●○○○	<i>Protect Shipmates (Duty)</i>	●●○○○	<i>Embody</i>	●●○○○
	○○○○○	<i>Play Guitar (Pride)</i>	●○○○○	<i>Keening</i>	●○○○○
	○○○○○		○○○○○		○○○○○
	○○○○○		○○○○○		○○○○○
	○○○○○		○○○○○		○○○○○

## Fetters

<i>Wedding Ring (Conduit)</i>	●●○○○
<i>Shipyards</i>	●●○○○
<i>Album</i>	●●○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

## Corpus

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Willpower

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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## Angst

●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Thorns

*Fainted Touch, Devil's Dane*

## Dark Passions

<i>Kill Wife (Lust)</i>	●●○○○
<i>Kill Terrorists (Hatred)</i>	●●○○○
	○○○○○

## Experience

## Pathos

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Attributes: 7/5/3, Abilities: 13/9/5, Arcanoi: 5, Passions: 10, Fetters: 10, Backgrounds: 7, Willpower: 5, Pathos: 5 + Memoriam, Freebies: 15 (7,5,2,1)

# Con Artist

**Quote:** "Nobody cons a con man and gets away with it. Nobody."

**Prelude:** On the streets from the time you were 13, you learned to survive on your wits, not your muscles. There was always someone out there bigger and stronger, but you realized early on that there was very rarely someone smarter. Being smarter meant finding ways to get the bigger and stronger guys to beat up the guys you wanted beaten up instead of you, and damned if it wasn't easy.

You kept a low profile, picking pockets and running small-time scams ("Excuse me, sir, I'm with the Committee to Reforest the Finnish Tundra. Would you like to make a donation?") while paying off whoever you needed to. It wasn't a great life, but it was a reasonably secure one, and slowly you branched out into bigger and bigger operations. Things were actually looking up when you got overconfident.

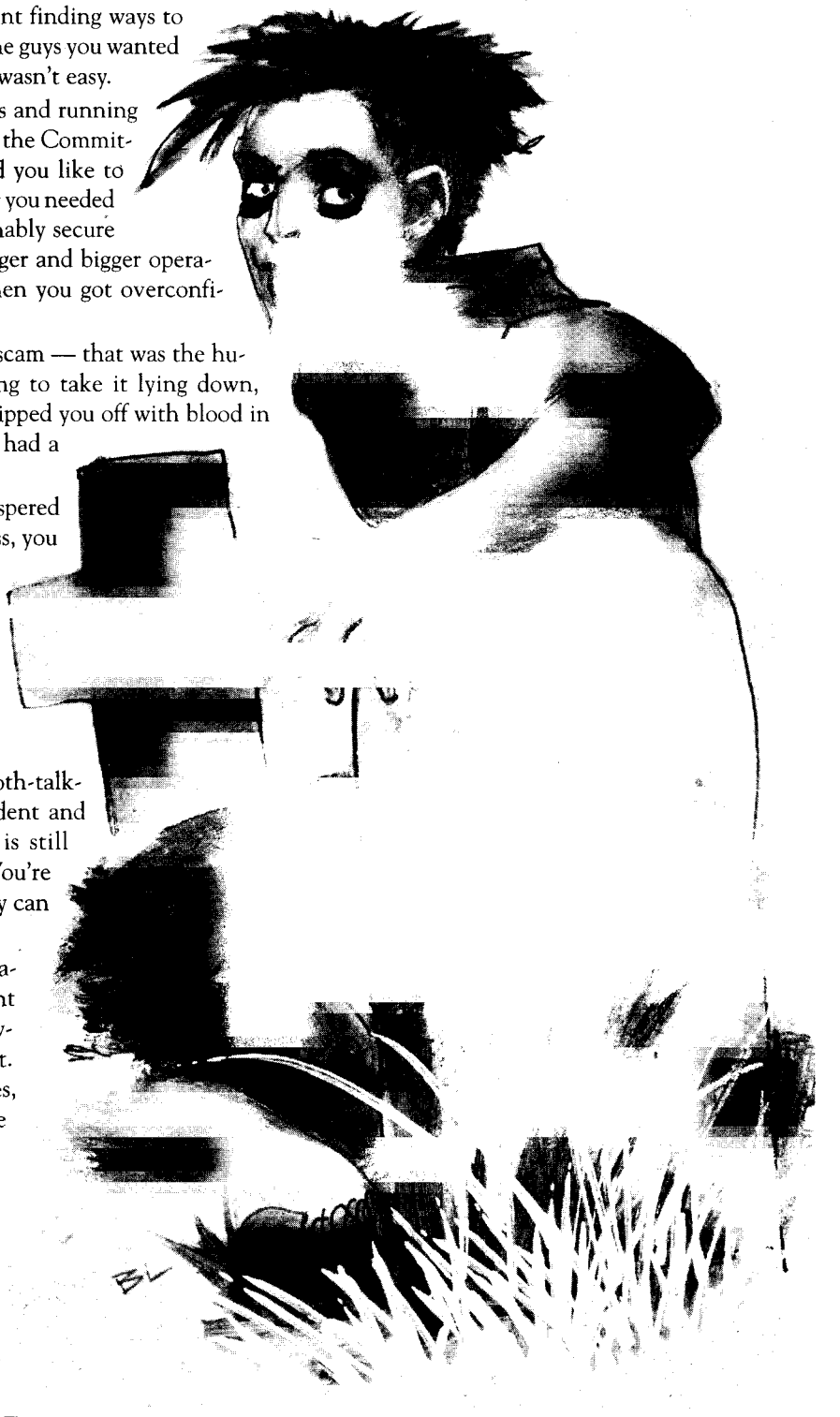
A scam artist pulled you into another scam — that was the humiliating thing about it. You weren't going to take it lying down, though, and went after the bastard who'd ripped you off with blood in your eye and a butterfly knife. Too bad he had a gun.

