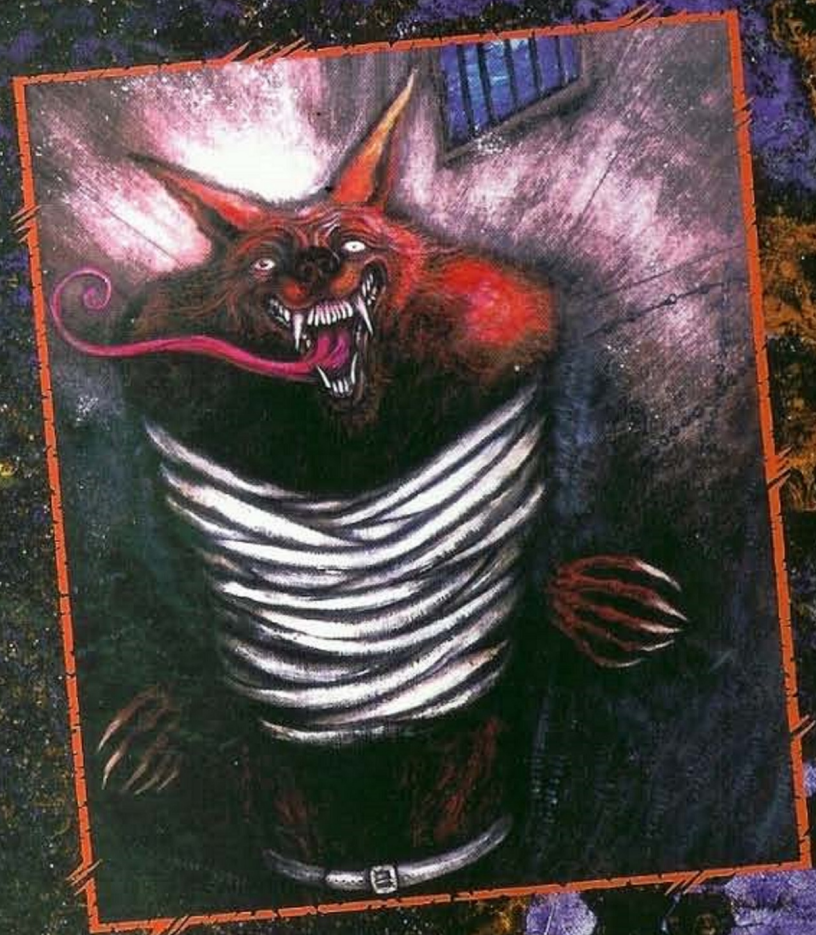


WEREWOLF CHRONICLES

VOLUME 1



Includes:

Rite of Passage™

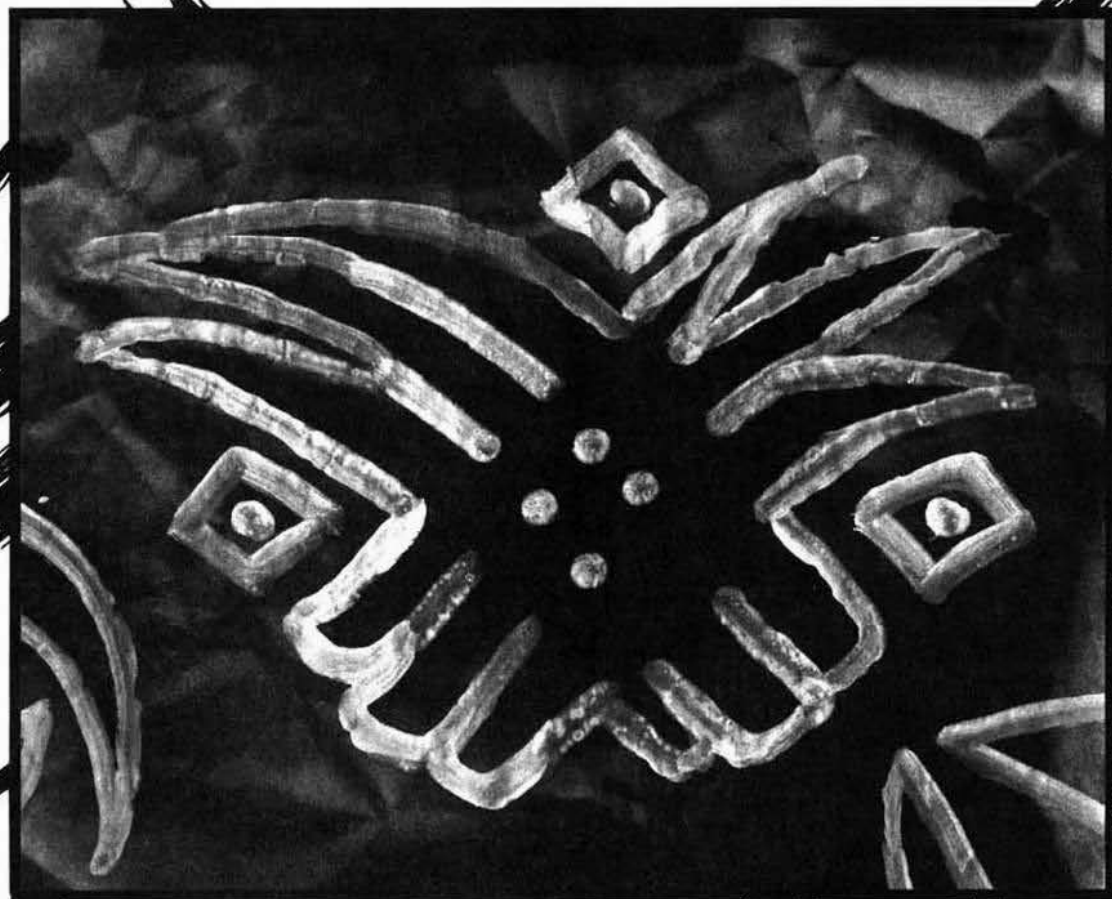
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RITE OF PASSAGE

Through Danger Reborn

By Sam Chupp, William Hale & Rob Hatch





LEGENDS OF THE GAROU

The Tale of My Passage

This is the story of one of the many chapters of my life. Although I was educated in the society of man and hold several degrees, this does not reflect who I truly am, or even what I am. I am a creature of human legend, of mortal terror, as are all my kind. I am a werewolf. I am Garou.

In this, the autumn of my life, I seek to pass on some of my experiences to those who will follow the same path, the path of the blood which flows through our veins. I shall tell the tale of my rite of passage, of my journey to adulthood and what it means to be of the changing breed.

My name is Charles Steffan Pershing, though I am known as Blood-at-Dusk to the Children of Gaia, who are my tribe. I am originally from Los Angeles, although I had lived for the few years prior to this story in Baton Rouge. I was a product of the urban jungle and a nightmare to my parents. My father's career as a salesman, which allowed him little time for a family, and my mother's chronic alcohol abuse had enabled me to choose my own life, with minimal intervention from my parents. I had not always chosen wisely.

At a young age, I fell in with the "wrong crowd," and found nothing but desolation and anger in my soul. I turned to drugs to fill the void which I had become. I soon discovered that I could relieve the pain of others by introducing them to the virtues of cocaine, shining a light into the darkness of their existence.

In retrospect, I realize the disservice I had done these poor, lost souls who, like myself, were merely searching

for an answer in a questionable world. The instigator of my crime was an individual by the name of Jack (I still do not know his last name), who used my insecurities and need for acceptance for his own profit. I shall curse him and his lies for eternity.

I am an adult now, and I look back on the chapter of my life which was my youth with a bittersweet longing to rectify the sins I committed, although I know this can never be.

This is how I found truth in my life. Although it may seem incredible, it is no different than the long road which all must follow to find that place in the world which they call home.

All I can remember are the woman and the dog, more like a wolf by the size of it. It stared into my eyes with a wisdom that was more than canine, as if it knew something about me that I did not. Jack pulled his gun, but before he could fire, the wolf descended upon him in a collage of blood and fear and screams. I tried to help him—how he begged me to! Before I could quell my fear, a hand as large as the sky covered my face and darkness was my home.

I awoke in darkness. At least, I think I awoke. I was painfully aware of my physical self—I was cold and hungry and fear numbed me like snow on a December morn. The darkness was the razor edge between sleep and the waking world where life is insignificant.

As the fog in my brain subsided, I began to perceive breathing, course and labored. I was unsure if it was even

of human origin, though I could not muster the courage to ascertain its source. After an indefinite period of time a voice broke the stagnant void, a voice which overflowed with the same terror which had conquered my soul. Yet even with the discovery that I was not alone, I was given no comfort. In a matter of moments, another voice joined our duet of terror, and the three of us scrambled to solve the mystery put before us with a newfound strength in numbers.

Our search led us to believe that our prison was rectangular in shape, with a door at the far end, well sealed and beyond our ability to open. The putrid aroma of fish entrails permeated our nostrils and lent a feeling of doom to our endeavors.

The background noises changed several times, and we came to the conclusion that we were being transported by different means for each portion of our mysterious journey — first by truck, then by air, ship, and finally train.

I seem to remember spirits on that endless trek, spirits which spoke of courage and the hunt, of pride and the Garou. I dismissed these as illusions, nightmares which were not content to dwell in my sleeping world, but were determined to haunt my waking mind instead.

The doors burst open and the sunlight stabbed viciously at my eyes, without concern for my tears. We were herded from our confinement like cattle, and were given food and drink, which burned our empty stomachs.

Our abductors were rugged, and possessed a violent glare which subdued a great deal of my anger. They spoke of obedience and the respect due one's elders. I was too hungry to argue.

I was also cursed with another dilemma, a gnawing at my brain caused by my addiction to a white demonic powder, which I had long used as a crutch to hide my fears and weaknesses. Unknown to me at that time, this manmade poison could never compare to the fever which surged through my veins by my birthright; but this I shall address later. My hunger and my need to corrupt my body further with my addiction overwhelmed me.

I had never known such pain. In the corner of my eye I spied her, the woman who had instigated this suffering. Beside her sat the wolf I spoke of before, the same bright light burning behind those eyes. The woman gazed down at me and her smile told me that she understood the pain which enveloped my being. She was quite entertained.

We huddled in the van as it sped across the Alaskan countryside. Being a product of urban society, I had never witnessed such a beautiful sight. The greens and browns of the forest seemed to orbit my consciousness in an ethereal way. In the distance, built into a hill which I knew

to be our final destination, sat a cabin; squat and rustic in appearance, it emanated an aura which somehow soothed my companions and me with a sense of warmth.

As our captors led us up the path to the cabin entrance, I noticed a large American Indian totem with a moose at the top, followed by a frog and then a bear. I began to think that perhaps my fears were unwarranted.

Once inside, we found ourselves surrounded by a hive of activity. Jerky, cheeses, and homemade beer were served, all in great quantity, far surpassing anything I had ever tasted in the fast food establishments of my urban birth. We were quickly accepted into the fold as if we had lived there all of our lives.

An old woman rushed to me from the crowd and said she was my cousin. I was unsure of this, as no one in my family had ever spoken of having relatives this far north. Before I could question her on this, she wrapped her arms about me and I found solace in her embrace. It seemed that she held me a lifetime, that she had raised me for my short life of 16 years, and that I had never known anyone else. Then as suddenly as she had appeared, she vanished into the safety of the crowd which I so yearned to be part of.

Two others who had also been abducted now joined us, full of the same confusion which had plagued us for so long now.

I find it necessary at this time to introduce my companions. In the years that we have been together, they have become a part of me.

Horace Wu, a young man of Oriental descent, stood beside me now. He had introduced himself first during our trek to this place, and we stayed close to one another for comfort.

Bruce Conner and Travis Long stood in a corner by themselves. They were both from well-to-do families but were unhappy nonetheless; they were never as close to their parents as other children their age. They were as alone as I was.

In the corner, her frightened face in shadow, stood Zoe Parker, the youngest of us all. She was obviously a loner, and chose to speak to no one. In fact, up to this point, she had not even made eye contact with anyone in our group.

The crowd exited the room and we were left to stand before the one who remained. So great was his stature that his gaze froze my heart, and once again brought forth the tidal wave of terror I had managed to dam earlier. He spoke of the spirit-things my nightmares had told me of, yet his voice was thunder and shook the foundation of my soul. The word Garou, which I had heard earlier, fell from his lips like blood from a glorious battle wound, as he told us of the awakening we would soon participate in.

As the sun set, we were led down a trail to a stream. We waded across and came to a cave. Inside, ancient paintings decorated the cavern walls: scenes of the hunt, of family, of tribal companionship and death. A huge fire roared in the center, which scorched our faces and left our backs barren and cold. We joined hands and once more I felt calm, as if I had known these people all my life. These were not strangers I had been abducted with; these people were my family.

Something was behind me. It stalked around the circumference of our circle and panted, growled, prepared itself for the hunt of one's self which is the awakening.

Those who had brought us here began to chant, softly at first, but rising to a fevered pitch. As their howling reached a crescendo, they pushed us forward into the fire and the life I had known before became meaningless.

A great sleeping wolf stretched across the land as we rose high above the earth. She was bathed in fire and screamed in agony and I suddenly realized that the world was dying, that the areas engulfed in flame were the spoiled, wasted lands of mankind and his struggle to dominate nature. With this understanding, I felt a great sobbing build inside me and I felt shame for raping the land, enough shame for generations.

The moon sat in a huge chariot, pulled across the heavens by a woman who laughed maniacally to the wind. As one, we flew to intercept her and begged her to give meaning to this intense dream. She agreed, but only if we would each give her a dream within one lunar cycle. I, as well as my companions, agreed to her price, even though I could not remember what it was like to dream, for I had not done so since I first poisoned my body with that damnable white powder.

We found ourselves on green earth once more and seemed to be in the midst of a towering forest. A small path stretched to the edge of our sight. In the distance, a column of smoke rose to the sky. Since the path seemed to lead us in that direction, we chose to follow. Around the fire danced several creatures, half-man and half-wolf, that howled and screamed a primitive war-like symphony. They invited us to join them, and after a few moments of thought, we reluctantly did so.

As we danced around the fire they told us to evoke our rage, to summon the hidden fury which lies buried within each of us. I thought of my mother choosing to cradle a bottle of liquor rather than her own son. The tears welled up in my eyes. I suddenly realized that I ran around the fire on all fours, my soft fur the color of snow upon the damp ground. I looked at my friends and saw that they were no longer human, but had transformed to wolves as well.

I felt elated as never before. My blood coursed through my veins, a new untainted blood which enabled me to smell the crisp scent of my comrades' fur and to hear their hearts beat fiercely within their chests. I was free at last. Together we ran wild into the forest, completely relieved of all human bonds. For the first time, I was truly alive.

On a hill stood a great stag, its antlers enormous against the full moon. It bolted in a cloud of dust and fear, and we pursued with a passion passed down through a hundred generations of hunters. Realizing that he could not outrun the ravenous pack, he stopped and adopted a defensive posture. He fought fiercely, and the blood flowed from our wounds, but in time, the battle was ours. We fed hungrily on the blood of our victory.

We howled together that night, our voices and hearts as one with the night. I had finally found my family and my life. I was no longer a lost child in a cold world. Now I was part of nature's glorious design. The hunt was over. We cleansed our fur and huddled together for a much-needed rest. At last I could sleep in peace.

I awoke with the waves slapping the sides of the small fishing boat I now found myself in. I was cold and hungry, but this was soothed somewhat by my newfound knowledge of self. We were given warmer clothes and I took a few moments to transplant my personal possessions to my new wardrobe. We were also given food to assuage our ravenous hunger, and were told we had been in our dream for nearly a week, which explained the rumbling in our stomachs. Ahead of us lay an island, our destination. Here is where we would learn of ourselves and our pack, and learn what it was like to be Garou, to be a werewolves.

We were to be accompanied by an old wolf. It was nearly his time to pass on, and we were to care for him until that time came. Those who brought us here, our former captors, had removed the cold sting from their voices, which had been constantly present when they addressed us before. But this could not quite quell the apprehension I felt as the island drew closer.

To make matters worse, I removed the small vial of white powder I had been carrying in my pocket and, though my troubled brain protested, I uncomfortably handed it to the woman who had kidnapped me a lifetime ago (or so it seemed). I realized how much I would suffer for what I had just done — withdrawal symptoms show no mercy — but I felt the time had come to fight my own battles. She casually opened the vial and cast the contents to the torrid waters.

We anchored about 200 yards offshore and were suddenly told to get out. As disturbing as this news sounded,

we still had no intentions of arguing with our elders. We prepared ourselves as best we could and, grimaces firmly etched on our faces, dove overboard. As soon as I touched the water my breath was stolen from me by the choppy waves. The constant motion of the water was the only thing which kept it from turning to ice, as the temperature was far below freezing. I swam as fast and as hard as I could, but the island never came any closer. My breath was getting short and my muscles ached as the waves tossed me about like a child's toy. I could swim no longer, I was exhausted. I wrapped myself in this dark blanket of tranquility and prepared for a long sleep. Blackness came to me as a friend.

I awoke. I was stiff and sore and covered with sand. I was soaked and overcome with a chill like I had never before known; but I was awake. I was alive, and this was far more than I had expected. I realized, by the expressions on my companions' faces, that they had risked themselves to save me. No one had ever done anything like that for me before. I was so flooded with emotion that I could not even speak. Once assured of my health, they wandered off to search for driftwood to build a fire, and spoke nothing of the incident. I huddled closer to the old wolf and relaxed as my friends performed a preliminary reconnaissance of the island.

As I recovered my strength, I joined them in their search for supplies and shelter. It was not long after that we discovered a cave. It was cold and dark, having been created by lava flows, but it would serve our purposes. We gathered the firewood we had found and, with my cigarette lighter, built a roaring fire to dry our clothes and warm our aching bodies.

We moved the old wolf closer to the fire, as he was shivering almost uncontrollably, and huddled closer ourselves, bathing in this blessed element. The cave was far deeper than the flickering light could reveal; we chose not to explore too deeply at this time. The walls were covered with ancient drawings, similar to the ones we had seen earlier, but a huge dragon-shaped creature decorated these walls, one which chased several doomed stick figures. This was not a comforting discovery.

After the flames had sufficiently thawed our blood, we thought it prudent to explore the island further. The old wolf was left in Wu's care, who chose not to accompany us due to his lack of shoes. The rest of us left the cave and headed south in hope of finding food and fresh water.

We had traveled only a short distance when we entered a forest. It was rather small, but we hoped it could provide the necessary supplies for our survival. After a short time, we stumbled upon a goat drinking from a small brook. So elated were we to find food that several of my compan-

ions, including myself, immediately gave chase to the young goat. It raced around a tree and disappeared into the forest, but this was not the only reason that we chose to end the chase.

Standing before us was a young man, no older than myself, covered in mud and foliage. He wielded a small spear but showed no signs of outright aggression, so we held our ground and did nothing to instigate violence.

The young man then raised his head to the sky and uttered a shrill cry which echoed across the small island, quickly summoning several other young men, dressed (or should I say undressed) very much like he was. They spoke very choppy, guttural English and possessed a fiery glance unlike any I had ever seen. They told us that the forest belonged to them and that we were not welcome. After several moments of arguing to deaf ears we decided to withdraw and ponder our future strategy in a less tense environment.

We headed north toward the cave, and before long, we came across another group, who made their home near an ancient volcano. They were covered in ash and some of them were lounging about in hot springs, which were warmed by an underground source.

They were much less apprehensive than the last group, and after a short conversation they invited us to join them in the softly bubbling water. They were hungry. It showed in their eyes and was obvious by their pinched, gaunt features. We learned that the Forest Dwellers, as they called the other clan, possessed a monopoly on the food and were quite reluctant to share. Thus, those who lived near the volcano were forced to steal food in order to survive. They brought to light other facts as well: they were Garou, along with the Forest Dwellers. They could not remember how long they had been there, only that it had been a struggle since the beginning. It seemed as if this was the only life they had ever known.

I began to wonder if this would be our fate as well. Together, my companions and I decided it would be prudent to find a way off the island, or at least find weapons to defend ourselves, as the Forest Dwellers would not give us food without a fight.

An idea suddenly struck me and, although it was quite extreme, I chose to discuss it with my companions nonetheless. After enlightening them, as well as the Volcano Dwellers, we made our way to the forest with fire in hand in order to initiate our plan.

We were "greeted" as warmly as the frigid ocean itself, but it was no less than we expected. When the Forest Dwellers had gathered I told them of our ultimatum. I

would give them the choice of either sharing food with all the inhabitants of the island, or I would bring fire to the land and we would all starve. The Forest Dwellers repeated time and time again that there was not enough food in the forest to feed everyone, but we stood our ground and, before much longer, they agreed to our terms and stalked angrily into the forest.

The Volcano Dwellers ran about the forest in triumphant joy, feeding themselves with wild abandon, as if they had not eaten for weeks. I knew that, at this point, we had to devise a method of rationing the food fairly or none of us would survive for long. My mind was filled with a thousand dark thoughts concerning the future, as I joined my companions in the forest to partake of a hard-earned evening meal.

Back in the cave, weariness crept upon us like a summer storm and within moments we found ourselves in the realm of dreams.

A chill wind caressed my being as I strolled across the forest floor. It was majestic and pure and untouched by human blasphemies. I felt as though I was intruding in this sacred place. A chariot thundered up the trail, a chariot that glistened and sparkled as if it was carved from ice, and as it drew closer, I saw that, in fact, it was. It moved of its own accord, and its passenger was a woman of ethereal beauty, with smooth, pale skin and milk-white hair.

The whole scene was one of immense beauty, not so much for the content of the dream, but for the simple fact that the dream was mine. It had been so long since I had dreamed; the tourniquet of cocaine had repressed my subconscious for so long that, until tonight, sleep had been nothing but a short escape from a horrible world.

The icy maiden invited me to join her on the chariot, and I was so overcome by her beauty that I found it impossible to refuse. We rode as the wind, and although it seemed the chariot stood still, the trees and surrounding foliage dashed by at dizzying speeds. A fine snow began to fall, clinging to my exposed flesh as if this was something more than a dream. My guide invited me to taste the newly fallen snow and I saw no reason not to oblige her. Yet, as soon as my tongue touched one of the flakes, it was immediately struck numb and I suddenly realized the cruelty which lay beneath her sky-blue eyes. A fine powder fell from the heavens, but it was not snow. It was pure cocaine.

She laughed and told me to give myself to the dream, to enjoy myself, but I refused. She quickly reminded me of the promise I had made in my dream of the awakening. At this point, I realized that this was Luna. She had come to claim payment for the pact I had made, but I could not

allow myself to fall back into that pit of addiction. I had to be strong. She frowned her disappointment and told me that I was not ready; then blackness stalked into my sleep and I found myself alone once again.

My dream was over, but as the darkness faded, I found myself observing my companions' dreams.

Horace Wu, or Raptor as he was known by the members of the pack, walked the streets of his native city of Calloon, a decadent walled city outside of Hong Kong. He was young, perhaps no older than six years. This seemed odd, for I had only met Raptor recently, and I knew him to be about the same age as myself. He appeared to be frail and lost, chased by the white slavers who had plagued this city for so many years. His expression was one of pure desperation. His flight took him from alley to alley, and he cried to the various denizens of the street to grant him salvation from his impending doom. His screams fell on deaf ears.

From a nearby alley, they pounced and wrestled young Horace to the ground. They carried the struggling boy to a nearby apartment and threw him into a closet. After several long moments the door opened and there stood Luna, the woman who had been the instigator of so much pain in my dream. She escorted him to an adjoining room and promptly tied him to a chair.

I pondered silently how she could be so cruel, but I could not intervene, for this was Horace's dream, not mine. I was forced to stand by and watch my friend's pain.

His rage was building; I could see the fire in his eyes as he rocked to and fro in an attempt to loosen his bonds. Blood erupted from his hands as claws extended from his fingertips. He voiced his anger and confusion with a blood-chilling scream, and all was dark once more.

The airport was teeming with the confused rush of humanity, as young Travis Long and his parents stood in line to purchase their tickets. It was obvious that they were preparing to move again, as was often the case for those who had chosen military service as a career. While standing in line, a small girl about the same age as Travis (six or seven), approached him, bouncing a colorful rubber ball. She asked him if he would like to play. At first he turned his back and ignored her completely, but after a few moments of consideration, he accepted her offer and stepped out of line to play.

An eternity passed in the mind of the child as they happily passed the ball to one another. Then the time came for the little girl to depart. She left the ball in the possession of Travis and quickly disappeared into the impatient crowd. Travis turned to rejoin his parents, only to discover that there was no one left in line. In fact, as he scanned the

rest of the airport, he found himself completely alone. His hollow sobs echoed through the deserted building.

He searched the concourse thoroughly, but could find no sign of his parents or anyone else. In the distance echoed the sound of someone methodically sweeping. He searched and searched, desperate to find this person, but no sign of the mysterious custodian was found. Travis raised his voice to the heavens and screamed for someone to rescue him from this solitude. His only answer was a flood of tears from his frightened eyes.

I could only guess that the small girl had been Luna, but I could not understand her part in the dream. I traveled swiftly through the tunnel of change once more and prepared my mind for the light which shone at the far end.