The sheer humiliation (*and envy*, whispered your Shadow) wouldn't let you rest. Helpless, you watched him rip off others the way he'd smooth-talked you, studying his technique and his weaknesses. You knew that you had to be the one to take him down. That led you to the Puppeteers, who led you back to your body. Now it's time for payback, with a great deal of interest.

**Concept:** You were a charming, smooth-talking young man who got a little overconfident and paid for it big-time. Your jokey manner is still present, but it's an obvious veneer now. You're out for blood, and anyone who looks closely can see it.

**Roleplaying hints:** You've got the charisma and talent to talk your way out of tight spots. You've still got the moves to do it. However, if that's taking too long, the hell with it. You're a dead man on a schedule, and besides, what are they going to do if you mess up some people along the way? Arrest you?

**Equipment:** Butterfly knife, walkman, loaded dice, slimjim (for opening car doors), screwdriver, \$50 in panhandled cash.



# THE MISEN

Name:  
Player:  
Chronicle:

Nature: *Survivor*  
Demeanor: *Bon Vivant*  
Shadow: *The Leech*

Life: *Con Artist*  
Death: *Violence*  
Regret: *Getting Conned*

## Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●●●	Charisma	●●●●●	Perception	●●●●●
Dexterity	●●●●●	Manipulation	●●●●●	Intelligence	●●●●●
Stamina	●●●●●	Appearance	●●●●●	Wits	●●●●●

## Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Alertness	●●●●●	Crafts	○○○○○	Bureaucracy	○○○○○
Athletics	●○○○○	Drive	●○○○○	Computer	○○○○○
Awareness	○○○○○	Etiquette	○○○○○	Enigmas	○○○○○
Brawl	○○○○○	Firearms	●●●●○	Investigation	●○○○○
Dodge	●○○○○	Leadership	○○○○○	Law	●●●●○
Empathy	○○○○○	Meditation	○○○○○	Linguistics	○○○○○
Expression	○○○○○	Melee	●●○○○	Medicine	○○○○○
Intimidation	○○○○○	Performance	●●●●○	Occult	○○○○○
Streetwise	●●●●○	Repair	●○○○○	Politics	●○○○○
Subterfuge	●●●●○	Stealth	●●○○○	Science	○○○○○

## Advantages

Backgrounds		Passions		Arcanoi	
<i>Contacts</i>	●●●●○	<i>Get back at the guy who</i>	●●●●○	<i>Puppetry</i>	●○○○○
<i>Mentor</i>	●●●●○	<i>killed you (Revenge)</i>	○○○○○	<i>Castigate</i>	●●●●○
	○○○○○	<i>Con more people (Ego)</i>	●●●●○	<i>Inhabit</i>	●●○○○
	○○○○○	<i>Find a way to</i>	○○○○○	<i>Fortitude</i>	●○○○○
	○○○○○	<i>really live (Fear)</i>	●●○○○		○○○○○
	○○○○○	<i>Destroy the memory of</i>	○○○○○		○○○○○
	○○○○○	<i>your being conned (Envy)</i>	●●○○○		○○○○○

## Fetters

<i>Lockpicks (Conduit)</i>	●●●●○
<i>Deck of Marked Cards</i>	●●○○○
<i>Hideout</i>	●●○○○
<i>Ring</i>	●●○○○
<i>Social Services Office</i>	●○○○○
	○○○○○

## Corpus

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## Willpower

●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
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## Experience

## Pathos

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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## Angst

●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Thorns

*Tainted Relic, Infamy, Aura of Corruption, Shadow Familiar*

## Dark Passions

<i>Kill Randomly (Hate)</i>	●●●●○
<i>Steal Valuables (Greed)</i>	●●●●○
	○○○○○

Attributes: 7/5/3, Abilities: 13/9/5, Arcanoi: 5, Passions: 10, Fetters: 10, Backgrounds: 7, Willpower: 5, Pathos: 5 + Memoriam, Freebies: 15 (7,5,2,1)

# Appendix: Stories of the Risen

*Come into the candlelight. I'm not afraid  
to look the dead in the face. When they return  
they have a right, as much as other Things do,  
to pause and refresh themselves within our vision.*

— Rainer Maria Rilke, transl. Stephen Mitchell, "Requiem for a Friend"





Even among legendary beings, there are legends. They may not be known for what they truly are, but certain Risen have achieved fame — or infamy — beyond their kind. The mad badge-killer Gwynneth Sarbro's description is up in a hundred different post offices, but not one of those posters mentions the fact that she's been dead for seven years. The name Ian Jackson provokes terror in Caitiff and Camarilla alike, but no one's ever asked why the notorious "Kindred" vampire hunter has never committed diablerie. Evelyn's been the subject of a children's rhyme that's spread far and wide outside the Five Boroughs, but not one of the little girls skipping rope to "Black Evelyn" knows that she's singing about a dead woman.

Murderers. Vampires. Vigilantes. That's all people like Ian and Gwyn and Evelyn are, right?

Dead wrong.

## Ian Jackson

Ian Jackson and Emily Forth were very much in love. It was a fairy-tale romance, strewn with flowers and kisses. He was the honor student from a good family, and she was the low-class girl from the wrong side of the tracks who had been saved from her descent into the bad life by his love. There was passion, and there were promises. They were high school sweethearts in a small city, and had been dating ever since the Homecoming dance of their sophomore year. They both went to the local college because they couldn't stand the idea of being apart.

Eventually, of course, Ian and Emily became engaged, and a wedding date was set for the summer immediately after their joint graduation. Their parents approved of the match, and put on a splendid ceremony, all white lace and silk. The couple was sent on a trip to California for their honeymoon.

Of course, Sabbat packs don't believe in fairy tales. Emily they took for their own; Ian they ripped to shreds when they came across the newlyweds walking along a deserted beach. Creation Rites, Vaulderie — Ian watched it all, screaming from the Shadowlands.

It was hard for him to accept at first, seeing his Emily become a bloodthirsty caricature of her former ways. Still, even death and worse could not alter his feelings. He followed his wife and the pack of Country Gangrel to which she belonged wherever they went, learning what he could along the way.

In the course of time, the pack returned to the place where they'd killed Ian. And it was there that he came through, re-inhabiting his body, his need to be with his wife overriding







all else. She had kept his wedding ring with her and he took it back, soon discovering that through it he could sense Emily, as though the two rings were linked somehow. He joined the pack, roaming with them as he had before, but now in body as well as in spirit. As far as they were concerned, he'd proven himself when he came back from the other side, and they found him useful. He had some abilities they didn't, and his Heightened Senses made him a useful guard. In fact, most vampires they ran into simply assumed that Ian was a Kindred member of the pack.