The doorbell rang and a well-dressed, rather pretty woman in her early 30s dashed to answer it. Waiting in the doorway was a very handsome man with a bouquet of roses, who had obviously come to escort her for the evening. She called for her son and the sound of footsteps came thumping down the staircase.

It was Austin Conner, and he looked just as young as my other companions when they had experienced their dreams. He rushed to the door to answer his mother's call but, upon arriving, screamed in terror.

He bolted back toward the staircase, crying that the individual who now stood in the doorway was the bogeyman, come to take him away. His mother flashed an embarrassed smile to the man and then yelled to Bruce to return immediately. The man dismissed the young boy's fear and ascended the staircase to retrieve the frightened child, only to discover, upon entering his room, that it seemed completely barren of occupants.

After a short search, the man found Bruce shaking in silent terror beneath his bed and brutally reached in to dislodge him. His voice became rough, like that of an animal, and an excess of hair sprouted from his face and hands. He growled at the boy to abandon his sanctuary or he would be hunted in his dreams for all eternity. Bruce screamed and sunk his teeth firmly into his assailant's flesh. The man-wolf bellowed a thunderous roar as the dark fog blinded me yet again.

Zoe Parker lay in a barren bed with no blankets and shivered as the night air assaulted her. The room was barren of all furnishings, which made her look small and frightened in the darkness. She was perhaps 12 or so, but her present situation gave one the impression of a small child, waiting for her mother to assure that there were no monsters under the bed.

The door opened, and in stepped Luna. This time, she was clad in a nurse's uniform with her hair securely

braided. She brought with her nothing but a hypodermic syringe and a cold gaze of indifference as she quietly strolled across the polished floor. She told Zoe that the solution in the syringe would make her more comfortable, would help her to sleep. Young Zoe was calm and rather reserved in her reply to the dream maiden, as she questioned the logic of the absence of blankets and compassion, refusing to allow the nurse to come any closer with the syringe.

The nurse reminded her of the promise we all had made earlier, that this dream belonged to her. Zoe breathed a sigh of resignation and thrust her arm forward so that the nurse could perform her duty. As the contents of the syringe flowed into her vein, the door to the waking world was suddenly thrust open, and I found myself in the cave once more.

It occurred to me, then, that Luna had not appeared to us in order to cause pain or to bring back horrible memories of our earlier years. She came to free us of this suffering, to have us live through our nightmares one last time, so that she might remove these horrors from us and take them to a far-off place where they would never harm us again.

I knew I had failed, and I suddenly realized the consequences of my failure. My pain would not be lifted from me; instead, I would be forced to ride the terror caused by the aftermath of poisoning my body. I felt something in my pocket and reached in to discover that Luna had left a small vial of the drug to tempt me with. I removed it and swiftly handed it to Zoe, asking her to keep it from me no matter how fiercely I begged her give it back. I would be strong. I would defeat my curse.

The old wolf was gone, replaced by his human incarnation, an old man with runes and sigils painted all over his body. They varied in color and were not unlike the paintings which we had seen carved on the cave walls. The runes suddenly grew brighter and began to illuminate the cave with a light which rivaled that of the dying fire. They lifted themselves from his tired old frame and floated freely about the cave with a mesmerizing glow. After all that we had experienced, we saw little reason to fear; we sat back to listen to the old man.

He spoke softly, and seemed to choose his words with great care. He told us that the runes represented the many spirits of Gaia, who is the earth and mother to us all. He spoke of the mark which we Garou carry deep within our souls, the mark which is the source of our powers, the very foundation of everything that we are. He gathered several pigments about him, explaining to us that we must look into ourselves to find that mark, and then use the pigments to draw it onto the palm of our left hand. We were not of

a mind to dismiss the wisdom of the old Garou, thus we made haste to follow his instructions.

I looked deep into the darkness which was my inner soul, and though it had long been barren of faith for anything in this world, I suddenly came across a light in the depths of that abyss. My delight in the discovery of this purity, which had eluded me for so long, gave my spirit wings which lifted me to the summit of joy.

I took the dyes which had been supplied to us, and sketched the symbol which rested in my soul upon my left hand: a wolf. Although it held no meaning to any human who would gaze upon it, and indeed would soon fade from my flesh, I was content in the knowledge that I had found a light within myself, a shining beacon of innocence that made me something more than human. Any who cannot see this wolf during their rites can never Change, and can never be Garou.

The old man then told us to gaze intently into the runes which spiraled above our heads, for they would teach us of Gaia and the powers she has granted each of us. The runes represented many of the cave paintings and included such symbols as a wolf howling, a flame, a lightning bolt, and a shield. As I stared into the depths of each one I learned the gifts they bestowed upon me.

The symbol of the wolf howling taught me the ability to summon my pack while in wolf form, while the claw sigil endowed me with the ability to make my claws razor-sharp. There were many others which possessed different powers, too numerous to detail.

These new powers thrilled me even though I was incapable, at the time, of assuming wolf form at my discretion. I believed its secret lay in the ability to invoke my rage, as was spoken of in the awakening.

I also understood that these powers were not granted to make me superior, but were meant to be used as tools to defend Gaia from the defilement of human society. I felt my body flood with a purpose, a primal need to be alive, to preserve the balance of nature which I had become an integral part of.

I moved closer to the warming fire, and as I glanced at the faces of my new family, I realized that a smile now brightened the grim expression that I had for a lifetime used as a weapon against a cold world.

We awoke once more to find that the wisdom of the old man-wolf had been nothing more than a dream within a dream. Nonetheless, we realized that our spirits had transcended that elusive realm of sleep, and were bestowed with a truth.

We awakened to bitter cold; the air was saturated with the residue of the fierce storm that had assaulted the island

the night before. The fire's embers had grown cold and the old wolf sat in the shadows of the cave, trembling from the morning chill. My body was numb and withdrawal pains echoed through my fevered brain.

My companions decided to scrounge for drift wood, to light a fire to dry out with. Despite my pain, I refused to shirk my responsibilities. We searched the perimeter of the cave and returned with as much wood as we each could carry.

During our search, the wind began to rise off the water, and from the north end of the island strolled a woman. She was elegant yet sad, as the wind whipped at her gown. She addressed our pack, and as she spoke, a peaceful breeze blew from her lips. She was Sususura, the daughter of the north wind, whom many Garou had long followed as their primary spirit.

She said that she had come to relieve our suffering, to bring us food and to heal the wounded; and this she did, as sweet breads fell from the sky at her bidding. We consumed this gift with a passion forged of fear and confusion.

As her gentle eyes fell upon me, she quaked in sympathy. She realized the pain which stabbed at me. She called to her mother, the north wind, to end my suffering and to bring peace to my poisoned body. A bright glow illuminated her cupped hands and the small flask of bluish liquid that appeared within. She presented it to me, instructing me to drink. The pain conquered any apprehension I might have had, and I quickly drank.

I felt as if my soul had been flushed clean with stinging, icy water, and I was struck senseless by the intense chill. As the frigid feeling subsided, I felt fresh and new, as if I had never summoned the demon cocaine. My body sang with freedom as the psychological chains of addiction fell to the earth, to be carried away by the tides.

I would be my own master now, and would follow naught but the traditions of my newfound culture.

I was free.

She seemed pleased by my reaction, but her expression swiftly turned solemn as she spoke of what was to come. She advised us against summoning our rage, for a great dragon slept in the volcano, waiting to be awakened. She told us of the ferocity of the creature and begged that we remain calm in order to avoid loosing it upon the world. In our confusion we agreed, although we did not fully understand her warning. We believed the future would be our greatest ally.

We continued to scrounge the island for food. As we did so, we were surrounded by the pack who lived in the forest. They were in wolf form, and seemed quite agitated as they gazed down upon us. The leader stepped forward

and spoke of the lies which Sususura had told, warning us not to pay heed to such nonsense.

Austin became angered by the wolf's words and had no intention of suppressing his rage. Upon sensing this, the wolf issued a challenge of combat. Although Austin refused, the wolf pounced nonetheless.

The wolf was by far the superior in battle; he assumed the upper hand in short order. His huge claws ravaged the flesh of my brother, but I could not interfere. This was Austin's fight, not mine.

As the battle progressed, Austin could contain his rage no longer. He suddenly assumed the form of a wolf. The beast within his soul erupted forth in a frenzy of fur and anger. I realized that I too could not quell the rage which was inherent in my being. I swam in the anger that was my brother's, and although the battle was lost, in my heart, I applauded him for his courage and fearlessness.

His human form regained, he lay on the cold sand, blood clinging to his scarlet wounds. Zoe ran to his side and began licking his wounds. As quickly as they appeared, they began to withdraw from his flesh and were replaced by scars which glistened on his skin like trophies.

The pack of Forest Dwellers was gone now. I pondered the futility of their violent gesture as all became quiet once again.

The day passed slowly as we went about our mundane chores. Raptor fashioned a hunting sling out of available materials and Travis went to secure fish for our evening meal. Eventually, we all returned to the cave and shared the successes of our individual endeavors.

As the sun made its journey toward the west, the volcano began to rumble ominously. We thought it wise to leave our shelter, as it was originally formed by lava flows, long before our arrival.

We carried the old wolf from the cave and sought a vantage point to witness the disturbance. Smoke bellowed from the peak of the volcano. Both the Forest Dwellers and the Volcano Dwellers stood about, expectant expressions etched upon their faces. At this point, we discovered that each of the packs present had been charged with an old wolf to care for. The wolves waited at the foot of the volcano, for they knew their time had come. Our old teacher crawled away from us and took his place with the others to await the inevitable. I understood this to be a natural cycle. For every beginning, there must come an end.

The island shook violently and from the summit of the volcano erupted a great dragon, composed entirely of flame. It roared to the heavens. Even the winds changed their course to avoid it. It reached out and plucked up the

old wolves, one by one, and consumed them. As it did this, the other two packs howled ferociously, and freely gave their rage to the writhing fire-beast.

Yet another truth made itself known to me then: the tragic truth of passage.

The daughter of the north wind had appeared to us in order to secure her mother's place as our culture's primary spirit guide, although her time had come to an end. The ways of our people must change if we are to survive. It has come to the point where we must assume a more violent posture if we are to save Gaia from the atrocities of the humans. That is the purpose of the great rage-dragon; we must avenge Gaia or the world will soon perish. The dragon bathed in our anger, becoming regal and well-defined as we fed it the source of our beings. It looked upon each of us in the three packs and recognized us to be its own kind. Satisfied with our allegiance, it descended back into the depths.

On the shore awaited the boat which brought us here. Our elders rushed to embrace us.

Our rites of passage had ended and we would now be welcomed into the tribe, into the life to which we had always belonged.

Two other boats could be seen heading toward the island; I realized that the two other tribes had passed their tests as well.

As I stepped onto the boat, I looked back at the island which taught me so much; I would never forget this place where I had been reborn. Its lessons will be told to my great-grandchildren as bedtime stories. The legends will be sung by the bards of a hundred generations.

We were taken back to the cabin where our adventure had begun so long ago, and were given a welcome not unlike that of conquering heroes. Clean clothes and hot food were provided, as our elders prepared us for the rites of presentation, the ceremony where we were to be adopted into the tribe and given the full rights and responsibilities of adult Garou.

Before the ceremony began, the tribal chief told us that we must choose a totem for the pack and one from among us to lead. We chose the rainbow dragon as our totem, as we believed that it embodied every aspect of what we are—six hearts which follow different paths to the same goal.

I volunteered to lead the pack, and none among us chose to defy my right to lead.

We were taken to the roaring bonfire at the center of the celebration and presented as equals. It was a glorious night

in my life, one which I shall always remember. It was not merely a ritual of joining, but also a testimony to my conquest over the evils of human society, to which I no longer belonged.

I also learned the moon sign that I had been born under: the half-moon. I was presented to one who would teach me

of the ways. My pack members were shown to their mentors as well and I spied their joy through the tongues of the roaring fire.

The rite lasted until dawn. As the sun shone brightly in the morning sky, weariness crept upon me like a spring rain. I secured a place to rest amid the revelry and prepared for a long nap. Sleep came swiftly and peacefully.

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William “Journeyman” Hale, for gaining another dot in PageMaker.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the Legends of Cora-Ni, the Peaceful Lands of Lyr, and Brother Grom, wherever they are, whatever they’re doing: you will always live in our hearts.



RITE OF PASSAGE

<i>Legends of the Garou</i>	3
<i>Introduction</i>	15
<i>Chapter One: The Story</i>	21
<i>Chapter Two: Plots</i>	29
<i>Chapter Three: Resolutions</i>	49
<i>Appendix: Characters</i>	57



Introduction

Beginning Information

"Soon Winter's angry claws scratched at the earth, and the First Ones decided that something must be done to strengthen their pups, for even as the First Ones had stood strong against the trials of the Wyrn, so must their pups, and their pups ever after until the days of the Apocalypse.

"And so the First Pack gathered their children together, and abandoned them hungry and naked in the frozen wastes, telling them to wear the skin of the Wolf, and to come back to the Pack only when they were as mighty as the First Ones."

—Tale of the First Pack

Thus it was, croon the bards, for the First Pack and the first rite of passage. This supplement, *Rite of Passage*, is designed to help you, the Storyteller, run your first session of **Werewolf**. Included here is a complete story, written to enable you to run a fast-paced and hair-raising rite of passage.

"Legends of the Garou: The Tale of My Passage" offers a detailed look at the trials a particular Garou faces during his rite of passage.

The Introduction details specific information about the rites of passage for each of the 13 Tribes of the Garou.

Chapters One, Two and Three detail a rite of passage story which takes your players from the concrete jungles of New York City to the wilds of Canada and gives them a taste of the many possibilities inherent to the **Werewolf** setting.

The Appendix gives sample characters to use for play; character sheets for the important non-player characters are also included.

The story is designed for five or six beginning **Werewolf** players (not necessarily beginning roleplayers, although it would be simple to adapt to them—simply change the non-linear format to a straight linear story) and will expose the new characters to the wilderness, and their enemies: the Wyrn, vampires, humanity, Black Spiral Dancers, and even the city of Toronto.

The story will probably take about two to three sessions of play before you and your first pack resolve it. Be sure to set aside time in your first session to explain the rules.

This story often refers to the chronicle information in the back of the **Werewolf** rulebook, specifically Mother Larissa and the Sept of the Green (also known as the Little White Feet Sept). The Appendix provides you with five sample Garou characters ready to play. These characters have been playtested with the scenario, and are suited to it.

Tribal Rites

Besides the bonds of blood, one other thing unites all Garou: the rite of passage. The rite is an initiation all adult Garou have survived — an initiation which marks them for life.

Some tribes see the rite of passage as a bloodbath, weeding out the weak and the infirm. Those who aren't worthy to defend Gaia do not survive it. Others view it as a profoundly spiritual

experience that greatly changes the lives and outlooks of the participants forever. Still others see it as an initiation into a path of high honor, a link to a bloodline of legendary glory.

Customs of the Rite

The rite is a test first and foremost, and often causes hardship for its participants. Garou are placed together in a difficult situation and forced to learn how to live and work as a pack — or suffer the consequences. Few can survive for long without the aid and trust of the pack. Thus the rite serves as a test, not only for the individual, but for the pack as well.

There are many customs surrounding the rite of passage. Before a Garou completes the rite, she is referred to as a “pup.” Pups enjoy certain privileges which are honored by most of Garou society and reinforced through centuries of custom and Garou law. For instance, only a pup’s own tribe or pack may put her to death. She is protected from Garou justice by the Litany until she completes the rite of passage, although she can be forcibly detained until a rite can be arranged for her. These days, pups are rare and the tribes have begun to pay particular attention to protecting those who seem viable.

The pups also have many problems. They are often friendless and are usually ignored by the tribe before their rite. They are technically the lowest “caste” among the Garou. They are taken advantage of, manipulated, and ostracized. They are the butt of bad Ragabash jokes. They are teased, taunted, and generally disrespected. They are never heard in council, and if a pup speaks up no one is obligated to answer. They are required to learn ridiculous amounts of oral history, lore, and trivia, such as the names of the Three Greatest Garou Warriors. They are harried, hazed, kidded, taunted, and teased as a matter of course.

There is a curious double standard at work here. The Garou, for all the ill-treatment of their pups, expect them to function as full-grown Garou, especially during the course of their rite of passage. Essentially, the pups bear all of the responsibilities of being full-grown adult Garou, but have none of the authority or respect that comes with the title.

Coming Home

The Garou trait does not always emerge with each birth among the Garou Kinfolk. In fact, it is becoming rarer and rarer in these final days. Still, each Garou Kinfolk is assigned a Kin-Fetch, a spirit that watches over her, waiting for signs of the inner wolf to show. When it seems that such a change is imminent, the Kin-Fetch will contact the nearest tribe member or sept to warn of a pup on the verge of First Change, or “The Firsting”.

The First Change is a brutal, violent happening that is incredibly painful and immensely satisfying at the same time. It is as if the Garou was asleep all the time before, and has only now awakened into the real world. Sometimes a team of Garou reaches the pup before the Change, sometimes after. Regardless, the pup is usually kidnapped and taken to a tribal caern to be indoctrinated in the gifts and forms of her birthright. If the First Change has already occurred, the “extraction team” usually stays to repair the Veil as necessary.

Usually, but not always, the time before the rite of passage is spent in study with the elders of the tribe or sept. It is during this time that Garou are taught their gifts and their inner nature, and taught to respect Gaia.

The rites of passage for some tribes begin with a period of contemplation; the pups meditate and reflect, preparing themselves spiritually for the experiences ahead. Other tribes’ rites begin without warning, taking the pup by surprise, for it is important to these tribes that a radical separation from the past be made.

The rite is usually held in some far-flung wilderness. However some wilderness-based tribes send their pups to the hellish, Wym-ridden cities, there to hunt and survive as best they can. This is usually where young pups have run-ins with the Kindred, as they are particularly vulnerable to attack at this time.

The Traditions of the People

Different tribes enact their rites differently. Some tribes feel that the Garou in the pups should be brought out through fire, famine, and fear. Others feel that it is important to first train their pups, and then test their mettle.

Below are some sample rites of passage for the various tribes. These are not comprehensive; they are simply representative of standard rites of passage for each tribe. When a sept composed of different tribes holds a rite of passage, such as in the story in this supplement, it will usually not involve a specific tribal totem or quest.

Get of Fenris

The Get are most brutal to their pups. They often cull packs they don’t feel are worthy to be of the Get — that is, they slay them outright or banish them to be ronin for the rest of their lives. They place those they don’t cull in bloody, violent, horrific rites of passage that are more like lynch mob scenes than anything else. The pups are turned loose and are hounded and hunted by the Get until they falter. At that point, they must prove their mettle by fighting their elders in pitched battles.

Shadow Lords

The Shadow Lords also have very brutal rites of passage. They throw many potential Garou (even Kinfolk who have not exhibited signs of the Change) into a ring and force them to fight with weapons. Only the ones who win these fights are awarded adult Garou status; the rest have the Wolf taken out of them and are left to wander the world as soulless husks. They encourage leaders to organize teams to fight each other in these duels; if clever tactics result in an uneven contest...well, the natural order of existence is hardly known for its fairness either.

Silent Striders

The Striders are dark and mysterious. None understand them completely. It is thought, however, that Silent Strider pups are often asked to carry a message into particularly dangerous territory or follow a Moon Bridge to an unexplored destination.

Children of Gaia

The Children of Gaia have a very spiritually-oriented rite. Their pups go through a lunar month of ritual meditation, fasting, and preparation. During this time the pack is expected to discover its quest and its totem, if any. Then the rite of passage is culminated in a ritual which corresponds to one of the

solstices or equinoxes. The ritual itself invokes the Unicorn, who carries the pups to its realm, where it tests their hearts, souls and spirits.

An alternate rite places the pups in a secluded location with pups from other tribes. This tests not only their survival skills, but also their mediation abilities.

Black Furies

The Black Furies call upon their totem, the Pegasus, to carry the pups on a quest. The quest usually involves reclaiming a particular caern that has been lost to the Wurm, but might also involve rescuing a forgotten animal or preventing the rape of a woman caught by foul servants of the Wurm.

Fianna

Fianna have a Test of Wisdom, a Test of Luck, and a Test of Skill, and all three must be passed before adulthood is conferred on the pack. Often the Fey involve themselves in the Fianna rites. These tests reflect the intense amount of knowledge and training the Fianna expect from their pups, and they often undergo apprenticeships to tribal elders before they even attempt the rite. At times the Wild Hunt has appeared out of nowhere to protect a pack who got into trouble during the rite.



Glass Walkers

Glass Walkers see no reason why their pups should learn to hunt and kill. They want the pups to form packs on their own; the Walkers only require them to meet on a regular basis. At some point the Glass Walker elders will place the new pack in a very difficult situation (i.e. will get them involved in a vampire's plot, cause them to run afoul of a mage, etc.) and then expect them to make the best of it. They are allowed to use any and all resources they can scrounge up. Spirits watch the pack wherever they go and report back to the elders. Depending on their performance in the urban jungle, the elders will either vote the pack into the tribe, and thus give them their tribal names and computer access codes, or continue to test them. Thus there are a few older pups in the Glass Walkers who, bitter and short-sighted, go ronin without the benefit of a rite.

Red Talons

The Red Talons' rites often revolve around communing with nature and protecting the dwindling wolf population. Pups will often be assigned the task of rescuing a wolf from captivity or destroying bands of poachers. Survival skills in both the deep forests and the fringes of civilization are essential.

Bone Gnawers

Bone Gnawers are interested in developing the survival skills of their pups. Because of this, they will often arrange to have the pups abducted from the city and dumped somewhere completely different, there to survive and make their way back to the city. There is much honor in finding one's way back without help from other Garou. Of course, this is often how new Bone Gnawer tribes get started, as the pups sometimes stay in a new city rather than return to the old one.

Uktena

The Uktena use complex mystical rituals to set up strange "testing grounds" in the Umbra. Often the pups are sent to these domains, while elders supervise the rite, challenging the pack-

to-be in an almost laboratory-style fashion. Thereafter, the Master of the Rite gains a special title usable only by the pack he oversees. He is the pack's Warder; this position has special ritual significance.

Those that don't survive the rite of passage are mercifully slain with ritual silver, since the sanity-bending vistas that the Uktena evoke are enough to reduce the pups to gibbering half-wits if they fail.

Wendigos

The Wendigos take their pups as far north as possible and deposit them in frozen and desolate lands. Those that survive the trek back are welcomed with great joy and are treated as heroes for a week. Sometimes the Wendigos send their near-defenseless pups into the city to be challenged.

Silver Fangs

The Silver Fangs perform a special rite which sends their pups back through the bloodline of the Garou, to inhabit the bodies of ancient and honored ancestors. While there, they face epic foes and experience the pure, pristine wilderness of the time before the Impergium. How well they enact their roles will determine how the tribe views them as a pack when they return to the present. This rite serves to keep the Silver Fangs firmly grounded in their heroic past.

Stargazers

Very few Stargazer packs are ever formed, and a significant number of Stargazers never join a pack. Their special rites of passage can be given to any number of Stargazer pups. The pups are ritually prepared and then placed in a specially constructed chamber. The chamber has a spiral ramp that gradually rises up and coils around itself three times. On this ramp are 21 separate riddles or puzzles, each represented by an object, a person who challenges the pup, or a spirit who is itself an Enigma. The pup (or pups...they can help each other if there is a pack of them) must answer each of these riddles correctly or the rite will be called off and the pup sent to study once again.

The Litany of the Return

Who steps from the shadow?

We, who are not now what we once were.

Who comes in the night, cold and hungry?

We, who do not hunger for prey or warmth, seek wisdom this night.

Who comes before us wounded and dying?

We who have fought the Wurm and yet live. We who tend our own.

Who comes before the fire, nameless?

We who are without a name, yet seek one.

Who comes in the light of the rising moon?

We who have fought the bitter battle.

Who comes in the glory of our Mother?

Your children once, but never again.

Who comes before us as warriors, children no longer?

We do. We are a pack.

So let it be sung. So be it. Welcome.



Chapter One: The Story

This is a story about a rite of passage that goes wrong. Although designed specifically to start as a linear story, it quickly opens up into a completely non-linear format. The first part does not allow the characters much freedom; indeed, they are shuffled and chased and manipulated. This is much the way a rite of passage is supposed to work. However, after they are evicted from the Winter Wolf caern, the story opens up, and the players must decide on their own what to do. The world of the far north is open to their exploration.

There are many considerations you should keep in mind. First of all, the characters provided in the back of this supplement have all been playtested with this story — they may make a good choice for your players if they have never played Werewolf before (especially if they have never played a game in the Storyteller series!).

If the players wish to create their own characters, you need to be concerned with the choices they make. There should be one of each auspice represented if at all possible. You should not allow more than one lupus character, nor should you allow more than one Red Talon or Get of Fenris. However, the metropolitan nature of the Sept of the Green allows virtually any other combination of tribes, auspices and breeds among your pack of pups.

On the Forging of a Pack

Although the characters have been thrust together in this situation, they may have known each other for some time. You may wish to have them decide how they relate to each other, and what they know about each other before you begin play. This will help provide your characters with a sense of companionship, if not outright friendliness. Of course, it is not necessary for your characters to like each other to be in the same pack.

A pack is more like a family than a group of buddies. You need to allow your players to forge their own group. The rite of passage is the fire which tempers the steel of the new pack — the shock of being thrust into an unpleasant and trying situation with others often causes Garou to make lasting bonds that eventually result in the special kinship between packmates.

The Secrets of the Garou

Because your players may not have played Werewolf before, you may wish to have them make Intelligence + Etiquette rolls (difficulty 7 or 8) in order to give them hints about Garou society, thus reflecting the amount of training they have had on the subject. Perception + Etiquette rolls (difficulty 7) may also be used to correctly analyze a Garou social situation. Do not, however, give away story elements that will harm the flow of this story as a whole.

Theme

The theme of this story is "coming of age". That is what a rite of passage is all about. Tribal cultures throughout the world hold initiation ceremonies for their young, in order to induct them into the mysteries of the adult world — a world of responsibility and pain, but also of honor, glory and wisdom.

A Garou rite of passage initiates the young into the harsh role required of them by their culture: warriors of Gaia. This is a position of utmost responsibility, for the power a werewolf wields can be used all too easily to destroy. The risk of corruption is great when the enemy is corruption personified: the Wurm. Garou must be strong and able. There is no room for children among them, although the Ragabash would disagree...

Mood

This story is meant to be a cross between a wild, swashbuckling rampage and a spooky "man against nature" story which requires the characters to make tough choices and rely only on themselves. You should generate fear and paranoia in your players and reward brave, direct actions over shrinking, cowardly ones. Whenever the characters stop to ponder and delay, hit them with a new problem or trouble. Let them understand that the world is moving around them (as it indeed is; see the section regarding the Pentex mine). If they dawdle figuring out what to do next, they will soon find that they have waited too long, and are now they in more trouble than they were before!



Background

*Old longings nomadic leap,
Chafing at customs chain;
Again from its brumal sleep
Wakens the feline strain.*

—Jack London, *The Call of the Wild*

Many millennia ago, a great evil roamed the north — a foul spirit of the Wurm. Powerful beyond belief, this spirit, known as the Narlthus, reveled in the suffering it caused. Indeed, some say that this spirit was responsible for the great ice age that caused glaciers to descend from the pole and plow the ground into great furrows of ice. The power and malevolence of the Narlthus were such that it could not be contained by any fetish made of earth. The Garou were helpless before it.

However, a mighty shaman of the Wendigos realized that, although the Narlthus was anathema to the very body of Gaia, perhaps it could be bound into an object from beyond Gaia. She used her considerable gifts over the sky and attracted to herself a giant stone that floated in the heavens. The stone plummeted to the earth and, as it fell, the shaman forced the great evil spirit into it. As it was not of this earth, the stone was able to hold the Narlthus.

Unfortunately, even the sky-stone was not enough to totally imprison the spirit — the Narlthus was able to exert a slight effect upon the outside world, although it was very weak. Fortunately, the stone impacted the earth at sufficient velocity to gouge a deep crater in the side of a mountain. The crater gradually filled with rock and debris of various sorts, completely burying the huge, otherworldly stone.

The shaman was satisfied with what she had done, even though she noticed that the giant fetish (for that is what it was) grew in power on every New Moon and was able to corrupt creatures who ventured near it, infecting them with Banes. It also attracted other evil spirits who would come and lurk nearby. After she passed on, however, her tribe still watched over the stone, ensuring that it was not disturbed. As time passed by, and more earth was piled over the fetish, it grew gradually weaker until it entered into a deep slumber in its earthly crypt.

A few weeks ago, Grend Enterprises, a Canadian company, uncovered the giant fetish during a strip-mining operation designed to glean the uranium-rich deposits from the mountain. The find was logged and immediately picked up by the computers of Pentex Corporation's Acquisitions Department. Pentex's Special Services Department (consisting largely of Black Spiral Dancers) immediately investigated; these agents were nearly overwhelmed by the Wurm entity's spiritual cry for release. Grend Enterprises was immediately bought out by Pentex (with some "persuasion" from the Black Spirals).

Grend Enterprises has since tried diamond drills, acid, extremely high temperatures, and flash-freezing on the rock — to no avail. Nothing will harm it.

Complications

Virtually everything was going according to plan. That is, until a pack of young Wendigo pups accidentally stumbled across the well-hidden valley where the operation was being conducted. The Wendigo pups managed to escape without direct confrontation, but mysteriously, did not report what they had found to any in their tribe.

Azaera, the vicious Black Spiral Dancer who headed the operation to free the Narthus, sent Banes after the pups. The Banes came upon them unawares, for the pups knew not the ways of these dread spirits. The Banes planted a plan in their psyches, a plan calling for them to wait until their rite of passage was over before saying anything. They believed they would be able to return from their rite and lead the tribe into a glorious battle against Grend Enterprises.

Azaera knew the Wendigo pups would be exchanged with pups from New York, to complete a pact between the septs. She contacted Black Spiral Dancer assassins in that city and arranged to have them murder the Wendigo pups. She felt the Winter Wolf Sept would slay the young Green Sept pups in return, rather than allow their continued existence. Indeed, her pawn in the Winter Wolf sept, a young Ahroun named Icedagger, urged the leadership of the sept to slay the pups in their sleep.

Her plan was foiled by an error in judgment: trusting the Winter Wolf Sept to kill the pups. Now the Green Sept pups are the only flaw in an otherwise perfect tapestry of treachery she has woven.

The pups essentially have 10 days after the night they are exiled to explore unprovoked (unless they run into Grend Enterprises before that time). It is at that point that Azaera will make plans to take care of the pups in one way or another.

Scene One: Hurry Up and Wait

*I am an only child
Born of the Wild
Riddled to spend my time
Defending my land...*

—Indigo Girls, “Chickenman”

The characters have been staying for the past week in an abandoned warehouse 30 blocks from the Central Park caern, and they are going (understandably) a little stir crazy. They are supposed to be preparing themselves spiritually for the experience of the rite, but it is doubtful that this is what they are doing (after all, these are young people stuck in a boring situation in a cold, clammy warehouse with little else to do...an ideal meditation environment for Bone Gnawers perhaps, but no one else.). A battered radio plays tinny music. Lupus characters are likely to be curled up in the corner, sleeping.

The chatter and tense arguments generated by boredom are interrupted when Mother Larissa, the Bone Gnawer who runs the sept, strides into the warehouse; she is flanked by Timmy, her Ahroun protector.

Larissa cajoles the characters, pinches a few ears, and tells them they aren't worthy to undergo the rite. She then turns and leaves, walking surprisingly fast for her evident age. If they dawdle, Timmy growls at the characters, gruffly ordering them to follow Mother. Mother leads the characters down a path and into Central Park's Ramble; however, about halfway down a dark path in the Ramble, the characters realize they've been abandoned by Mother Larissa and are alone.

Setting

The warehouse is big, dark, and empty. It is boring. Under-score that there is very little to do and that the characters have been warned not to leave. They have been in this warehouse for almost a week; their only meals have consisted of scanty rations of bread and water.

Drama

The characters provide their own drama, possibly dwelling on the boredom of the situation and playing with each other. They will be stopped by an older Garou if they try to leave. Larissa is quite abrasive and appears very angry at the characters.

Characters

Mother Larissa is detailed in the *Werewolf* rulebook (pages 257-8). Timmy is an Ahroun Bone Gnawer Homid, and he protects Larissa from harm.

Scene Two: A Harrying Experience

The characters are chased about the Ramble in Central Park, and are run directly into the Moon Bridge. The Great White Mouse will only open the Moon Bridge on the night of the full moon (when light is brightest) or when someone comes near the Moon Bridge running in fear (he thinks he can save them this way); therefore, the sept elders have arranged for Larissa to lead the pups into the Ramble. They will chase the characters into the Moon Bridge portal as soon as it opens. To run this chase scene, review the Harrying rules from the Drama chapter.



Drama

Of course, many things could go wrong during this scene. Mother Larissa doesn't want the pups to run out of the Ramble; that would violate her policy of keeping the Veil very thick in this area. She has thus authorized the harriers to use harsh, if not killing, force to stop the pups from running out of the Ramble. She would rather see a pup wounded than one running out in front of Tavern-on-the-Green.

The elders would much rather scare the pups than attack them, so it is possible that one of the characters may land a blow or two. This will be followed quickly by attacks from the harrier, which may result in the character becoming gravely wounded. If this occurs, Larissa takes the character's wounded form aside and heals her, then carries the character to the clearing where the Moon Bridge is to form.

You should allow the players to make rolls of Intelligence + Rituals (difficulty 8) to figure out what is going on; if they fail, tell them that it is often the practice among the Garou to cull pups that they feel are unworthy. If they gain three successes, tell them they are obviously being harried by a group of elder Garou.

If you really want to shake them up, have one of the harriers fire a silver bullet near their heads. That should get them going.

Dialogue

The only sounds the characters should hear are snarls, growls, howls, and the rustling of the underbrush. You could, however, stage a speaking encounter with other Garou or humans who might be hiding there as well.

Characters

Harriers

Strength 4, Stamina 4, Dexterity 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Alertness 4, Brawl 4, Firearms 3

All harriers have the Silver Claws gift, and will use it if necessary, though they will attempt to avoid outright lethal blows. Most of them are in Crinos form, though some of them are in Homid form and carry rifles with silver bullets to fire over the characters' heads (not that the characters know that).

Scene Three: Moon Bridge Over New York

The Moon Bridge opens and the characters travel through. A strange occurrence transpires, and they find themselves deep in Canada, in the caern of the Winter Wolf Sept, guarded by the Wendigo tribe. They are greeted and given a place to bed down for the night.

Drama

All the harrying has forced the characters to appear in the clearing that is the domain of the Great White Mouse inside the Ramble. The Mouse will notice a group of fleeing and evidently terrified Garou, and will open the Moon Bridge portal for them. The Bridge appears as a blue globe that rises from the ground, swirling and crackling with energy. The globe expands, and an oval portal forms in the side facing the players. The portal is translucent and appears to lead into a tunnel which curves sharply up. They will feel a rush of cold air that floods out from the portal and then a breeze from the other direction as the pressure in the tunnel equalizes. The Mouse will hold the portal open as long as they stand there; soon, the Harriers will come to confront the characters. Have them make Rage rolls if they are confronted with the Harriers face-to-face; if they frenzy—wham! Into the Moon Bridge they go.

The characters get a sensation of ascension as they run through the Moon Bridge. The Bridge then levels out, and they begin to descend. The scent of wilderness is in the air ahead: cold, pure air, pine trees, and the like.

The characters see a tall man with night-black hair and piercing eyes. His features are distinctively Native American, and his voice is strong and clear. He is wearing traditional native clothing in addition to a heavy black coat. This Garou is the Warden of the caern, and he steps forward to speak.

After he has said his piece, he will lead the characters to a cozy cave chamber — their lodgings for the night.

Dialogue

The man says to them, “Welcome, pups of the Sept of the Green. I am the Warden of this caern. There is food and shelter for you. Tomorrow you will begin your rite of passage.” The Warden will not answer any other questions from the characters, rewarding any who ask with a chilling stare.

Scene Four: This isn't the Hilton!

The characters find lodging, sleep, and are awakened by howls of Garou in the middle of the night.

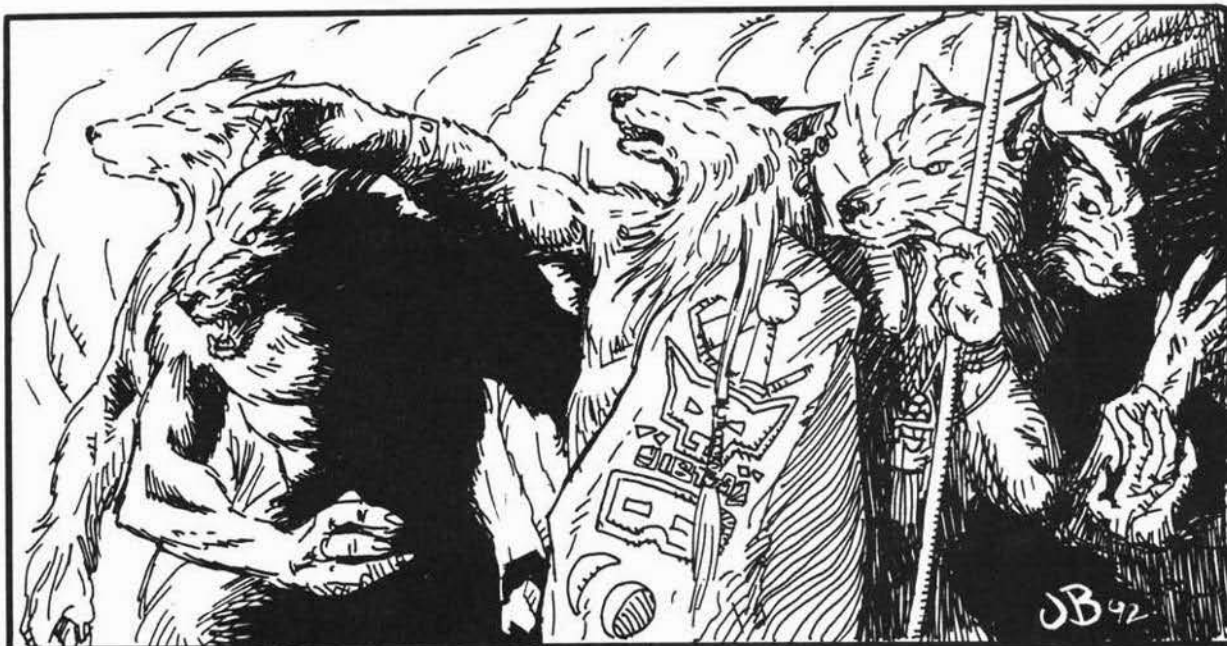
Drama

The characters are led to a cave, where they find a warm pot of venison stew over a banked fire in a pit. They will find warm wool blankets by the dozen, and a wool blanket has been hung over the mouth of the cavern to keep out the cold. This is winter, there is snow on the ground and the only warm place around is this cave. Since they have not had any decent food for some time, this stew will satisfy their hunger. It is also not a bad idea for them to catch some sleep. There is no need to post a guard, but if the characters want to, they certainly can.

Halfway through the night they are awakened by a horrible howl. It is long and mournful. Have any Philodox or Galliard characters roll Perception + Rituals to discover what kind of howl it is. It is, in fact, a Howl of Mourning. From the howl it is easy to see that some kind of awful tragedy has taken place. Then, a Howl of Calling the Pack is heard, sung in a way meant to summon the entire sept to the caern. Successfully rolling Intelligence + Primal-Urge (difficulty 7) will discern this.

A short time after this other howl occurs, the Warden will appear at the door of the cave and call for the characters to come out. Make careful note of what items they carry with them out of the cave, but do not call too much attention to this. This is the last time they will have access to the cave.





Scene Five: *I have a bad feeling about this...*

The characters emerge from their cave to confront the Council of the sept. The five sept leaders, each Rank 4 in their particular auspice, are led by the Ahroun, who is the chief speaker. He tells the characters that they are to be evicted from the caern and that they are not to come back. A tense moment ensues when the characters are forced to leave by walking through a row of Garou arranged along a ramp leading to the caern's edge. Finally, the characters (barring any trouble) reach the caern's edge and beyond.

Drama

When the characters emerge from the cave, they will instantly note the five huge Garou in the center of the caern, each a fine specimen of a particular auspice. The Ahroun will be the chief speaker, but in matters spiritual, the Theurge will speak. Players may roll Perception + Empathy (difficulty 6) to notice that the Philodox does not like this at all, and may be a future

ally to them. The Galliard is incredibly sad-looking and seems to be fighting back tears the entire time. The Ragabash is carefully watching the characters' reactions.

When the characters leave (if they do not leave, it becomes quickly obvious that they will be cut down with very little effort by the leaders), they will have to pass through the pairs of Garou lined along the ramp. One of these Garou is an Ahroun named Icedagger, who is quite foul-tempered and is trying to impress the other Garou in order to be allowed to advance to Rank 3. He will spit on any one metis in the group. If one of the pups attacks him, by custom he has a right to attack back, but the Ahroun leader will verbally stop him from doing so. Depending on how the metis character handles the slight, the sept as a whole may actually grow to respect her. She will have to stay her hand and return the slight with cool hatred in order to keep face among the Wendigos.

Dialogue

The Ahroun leader speaks:

"You are no longer welcome among us. Our spirits have cried out to us in the night. Our pups are dead, murdered by your people. By all the customs of the people, we are no longer obliged to complete your rite. The fact that you are pups protects you, however, for we may not kill you for your elders'

transgressions. Therefore you are cast out of this caern. Do not return, for if you do, you will no longer be protected by the Litany."

If the characters complain that there is no way their leaders could have done that, the Theurge gives the Ahroun something and he holds it up. It is a subway token, the symbol of the Sept of the Green.

"Our spirits found this on their bodies. That is proof enough for us."

It should be obvious to the characters that they are not going to win an argument with the sept leader in front of his entire sept. It should be even more obvious that the characters are in very real danger should they do anything funny.

Free to Wander

The characters have basically been led around by their noses for long enough in this story. Now they are literally free to go wherever they want to go. They may decide to go west into the great wilderness. They may decide to go north and get involved with the Pentex Corporation's mining operation there. They may decide to head east to the village of Kroder's Pass. They might journey south to the city of Toronto. Indeed, they may decide to enter and explore the Near Umbra here at the caern site. In each of these areas, they will discover elements of the larger story taking place here. The next chapter describes this story.

The most important story taking place, however, is the story that follows the characters, as they learn about themselves, their pack and the Garou during their rite of passage.



Chapter Two: Plots

The Garou believe that life is but one of many cycles, and that the spirits of the greatest Garou go round and round the Wheel of Life, repeatedly being reborn, living, dying, and being reborn again. Within this Wheel of Life there are many other wheels, cycles which cannot be easily detected or understood. The larger story in **Rite of Passage** is about one of these cycles: the cycle of a power which, once bound, now grows nascent again.

The Five Talons of the Wyrn

Legend states that, in the ancient days, the Wyrn sent five evil spirits, known as its Talons, to defeat the five Garou of the First Pack. Each Talon was powerful beyond belief, and it was only through the courage and teamwork of the First Pack that they were individually defeated.

Azaera believes it is her destiny to uncover and awaken each of these Five Talons, which are now imprisoned. Azaera sincerely believes the Narlthus to be one of the Five Talons, but it is possible that this is not the case.

Meanwhile, Back At the Park

The Sept of the Green is frantic. First of all, the pups that were entrusted to their care have been slaughtered. Shortly after the news came to the Winter Wolf Sept, they closed the caern of the

Winter Wolf to all traffic, spiritual or otherwise. They sealed the Bawn and have maintained a war-watch, expecting a direct attack from the Sept of the Green. This has prevented the Wendigos from receiving any spirit messengers from the Sept of the Green. Some of the Green's Silent Striders departed shortly thereafter with a message for the sept, but they haven't been heard from yet. There is no known technological method of contacting them, and the sept has no fixed permanent address. The Glass Walker chief has already tried to bribe Federal Express into sending a jeep with a package out to the caern, but to no avail.

Then, Larissa realized that the pups were probably in danger. All scryings and divinations have determined that they are, indeed, alive, but in grave danger. Perhaps they are being held prisoner! The Bone Gnawer leadership has almost universally decided to let the pack go unaided: if they survive they will prove themselves. However, the Get of Fenris and a few of the more warlike sept members (especially those who have tribal affiliations with the characters) want to send a war party through the Moon Bridge to rescue them.

The problem with this is time. Because the Wendigos have sealed their end of the Moon Bridge, it will only be usable again for a brief moment the next New Moon. So the pups have roughly 14 days to wait for help to arrive.

Meanwhile, Accolon, a Stargazer, descends from his lofty perch above New York City and brings the Sept of the Green ominous news of a great new power of the Wyrn being reborn

Shelter

A shelter is easily constructed in the deep woods. Allow Intelligence + Survival rolls among the entire pack (difficulty 6), and total the number of successes. Compare the total to the chart below:

Successes	Level of Shelter
1-5	Poor shelter — roll Stamina + Survival (difficulty 6) to reduce the number of Health Levels lost due to cold (one per success). There is no way one can sleep in this shelter.
6-7	Good shelter — no roll required; however, the shelter must be rebuilt each time someone leaves. Good sleep is possible, however.
8-10	Near-permanent shelter — no roll required; shelter can last one or two days of exposure. Good sleep is possible.
11 +	Permanent shelter — no roll required; shelter can last indefinitely, and it is possible to keep a fire going inside the shelter for additional warmth and cooking. Excellent sleep is possible.

in the north. He travels into the Umbra to try and contact the characters and perhaps battle the newly born Wyrmling.

Therefore, during the story you, the Storyteller, may have either a Silent Strider from the sept, a messenger-spirit, or Accolon appear to the characters and tell them the tale of the Sept of the Green.

Chronicle Spin-offs

Rite of Passage has been designed not only as a means to get a pack started but also to get the characters involved with the many aspects of Garou society and Garou life. You may want to use this setting as a jumping-off point for your ongoing chronicle.

Area: The Wilderness

The characters will most likely interact first with this area. The wilderness is everywhere, and it is dark, strange, and mysterious in its desolation.

Below are a number of scenes you may run in the wilderness. It is not necessary to run them all, and they needn't connect in any particular order. Because of the open-ended structure of handling this part of the adventure you are free to choose which scenes seem appropriate for your players.

General Environment

It is important to remember that it is very cold in the middle of winter in northern Canada — especially since the Wendigos, in their fury over the death of their pups, have summoned a storm of incredible proportions. Garou in Lupus, Hispo, or Crinos form who sleep in the cold without shelter will begin to receive Health Levels of damage, one per hour, and they will be aggravated because of the bitter cold. Garou in Glabro or Homid form will receive three aggravated wounds per hour because of the cold. Characters may resist this cold with Stamina + Survival rolls (difficulty 8). Remember that normal cold does not affect Garou in this way: this is a supernatural cold that penetrates the Garou's thick fur. A metis with the Hairless deformity (such as Whisperer; see the sample characters) who is in this situation is in great danger, unless he has warm winter clothes — he should receive one aggravated wound per hour of exposure regardless of whether he is sleeping or moving, and regardless of what form he is in. A shelter can be constructed, however (see insert).

Food is also a consideration. Garou may hunt using Perception + Primal-Urge as listed in the Drama chapter of the rulebook (difficulty 8 here in the dead of winter).

Water is easy enough to find, but eating snow makes one even colder (increase the difficulty of Stamina + Survival rolls by two) and so fire would be useful to get water to a decent temperature. Gifts like Create Element can be useful here. Note that any use of the homid gift Smell of Man will increase hunting difficulties to nine for two days.

Sleep is the final consideration for the Garou. Without at least good sleep, their Stamina will be effectively reduced by one per day of lost sleep. If this drops them to Stamina 0, they are exhausted and may collapse — they must make Stamina + Survival rolls once an hour to avoid passing out.

The Blizzard

The blizzard begins about six hours after the characters leave the caern and continues for the next two days almost nonstop. Visibility in the blizzard is reduced to 10 feet, and movement in any bipedal form is reduced to half. In Hispo or Lupus forms, the characters may move normally through the blizzard conditions. In the afternoon and in the early morning there is a break in the snowfall and characters may spend that time hunting. You might allow the players to make Wits + Survival rolls (difficulty 4) to realize this.

Encounters

The following scenes are some of the various encounters which can take place after the characters have been ejected from the Winter Wolf Sept. They can take place in any order, depending on how you wish to structure your game. The

Demon-Bear can be juxtaposed with Bill, which would make the characters extremely suspicious of Bill. Characters can stumble across the Glen right after fleeing from Icedagger and his pack, creating a mood of relief and rest on the heels of great travails.

However, the main plot involves the mining site and Azaera's attempt to awaken the Narlthus. You should use the encounters below as an introduction to what is going on in the area, but eventually, the characters should become involved in the Narlthus plot. Each encounter is part of an interlocking net of events that take place in the days following the characters' exile from the Winter Wolf Sept.

You decide, as a Storyteller, which of these encounters you wish to incorporate into your chronicle. While these encounters stand alone, it is up to you to weave them into one story, a continually moving plot that leads from one event into another in a seamless whole.