Ian ordinarily used all of his abilities to protect Emily and her pack. He believed he would do anything to keep his love alive and well, no matter what she had become. Yet a part of him still craved revenge against his murderers, and as much as he would have liked to believe otherwise, he could not deny that Emily was now one of them. His Shadow fed on this, and there were times when even Emily looked on him with fear.

Eventually the part of Ian that demanded retribution won out, and he betrayed the Sabbat pack to the Camarilla. But even as he felt the beginnings of Emily's terror through their link and saw through her eyes the carnage that ensued as the vampires tore each other limb from limb, he was running back to save her.

When he reached the pack's camp, there was no one left "alive." He searched through the blood and bodies, clawing his way through piles of spilled intestines and gory ash, but he couldn't find her body.

When he calmed down enough to reach out to Emily through their link, Ian thought that he could just barely feel her flickering mind at the edge of his consciousness, as though she were a great distance away. In a rage he ran all night and the next day in the direction he thought he'd felt her in, but he soon lost even the faintest contact. It's been years now, and Ian's almost convinced himself that he imagined it. Almost.

Ian began hunting the Kindred on the night he lost Emily for the second time — all Kindred, not only the ones who'd taken her — all the while searching for some sign of his love. In time he came to be feared throughout the world of the Kindred as one of the most terrifying of all hunters. It is said that he is still out there somewhere, searching for Emily Jackson and killing everyone who gets in his way.

## Gwynneth Sarbro

Gwynneth Sarbro was always getting into trouble. It started with the little things: broken windows, school-children with black eyes and stolen lunch-money. When she was 13, her parents, who had beaten her for a spilled glass of milk and a misplaced key, threw her out of the house and told her to never come back.

That night she crept back into the unlocked garage with a can of gasoline. She poured it out all around the house, thoroughly soaking every surface she could reach. When she was done, she stepped back, lit a match and threw it.

She'd broken the smoke detectors years before — enough times that her parents eventually stopped replacing them. They had approximately 30 seconds in which to regret this after the smoke and heat woke them up, while the smoke stopped up their lungs and the heat and fire charred the flesh from their bones. Gwynneth smiled as she walked away, her parents' screams discordant music in her ears.

Gwyn spent three years on the streets of Cleveland as a prostitute, turning tricks for a tattered twenty, a hot meal or a warm place to stay. Twice she killed her john: once when a man pulled a knife on her, and once when a man made the mistake of letting her see the multiple hundred-dollar bills in his wallet. When she was 15, she joined up with a biker gang; even she was hungry for the company of her own kind, and they were a hellbound collection of violent misfits. It was exactly what she needed.

As one of the gang, Gwyn learned to kill on a regular basis — for money, for food, for some knickknack she'd developed a liking for or just for fun. She lost count of her victims when she was 19. When she was 20, the gang was wiped out by the police in a raid on their warehouse lair, after they were betrayed by one of their own. Not a single gang member surrendered; not a single gang member lived... except the stooge who'd sold them out.

Gwyn had finally found a group to which she belonged. She'd found people who would accept her, who would understand what she did and could share it. She'd found a family. Their destruction consumed her.

In the Shadowlands she searched out every bit of esoteric knowledge she could, until she'd finally learned enough to regain possession of her body. Then she set out after her revenge.

First she killed the traitor, ripping him limb from limb with her bare hands, laughing as he screamed for mercy. Then she set out to find and kill every policeman or government agent she could get her hands on. She knew it would be a goal without an end, but she was more than content to spend eternity hunting down her prey. They're all the same to her — police, FBI, CIA, ATF, Coast Guard — it doesn't matter. She's left a trail of badges soaked in blood from Nevada to Michigan, and even the Kindred have developed a healthy respect for, or perhaps fear of, her. She's made some sloppy mistakes though, such as that time in Phoenix when she forgot to check the back room of the safe house she'd just raided. The bullets fired at her by the man who'd been hiding there missed her head by scant millimeters. Gwyn "survived" that encounter, but sooner or later the guard she doesn't see will be a better shot than the last, and then she won't be coming back again.