The Demon-Bear

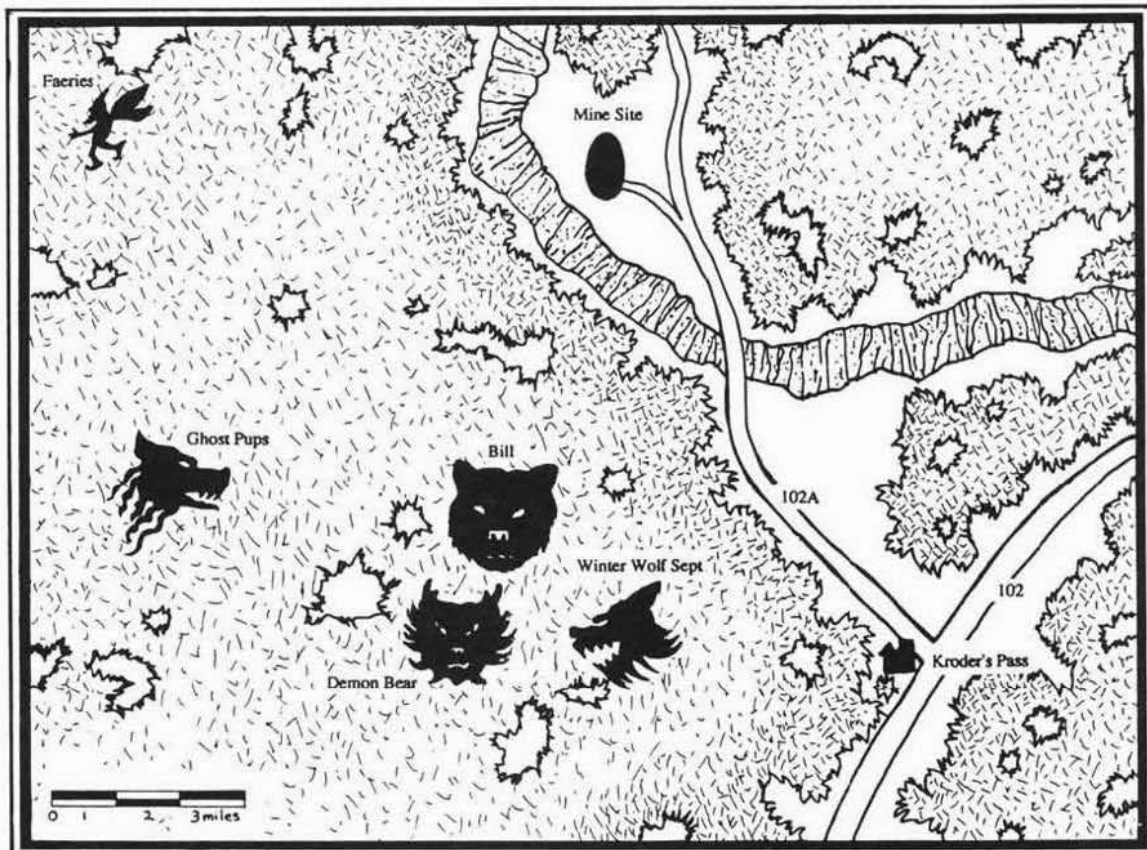
The characters are surprised (awakened?) by a bear possessed by a Bane spirit. Set this scene in a time and place when the characters are particularly vulnerable to attack. Perhaps they are asleep in a shelter, or have just been attacked by some other creature and are recovering. Use this scene to pick up the pace in the story when things seem to be drifting.

The giant demon bear blindly attacks the characters. Normally, this creature would be shy and avoid the strange scents of creatures like the Garou. Somewhere in its consciousness, it realizes that the Garou might release it from the torturous existence of being ridden by a Bane. It attacks with little regard for itself, using the Overbear maneuver and then switching to Bite when it can. Characters who use Sense Wyrms on the bear will instantly understand its situation, and players who roll Perception + Animal Ken (difficulty 7) and score two or more successes will know that the bear seems to be controlled by something from within.

The characters may fight the bear and will probably kill it, thus releasing the Bane spirit. The Bane will instantly fly back to the nearest superior (probably Azaera in the mining camp) and inform her of the Garou's position, strength, and abilities.

The best way for the characters to deal with the bear is to enter the Umbra and face the Bane itself in spirit combat, who will be forced to fight. If the characters can kill the Bane in the Umbra, they will remain safe. Garou in the Umbra can use their claws or teeth, inflicting damage to the spirit's Power. When the spirit is reduced to 0 Power, it dissipates into the Umbra.

If the characters kill the Bear they must make Wits + Occult rolls in order to realize that the meat may be inedible. You may also choose to give them Gnosis rolls to see if they realize this immediately, or Intelligence + Rituals rolls to remember tales in which Bane-ridden animals have had strange diseases. The carcass of the bear will cause the characters to start losing one





point of Gnosis per hour until they are cured with a use of Mother's Touch or until they eliminate the meat (about eight hours). If they lose all their Gnosis points they will begin to lose Health Levels instead. If they reach Incapacitated, they will pass out and not awaken until the eight hours are up.

If the characters defeat the Bane, the bear will revert to its natural state and go lumbering off into the woods.

The Bear

Str 6, Dex 5, Sta 7, Per 2, Int 1, Wts 1, Alertness 2, Brawl 5, Athletics 3. Eight Health Levels (OK, OK, -1, -1, -2, -2, -5, -5).

Bear-Bane

Rage 8, Willpower 5, Gnosis 5, Power 20. Charms: Possession, Airt Sense. The Bane will attempt to give up the bear and flee if it appears to be losing. If Garou are in the Umbra, they can chase it down to prevent its escape.

The Son of the Bear

The characters are discovered by a man who obviously knows what they are, even in wolf form. He is friendly and invites them back to his cabin, where they can experience the comforts of home and/or wait out the worst parts of the blizzard. They discover that Bill, as he calls himself, is a Son of the Bear,

or were-bear. Before they leave again, he asks that they swear not to speak to others about his existence.

Like the cavalry, Bill finds the characters, appearing as if out of nowhere. Bill sensed the young Garou's presence when they neared his territory and has been watching them closely for days. He is a very lonely person and is seeking companionship in the dead of winter. He speaks to the characters even if they are in different forms and tells them that he has a place "just over the hill" if they need help. Scent of the True Form will reveal that he is not as he seems, and three successes will tell the Gift-user that he is actually a bear in human form.

This is a good scene to play when your characters are tired of the wilderness, are hungry, sick, wounded, or otherwise in need of help. The cozy comfort offered by Bill's cabin will seem like a paradise after terrible hardships. But you should never allow the characters to totally relax: they should hear wolf-howls in the distance and perhaps distrust the open-hearted goodness that Bill offers.

Bill's house is very cozy and comfortable. Any Glass Walkers stuck in this chilly situation will certainly love the comfort of an actual dwelling and, luxury of luxuries, a huge lion-footed bathtub with hot running water. It is possible that even lupus characters will be interested in the warm bear-pelt rug by the fire. Bill lays out quite an impressive spread: freshly baked bread, fresh butter (there is a barn nearby), honey, jellies and jams, and a rewarmed, leftover, but still quite meaty,

haunch of venison. There is cool spring water and honey mead to drink.

Bill asks the characters to share stories by the hearth. If the characters tell him they are on their rite of passage without explaining further, then he will grow suddenly very angry and demand to know why the characters didn't say that before, and then instantly begin to worry about the fact that he has violated the rite. He can be calmed down with a careful explanation, however.

Bill is a very old were-bear and it is unwise to anger him. It is even more foolish to fight him. However, he can heal each character of four aggravated Health Levels; he can also cure them of diseases and restore their Stamina. In truth, no force or Garou can or will bother them while they are at Bill's place, and he allows them to wait out the rest of the blizzard with him.

Bill will not travel with them beyond the bounds of his lands, but he will give them directions to anywhere they are interested in going. Curiously enough, they will not be able to find Bill's house again after they leave the vicinity, as it is protected from discovery through Bill's magic.

This is the story Bill tells in exchange for a story from the characters:

"Many, many years ago, before the white man came to this part of the world, there was a great tribe of the wind-walkers who dominated this land and ran it like an ice-ridden empire. The mightiest among these was a shaman called She-Cries-Ice, who fought a terrible evil spirit. This evil spirit was called the Narlthus and could not be bound into anything of this world. But She-Cries-Ice whispered to the sky and called down a stone from another world. The great shaman bound the Narlthus into this sky-stone, and it struck the mountain with great force, thus burying the Narlthus completely. Legend says that the mountain lies but north of here, and that one day, the Narlthus will rise again to defeat the children of She-Cries-Ice."

Bill speaks in a gruff but kind voice. Juxtapose this with a rage-filled voice when he is angry.

Bill's statistics are provided in the Appendix.

The Hunters

Icedagger is a wild, undisciplined warrior who has his own pack. The pack of Stormwinter is secretly dedicated to Grandfather Thunder; its totem spirit, a Stormcrow, continually sits on Icedagger's shoulder in the Umbra, whispering foreboding predictions and harsh commands. He is quite certain he can gain much Glory among his sept if he hunts the characters down, slays them, and brings their ears back. He personally wants his pack to be the vanguard, and he himself wants to be Executioner of the sept. He and his cohorts set off under cover of darkness to track down the characters and slay them where they find them.

This scene can be used to keep the pack moving. You should use foreshadowing and allow the characters to suspect that they hear approaching footsteps, etc.

In reality, however, Icedagger and his cohorts are much better stalkers than that. They will surprise the characters, coming up out of ambush-holes in the snow. They will attack with blinding speed and only instant flight will allow the characters a fair hope of living to fight another day; the pack will be too taken with its own power and might to truly put forth a gallant pursuit.

However, the Pack of Stormwinter is not a very wise one. It is possible to "circle around" in the Umbra as a pack and descend upon them (they make the mistake of wearing shiny earrings that could be used to "step sideways" from the Umbra). It is also possible to lure them in the direction of another danger or a protector (like Bill, who may intervene on the pack's behalf). Crafty characters may be able to separate the pack and take them one by one. This scene would make quite a climactic one if your group seems oriented towards the wilderness areas in this adventure: they could defeat Icedagger, force him to return with them and thus win honor in the eyes of the Wendigos (Icedagger is breaking with tradition and the Litany when he seeks to attack pups outright!).

However, if they do not defeat Icedagger, you can still continue the story. Have Bill or Accolon show up at the last moment to heal them and gird them for further battle.



Icedagger's Pack (contains as many members as you feel necessary to give the characters a tough fight)

Str 3, Sta 4, Dex 4, Per 4, Int 1, Wts 3

Alertness 2, Brawl 4, Primal-Urge 2, Dodge 2, Stealth 3, Survival 4, Enigmas 1, Rituals 1

Gifts: They are Rank 1 Wendigo Homids, each of a different auspice. They have four gifts apiece.

The Glen

Even in deepest winter, the Umbra offers solace, comfort, and memories of past days of peace, as much as it offers danger, darkness, foulness, and despair. In this scene, the Garou step sideways, without their knowledge, into a Glen domain.

The place for this scene is when the characters are expecting something dark, horrible, and nasty. After all, they have been thrust out into a cruel, cold world, one where their enemies hunt them day and night, where the very air seems to lash out against them. Why shouldn't there be doom? Well, in this scene they get a taste of what they have been defending, what they stand to lose. They get a taste of Gaia at her best, her most pristine.

The characters pass down into a gully. Perhaps they are being chased, and are weary, bone tired, and cold. They pass under a bramble of thorns that tear at their fur and are then confronted by a beautiful scene.



A hot spring pool serves as a centerpiece. Lush vegetation thrives around the pool, which is hot enough to melt the snow and ice around it. A tall rock wall shoots up from the forest floor, bordering the pool on one side. The sweet smell of spring earth is quite clear here. The characters have passed into the Umbra unawares, although they will notice with a Gnosis roll. This is a protected place, a place of pure beauty, where Gaia's power is strong. The characters automatically regain three points of Gnosis from bathing in the hot spring.

They can sleep the night here in the Glen and awaken the next day refreshed, but upon awakening the spring is gone and the Gauntlet separates them from the Umbra once again.

The Past

Many pups have undergone their rites of passage in this wilderness, both Wendigos and, more recently, the Sept of the Green packs who came up from Manhattan.

The Wendigo rites are harsh and held in the dead of winter. Because of this, pups have died during their rites. The Wendigo is supposed to come and claim their spirits, but it has not in recent years.

The spirits of many Wendigo pups haunt these woods. Because they have not been taken beyond the clouds to the realm of the Wendigo, they have become bitter and hateful and vengeful. They will manifest and attack any Garou that journeys through the woods, but they will do it slowly.

They have the power to cause doubt and fear in the hearts of the Garou; they do this through whispering winds, movements in the trees, and strange scents on the wind. They will steal small objects from the characters, moving them quietly to other characters' possessions. They will particularly "pick on" metis and Ragabash characters.

The only way to banish these spirits from the area is to defeat them in the Umbra, for above all they wish to die in glorious combat. Alternately, a Theurge may be able to convince them to aid the pack in return for having a tribal Theurge aid them on their Final Journeys. They will not, however, pursue the characters if they leave the area, and characters can gain 25 Wisdom apiece if they manage to solve the riddle of the spirits and get a Theurge to deal with them.

Vengeful Spirits

Rage: 8

Gnosis: 8

Willpower: 9

Power: 30

Charms: Materialize, Breath of the Rogue Wolf (as the Ahroun gift True Fear; Power Cost 1; causes a breeze that carries with it a strange wolfish scent, striking fear into Garou hearts—roll the spirit's Gnosis versus the target's Willpower), Taking the Forgotten (Power Cost 1; spirit rolls Gnosis versus

target's Perception + Alertness; any successes indicates the spirit has stolen whatever it was after).

They will manifest as ghostly, pale Garou in Crinos form; this costs them 16 Power points each. Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Brawl 3, Athletics 2, Dodge 1, Seven Health Levels. They will use Rake attacks.

The Gauntlet in this area is only four, if the characters wish to "step sideways" and do battle in the Umbra.

Midwinter's Night

It is the middle of winter, the winter solstice, and the Garou soon discover that they are not alone in the wilderness. A group of wild faeries journeys from Arcadia to visit Gaia every solstice. They were instructed by the Wendigos to help with a rite of passage the next time they came, and they have not been told otherwise...obviously the Wendigos have been too busy preparing for war and mourning to attend to the chore of warning the Fey.

Faeries are notoriously curious about the Garou, and they are also notoriously unconcerned with the differences between them: to them, a werewolf is a werewolf. They can tell the difference between a pup and an adult, however. Two wyldling faeries, Barlithan and Hesper, are looking for pups to kidnap as part of their midwinter festival.

They have been given a silver lasso in order to accomplish this task. Fortunately for the Garou, this is faerie silver, and does not burn them. Unfortunately for them, the silver inhibits their ability to transform. They also have a magic bag into which they can pop Garou to carry back to the festival.

Barlithan and Hesper are nasty, ugly, disgusting toadlike faeries with growths of fur all over their bodies and gnarled, pocked, stained fangs. They are thin and wiry and quick, but stupid and near-sighted.

Both Barlithan and Hesper have identical Traits:

Str 4, Dex 4, Sta 3, Per 1, Int 1, Wts 4, Alertness 3, Melee (Lasso) 2, Primal-Urge 3. They locate the Garou's trail on any Perception + Primal-Urge success (difficulty 7). In order to lasso and wrestle a Garou into their bag they must first gain two more successes on an opposed Dexterity + Melee roll versus the Garou's Dexterity + Dodge (difficulty 7). This means that the Garou is lassoed and can no longer transform or take any aggressive action toward a faerie. They must score two more successes than the Garou on a Strength + Brawl roll versus the Garou's Strength + Brawl to bag them.

The bag is larger on the inside than it is on the outside (obviously). Inside the bag is a nearly complete collection of the John Norman "Gor" novels; a half-empty bottle of Listermint; hundreds of empty beer cans; a Sony Walkman CD player with no batteries; a CD: Flood by They Might Be Giants; and a button which says "Bite Me, Fan Boy." No one can escape the bag until it is unopened by the holder. It can hold all of the pups

comfortably, and the air inside is somehow renewed so that it does not go stale.

The faeries will flee if the pups somehow disarm them or get into a really serious fight, winking out of existence with a pop and a faint smell of day-old beer.

Events might take an interesting turn if the faeries are only able to snatch one or two of the Garou and the rest of the pack has to rescue them from the Faerie Revel. They will have to follow the faeries back to their high-altitude mountain Revel and attempt a rescue.

The Garou have been kidnapped in order to provide the subject for a Faerie Hunt. Wild faeries ride even wilder faerie steeds on a hunt, chasing the characters overland like foxes. The details of this hunt are best left up to you. If you do not wish to descend into such pure fantasy, you may simply wish to have the faeries get the characters roaring drunk and play an immense amount of tricks on them, while perhaps providing some answers to questions they might have.

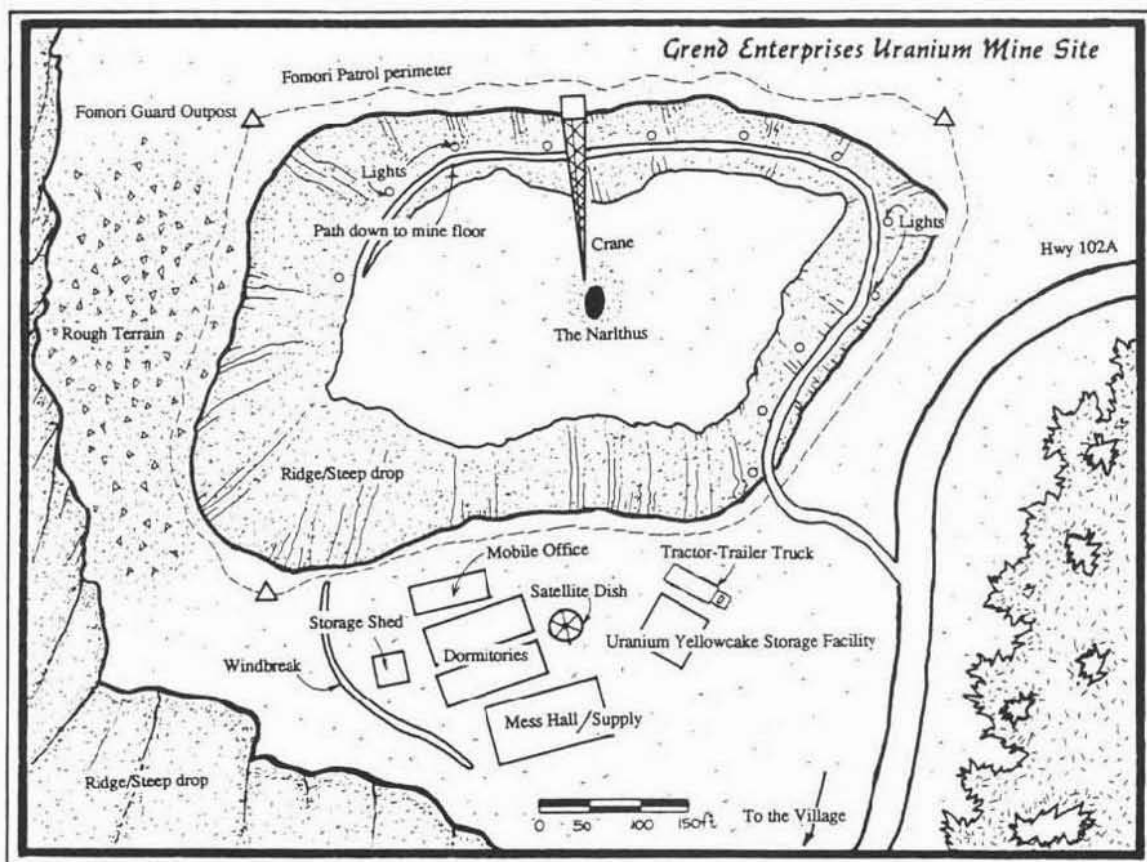
The Strip Mine

Earlier, you read about the Pentex Corporation's acquisition of a strip mine where uranium and a giant evil fetish are buried. This section provides you with the information you need should your players be brave enough to investigate the strip mine.

Nestled on a hidden mountain ridge is a small strip mining complex. This ridge has an unusual vein of pure uranium, which was originally discovered by a geological exploration team. Grend Enterprises quickly obtained the land and mining rights to the vein.

Not long after the uranium find was logged with the Prince Albert Mining Authority, the data was sifted into a special holding file by Pentex Corporation computers, reviewed, and a special memo sent out. The next morning, Pentex Acquisitions began a major bid for Grend Enterprises, finally purchasing it through its Draco Holding Company, Ltd. in a surprise takeover. The *Toronto Register* ran a small item on Page 4 the next day congratulating the Werner Road Production Company for its altruistic donation of a new two-lane blacktop extending into the Northwest Territories as part of an effort to "revitalize" the area. (This road is designated "102A" on the map.)

The next day, a pack of Black Spiral Dancers ripped open the Gauntlet with their dark claws and stepped from the Umbra into the office of the site manager for Grend Enterprises. A tall, beautiful woman known only as Ms. Azaera sent her team of personnel (who had come with her through the Umbra) out to the mine, each with their own tasks. Many of the old mining management personnel were fired but placed on a special "relief fund" that silenced their protests. The site manager called his lawyer in Ontario and asked him to start divorce proceedings with his wife of 23 years, awarding full custody of his children to her. He set up a trust fund for their education and welfare and quietly vanished. Ms. Azaera spent most of the morning drawing pretty designs on him, her black claws



Player's Map will be found on page 40.

glowing neon blue, until he expired from loss of blood. His screams had been pleasurable enough, however, and Ms. Azaera began to feel as though the Black Wolf Ridge operation would be a success.

The Mine

Uranium miners work seven-day-on, seven-day-off shifts. During those seven days they work 11 hours a day, even in deepest winter. The permafrost is nearly impossible to penetrate and special equipment has to be constantly kept warm in order to remain in working order. Frostbite and similar exposure problems are a constant danger.

Still, there is much money to be made here, uranium being an extremely rare element. However the real purpose behind Pentex's interest in this place is not in the profits from the uranium mine. It is the Narlthus.

Where there is radiation, there is the Wyrms. Sometimes it is sleeping. Sometimes it is rising. Sometimes it is bound, as in the case of the Black Wolf Mine. The Mine holds a dark and deadly secret, a huge meteorite that holds within it a great Wyrms spirit, perhaps one of the five Talons of the Wyrms that were torn from it so long ago.

The Call of the Narlthus

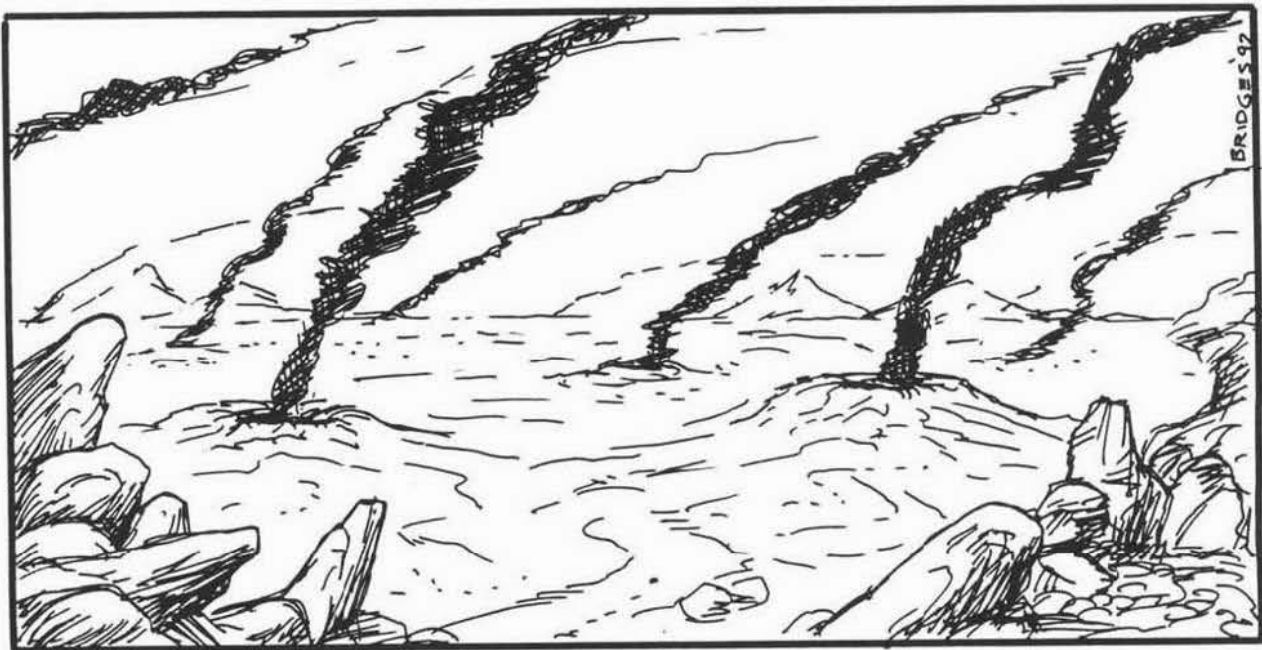
Azaera has made it a personal quest to locate the Five Talons of the Wyrms before she sends her soul screaming into its maw. Somewhere in her tattered psyche she firmly believes that this will prevent her death and earn her a place as one of the Wyrms' greatest Banes. When she was newly-spawned, she fell into a Hellhole and found herself in a realm of fire and evil, much like Dante's Inferno.

There, Azaera was given a prophecy by a wizened old woman with snakes for eyes. The prophecy was that she would be responsible for uncovering great evil, and that if she looked in places where the Wyrms' fire was strongest, she would find what she sought. Then she was tortured and thrown out of Hell.