## Niles Pierson

He was 40 years old, and a wealthy man. Niles Pierson had started out with one shoe store, really just a hole in the wall retail outlet, and built himself an empire. His wife had died in an auto accident shortly after their only child was born, and he never remarried. He became bitter after the loss of his Miriam; some said it was because he'd wanted a son, and had gotten a daughter instead. He'd had his heart set on an heir, someone who would take over his empire when he was dead, and his upbringing didn't allow him to consider a woman as a suitable replacement for himself.

Marian took after her father, for all that she would deny it. She was strong, independent and decisive. She knew that she was capable of taking over her father's vast enterprises, and she wanted them. But while he was alive he refused to let her get involved. It wasn't proper, he said, for a young lady.

The obvious lie galled Marian. Her hatred for her father grew daily. He, uncaring, spent every waking minute with his company, leaving the care of his daughter entirely to the family servants. Marian knew exactly where she stood with him.

One day when Marian was 22, she decided to confront Niles, to demand that he allow her to become involved with his business, to prove that she was every bit as able as he was. The servants stood just outside the closed door to his study, afraid of the


tempers of their two employers but far too curious to stay away. For 20 minutes all they heard was screaming and yelling. Then the door burst open. "Call an ambulance!" Marian told the servants. Behind her they could see Niles lying on the Persian rug, his eyes wide and staring, drool slipping from his slack mouth.

Niles had a weak heart. When the ambulance reached the hospital, Niles Pierson was pronounced dead on arrival; his cause of death was listed as a heart attack. The next day his daughter walked through the company's front doors and took charge.

Marian was every bit as good at running the shoe empire as she'd believed she would be. She'd learned from the best, after all, and she was every bit as penny-pinching and hard-nosed as her father had been. By this time, however, she'd grown to hate the business almost as much as she'd hated her father. It represented everything she'd hated Niles for. After six months, once she'd proven to her own satisfaction that she was just as intelligent and sharp as her father had ever been, she decided to sell. It was the only way she knew to get revenge on her father now that he was dead.

Niles was angry enough that his daughter had taken over his company, and even more angry that she was doing well with it — he'd always hated to admit when he was wrong. But when he saw her attempting to sell the company, his company, the one he'd started when he was just 19 years old, that was it. He made his way back into the land of the living to stop the sale.

The night before the deal was closed, Niles killed the buyer's bodyguards and ambushed him just outside of his man-



sion. The unfortunate investor got his head caved in with a baseball bat. Niles did this to buyers two and three as well, before his daughter finally discovered and confronted him, her own pride and stubbornness not allowing her to display any emotion other than anger before him.

Marian's lack of fear of her dead father threw him a bit, but he quickly recovered and gave her his terms: he would not interfere with her attempts to run the company, but he would never allow her to sell it.

Marian tried to fool Niles a couple of times, but it didn't work. He always knew. The Pierson Shoe Company gained a reputation as being cursed, and eventually there simply were no more interested buyers. As far as Marian can tell, Niles has kept his word and not interfered with her attempts to run the company, but every once in a while someone comes sniffing around, wanting to know more about the company's reputation and how it was acquired. As much as she hates it, she has once or twice had to call on her father to get rid of these people. Niles, grinning, hasn't let her down yet.

## Evelyn

*Evelyn, Evelyn  
Dressed in black,  
From the shoes on her feet  
To the coat on her back.  
There's a gun in her coat,  
And a knife in her boot,  
And the blood doesn't show  
Against the black.*

Evelyn grew up in the ghetto. Her father died when she was 14 and her sister Amy was six, and her mother didn't make enough money to support them on her own. So Evelyn got into the drug business. She never used, but she had good business sense and made a killing at selling. She refused to sell to children, though — even the thought of it brought to mind nightmarish images of her kid sister Amy, coked out of her skull, lying on the street, blood puddling around her cool-

ing body. She kept her sister as secluded as possible, hoping that her recurring nightmare would never come to pass.