Ever since then, Azaera has heard the call of the Narlthus, whispering dark obscenities to her in the darkness. Before its call drives her further from sanity, she must find it and awaken the sleeping spirit within. This is why she risks all to uncover it, and this is what drives her every move.

The Site

Sitting like a huge stone egg laid by some monstrous bird, the Narlthus' meteorite prison is nestled on the lowest levels of the hastily-carved strip mine. A crane is being constructed to lift the meteorite out of the mine. Along the rim of the mine is a plateau



where the mining facilities perch precariously, struggling for comfort against the whipping wind.

Some of these structures are new: they are dome-shaped and were constructed by the Pentex team after they arrived here. Some are the rest areas for the Black Spiral Dancers, who must sleep in total darkness, while the others are special crypts for the vampires she has sent for. Green sodium lights flood the area, casting a sickly pallor over the scene.

The Past: A Timeline

Six months ago, Azaera began searching for the great source of Wym power located at the mining site. Three months ago, she found the first hint that there was something huge in the earth directly underneath. One month ago, she completely uncovered the Narlthus. However, at that time, the pups of the Winter Wolf Sept discovered the site while exploring the Black Wolf Ridge area.

Thinking quickly, Azaera ordered her minions not to slay the pups: such an action would bring the nearby Wendigo sept down on her operation like an avalanche. Instead, she inquired among the spirits near the sept and sent a call out to other Black Spiral septs for help and information concerning this potential threat to her operation.

Word came back of the arrangement between the Sept of the Green in Manhattan and the Winter Wolf Sept in the Northwest

Territories. The Black Spiral leaders in Manhattan also informed Azaera that they would be glad to aid her for a future boon. She traveled to Manhattan to arrange the kill and bargain with the leaders there. It was decided that the Black Spiral Dancers in Manhattan would receive the remnants of the Narlthus' prison once it was freed, thus being able to use it to capture the spirit-essences of the city's Leeches. Also, the possibility of a sept war involving the Green Sept would greatly increase the Black Spirals' ability to operate in Manhattan without fear of reprisal.

Incubation

In the past few weeks, Azaera has tried to sunder the meteorite prison of the Narlthus and thus free it. She has tried everything from explosives to acid to lasers, and has incanted every opening-rite she knows. So far, no damage has been done to the outer shell, and no contact has been made with the Narlthus itself.

The Story Timeline

Azaera actually does not notice when the day of the rite of passage dawns. She is too busy trying to hatch the Narlthus to ponder her Manhattan dealings further. In fact, that day, she flies via helicopter to Toronto to meet with a contact she has among the Sabbat there. Her helicopter is grounded for the next



two days due to a massive blizzard which strikes the Saskatchewan province and gives the characters even more time and cover. The fourth day she returns to the mining camp to check on the progress being made by her underlings and to supervise the construction of a haven for her new vampire friends. She spends the fifth through the 10th days traveling back and forth between Toronto and the site.

On the 10th day, however, she remembers the “loose end” she forgot: the characters. She will immediately attempt to locate them, but will be delayed by the arrival of a group of Sabbat Tremere Antitribu and their entourages. She will have to delegate the task of tracking and destroying the characters to her lesser minions.

On the 13th day after the characters arrive (the day before the new moon) she will make plans to move the Narlthus to a safer place where she can more carefully attempt to open it. If she has not captured or slain the characters by then, she will abandon looking for them and concentrate on moving the Narlthus — unless, of course, they interrupt her plans.

On the 14th day, the crane for the Narlthus will be complete and it will be moved onto a truck for transport to Toronto. Note that this is an excellent day for her to move the Narlthus, as all Wendigos in the area will be bracing for an attack through the Moon Bridge. The 14th day is also the day that Accolon arrives in the area, seeking to stop the Narlthus from being moved. Of course, even though he is a great Garou warrior, he is only one, and he will be slaughtered if he is not aided by someone —

perhaps the characters. It is also the day of the new moon, and the assault on the caern of the Winter Wolf Sept will begin by the Sept of the Green, its chief objective being to rescue the pups.

Interrupting the Timeline

Characters may disrupt this timeline at any point. This disruption could be the result of their investigations at the mining campsite, or a result of their capture by underlings.

Investigating the Campsite

Despite the bitter cold which tears at them (see the Wilderness chapter, under General Environment, for the weather conditions at this time), the characters will find that the blizzard is actually the best time to infiltrate the campsite. The campsite has many defenses, both physical and spiritual, which make it hard for the Garou to penetrate to learn the truth of the mining operation.

Site Defenses

The passive physical defenses are alarms set on all the restricted zones (the armory, the Black Spiral Dancer sleep cocoons, the crypts). The active physical defenses are Fomori (Bane-ridden) guards armed with two silver rounds apiece in their assault rifles.

The site is hidden by a powerful rite that camouflages it from the outside (Perception + Primal-Urge rolls, difficulty 9, to see through the illusion). Many Banes have also been bound to this site and forced to search for Garou or any other intruders. They will report to Azaera directly if they detect any. If she is unavailable, they will report to one of her underlings, or, if no other leaders are available, to a Fomori guard.

As an added complication, many other Banes have been showing up simply to bask in the dark radiance of the uncovered Narlthus, which seems to be somehow attracting them. These unbound Banes are still quite willing to attack or fight any Garou they find in the Umbra nearby, even going so far as to follow them in hopes of spying on them and gaining a reward. Since the spirits are watching for Garou, they will notice any character on a Gnosis roll (base difficulty 9, -2 to the difficulty if any of the characters are in Crinos, Glabro, or Hispo forms, -3 if they any of them use gifts, and -3 if any of them enter the Umbra; all penalties are cumulative).

During the blizzard, of course, Azaera will be snowbound in Toronto for two days, and this is probably an ideal time for the characters to wander around in the camp, quietly discovering its nature and the Narlthus that dwells in the mine below. It is not a good idea to enter the Umbra in this place, as this action puts the Garou right in the middle of a Hellhole, where Banes will attack them unceasingly.

Another good time for the characters to enter the camp and look around is when Azaera is trying to incubate the Narlthus. During this time, her spiritual energies are focused on it, and the spirits she has bound to the site break free and no longer perform their tasks. A crafty character (or two) can sneak into the camp and even gain entry to one of the important mining facilities, such as the administration building (which is actually a trailer that's been permanently emplaced). The characters can thereby gain access to the computers in the building; with an Intelligence + Computer roll (difficulty 7) they might be able to gain the following information:

- 1 success: This mine has produced hardly any yellowcake in the past six months (yellowcake is uranium in ore form).
- 2 successes: Grend Enterprises has recently been taken over by Draco Holding Company, Ltd.
- 3 successes: Six months ago many of the personnel were laid off, and the site manager has vanished. The home office of Grend Enterprises has been trying to search for him.
- 4 successes: An entry of Azaera's diary. The characters discover she's a Black Spiral Dancer, and her dreams of finding the Five Talons of the Wyrn.
- 5 successes or more: An electronic mail letter outlining the deal with the Black Spiral Dancers of Manhattan that ties Azaera to the deaths of the Wendigo pups.

The characters can accumulate successes by spending 30 minutes per attempt after the first one. However, each attempt increases the risk of discovery: roll a die; on a 1-3 the characters are interrupted by a Black Spiral Dancer, returning to the trailer to fetch something.

With a Dexterity + Computer roll the characters can save any of this data to a 3.5 floppy disk in order to carry it back as proof. This must be done very quickly. Printing out the data would require about 30 more minutes, but because of the noise involved (it is a loud dot-matrix printer) there is a 1-5 chance of attracting attention to themselves. The data may be printed out anywhere: it is saved in an ASCII format on the floppy.

Characters may even be able to get in and out through the Umbra at this time, if they can remain unnoticed by the many Banes who flock around the area of the Narlthus.

Consequences of Getting Caught

Fomori guards will confront the characters (in whatever form they are in) and tell them to submit or die. A silver bullet or two (remember the damage cannot be soaked and it is aggravated) may put an end to their objections. If they are



actually able to defeat the guards (not inconceivable), they should have a chance to get away as long as all they do is run.

Characters that are caught and submit are taken to Azaera. Azaera will try to intimidate the characters into telling what they have learned, even torturing them to find out what she wants to know. Then she will have them bound with silver-threaded rope (the pain is dull and throbbing; any Strength roll to break the bonds is at difficulty 9) and tossed in a locked storage shed. She will set one of her Black Spiral pack to guard them, along with two more Fomori guards and a Bane bound in the Umbra

Hopefully for the characters, this will be before the Sabbat Tremere arrive, because the Tremere would most likely love a blood feast — with the characters providing the main course. If denied that delicacy, they might suggest that the characters be sacrificed to the Narlthus in an attempt to awaken it, which will probably make sense to Azaera.

The best time, in fact, for an escape or rescue attempt involving the characters would be when the Tremere first arrive and Azaera is occupied with them. She actually has the guard on the characters “stand down,” so as not to draw attention to them; thus, only one Bane stands watch over the characters at this time, and that is in the Umbra.

You need to decide whether or not any particular mission into the site grounds succeeds, or partially succeeds, depending on the demands of the story at the time. Your characters could conceivably take the “Get of Ferris” route and barge into the

camp, attacking and screaming, killing and maiming, until they reach the Black Spirals. They might even succeed in convincing the Black Spirals that they are full-grown Garou, for they certainly do not look like pups at this point. Azaera will not abandon the Narlthus for any reason unless her life is in direct danger.

You may photocopy the map of the site from this book and give this to the players to help them plan their assault, scouting, or other activities involving the mine.

Characters

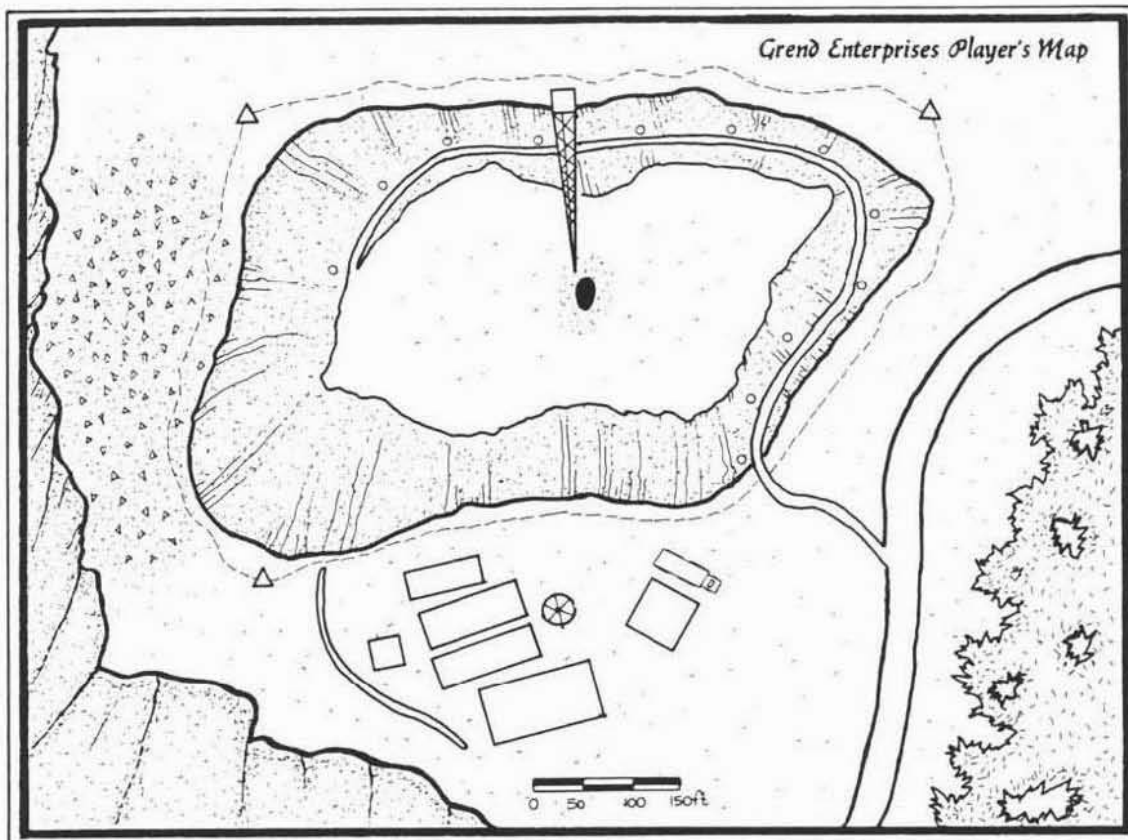
Black Spiral Dancer Pack

There are six of them. Each of them is Rank 3.

Str 4, Dex 3, Sta 4, Cha 2, Mnp 3, App 1, Per 3, Int 2, Wts 4

Brawl 4, Alertness 3, Firearms 3, Melee 3, Enigmas 4, Occult 4, Rituals 3, Primal-Urge 3, Science 3, Computer 2, Intimidation 3, Leadership 2, Rage 9, Gnosis 6, Willpower 6

Gifts: All Black Spiral through Level 3, plus two others from this list: Persuasion, Eyes of the Cat, Mental Speech, Razor Claws, Inspiration, Fatal Flaw, Sense of the Prey, Control Complex Machine.



Fomori

Since many Banes have been attracted by the uncovering of the Narlthus, Azaera has turned most of the miners who were left at the site into Fomori. Unfortunately for them, they have had most of their own souls drained as a result of the possession, so if the Banes are exorcised from them they will quickly die. The Fomori are unquestioningly loyal to the Black Spirals and to Azaera, although they do not retain much free will. Banes dislike being used in such ways, but the slow digestion of a mortal soul salves their hurt feelings about this.

Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Brawl 4, Firearms 3, Alertness 4, Survival 2, Athletics 3, Occult 3 (the Fomori Leader has Leadership 3 and a Manipulation of 2)

Each Fomori is armed with a firearm (including two silver bullets). There are 12 Fomori total. Six of these have assault rifles, while the others have handguns. Fomori will gladly sacrifice their mortal hosts to save Black Spiral Dancers, and will enjoy flinging themselves wildly at Garou. Their irregular fanged teeth do aggravated wounds and may confuse the Garou into thinking they are vampires.

Uranium Banes

There are many of these Banes wandering the camp. When Materialized, they look like malnourished children with bulging, green-glowing eyes. Their fingernails are long, doing aggravated damage in a Rake attack.

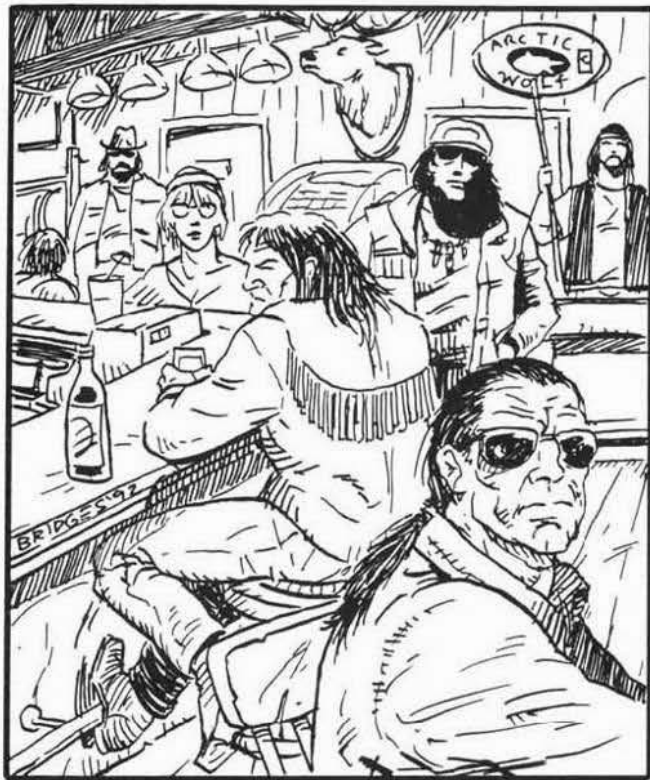
Rage 7, Willpower 7, Gnosis 6, Power 30, Charms: Materialize (Power Cost 12; Str 3, Dex 3, Sta 3, Brawl 3), Airt Sense, Kiss of Glowing Corruption (Power Cost 3; a successful Gnosis roll against the target's Stamina +3 will cause the target to lose a point of Stamina. This can be healed like an aggravated Health Wound.)

The Village

Nestled in the fog-shrouded mountains of northern Saskatchewan, the village of Kroder's Pass evokes an aura of mystery and intrigue to all outsiders who enter. Although a mere 150 miles away from the metropolis of Toronto, the village seems to be a world of its own, alien yet somehow familiar in its rustic, simple charm.

The mists rise from the mountains and fall silently through the fields and forests of the village. The surrounding countryside is alive with the sounds of a thousand beasts, some of which are recognizable and some of which are not.

Settled in 1823, the current denizens are, for the most part, the direct descendants of the original settlers. Living as farmers and craftsmen since that time, the village has evolved a social ecology which is vehemently opposed to change and influence from the outside world. Travelers entering the township will



find their reception to be hospitable in terms of creature comforts, but the attitude from the natives will be chilly at best, as they are quite concerned as to the motives of visitors.

Despite their precautions to avoid change, the city is slowly moving into this beautiful land. The Pentex Corporation (in the guise of Omnicron Oil), in its relentless quest for a greater profit margin, has landed the first blow against this simple village. Having established a new, modern service station in the heart of the town, they quickly ran the former station out of business. This proved very beneficial to the tourist trade, but has had some horrible repercussions on some of the local residents.

One of these residents is Sylum Digvy, the former owner of the town service station, which has been put out of business. As his business waned, he sank deeper into depression and alcoholism and is now just a hollow shell of the man he used to be. He spends his days alone with his bottle and his memories, as if he is merely awaiting his time to leave this world, so that he might forget his failures. This encroachment into the wilderness has also taken a toll on the other denizens as well. The people of this village no longer have the privacy that they once had. The balance of the town is in grave danger.

The Sheriff, Joe Danson, looks upon these changes as necessary if the town is to survive although he feels as much apprehension as the rest of the village. Sheriff Danson has been in office for over 20 years and is respected by the populace. He ascended to office after his father died and no one ever thought to oppose his rightful place as the next sheriff. Robert Price, the

Mayor, spends most of his time fishing, as the duties of his office prove to be less stressful than same position in a larger city. Crime, with the exception of the occasional stolen chicken, is almost nonexistent; thus, those in positions of authority tend to lead a rather relaxed life.

The one diner in town, Luke's Place, is where most travelers and tourists go to unwind from their journeys and to enjoy wholesome, home-cooked meals. The diner is run by Luke Brown (thus the name) and is one of the few businesses which is thriving more now than before. One oddity of note is that the steak on the menu at Luke's Place can be prepared two different ways: raw, or cooked to order, with a separate price for each. Although this has never warranted notice by the natives, it has raised quite a few eyebrows among transients.

The urbanites would say that such testimonies to the old ways are swiftly dying and that small villages like Kroder's Pass will only last a few more years before the ever-expanding metropoli engulf them in their steel and concrete embraces. They say that such places are but a step away from extinction and will soon be only vague memories. The inhabitants of Kroder's Pass disagree. They all share a determination which comes from hard work and living close to the land. They will not give up their homes and their way of life without a fight.

The majority of the inhabitants of the village are Garou Kinfolk and have a tenacity unparalleled by mortal kind. They are quite accustomed to hardship, as that is their chosen way of life. Although the true blood of the werewolf does not run through their veins, they nonetheless have that same spirit of survival.

Travelers find the populace to be secretive, somewhat cold and callous to those who visit. They will never discuss the politics of the village with travelers. This is not a haven of quiet contemplation; it is a place of bitter struggle between man and beast. Those who visit here can feel the paradox which lives in the hearts of the inhabitants.

This is a place of great danger and the Storyteller should never let the players feel comfortable or safe to any extent. Every native encountered should make the characters feel uneasy, and if they are foolish enough to venture into the forests, the Storyteller should feel free to throw numerous dangerous situations at them.

There are many rumors in the cities near the area that some men who go into those woods around the village never return and those that do refrain from telling what they saw. Kroder's Pass and the surrounding forests have an infamous reputation for violence and mysterious deaths which are never investigated by the local authorities. Several years ago it had become a college dare that, before allowing a new member into a fraternity, the pledge had to spend one night in the forests which shield the village from the rest of the world. This is a tradition that died as quickly as it began when several young men disappeared and are yet to be heard from.

If the characters find themselves in the diner, they will attract the attention of a group of Garou of the Wendigo tribe. If they acknowledge the presence of the members of this tribe they will quickly provoke one hell of a barroom brawl. Although the Wendigos will not fight to the death, they will nonetheless be more than willing to put a few new scars on the player characters. If one of the players inadvertently or purposefully kills one of the Wendigos, they will swiftly change their attitudes and consider it a fight to the death. This is not something which the characters should look forward to, as these are well-trained Garou who have already suffered through the rites of passage.

The Bane-Ridden

A young boy, only eight years old, strayed too often near the Omnicron Oil service station and has picked up a Bane for his curiosity. The Bane is slowly eating the boy, who can now only lie on a bed and shake, sweating furiously. At times he sweats blood, at times green mucus. He is slowly wasting away.

The boy's mother, Diane, works at the diner and is terrified for her son. She is supposed to take him to Toronto or Saskatoon to see the doctor but has been unable to find the money to do so. She is afraid he is possessed by a demon and does not want to tell anyone (the Bane is most certainly affecting her judgment).

If one of the characters is nice to Diane or even notices her, have the character make a Perception + Empathy roll (difficulty 6) to try and determine the cause of her worry. If the character can trust a homid, he might be able to save her son's life, for the Bane has not yet eaten his soul. This might be an interesting subplot to run if your characters are tired of fighting. They will have to confront the Bane and scare it out of the boy, and perhaps bind it into a fetish, or attack it in the Umbra.

Wasting Bane

Rage 7, Willpower 6, Gnosis 5, Power 35, Charms: Reform, Airt Sense, Wasting (Power Cost 2; the Bane can slowly chew away at the victim's Health. The Bane can use this Charm once per week, but must stay by the side of the victim the whole time; the victim will lose one Health Level until dead. The Bane then gains that victim's Willpower to add to its Power).

Note: The Bane does not have to Materialize to use its Wasting Charm; it does so from the safety of the Umbra. The Bane will try to flee as soon as the characters become involved, but must make a Gnosis roll (difficulty 8) to do so. This type of Bane is slothful when it is feeding. If the characters begin to directly attack it, it can leave without a roll (it will attempt to Reform if it has enough Power). If it reaches Azaera, she then will know where the characters are and what they have been doing.

Leaving Kroder's Pass

If the characters feel the need to leave Kroder's Pass, they will be told that they may hitch a ride with one of the Pentex trucks which frequently travel through the village, or they might try their luck at hitching a ride with a passerby. If neither of these options appeal to the players, then there is one last alternative. In the garage of the alcoholic mechanic, Sylus Digvy, is a beautiful reminder of a much gentler age: a 1957 Chevy, candy apple red, in near-mint condition and wearing snow tires. The only problem is that the automobile is not quite rebuilt, as Sylus sank too deep into depression before he could finish assembling it and has not been motivated to do so since.

Sylus will allow the characters access to the automobile if they will promise to bring it back to him one day, as it once belonged to his father. If the players agree, he will give them the keys, then go back to his lonely existence; the players will see him no more. A Dexterity + Repairroll (difficulty 6) can be used to complete the construction of the car, but 10 successes are required. If no one has Repair, then a straight Dexterity roll can be made, but the difficulty is seven. Thus, it is mandatory that the players cooperate and pool their dice. If the players choose not to return the automobile, Sylus will not seek revenge although he will live his final days in a bit more shame than he would otherwise.



Story Seeds for the Village

All of these encounters take place in or around the village of Kroder's Pass. These encounters can be used as many times as necessary. These are presented merely as ideas to keep the players on their toes, and they can be used or discarded at the Storyteller's option.

The Tragic Lovers

Garou does not mate with Garou. That is a statement which is implanted in the mind of the werewolf from the start. It is a tragic scenario when two Garou fall in love, for there is nothing they can do to consummate their desires.

In the dark forests just outside Kroder's Pass there is a clearing. This clearing seems to refuse the sun on the brightest of days and exudes a feeling of gloom to all who find themselves here. It is here that two young Garou, cursed by their love for one another, took their lives to end their suffering and the need to embrace their passion.

Despite the double suicide, the essence of these two and their intense love still lives here among the trees. Players entering this area will hear the anguished whispers of the two lovers, and if they so much as sleep in the clearing, they will relive the tragedy of the lovers' passion in their dreams.

The blade which was used by these lovers still rests in the grove, tangled in the exposed roots of one of the taller trees. It is old and rusted and seems to be a channel to the shame which still consumes the two. The players can use a Gnosis point to release the spirits tied to the blade and set them free. Players who perform this action receive a point of Willpower.

Pentex

The Pentex Corporation, in its ever-expanding greed, has begun raping the land just west of the village. The operation in progress is a systematic desecration of the land in order to build the first of many vacation areas in the Canadian wilderness. There are many ways that the characters may deal with this blasphemy, few of which are legal. This encounter has many possibilities for a creative Storyteller and could be used for a one-time encounter or could be expanded into a full chronicle.

The Night Wolves

While wandering through the forests which surround the village, the players encounter a small pack of wolves that claims the area as its home and hunting grounds. Once encountered the pack will be quite friendly towards the players and will be more than happy to share their land and their kill with the Garou.

The wolves, in reality, are a group of Gangrel vampires who have claimed the land temporarily on their way to wherever else



their unending life may lead them. Although they will not show themselves in their true forms, an astute player may notice that the pack is never seen in the light of day and may begin wondering about the reason behind this.

If the players confront the pack with their suspicions, the Gangrel will assume their true forms and end the deception. Although they will not attack the players outright, they will defend themselves if necessary.

The Kidnappers

A group of Garou who live in the surrounding forests manage to kidnap one of the players. Unfortunately for the player, the kidnappers are members of a rival tribe and their plans for the character are less than savory. If the players try to rescue their comrade they will meet fierce opposition from the tribe. This will make a great story for characters who enjoy combat.

The Ghosts

In these dark forests, many have died while trying to complete the rites of passage and those who have failed in this undertaking seem to be forever bitter over their failure.

The players, throughout their stay in these dark woods, will be constantly assaulted by the restless spirits of those who have

come before them and lost their lives due to the curse of lycanthropy. These spirits will constantly remind them that, in the end, nothing but failure will greet them. Death awaits in every shadow, and those few who do survive will only inherit the curse to the full extent of its horrible paradox.

This is a scenario which will bring the tragedy which is the life of the werewolf to the forefront of the player's minds. Storytellers are encouraged to be as morbid as they choose, as this will add to the dark mood of the rite of passage.

The Umbral Guide

One of the players inherits a spirit guide during the rites. This particular spirit can be either malevolent or benign depending upon the needs and the mood of the Storyteller and can prove to be a great obstacle for the players to overcome in order to learn to work together.

The Lover

A young Garou relative who lives in the village becomes attracted to one of the players and stops at nothing to let her affections be known. This is a *Fatal Attraction*-type story which will give the players a true glimpse of the violent temper of the Garou and their kin if they do not get what they want.

If the character gives in to the charms of this star-struck would-be lover, the pair will have a rather happy relationship until the father, who is quite respected in Garou circles, finds out that his child has fallen for someone of Garou heritage. He will do anything necessary in order to separate the two lovers...even attempt to kill the player.

A Job Opportunity

The players, upon discovering one of the many excavation sites of the Pentex Corporation, are given a job offer by the foreman of the site. This will test the prudence of the players, and perhaps give them a chance to terrorize the corporation from the inside.

Toronto

The characters may journey to the city of Toronto for many reasons. They can hide aboard the truck which carries the Narthus, and not reveal themselves until the fetish gets off-loaded at the Pentex branch office. Characters who are fleeing may travel through Toronto on their way back to the Sept of the Green; in this case, they may get caught up in events here.

Characters may well seek to lose themselves in the streets of Toronto. This is unlikely to happen. Although Toronto is the largest city in Canada, it is heavily controlled by both the Sabbat and the Black Spiral Dancers. Pentex Corporation is very

strong here, and has eyes and ears everywhere; there is also a small but efficient Sabbat Tremere Chantry.

If the characters have had run-ins with the Black Spiral Dancers or Azaera, the customs agents will be looking for them. If they try to cross the border into the United States, they will be detained by the agents "under suspicion of smuggling," while a team of Black Spiral Dancers is mustered to destroy them.

Everywhere the characters go in Toronto, the Storyteller should attempt to maintain a mood of paranoia — strange black limos will cruise silently by, slowing as they pass the characters; shadowy figures will be illuminated against the windows of the enormous skyscrapers, staring down; groups of men in black trenchcoats will hover just on the edge of vision, their collars partially obscuring their (Glabro?) faces.

Externally, Toronto is a very clean, glistening city of shiny office buildings and uncluttered subways. The characters can find plenty to do; there are clubs, theaters and museums, and the entire city radiates a very cosmopolitan ambience. A few encounters in Toronto are worthy of note:

The Metro

Toronto's zoo, the Metro, is ranked among the 10 best in the world. It contains exotic animals from all over the globe, including a large display pen of wolves. If the characters take the time to study the wolves, they might notice (Perception + Animal Ken, difficulty 6) that one of the wolves, a large female, is behaving strangely and nervously. If this fact is noticed, a Wits + Empathy roll (difficulty 8) informs the pack that the wolf is displaying symptoms remarkably similar to Lunacy among humans.

The wolf is, in fact, a Lunatic — a Garou who never learned to shapeshift. The curators and zookeepers are concerned about her strange behavior, but are keeping her penned up with the others for now. If questioned, any of the zoo employees can tell the pack that this wolf was only recently brought in from the wild.

Characters may opt to help the Lunatic escape. How they accomplish this is up to them, but it requires a Charisma + Empathy roll (difficulty 8) to get the wolf to trust them. She will be able to speak to the characters with difficulty (she has never spoken before), but will have no gifts and will only be able to shapeshift if a) the ability is demonstrated to her and b) she spends a Rage point and makes a Stamina + Primal-Urge roll (difficulty 9).

If the Lunatic is freed and brought into Garou society, she will be a friend to the characters for life. She is (of course) of the lupus breed, has the potential to be of the Galliard auspice, and is of the Black Fury tribe by birth.

Hit Squad

Toronto is, like many cities of the Northeast, largely controlled by the Sabbat sect of vampires. If the pack is blithely wandering around in Toronto without adequate mystical shield-



ing, the Tremere Antitribu Chantry located in the city will undoubtedly learn of their existence, using a spell which alerts them to Lupine presences. While the Sabbat may simply watch and wait to see what the pack hopes to accomplish, the sect will most likely send a group of its own out to deal with the intruders.

At some point during the night, when the pack is wandering in an unfamiliar section of the city, the Tremere Antitribu in charge of the Sabbat pack will cast a ritual to warp the appearance and dimensions of the streets in the area, causing the Garou pack to lose their way and hopefully stumble into a cul-de-sac (the leader of the pack must make a Perception + Primal-Urge roll against a difficulty of 9 to avoid this). Once the group is trapped, the Tremere will use her discipline of Weather Control to shroud the area in a thick fog and the group will attack from the shadows.

The Sabbat group consists of the following members:

Janine (10th generation Tremere)

Str 2, Dex 2, Sta 3, Per 4, Int 4, Wts 3, Cha 4, Mnp 4, App 4
Subterfuge 3, Leadership 3, Occult 4, Stealth 2, Dodge 2
Thaumaturgy 3 (Weather Control 3, Flames 2, Mind 1),
Auspex 2, Dominate 2
Resources 1, Retainers 1 (ghoul cat familiar), Contacts 1
Willpower 8

Andre (Ninth generation Gangrel)

Str 3, Dex 4, Sta 4, Per 3, Int 2, Wts 2, Cha 1, Mnp 2, App 2
Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 3, Stealth 3,
Survival 3, Investigation 1
Protean 4, Fortitude 2, Celerity 1
Willpower 7

Skulk (10th generation Nosferatu)

Str 5, Dex 4, Sta 3, Per 3, Int 2, Wts 3, Cha 2, Mnp 2, App 0
Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Streetwise 3, Intimidation 3, Stealth 5,
Melee 2
Potence 2, Obfuscate 4, Animalism 1
Willpower 6

Theo (12th generation Malkavian)

Str 3, Dex 3, Sta 2, Per 3, Int 4, Wit 3, Cha 2, Mnp 4, App 2
Brawl 1, Dodge 3, Subterfuge 3, Melee 3, Stealth 3
Dominate 3, Auspex 2, Obfuscate 2
Willpower 6

If you do not own **Vampire: The Masquerade**, the powers of the Vampires are as follows: Janine can alter the weather, hurl small flames at foes, telekinetically lift very small objects, sense danger and the moods of those she looks at, and mesmerize and command individuals whom she stares at. Andre can see in pitch darkness, merge with the earth, grow claws like a Garou, shapeshift into a wolf or bat, attack twice in a turn, and soak three levels of aggravated wounds. Skulk can turn invisible, change the features of his face (note that his real face is hideously deformed), speak to animals, and increase his Strength to 7. Theo can command individuals by gaze, hypnotically vanish from sight, and read the emotions and moods of any he looks at. Theo and Skulk are armed with silver knives.

Antitribu is the term used for those vampires of either Camarilla or Sabbat who turn against their sect by joining the opposition. A Malkavian (Camarilla) who joins the Sabbat is called a Malkavian Antitribu, while a Lasombra (Sabbat) who joins the Camarilla is called a Lasombra Antitribu.

The Branch Office

This forbidding structure of black glass dominates the downtown Toronto skyline. Although theoretically rented out by many different corporate offices, in reality almost all the companies doing business from this location are held by Pentex. The few non-Pentex businesses here are made to feel

acutely uncomfortable, and most of them move out. The non-Pentex employees are often disturbed by the strange visitors, as well as the vaguely discomfiting sounds occasionally heard in the bowels of the building. If characters should somehow manage to interact with any of these individuals, they may learn various rumors that a lot of strange people have been riding the elevators to the upper suites where the Pentex VIPs work. If a character describes Azaera, the employees will remember her easily — “a real babe, but kinda freaky, you know?”

There are several hidden subbasements below the main corporate tower where various “guests” such as Black Spiral Dancers, Sabbat and worse reside when they visit the branch. A Bane is also bound to the building through a black prism implanted in the wall of one of the subbasements; every night at 10 PM the Bane is released to stalk the halls. The various employees, Pentex and otherwise, never work late here.

The characters may gain access to a terminal on the Pentex computer net, if they are lucky and can defeat the Corridor Bane. Treat this computer the same way as the one that is described under The Strip Mine, except the printing goes much faster and the difficulty to obtain information is one higher.

The Narlthus will be taken here for another attempt to hatch it, which fails. It will then be placed in a truck, which is parked in a large subbasement guarded by Black Spirals and Fomori. Azaera and the Board of Directors will adjourn to the boardroom on the top floor to discuss the next stage of their plan: transporting the Narlthus to the Black Spiral Dancers’ dark caern.

During this time, the characters may actually have a chance to assault the guards and drive the truck away. What they do then is up to them, but Azaera, Pentex and the Tremere Antitribu will all be hot on their tails. At this point you may want to have the characters run into Accolon, or a Silent Strider from the Sept of the Green. They will, however, have very little chance of surviving the hunt against them.

Corridor Bane

Rage: 8
Willpower: 8
Gnosis: 7
Power: 50

Charms: Materialize (Str 6, Dex 3, Sta 4, Brawl 3, Athletics 2), Airt Sense, Haunt Sense (Power Cost 2; this enables the Bane to mystically sense everything that is going on in the building to which it is bound)

The Bane Materializes as a hideous 8’ tall humanoid figure with slimy green-gray flesh and blunt, rotten teeth.

TIMELINE



DAYS		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
WEATHER (WINTER)	AM												CLOUDY		
	N														
	PM	COLD		BLIZZARD		COLD					CLOUDY	LIGHT SNOW			
WINTER WOLF SEPT	AM	Receive The Pups	Eject The Pups	Ice Daggers Begin Hunt											Brace For Attack
	N		Seal Bawn												
	PM		War Watch												
SEPT OF THE GREEN	AM		Silent Striders												Open Moonbridge To Winter Wolf
	N	Send Out Pups/WW Pups Killed	Dis-patched												Accolon Arrives At Mine Site
	PM		Accolon Leaves												Load Narlthus And Move
AZAERA	AM	Tries To Watch Narlthus	Flies To Toronto			Return To Mine Site	Toronto			Toronto	Mine Site			Ready To Move Narlthus	
	N								Mine Site		Receive Sabbat			↓	
	PM						Mine Site	Toronto		Mine Site	Send Out Party To Find Cubs				
THE PUPS	AM	Arrive By Moonbridge	Ejected By Sept												
	N	At Winter Wolf													
	PM	Sept													



Chapter Three: Resolution

There are many complications inherent in the setting for *Rite of Passage*. This section seeks to tie all the possible story lines together so the Storyteller can conclude her story in a satisfying manner.

The story will progress according to the goals the players set for themselves. Most probably, this will boil down to three goals: 1. Survive and wait for rescue; 2. Find a way to go home; 3. Gain Renown and fight the Wurm. The pack may change goals several times during the course of the story.

Goal: Survive and Wait for Rescue

Hiding Out

It is possible for the Garou to hide in the snow and the wilderness, or in the village, or even Toronto. Icedagger and his pack will be the only ones hunting them specifically — that is, unless they have discovered what's going on at the strip mine. Of course, this is not a noble course of action, and it certainly won't win them any Renown within their sept. They will still have to undergo a "real" rite of passage and they will most likely

have a pretty boring game. You can perhaps shake them up and get them to alter their goals by having Icedagger, a Fomori, a disgruntled Wendigo, or even a vampire find their hiding place.

Running

The characters may decide to run in whatever direction they can, hoping to elude danger and perhaps gain information later about their situation. You can "help" them through the story by turning them around (perhaps) and having them "run" into the village, the mine site, or even back to the caern.

Goal: Go Home

Note that the story does not have to end should they get home. There are many lakes in the area of the strip mine and it is possible for Mera (the spirit of Central Park) to open a Moon Bridge for the characters to go back, perhaps with a Garou hunting party, to attack the strip mine.

Modern Transportation

The pack may make it to the village and procure transportation from there to Toronto, and from there to New York. They

should be hounded first by Wendigos, then by Fomori, and finally by the Sabbat in Toronto. Once they leave Toronto, however, they will be out of harm's way. If they make it back with little trouble, they should be treated as in Hiding Out, above.

The Moon Bridge

The characters actually have a chance of using the Moon Bridge to get back to New York. In order to do this, however, they will have to enter the Umbra and sneak past the Wendigo watchers. They will have to convince the totem that guards the caern that they are truly innocent and that they deserve to go back to their home. The Winter Wolf is an icy totem of war not unlike Fenris. He will most likely listen to a lupus character who swears a blood-oath, especially if the player bears news of the strip mine and has already (unsuccessfully) presented her case to the Wendigos.

Entreating the Wendigos

The Wendigos have very little patience. If they catch the pups coming back (either in the Umbra or on land) to the caern they will take them before the War Chief and he will ask them to explain themselves. If they can tell a really good story (perhaps showing them proof that the Black Spiral Dancers are active nearby, or what have you), it is possible that the Wendigos might change their course of action. Otherwise it is within their rights to imprison the characters as spies to be tried later when the crisis is over, or, if they fight, to kill them where they stand.

Finding Another Moon Bridge

On a roll of Intelligence + Rituals (difficulty 7) the characters remember that the main Moon Bridges into and out of the Sept of the Green are through bodies of water, controlled by the water spirit Mera. They may be able to have Mera open a Moon Bridge to Central Park through one of the bodies of water in the area, especially one tied to Gaia or to the Garou (like the one in the Glen domain described in the Wilderness chapter.) Although the Rite of the Opened Bridge is one the characters must normally learn as adult Garou, they may bypass the rite by permanently sacrificing three points of Gnosis to call Mera to them; she will then open a temporary Moon Bridge back to New York.

Do not volunteer this information to the players; they must formulate this plan on their own. Realize that the sacrifice of three points of permanent Gnosis is enough to attract the

attention of any Gnosis-sensitive being in the area (spirits, any Theurges, any Black Spiral Dancers, especially Azaera). You might intimate to the players that it will be a great sacrifice to summon Mera here. Optionally you may require them to protect her.

Goal: Gain Renown and Fight the Wyrms

There are ample opportunities for this in this setting. Wym-infected villains are found in large quantities. Refer to the individual story areas for these opportunities.

There is one foolhardy method, though: following Azaera into her caern.

Endgame: Into the Serpent's Den

If the Garou fail to stop the Black Spiral Dancers from loading the Narthus onto the truck, the stone will be shipped to the Toronto branch office (see Toronto). After three days, it will be taken to the docks and loaded onto a freighter headed into Lake Ontario.

Characters may still try to stop Azaera and the Narthus, but their chances are much slimmer now. The freighter will be heavily guarded by Fomori and Black Spiral Dancers. Once the freighter is underway, the only way characters will be able to follow is in a small powerboat or the like. If Azaera detects the characters following her, she will use her Summon the Great Beast gift to call the Lake Lord from the slime of the lake-bottom.

As the characters move into the middle of the lake, the water will start to chop and heave. A great wave will shake the boat like a rat, and then a vast slimy coil will arc its way into the sky. The serpentine creature will tower above the boat, and high above them characters will hear the rasping of a circular mouth ringed with vampire-like fangs.

The Lake Lord is in reality an enormous lamprey, nearly 30' long. At Azaera's command it will attack the characters, seeking to latch onto them one by one and drink their blood. The Lake Lord, once attached to a character, does one automatic level of aggravated damage per turn until its grip is broken (resisted Strength roll). It will attempt to flee once its wound penalty reaches -5.

The Lake Lord

Str 8, Dex 3, Sta 7, Per 2, Int 1, Wts 1

Swimming Speed 30 mph

Brawl 2, Athletics (swim) 1, Dodge 1

Health Chart: OK, OK, OK, -1, -1, -1, -2, -2, -2, -5, -5, Incapacitated.

Once the freighter containing Azaera and the Narlthus gets about 100 miles into the lake, she will cast the Black Spiral Dancer version of the Rite of the Opened Bridge. A strange portal of black and ultraviolet light will open up in the middle of the water and the entire freighter will be swallowed up by it. The portal will remain open for five turns; if they do not follow the freighter in time, the pack will have to reopen the portal themselves. One among their number must know the Rite of the Opened Bridge, and must succeed in a Wits + Rituals roll (difficulty 9) before any other rolls are made simply to adapt the rite to function with a Black Spiral gate. The caster must also spend one Gnosis point, and, regardless of success, will lose 100 Honor points for "dabbling in black magic."

The Grotto

This is not good. The invasion of a Black Spiral caern is not to be taken lightly even by the greatest of the Garou, and that is what these pups have just done. Although killing off an entire pack is seldom a good idea, the characters have had several chances by now to stop the Narlthus, and death may well be the reward for repeated failure.

The characters, upon crossing the portal, are nearly overwhelmed by a foul stench. Their boat (or driftwood, if the Lake Lord had anything to do with it) floats in a huge underground lagoon of sticky black water. There is a strange green fire all around from an algae that covers the walls and ceiling of the mammoth cavern. High overhead, stalactites loom like jagged talons. The freighter floats nearby. If characters look into the water, they see several slow, bloated albino fish swim nearby; a Perception + Animal Ken roll (difficulty 4) reveals that most of these fish are deformed or mutated in some way: three eyes, extra fins, no mouth, etc.

The characters are far underground, in a location of the Storyteller's choice, and are in the middle of a Level 4 Wyrn caern. The air is fetid, indeed barely breathable, and there is a high level of background radiation. These factors combine to inhibit the regenerative properties of the Garou; they are spending their bodies' energies to keep themselves alive and cannot spare any to heal wounds. Indeed, Garou in Homid form begin to lose one Health Level per turn, and had better transform to a hardier form quickly. Black Spiral Dancer foes are, naturally (or unnaturally), unaffected by the properties of the caern.





All Gnosis pools are halved, and all Gnosis and gift rolls are at a difficulty of two higher; the spiritual foulness of the area nearly prevents contact with Gaia. Entering the Umbra from this point is virtual suicide, as hordes of Banes infest the area; so is reopening the portal from this side. There may well be no way out.

The Storyteller is encouraged to put whatever she likes in this place; it is crawling with Black Spiral Dancers, Banes and viler things, like giant toxic slugs. The caern is a labyrinth of caves, many lit with the ceremonial bale-fires (treat as biochemical weapons for determining damage should characters contact the foul green flames). Whether there is a way out or not is up to the Storyteller, but it should be virtually impossible to attain. The characters may wander about as they will, and may even attempt to stop Azaera's rites in the central caverns, but at this point their demise is all but assured.

The Inspiration

Although the rite of passage is important to Garou society, it is not an idle, stagnant ritual. There comes a time in each proper rite where the fire of the Garou engulfs the pups as a whole—where they experience the power of the blood of Gaia's greatest warriors, and realize the strength inherent in their fledgling pack. This inspiration is what makes the rite of passage, and is the central mystery of the rite. Having this experience is what makes an adult Garou out of a pup.

You can give a signal to your players that they have reached this point when you feel that they are responding as Garou to situations, not as players in a roleplaying game. This awakening can occur at any point during the story, but it should certainly occur just before or during a dramatically appropriate moment. You may even give them the benefits of Inspiration (as the Ahroun Gift) for the duration of the scene. After the inspiration, there is no longer any doubt: they have passed the rite whether their sept feels they have or not.

So, if the characters foolhardily decide to follow Azaera into her lair below the earth, they may receive their Inspiration just before their final battle.

The Future

After running *Rite of Passage*, you have ample opportunity to incorporate the setting and central characters in your chronicle.

Azaera

Azaera is a powerful adversary, one that should not perish in the tale told here. She can continue to show up in the pack's future life, to dog them and perhaps use them as pawns, continually plotting revenge. Having her as their enemy might even gain the pack Glory Renown, for she is indeed a terrible foe with excellent resources.

The Wendigos

Contrary to their role in this story, the Wendigos are quite honorable and are not usually in the position of being the “bad guys.” In fact, they may prove to be future allies to the new pack, especially if the characters prove themselves in the Wendigos’ eyes. Who knows? Your pack may wish to join the Winter Wolf Sept after all is said and done. However, Icedagger (if he is still around) will continue to be a problem, especially if he is routed and shamed by the characters’ actions. You may wish to incorporate the Winter Wolf Sept into your future chronicle by bringing them up from time to time as visitors to the Sept of the Green.

The Narlthus

The Narlthus could very easily become a recurring theme in your upcoming chronicle. You could decide it is an Infernal spirit, or a wizard’s soul, or even the essence of an Antediluvian vampire. You decide whether or not it is actually a Talon of the Wyrms, and, if it is, what does the Wyrms think about it — does the Wyrms lust for its return, or is it possible that even that dark entity wishes to have done with it?

The Five Talons

You may even wish to make the Five Talons be objects of many stories to come, each one more powerful than the first. It is up to you to create the legends and stories that surround the other Four Talons, and the forms in which they currently exist. This could lead to an exciting “Indiana Jones”-style chronicle with the pack hopping the globe through Moon Bridges to get to the various Talons first.

Pentex Corporation

If the characters succeed in breaking into the Pentex computers, they will unknowingly be placed on a special blacklist by Pentex Security. This list is a database of all known Garou “operatives” in the world. A group of Garou known only as the Monkeywrenchers are among these operatives, and they work worldwide specifically to target the various arms of Pentex and gum up its corporate works. You may use this information to link the characters up with a secret group of Monkeywrenchers operating in the area, which could be a jump-off point for an entire Monkeywrenching chronicle.



The Sabbat

If the characters manage to previously injure or slay any of the Sabbat mentioned in the story, the sect will surely seek retribution. Memories last long among the undead, and if their hate is great enough, they will risk all to hunt the werewolves. One day when the characters are feeble and weak, they may be visited by their undead enemies, seething with hate and clutching silver in their cold hands.

The Sept of the Green

If the characters manage to survive, prevent the Narthus from being taken by Azaera, aid Accolon, and somehow divert a battle with the Winter Wolf Sept, they will receive high honors within the sept. They will all instantly be promoted to Rank 1 and each given a moderately powerful fetish suited to their particular auspice and tribe. Their Renown will grow, and for months afterward Galliards will sing of their activities around the fire. However, this will also spread information about them to the Black Spiral Dancers and other unsavory sorts who might interfere with their future.

The Council of Peace

If there is a major battle between septs, the new Pack will have to attend a Council of Peace sponsored by the Silver Fangs and Children of Gaia, who will be alerted to the fighting within a week after it happens. Silver Fang packs will arrive in the areas of the fighting and attempt to sort out the conflict as soon as possible. The Council will convene in a neutral place just outside Chicago, and attempt to understand the events that have transpired. The pack will be questioned about their motives and activities.

It is here that justice will be meted out to those who have broken the Litany and it is here that peace will be restored between the two septs. Perhaps the characters will even convince the Council of the Black Spiral Dancers' involvement in the murder of the Wendigo pups. The Council will appoint two Garou Warders to stay with the various septs in order to ensure that the word of the Council is upheld. Since the Storyteller ultimately decides what peace terms the two groups have, you can use this to your advantage to structure a chronicle around the decision of the Council.

Note that no matter what the sept may think, the Council has the authority to award any pup her adulthood rights and may do so if the sept has not, in the interest of justice.

The Wilderness

Your players may wish to utilize the wilderness setting in this story in your future chronicle. One way they can do this is to utilize Bill as a source of wisdom and healing power. Another is to perhaps try and start a caern of their own based around the Glen domain they found. Once peace is restored between the septs, it should be no problem for the characters to utilize the Moon Bridge into the Winter Wolf Sept to visit these areas. Alternately, you may wish to allow characters to travel through the watergates that Mera can open to some body of water near the setting.