She was a smart woman, and within two years Evelyn had one of the most lucrative businesses in her part of New York, with a good handful of people working under her. Once in a while, one or another of them would sell to a child, but she always found out — and when she did, she'd kill the pusher who'd done it. "You know the rules," she'd say, just before the knife flashed. She gained a reputation for being twice as deadly as any male runner; in her business, she had to be.

Of course, not all of her decisions were good ones. For example, there was the decision to hire Andre as a courier. Andre was a whiz at math, and he juggled the numbers to see how much more the operation could make if it sold to kids. The numbers that came back were big, but he knew he would never see them working for Evelyn. So he did the sensible thing.

He killed her.

This wasn't enough to bring Evelyn back from the grave. Almost, but not quite. It was the sight of her sister doing lines in a school bathroom, her sister standing on the top of a building, her sister half-in and half-out of a car seven stories below, that brought her back. She watched helplessly as Amy stood on the gravel of the roof with her arms spread wide, moving them almost like wings. She screamed her denial as Amy smiled and stepped forward almost gently, her foot passing the ledge and continuing downward — and downward, and downward, on until the roof of Andre's Mercedes got in the way. Evelyn ripped out of the ground with a rage that brooked no interference. She killed three pushers on her way to her old headquarters, leaving their bodies cold and broken on the streets. The policewoman who found what was left of them had nightmares for weeks.

Evelyn tore Andre apart limb from limb and nailed the parts to the wall as a warning, blood dripping slowly down the boards as though the building itself were bleeding. The sleek, black rat that was her companion — probably somebody's pet, once — drank the blood like it was water. Then they both went after the others, the ones who'd sold to her sister. Some of them are still running. Others aren't going to be running much longer.

# THE MISEN

Name:  
Player:  
Chronicle:

Nature:  
Demeanor:  
Shadow:

Life:  
Death:  
Regret:

## Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●○○○○	Charisma	●○○○○	Perception	●○○○○
Dexterity	●○○○○	Manipulation	●○○○○	Intelligence	●○○○○
Stamina	●○○○○	Appearance	●○○○○	Wits	●○○○○

## Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Alertness	○○○○○	Crafts	○○○○○	Bureaucracy	○○○○○
Athletics	○○○○○	Drive	○○○○○	Computer	○○○○○
Awareness	○○○○○	Etiquette	○○○○○	Enigmas	○○○○○
Brawl	○○○○○	Firearms	○○○○○	Investigation	○○○○○
Dodge	○○○○○	Leadership	○○○○○	Law	○○○○○
Empathy	○○○○○	Meditation	○○○○○	Linguistics	○○○○○
Expression	○○○○○	Melee	○○○○○	Medicine	○○○○○
Intimidation	○○○○○	Performance	○○○○○	Occult	○○○○○
Streetwise	○○○○○	Repair	○○○○○	Politics	○○○○○
Subterfuge	○○○○○	Stealth	○○○○○	Science	○○○○○

## Advantages

Backgrounds	Passions
_____ ○○○○○	_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○	_____ ○○○○○
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### Arcanoi