Accolon

If Accolon is not killed in this story, you may wish to have him take the new pack under his wing as their mentor. If this happens, you can be sure that the characters will receive both great benefit from the association and be placed in great danger. Accolon has made deadly enemies over his long life, enemies who would love to get their hands on his charges in order to exact revenge on him. Even if Accolon dies, his Black Bowl may be bequeathed to the characters and they may have adventures involving it (see Accolon's character description).

Bill of the Bear

Bill can also serve as the focus for a chronicle involving the were-bears. Your characters may even choose the Bear Totem as their pack totem, which will put them in closer contact with Bill and other were-bears as a whole. The Children of the Bear were originally as powerful as the Garou, but fell into dishonor and were nearly eradicated by the Silver Fangs during a long and bloody war. Now there are few left. However they alone have secret lore which could result in the true healing of Gaia, the reforestation of the clearcut deadlands, and the restoration of the natural balance of things. Although this would require the pack to be secretive and become outlaws in their own culture, it would make for a very dramatic and intense chronicle. You may even wish to allow your players to generate Children of the Bear characters to play, modeling them on the Garou.

Making the Story Fit Your Idea

Rite of Passage was designed to be modular. If you do not want to tell stories about the Sept of the Green, you could easily "plug in" your own sept, with your own ideas. The Moon Bridge activated in the first part of the story is an old and

mysterious one that can reach past the 1000-mile mark (if necessary), enabling your pups to play this scenario even if their home sept is based in Tampa, Florida. (What an interesting contrast that would be!) Simply change all the events and rivalries between the septs to fit your chronicle, and you will have done the necessary work to make this story fit with your overall chronicle.

Rage Across New York

However, if you enjoy playing with the Sept of the Green, you may wish to get our chronicle supplement, *Rage Across New York*, which will detail many of the people and plots in the Empire State. You can use this supplement as a jumping-off point for that particular chronicle with little or no extra work.

Appendix: Characters

Azaera

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Philodox

Tribe: Black Spiral Dancers

Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5, Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5

Talents: Intimidation 4, Primal-Urge 4, Subterfuge 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Empathy 3, Alertness 3

Skills: Stealth 4, Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Drive 1, Leadership 4

Knowledges: Rituals 5, Occult 5, Law 4 (Garou), Enigmas 5

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Fetish 4, Rites 4, Past Life 4

Gifts: All from her breed and auspice through Level 4, all Black Spiral Dancer gifts except Patagia (see the **Werewolf** Appendix), Razor Claws, Howl of the Banshee, Gnaw, Paralyzing Stare, Call the Great Beast

Rage 8, Gnosis 8, Willpower 8

Rank: 5

Renown: Black Spiral Dancers do not gain Glory, Honor and Wisdom, but she has the equivalent of 250,000 Renown among her people.

Rites: Open Moon Bridge, Open Caern, others as needed. In general, assume that if Azaera needs to perform a rite (of Level 4 and below) to further the plot, she can.

Fetishes: Spirit Whistle

Image: A beautiful but impossibly cold woman in her early 30s with pale skin, green eyes and short blond hair. She is 5'9", 135# and wears nondescript dark clothing. In Crinos form she is as hideous as her homid form is beautiful: a twisted creature with glowing green pits for eyes, a nearly reptilian maw filled with sharklike fangs, and matted, light-gray fur.

Background: Alice was small when the dreams began. At night, she would run in slow motion through a dark, misty jungle with the bellowing of great beasts resonating in her ears. Others ran beside her, but she was afraid to turn her head and see what sort of creatures they were. Often Alice heard voices in her dreams, calling to her, inviting her to become one with them, and equally often she would wake up screaming when she glimpsed the voices' origin through the fog.

As she grew older, she began to accept the dreams—indeed, to relish them. At times she could not tell which was the dream: the dark jungle, or the old house with the silent stares of her parents and the cryptlike school filled with the mutterings of her classmates.

Once, she heard the whispers of her parents behind a locked door: their muttered concern for her health and stability, the fear that she might be "sick" like her great-grandmother, that mysterious relative about whom nothing

was spoken. Although she was yet young, she was old enough to know what the word "institution" meant.

Then the hag began to appear in her dreams. At first Alice thought it was one of the witches from her childhood books, but the decrepit old crone instead informed Alice that she was her great-grandmother, come from the Domain of the Wyrms to guide her Fostern. Her mother, her grandmother, all were fodder, fit only for passing the blood down. It was Alice who was the chosen one, who would one day bear the spawn of the Wyrms. Alice enjoyed talking to the old woman, even in the daytime, although it only increased the shocked glances of her parents.

She knew what she had to do. Wisdom, her great-grandmother said, could be garnered through the absorption of one's ancestors. And so one night Alice got a knife from the kitchen and crept oh-so-softly into her parents' bedroom. The house where she lived was quite isolated, so no one heard the screams or saw the bonfire that blazed against the night sky in the backyard or smelled the strange meat that Alice cooked around that fire for the satiation of her hunger.

With the first taste of the flesh came knowledge, and the Change. That night, Alice died and Azaera ran through the night, kenning for the pack in her skull and loping into the neighborhood below. She ate her fill from the houses of men before running into the far hills to join her brethren below the earth.



Roleplaying Notes: Appear quite capable and competent, at least at first. Switch from cool general to seductress to firebrand as the need arises. Then gradually break down and let the true sickness emerge. Change voices and mannerisms as needed or at random, but always show a decided preference for human flesh.

Accolon

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Ahroun

Tribe: Stargazers

Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 2, Brawl 5, Dodge 3, Empathy 3, Intimidation 2, Primal-Urge 2, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Animal Ken 4, Firearms 2, Melee 4 (Klaive), Leadership 2, Stealth 2, Survival 5

Knowledges: Enigmas 5, Investigation 2, Law 1, Linguistics 3, Medicine 3, Occult 4, Politics 1, Rituals 4, Science 4 (Astronomy)

Backgrounds: Rites 3, Contacts 2, Past Life 4, Fetish 5

Gifts: Sense Wyrms, Inner Strength, Merciful Blow, Preternatural Awareness, Persuasion, Razor Claws, Spirit of the Fray, Heart of Fury, Clenched Jaw, Strength of Will

Rage 4, Gnosis 9, Willpower 6

Rank: 4

Renown: 80000 Glory, 40000 Honor, 30000 Wisdom

Rites: Any he needs

Fetishes: Accolon has a Grand Klaive, which contains the spirit of a Ragabash packmate of his younger days, one with whom he shares a spirit bond. This gives him the ability to use the Ragabash gifts of Luna's Blessing (Level 4) and Thieving Talons of the Magpie (Level 5) at the extra cost of one Gnosis point per use. He also has a fetish called the Black Bowl, which is a 6' diameter obsidian bowl that reflects the stars and brings him prophecies. This bowl must be specially tended in order to remain powerful, and if Accolon dies it will be lost forever to the Garou.

Image: Accolon is a grizzled old man in homid form. His wolf forms are quite silvery as well.

Background: Accolon is one of the only Stargazers in the New York City area. He has procured a penthouse suite on top of a particularly high skyscraper and there, among Zen rock gardens, he contemplates the stars, whispering to the spirits of night to make his sight clearer. The light around his building is always a little dimmer when view from the outside. He has the literally the best view in the city, as the spirit-ward around his penthouse apartment forces light and air pollution back in a ring around it.

Accolon is a legend even among the Garou of the Sept of the Green. Kindred avoid his watchful stare at all costs. He is incredibly perceptive, but reclusive, and very protective of his sky-borne lair. They call him the Dragon of 86th Street because of his ferocity in defending his perch. Still, he has been instrumental in warning the Sept of problems and his prophecies are often well-heeded. He predicted when the Sabbat would invade Manhattan, and it was his vision that saw the Silver Fangs withdrawing their support for a caern in New York.

Roleplaying Notes: Think of a cross between a Zen master and a samurai: wise in the ways of others, but equally willing to sacrifice his own well-being on a whim. He is somewhat stubborn and isn't overly patient with the folly of pups.

Note: It is quite possible that Accolon could save the characters' lives. Of course, this is not recommended. Accolon is intended to be used as an example of Garou heroism. He throws himself into a desperate fight against Azaera at overwhelming odds. He is an old Garou, and ready to die should he have to fight the Wurm. It is quite certain that, if he fights Azaera alone, he will die. The characters will have no idea about this, and whether or not they help him in his fight against the Great Evil he has sensed should be totally their decision, uninfluenced by this knowledge.

The Narlthus

A hungry and terrible spirit, the Narlthus is best left alone. Tricked by a crafty shaman many years ago, the Narlthus was bound into a meteorite and buried beneath a mountain. Slowly it has plotted, planned and attempted to contact the Wurm from within its mountain prison. Now the Wurm has sent its children to aid the fallen spirit.

The noisome presence of the Narlthus within its egg-shaped meteor has warped the earth around it, creating highly pure veins of uranium and other expensive radioactive elements. This is how it attracted Grend Enterprises, and when it was partially uncovered by a strip-mining operation, the Wurm ordered Pentex to buy Grend out.

The Narlthus needs the blood of the descendants of its vanquisher in order to escape its spirit-prison. Nothing else will do. You may decide to make this a part of this current story by having one of the characters be of the blood of his vanquisher. If the Narlthus is released, every Black Spiral Dancer, vampire, and Bane within 1000 miles will instantly know that a great evil has been released. Hundreds of Banes will instantly be consumed by it, as will all of the Blood Pools of any vampires present. It will take about a year to coalesce into a spirit with motive force and continuity, but by then it will be incredibly powerful. What it might do then is your decision, but it's certain that even Azaera would have a hard time controlling this beast. It is possible that the Narlthus might even be able to make a Realm of its own in the Umbra and become a major servitor of the very essence of the Wurm.

Icedagger

Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Perception 1, Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 1

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Intimidation 3, Primal-Urge 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Drive 2, Firearms 3, Melee 4 (Klaive), Leadership 4, Repair 1, Stealth 4, Survival 4

Knowledges: Enigmas 1, Investigation 1, Law 1, Rituals 2

Backgrounds: Past Life 1, Pure Breed 1, Totem 2

Gifts: Persuasion, Razor Claws, Camouflage, Speak with Wind Spirits, The Falling Touch, Spirit of the Fray, Reshape Object

Rage 9, Gnosis 5, Willpower 5

Rank: 2

Renown: 15000 Glory, 2000 Honor, 3000 Wisdom

Image: As a homid, Icedagger has incredibly long pitch-black hair that streams down and is wildly unkempt. A patch of his scalp is shaved and shows off his nasty battle wound: a pure white scar he got from a claw swipe that also cut off half of his right ear. He is quite obviously proud of it even though it makes him look hideous.

Background: A young Ahroun Wendigo, Icedagger has already gotten a name for himself and his pack. The pack is quite violent, often going all the way to Toronto to hunt vampires and to get into deadly fights with gangs there. Icedagger has a necklace of Leech teeth around his waist and carries a Klaive of his own that sniffs out the Wurm like the Gift Sense Wurm.

However, Icedagger has become infected with the Wurm's corruption. His lust for power within the sept and his blood-thirstiness has made him open to possession by a Bane. This bane is under the direct control of Azaera. Azaera controls Icedagger through dreams, "thoughts," and temporary total possessions. Icedagger has come to relish the feeling of the Bane's strength entering him and has actually convinced himself it is some ancestral warrior-spirit inhabiting him.

Icedagger hates all minions of the Wurm and anyone he thinks is a minion, to his credit. If it could be proven to him that he is Bane-ridden he would probably commit suicide. Unfortunately the nature of his Bane is such that he may never see it, even when presented to him. Since his packmates all but idolize him, it is unlikely that he will be saved from the Bane's influence. If one of his pack could be convinced to look beyond his loyalty for the Ahroun, it is possible that he would be able to see the Bane's influence.

Roleplaying Notes: You are vicious, arrogant and power-hungry. These are your good points. Although you perceive yourself as an honorable warrior, in truth you would betray anyone and anything in your quest for power.

Bill of the Bear

Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Empathy 4, Expression 3, Intimidation 3, Primal-Urge (Bear) 4

Skills: Animal Ken 4, Firearms 3, Melee (walking staff) 3, Performance 3, Repair 4, Stealth 3, Survival 5

Knowledges: Enigmas 4, Investigation 3, Law 3, Linguistics 3, Medicine 4, Occult 4, Politics 2, Rituals (Bear) 3, Science 2

Forms: Human: No Attribute Modifiers; Near-human: Strength +3, Stamina +3, Appearance -3, Manipulation -2, Intelligence -1; Half-Bear: Strength +5, Stamina +4, Dexterity -2, Perception -1; Near-Bear: Strength +4, Stamina +5, Dexterity -2 Wits: -1; Bear: Strength +2, Stamina +3, Dexterity -1, Manipulation -3

Backgrounds: Fetish 5, Past Life 4

Gifts: Treat Bill as a Rank 5 Children of Gaia Moon Dancer Homid; he has any appropriate Gift, though he rarely displays his power, especially since it can reveal his position to some of the old Garou Watchers who still hunt for his kind.

Rage 5, Gnosis 9, Willpower 8

Rank: Equivalent of 6; no Renown as such among Garou



Fetishes: Horn of Fenris (see Below)

Image: A tall, broad, bearded man. Bill's face is weathered by time and tears.

Background: A Son of the Bear, Bill is one of the last werebears in North America. He is a shaman, a spirit-drummer to be exact, who has survived many adventures and has fought his entire life against the Wurm and its kind. He fell in love with a Daughter of the Wolf hundreds of years ago (werebears are particularly long-lived) and as a result, betrayed his people, who were at war with the Garou at that time.

Bill has since found peace, but this peace is always tinged with sadness as he thinks of all the loves and family he has lost over the years. It is only a sense from the Bear itself that he must remain behind on Gaia, the last bastion of the Bear there, that keeps him from taking off on a great journey far into the Deep Umbra, perhaps there to find his ancestor-spirits.

Bill possesses an ancient Garou artifact from Norse times: a Horn of Fenris, a talisman which can be used to summon spirits of war. This horn can also summon avatars of the First Pack, the ancestors of all Garou, in addition to many other spirits of great warriors throughout history. If one of the characters particularly touches Bill's heart, he will give her the Horn, but will not tell her what it is, only that it must be blown in a time of immense trouble. He will tell her that the horn is brittle and old and may break with its next sounding. He will also say that he himself has tried to use it in the past year and has been unable to get it to work; he fears that the power has gone out of it or is waning from it. In truth, Bill cannot summon aid because he has no great need, and his ancestors are, in truth, angry at him for staying behind on a martyr mission.

If the characters use this horn at the dramatically appropriate moment then there is a distinct chance (Storyteller determines this based on how the pups are acting) that the First Pack will come to them, inhabit their bodies for a brief time, and wreak havoc on their enemies or save their skins. Of course, the Horn will definitely be shattered by this sounding and the Pack will more than likely leave the pups in a worse situation than they were in when they first used the horn.

Roleplaying Notes: You are gruff, but kind and eager for company. You contain your rage well, but when it does emerge it is a terrible thing to behold.

Carmen

Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Empathy 3, Intimidation 4, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Leadership 4, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Investigation 3, Occult 3, Medicine 2

Gifts: Treat her as a Rank 4 Shadow Lord Theurge Homid, with any gift she wants or that is appropriate.

Disciplines: Dominate 2, Thaumaturgy 4 (Spirit Thaumaturgy, Elemental Mastery, Path of Conjuring, Corruption), Auspex 3

Image: Carmen is a delicate-looking vampire with short black hair and piercing black eyes. She expects total submission to her will by all except those whom she respects, such as Azaera.

Background: Carmen is an eighth generation Sabbat Tremere Antitribu. Her meditations have warned her of a powerful force being reborn in the North, one protected with the strange Garou spirit-magic. She is intrigued by Black Spiral Dancers and quite entranced with Azaera, who is a role model of a sort for her. In fact, in her heart's heart, she has begun to trust Azaera.

She stays with her at the mine site and aids her in trying to open the Narlthus. She doesn't know much about the Wyrms but does believe that this thing may be somehow tied to Caine himself, and that it would greatly please her Sabbat masters to have her learn more of the Father of the Vampires.

Roleplaying Notes: Cold and aloof, but impressed by true power.

Carmen has with her five Gangrel Antitribu Sabbat who are her personal guards.

Gangrel Guards

Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 3, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Invest. 1

Gifts: Razor Claws, Scent of the Prey (or you may use Disciplines, see below)

Forms: Gangrel may take the Lupus Form, with attendant modifiers.

Disciplines: Protean 4, Fortitude 2, Celerity 1

Willpower 7

Sample Player Characters

On the next 10 pages are sample characters, for use by players in the *Rite of Passage* story. These characters have been playtested with the game and work well in it, providing a good balance of character types. The Storyteller should, however, encourage players to create their own characters, thus ensuring that they are comfortable with their roles. Use these samples if they do not want to take the time for character creation or prefer not to create characters of their own.

Note that they will need to come to a consensus concerning their Pack Totem before they start play.

Snarls-At-Fleas

Life under pine-shadows, passing of summer to winter, roam with the pack, taste the blood of the kill, the good earth tells you of prey. Over the rocks and the rivers you wander, hunting and fighting and mating, lords under the trees. Only the two-feet you fear, them and their hard shiny dwellings and hard shiny claws and the sticks that make fire and sting from afar like the wrath of a thousand hornets. Ever you fall back, far in the forest, ever the two-feet come — places once yours stink of two-feet, the rivers are black and they stink of two-feet, the trees fall under the claws of two-feet, who come in their numbers once more with their sticks of death.

Out of room, out of time, one by one your pack falls, their blood stains the soil for the joy of the carrion birds, and the rage rises like the river in summer, and you thirst for the throat of the despoilers. And the rage guts you inside, moves up your spine to your head, and it fills you with something you have never known. Known...know...this is the new thing. You knew, you understood, you were suddenly aware. Like the apple of legend, the rage and the fear blossomed into knowledge — of time, of self, of good and evil. And the hunters were evil, of that you were sure.

In a series of hit-and-run assaults, you led the poachers deep, deep into the woods, into a ravine only you knew about. You would die, true, but perhaps you could save your pack. As the crunch of the hunters' boots sounded on the rocks, you leapt snarling at your foes. You had not reckoned on the terrible speed of the bullets. Half a dozen hollowpoints slammed into you, rending you into a mass of bloody meat.

And you stood again. In awe, you felt the wounds close as if they had never been, the chunks of lead purge themselves from your body to rattle on the rocks like empty nutshells. You felt the furnace of your heartbeat booming, lifting you up, up, higher than you had ever been, higher than the hunters. For now you had two feet too. And hands, hands to rip aside the flimsy rifles and smash them to flinders. But your fangs and claws — ah, you still had those. They were the last sight the screaming poachers ever saw.

You tried to return to your pack, but they would not have you. To them, you had become as monstrous as the two-feet. Lonely, embittered, you wandered the woods in Crinos form, until a tabloid report about the Bigfoot brought others of your kind to take you with them. You followed them because you had nowhere else

to go, and learned that you were a Garou, one of the Get of Fenris. But no matter how hard you try to lose yourself in battle and bloodshed, in your heart you long for the pines and the pack of your youth.



Dirge (Janet Crowley)

You had to fend for yourself at an early age — Mom was God knows where and Daddy dearest was usually on a couch making love to a bottle of Golden Grain. That was fine with you — you wouldn't have had it any other way. After all, your dad was usually too messed up to care when the calls from school started, the litany of teachers and administrators saying things like “antisocial tendencies” and “bully” and “behavioral disorder” and finally



“juvenile delinquent.” It wasn't your fault that all the damn kids pushed you around, wouldn't leave you alone, just 'cause you weren't like a lot of the other girls, and you had to push back, yeah, grind their faces into the wall till they shut the hell up. Nothing ever really mattered to Daddy, not the fights, not the tattoo or the nose ring, not the hooky or the nice new clothes and stuff that you started wearing despite the fact that he never gave you enough money to eat, let alone buy anything. Guess it finally mattered to the cops, though, when they hauled you off that store detective and booked you for aggravated assault and threw you in the adult PTD and all.

That was where he found you. Even though you had nothing but contempt for the damn fascist pigs, you knew not to argue when the detective with the burning green eyes and the knock-you-through-the-wall stare came and hauled you out of jail — “a mistake in processing,” he said. You still didn't argue, not even when he drove you out of the city and deep into the woods. Everything was a mistake, he said, your whole life — but now things have been put to rights, and you're where you belong, with your family. The Shadow Lords.

You didn't know what a Shadow Lord was, but it sounded cool. And it was — but more importantly, it was family. The tribe is your family, your church, your country; it is even more important to you than the band you play bass in. You will prove yourself to them on this rite of passage, or die trying.

WEREWOLF

The Apocalypse™

Name: DIRGE (JANET CROWLEY)

Breed: HOMID

Pack Totem:

Player:

Auspice: GALLIARD

Concept: LOYAL SOLDIER

Chronicle:

Tribe: SHADOW LORDS

Battle Scars:

Attributes

Physical

Strength ●●●●●
Dexterity ●●●●●
Stamina ●●●●●

Social

Charisma ●●●●●
Manipulation ●●●●●
Appearance ●●●●●

Mental

Perception ●●●●●
Intelligence ●●●●●
Wits ●●●●●

Abilities

Talents

Alertness 00000
Athletics 00000
Brawl ●●●●●
Dodge ●●●●●
Empathy ●●●●●
Expression ●●●●●
Intimidation ●●●●●
Primal-Urge 00000
Streetwise ●●●●●
Subterfuge ●●●●●

Skills

Animal Ken ●●●●●
Drive ●●●●●
Etiquette 00000
Firearms ●●●●●
Melee 00000
Leadership ●●●●●
Performance ●●●●●
Repair 00000
Stealth ●●●●●
Survival ●●●●●

Knowledge

Computer 00000
Enigmas 00000
Investigation 00000
Law ●●●●●
Linguistics 00000
Medicine 00000
Occult ●●●●●
Politics ●●●●●
Rituals ●●●●●
Science 00000

Advantages

Backgrounds

PAST LIFE ●●●●●
PURE BREED ●●●●●
RESOURCES ●●●●●
PACK TOTEM ●●●●●
00000

Gifts

SMELL OF MAN
FATAL FLAW
BEAST SPEECH

Gifts

Renown

Glory 200
Honor 200
Wisdom 100

Rage

●●●●●○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

Health

X if aggravated
Bruised □□
Hurt -1 □□
Injured -1 □□
Wounded -2 □□
Mauled -2 □□
Crippled -5 □□
Incapacitated □□

Rank

□□□□□□□□□□

Gnosis

●●●○○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

Combat

Weapon	Damage	Difficulty

Willpower

●●●○○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

Experience

□□□□□□□□□□

Homid (Human): No Stat Adjustments; Diff.: 6. Glabro (Near Man): Str. +2, Sta. +2, App. -1, Man. -1; Diff.: 7. Crinos (Wolf Man): Str. +4, Sta. +3, Dex. +1, App. 0, Man. -3; Diff.: 6. Hispo (Near Wolf): Str.+3, Sta. +3, Dex. +2, Man. -3; Diff.: 7. Lupus (Wolf): Str. +1, Sta. +3, Dex. +2, Man. -3; Diff.: 6. Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Gifts: 1 Level 1 from breed, auspice and tribe; Backgrounds: variable by tribe; Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

Linda Davis

Why can't people just be nicer? That was always your credo, even as a small child. You never had any of the urges most children had to pick on others or throw rocks or whatever — you never even swatted flies. Indeed, you developed an early respect for nature, and this, along with your natural altruism, fueled your interest in and concern for ecological issues.

You started doing volunteer work for Greenpeace at the age of 14, and continued your involvement with environmentalist groups into college; you also became the president of your school's chapter of Amnesty International.

Then came the protest. You were scheduled to help organize a demonstration at a new and allegedly unsafe chemical plant on the outskirts of town. The plant was owned by some big holding company whose name you never quite caught. Although ardent in your distaste for the plant's unethical practices, you were under the impression that the protest was supposed to be a peaceful endeavor, a simple exercise of one's First Amendment rights. However, a band of latecomers to the protest — a suspicious-looking fringe movement who called themselves the Green Knights or something — didn't see it that way.



Evidently, neither did the company's security force. You never knew who fired the first shot, but all of a sudden you were in the middle of a howling, trampling mob scene as the armored guards surged forward with gas grenades and the radicals answered with Uzis. Both sides seemed perfectly eager to sacrifice the peaceful protesters in their battle, and the last thing you remember seeing was the bright barrel of a security guard's shotgun in the high noon light, and your boyfriend shoving you to the ground. Then you heard a shot, and everything was dark and warm, and you tasted tears on your face — except it wasn't tears, it was the blood of your boyfriend as he lay twitching on the ground in front of you. You Changed for the first time then, and the quiet girl who had never killed a bug eviscerated the guard with four-inch talons.