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### Corpus

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### Willpower

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### Disciplines

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### Conduit

### Pathos

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### Driving Passion

_____
_____
_____



# MISEN

## Expanded Background

Skinlands

Allies

Shadowlands

Allies/Contacts

Contacts

Artifacts/Relics

Wealth

Wealth

Haunt

Haunt

Eidolon

Mentor

Notoriety

Memoriam

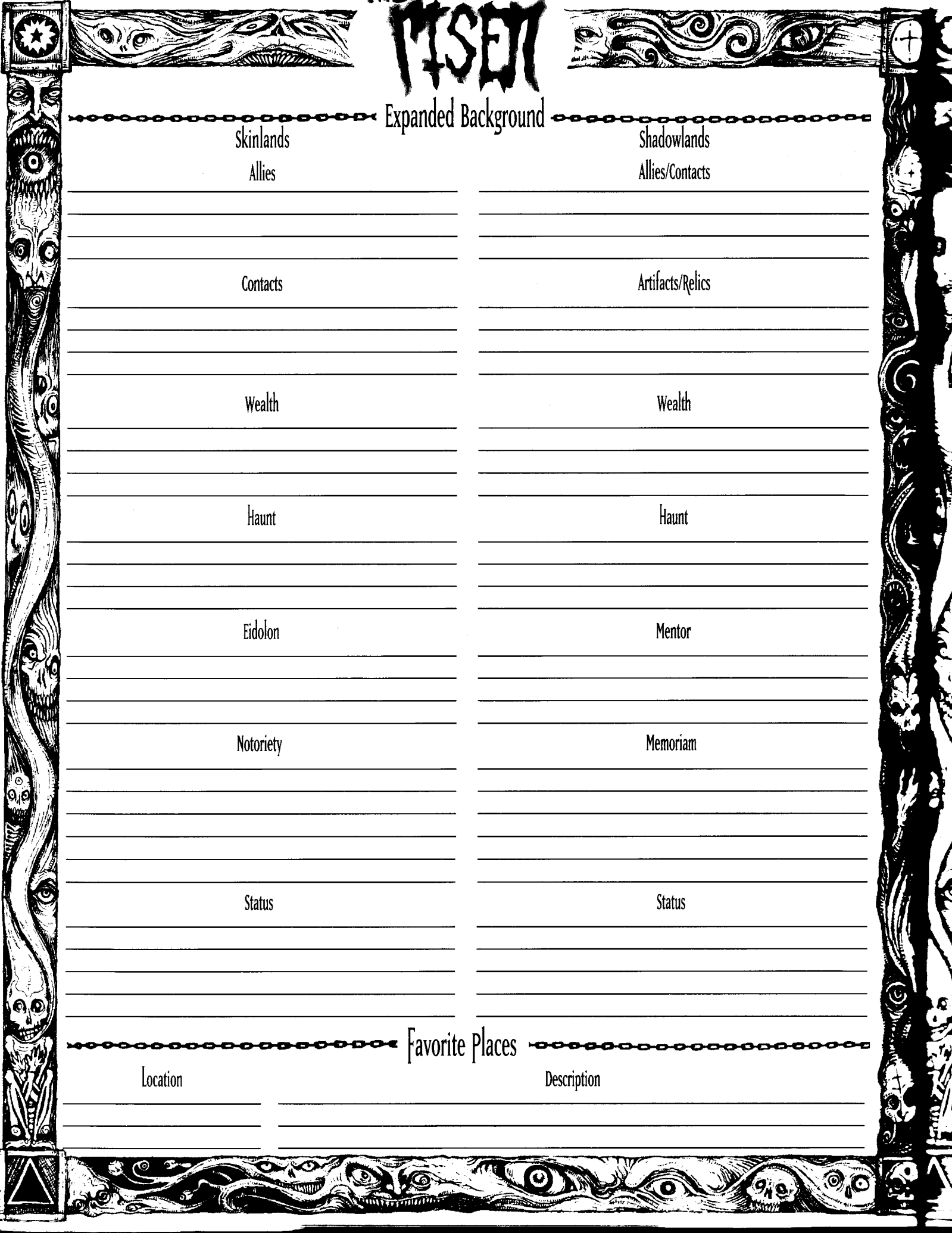
Status

Status

## Favorite Places

Location

Description







# THE RISEN™

## They Told You There Was No Coming Back

*Vincent screamed when he saw us — me — again. After killing me, he'd expected me to stay dead. A reasonable assumption, don't you think? But my Shadow and I, well, we're not reasonable people.*

— Ryan Shearin, *Risen*

## They Lied

Here's what you've been waiting for: the way back to the Skinlands. Here's what you'll need to get there. Here's the terrible price that, no matter what, you'll have to pay.

**The Risen** is a guide to the *Walking Dead*, those who dare to take their bodies back from the embrace of the coffin. Included are the powers, limitations and history of the Risen, as well as the terrible secret that each revenant carries with her. Gaze out from the sepulchre, and remember: Passion will always be stronger than the grave.

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- Everything you need to create a Risen character — or to bring an existing wraith character across the Shroud;
- New Arcanoi, Merits and Flaws that only the Risen possess;
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