The scene abruptly got even crazier, as the Veil went into effect and the homids on both sides scattered like panicked chickens. Fortunately, certain members of the Knights realized what you were and managed to calm you down enough to explain your situation to you. Your initial reaction was one of disbelief and horror, but after you realized that none of your friends who were at the protest could stand to be in the same room with you anymore, you called the number that one of the Knights had given you in desperation.

You were initiated into the ways of the Garou, where even now you desperately seek to save the planet and restrain the violent impulses of your brethren — as well as your own.

WEREWOLF

The Apocalypse™

Name: LINDA DAVIS

Player:

Chronicle:

Breed: HOMID

Auspice: PHILODOX

Tribe: CHILDREN OF GAIA

Pack Totem:

Concept: PEACE ACTIVIST

Battle Scars:

Attributes

Physical

Strength ●●○○○
Dexterity ●●○○○
Stamina ●●○○○

Social

Charisma ●●○○○
Manipulation ●●○○○
Appearance ●●○○○

Mental

Perception ●●○○○
Intelligence ●●○○○
Wits ●●○○○

Abilities

Talents

Alertness ●○○○○
Athletics ●○○○○
Paw ●○○○○
Dodge ●○○○○
Empathy ●●○○○
Expression ●●○○○
Intimidation ○○○○○
Primal-Urge ○○○○○
Streetwise ○○○○○
Subterfuge ○○○○○

Skills

Animal Ken ●○○○○
Drive ●○○○○
Etiquette ●○○○○
Firearms ○○○○○
Melee ○○○○○
Leadership ○○○○○
Performance ●○○○○
Repair ○○○○○
Stealth ○○○○○
Survival ○○○○○

Knowledge

Computer ○○○○○
Enigmas ●○○○○
Investigation ●○○○○
Law ●●○○○
Linguistics ●○○○○
Medicine ●●○○○
Occult ○○○○○
Politics ●●○○○
Rituals ●●○○○
Science ●○○○○

Advantages

Backgrounds

PAST LIFE ●○○○○
RESOURCES ●○○○○
PACK TOTEM ●○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○

Gifts

PERSUASION

SCENT OF THE TRUE FORM

MOTHER'S TOUCH

Gifts

Renown

Glory 50
Honor 300
Wisdom 150

Rage

●●●○○○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□

Health

Bruised X if aggravated
Hurt -1
Injured -1
Wounded -2
Mauled -2
Crippled -5
Incapacitated

Rank

Gnosis

●●●○○○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□

Combat

Weapon	Damage	Difficulty

Willpower

●●●○○○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□

Experience

Homid (Human): No Stat Adjustments; Diff.: 6. **Glaboro (Near Man):** Str. +2, Sta. +2, App. -1, Man. -1; Diff. 7. **Crinos (Wolf Man):** Str. +4, Sta. +3, Dex. +1, App. 0, Man. -3; Diff.: 6. **Hispo (Near Wolf):** Str. +3, Sta. +3, Dex. +2, Man. -3; Diff.: 7. **Lupus (Wolf):** Str. +1, Sta. +3, Dex. +2, Man. -3; Diff.: 6. **Attributes:** 7/5/3 **Abilities:** 13/9/5 **Gifts:** 1 Level 1 from breed, auspice and tribe; **Backgrounds:** variable by tribe; **Freebie Points:** 15 (7/5/2/1)

Whisperer

Cursed, cursed, cursed. From the wretched day of your illicit spawning you heard the term over and over and over. From the elders, who called you Mule and cuffed you for the slightest transgression. From the talons of the north wind, that so enjoyed slashing into your scrawny, hairless body. From the mocking voices that whispered in your skull since you were a cub, never ceasing, promising delight and power, showing only stark horror.

Quiet! you whispered to the voices. Away! you whispered to the tormenting spirits of rock and stream and cave and to the spirits of fouler things that rose to haunt you in the dark. The pack watched you as you muttered and in derision named you Whisperer. You did not care. The spirits had their own name for you.

You grew, and still the spirits would not leave you be. They whispered things to you, tales of horrors done in darkness, black prophecies of doom, and, every now and again, something useful, something you could whisper to the chieftain when he stood atop you and thereby stay the paw that would have otherwise dashed the life from your skull. Your information proved useful enough that you were reluctantly admitted into the community of Garou, though never accepted. One evening you were kicked awake and told that you were to join a pack forming in the area, that you would travel to the great city of the homids and undergo your rite of passage. Eager to leave that hellhole, you agreed. But nothing has changed. Your pack finds you useful, but they plot against you, you know they do. You can smell their treachery, and the voices warn you of their plots. One day soon, you may succumb and follow the voices, follow them down below, where there are others who may welcome you at last.



WEREWOLF

The Apocalypse™

Name: WHISPERER
 Player:
 Chronicle:

Breed: METIS
 Auspice: THEURGE
 Tribe: UKTENA

Pack Totem:
 Concept: TORMENTED SOUL
 Battle Scars:

Attributes

Physical

Strength ●●●●●
 Dexterity ●●●●●
 Stamina ●●●●●

Social

Charisma ●●●●●
 Manipulation ●●●●●
 Appearance ●●●●●

Mental

Perception ●●●●●
 Intelligence ●●●●●
 Wits ●●●●●

Abilities

Talents

Alertness 00000
 Athletics 00000
 Brawl ●0000
 Dodge ●●●●●
 Empathy 00000
 Expression 00000
 Intimidation ●0000
 Primal-Urge ●0000
 Streetwise 00000
 Subterfuge ●●●●●

Skills

Animal Ken 00000
 Drive 00000
 Etiquette 00000
 Firearms 00000
 Melee ●0000
 Leadership 00000
 Performance 00000
 Repair 00000
 Stealth ●●●●●
 Survival ●●●●●

Knowledge

Computer 00000
 Enigmas ●●●●●
 Investigation ●●●●●
 Law 00000
 Linguistics 00000
 Medicine 00000
 Occult ●●●●●
 Politics 00000
 Rituals ●●●●●
 Science ●●●●●

Advantages

Backgrounds

RITES ●●●●●
 FETISH (SPIRIT TRACER) ●●●●●
 PACK TOTEM ●0000
 _____ 00000
 _____ 00000

Gifts

CREATE ELEMENT
 SHROUD
 SPIRIT SPEECH

Gifts

RITE OF TALISMAN DEDICATION
 RITE OF BINDING

Renown

Glory _____
 Honor 100
 Wisdom 400

Rank

Combat

Weapon	Damage	Difficulty

Rage

●●○○○○○○○○○○
 □□□□□□□□□□

Gnosis

●●●●●●○○○○
 □□□□□□□□□□

Willpower

●●●●●●○○○○
 □□□□□□□□□□

Health

X if aggravated
 Bruised □□
 Hurt -1 □□
 Injured -1 □□
 Wounded -2 □□
 Mauled -2 □□
 Crippled -5 □□
 Incapacitated □□

Experience

□□□□□□□□□□

Homid (Human): No Stat Adjustments; Diff.: 6. Glabro (Near Man): Str. +2, Sta. +2, App. -1, Man. -1; Diff.: 7. Crinos (Wolf Man): Str. +4, Sta. +3, Dex. +1, App. 0, Man. -3; Diff.: 6. Hispo (Near Wolf): Str. +3, Sta. +3, Dex. +2, Man. -3; Diff.: 7. Lupus (Wolf): Str. +1, Sta. +3, Dex. +2, Man. -3; Diff.: 6. Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Gifts: 1 Level 1 from breed, auspice and tribe; Backgrounds: variable by tribe; Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

Curtis Worrell

You don't know why all of this is going down. You were perfectly happy as a hum — homid, whatever. Just a kid, doing kid things — going to school, hanging out with your friends, ripping off the local convenience store, hacking into the school net, dealing every now and then. But then in the 10th grade you started weirding out, and you knew it wasn't a flashback when the computer in your data processing class started talking to you. You didn't want to know — not about the computer, or the car, or any of the other elementals. Weren't elementals supposed to be some kinda wiggid-out monsters from D&D or something?

Well, they were real, and that wasn't all. One day, on your way home from school, you noticed a buncha guys in dark suits and shades tailing you. Oh man, it was the Secret Service — they'd found out about that Lockheed stunt you pulled! You tried to run, but the crisp fall day turned into a nightmare of one-way streets and blind alleys and finally you lay in a pile of garbage, exhausted and at the mercy of a pack of huge dogs that appeared out of nowhere. And then one of the dogs started talking to you too. You were too fatigued to protest when one of the mirrorshaded men lifted you up off the asphalt and put you in the back of a limo, where you were joined by the talking dog.

Not that being in the Glass Walkers is all bad — there's the money, and the power, and the knowledge that you can trash anyone who dares to screw around with you. But lately you've been spending too much time out in the woods with a bunch of other Garou who've got some serious attitude problems. You'll go along with this rite of passage crap for now, out of fear mainly, but if the going gets tough, you're outta here, amigo.



WEREWOLF

The Apocalypse™

Name: CURTIS WORRELL
 Player:
 Chronicle:

Breed: HOMID
 Auspice: RAGABASH
 Tribe: GLASS WALKERS

Pack Totem:
 Concept: LAY ABOUT
 Battle Scars:

Attributes

Physical

Strength ●●○○○
 Dexterity ●●○○○
 Stamina ●●○○○

Social

Charisma ●●○○○
 Manipulation ●●○○○
 Appearance ●●○○○

Mental

Perception ●●○○○
 Intelligence ●●○○○
 Wits ●●○○○

Abilities

Talents

Alertness ○○○○○
 Athletics ●●○○○
 Brawl ●●○○○
 Dodge ●●○○○
 Empathy ●●○○○
 Expression ●●○○○
 Intimidation ○○○○○
 Primal-Urge ○○○○○
 Streetwise ●●○○○
 Subterfuge ●●○○○

Skills

Animal Ken ○○○○○
 Drive ●●○○○
 Etiquette ●●○○○
 Firearms ●●○○○
 Melee ○○○○○
 Leadership ○○○○○
 Performance ○○○○○
 Repair ●●○○○
 Stealth ●●○○○
 Survival ○○○○○

Knowledge

Computer ●●○○○
 Enigmas ○○○○○
 Investigation ○○○○○
 Law ○○○○○
 Linguistics ●●○○○
 Medicine ○○○○○
 Occult ○○○○○
 Politics ●●○○○
 Rituals ○○○○○
 Science ●●○○○

Advantages

Backgrounds

RESOURCES ●●○○○
 CONTACTS ●●○○○
 PACK TOTEM ●●○○○
 FETISH (HARMONY FLUTE) ●●○○○
 ○○○○○

Gifts

CONTROL SIMPLE MACHINES
 PERSUASION
 BLUR OF THE MILKY EYE

Gifts

Renown

Glory 200
 Honor 100
 Wisdom 200

Rank

Combat

Weapon	Damage	Difficulty

Rage

●●○○○○○○○○○○
 □□□□□□□□□□

Gnosis

●●○○○○○○○○○○
 □□□□□□□□□□

Willpower

●●●●○○○○○○○○
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Health

X if aggravated
 Bruised □□
 Hurt -1 □□
 Injured -1 □□
 Wounded -2 □□
 Mauled -2 □□
 Crippled -5 □□
 Incapacitated □□

Experience

□□□□□□□□□□

Homid (Human): No Stat Adjustments; Diff.: 6. Glabro (Near Man): Str. +2, Sta. +2, App. -1, Man. -1; Diff.: 7. Crinos (Wolf Man): Str. +4, Sta. +3, Dex. +1, App. 0, Man. -3; Diff.: 6. Hispo (Near Wolf): Str. +3, Sta. +3, Dex. +2, Man. -3; Diff.: 7. Lupus (Wolf): Str. +1, Sta. +3, Dex. +2, Man. -3; Diff.: 6. Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Gifts: 1 Level 1 from breed, auspice and tribe; Backgrounds: variable by tribe; Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

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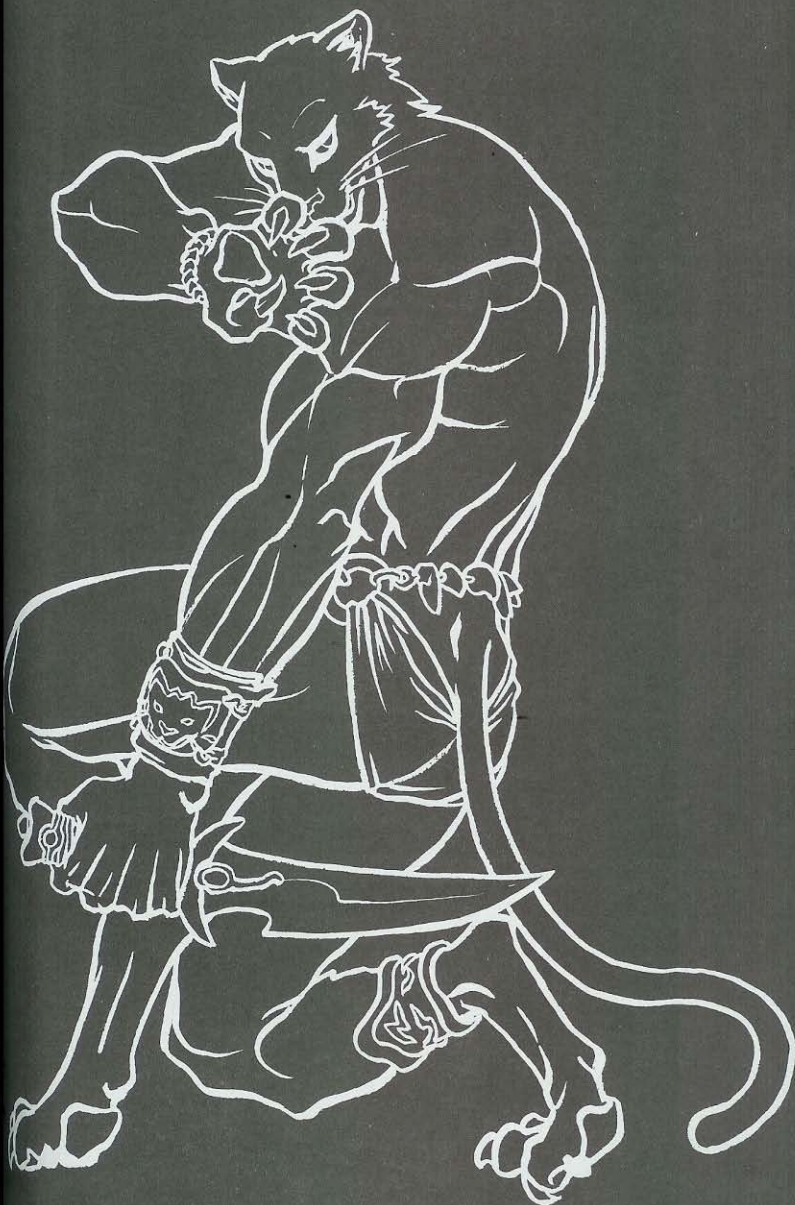


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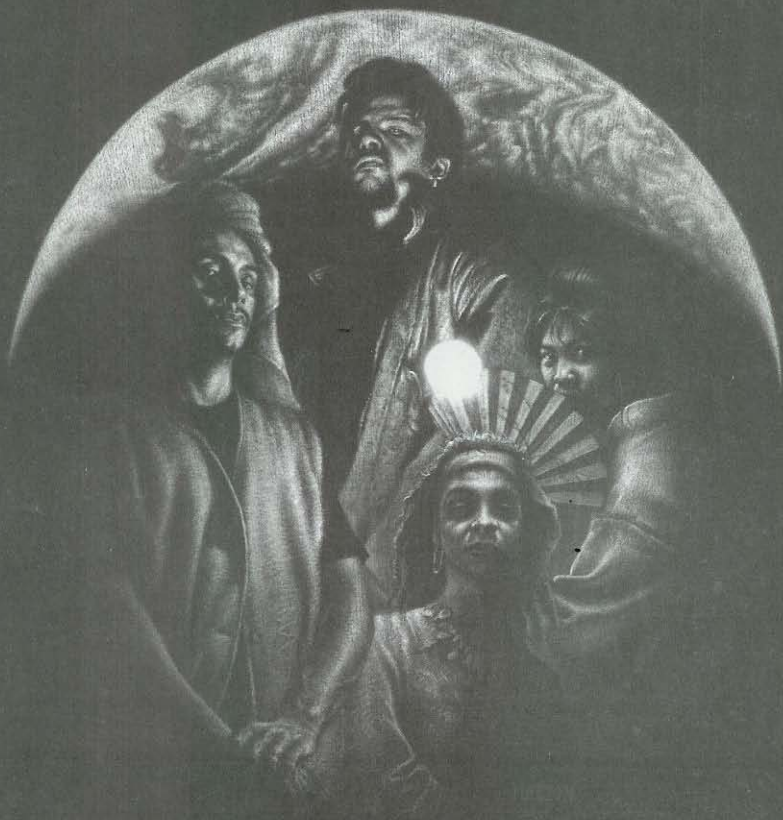
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FIVE YEARS IS A LONG TIME IN THE DARK.



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VALKENBURG FOUNDATION

...And so cure the disease and kill the patient.

— Francis Bacon





MCMXCLII

LEGENDS OF THE GAROU

The Shadow of the Wolf

*The other shape,
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint or limb,
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
For each seem'd either; black it stood as night...*
— Milton, *Paradise Lost*

*We come before the fires this night to remember.
We come not to dance, but to weep.
We weep for the Lost Garou, and we weep for our
future.*

*If we ever cease to remember, the danger will grow
again. The Wyrn festers when we forget.*

*This is a tale of a land far away and a time now
gone. I read to you now from the journals of Doctor
Leopold Valkenburg.*

January 20, 1913

Finally, all is complete. My first client comes tomorrow, at 9 o'clock sharp. The offices look good. I have just stood up to adjust the diploma on the wall. It would not be proper to usher my first client into an untidy study.

My client is a Mr. Jacob Hargast, who suffers from acute paranoia. The cause and cure for his condition has perplexed many a psychiatrist in Jena, but I feel that I know exactly what ails him.

I possess a heritage unknown to them, which allows me to look into many a mad face and know just wherein the madness lies. Our kind are not at home in this prim and proper world of European society. But through understanding and knowledge, I can at least help the unfortunates who crack under the pressure to find their way back to some semblance of health.

It was my immense success at the University that has allowed me to begin, so early on in my career, a private consulting practice. The reputation I made among the faculty of the University has ensured that I shall not want for clients.

I am weary now, for there has been much to do today. I had best finish this record and head off to bed, to begin afresh my first day as a consulting psychoanalyst.

I should first give the record of Mr. Hargast. In 1912, he was admitted to the Jena asylum for treatment of his condition. There, it was discovered that his paranoid fits only took place during the full moon. He is convinced, during this time, that beasts will come from the woods to snatch him away. Ah, if only they had! Then he could lead a well-adjusted life as what he truly is. I shall help in this respect — but not too early, for his mind is already under great pressure of fear. I must gently break the news to him of his heritage.

Tomorrow, then, I bring another into the fold.

January 21

A resounding success! After years of asylums and endless analysis, I have succeeded where others have failed. Mr. Hargast is cured, for I have shown him the cause of his fears and whereby they are real.

It was quite a shock to him. He had for years been told that he was mad, that his imaginings of beasts lurking on the periphery of his dream forests were but neurotic thoughts brought on by some as yet to be ascertained childhood fear. In this, they were only partially correct. A childhood fear, yes. A fear of his true self. It is not easily that modern man succumbs to the wild heart within him.

Mr. Hargast had come to believe that he was mad, that his delusions had no basis in reality. I was able to show him otherwise, by demonstrating to him the product of our rage, the shifting of form from man to wolf and back.

Oh, but I was most careful to ensure that I had gained Mr. Hargast's total and complete trust first. I had not planned on such an extreme demonstration so early on. I had thought it would take Mr. Hargast a number of sessions before I could reveal the truth to him. But I judged, after meeting him, that he was ready for it now. I took a gamble and it paid off. We must use intuition in these delicate matters just as much as reason, for are we not creatures of both worlds?

There, before his astonished eyes as he lay on the couch, I shifted to the Crinos and then to the Lupus. I pranced around on all fours and did acts that would prove that I still retained my self, my ego-center. Then, I shifted back to human form and resumed my talk with him. I believe it was my total candor and ease with my abilities that did the trick. I had enveloped the Change in a sense of wonder, and evoked for him a path by which he could release his fear and be free. He wanted so badly to do as I had done, to take the body of a wolf and roam wild.

Tonight, I take Hargast to the forest to run, to run as he should have long ago. There, the Children of Gaia shall meet him and ascertain his tribe. They will take over my job from here, for I believe Mr. Hargast is quite ready to be done with human society, with all its walls and doctors, and join his wilderness heritage.

Tonight then.

January 22

Very disturbing event last night.

I had taken Hargast to the woods, to fully introduce him to his Garou heritage. We had run in Lupus for some time through the pines, joyfully leaving our tracks behind in the snow. The new sights and smells were the best medicine for Hargast. All the years of crowded cells and bars fell away as the truth of Gaia was laid bare before him. He was healed.

I had begun to lead him to the meeting spot, the place appointed by Jeweled Tears, the leader of the Children of Gaia, when I saw them — the Red Talons, arrayed by the fallen log, hair bristling with low growls carrying over the breeze. Hargast whined in fear.

I yelled out to them, asking what they wanted, why where they here. The leader, who I knew to be Dark Blood Gushing, barked his reply: "Fool, Valkenburg! Fool you are to drag a Lunatic here. We shall not suffer it to live!"

I realized that I had to do more than counsel, more than merely talk for my patient. I would have to fight to defend him. Quickly, before he could bark a command to his pack, I began the Challenge, the howl that would force him to see to me before his pack could act against Hargast.

He growled his rage, for he knew what I had done. Nonetheless, he was confident that I could not hope to win against his battle-scarred self. I prepared for his attack, still wearing the form of wolf.

He launched himself towards me in an amazing leap. I jumped away, waiting for the moment of his landing, when he would have to, for a split second, regain his balance. I leapt in and knocked him over, timing it just right. As he fell, I jumped over him and whirled, latching onto his neck from behind. This he did not expect, for was I not that weakling Homid who preferred the city to the wild? The fool had forgotten that I am Stargazer, and thus wise to his ways.

He whined in pain as I locked my jaws tight, holding on as he jumped about trying to dislodge me. I knew that he would wait until the last moment to try shifting shape to throw me off. He was Red Talon, and believed he could win any battle in the Lupus form. I hoped that my hold would do enough damage before this tactic occurred to him.

I was right. He crumpled to the ground, blood leaking from his terrible wound all around my teeth. He whined his defeat, acknowledging my victory. I released him.

As I stood on weak legs, for I was exhausted, I saw his glower of infinite hatred directed at me. He could do nothing now, for even his pack would turn against him if he denied the Challenge instinct, but I knew his hatred would fester. I had made a powerful enemy.

The Children of Gaia broke into the clearing. They had heard my cry and arrived as soon as they could. With derisive howls, they drove off the Red Talons, who slunk away into the forest.

I turned to Hargast. He was staring at me in wonder, now in human form. What kind of being was I, who held forth equally well in the analyst's study and on the battlefield?

I approached him and explained that he was now free to go with the Children, who would give him the Rite of Passage, whereby he could claim his Garou heritage. He thanked me and claimed that he owed me too much to ever be counted. He swore a sort of fealty to me then, claiming that if ever I needed aid he would never refuse it, no matter his condition. I thanked him for it.

I was tired, and turned my weary legs home.

I have an enemy now, one who will never stop in preventing me from my work. I fear for those poor Lunatics he finds before I can.

February 15

It has been too long since I have updated this journal. In light of my patient of tomorrow, I had best do so.

The last month or so has been taken up with my day-to-day patients, the ones I need to pay the bills. If only I could concentrate on Garou entirely, I could perhaps come to an answer for our problem much sooner. Most Garou do not have a penny to speak of — except for my next client. But more on him later.

Most of my patients are suffering from tediously boring human problems. It disgusts me at times, how banal they can be. I have, whenever I can, recommended country retreats to them,

claiming the medicinal value of such sabbaticals. Many have returned from these trips much refreshed and ready to again resume their lives. They carry with them a deep love of nature ever after. Others, however, return with a particularly bad experience, such as a snake bite or twisted ankle. Thankfully, these few show no desire to use my services again.

There are those, however, who make me realize how important my work with humans is. Some return from their retreat with the full realization of how real the natural world is and how false their villages and cities are. These usually quit their jobs and take positions that get them closer to their newly beloved country life. These are the few who Gaia saves.

But about my patient tomorrow. It proves to be a fascinating case. It is none other than Baron Von Kulk, somewhat famed of late for his strange and eccentric behavior. He has long been a most steady and regular man, well known and liked by all. But this changed on his recent trip to the Alps.

Since his journey and return, the Baron has been acting increasingly imbalanced. He is known now to engage in temper tantrums that are uncontrollable by his friends and family. He keeps strange hours, spending long nights watching the moon, drooling into his cups all the while his gaze is fixed on fair Phoebe.

Some gossips say that it was the altitudes that unhinged him so, others say that it is a madness that runs in his family. I, however, know the true cause of his seeming lunacy. His manservant, Gustav, who approached me for the family, explained in confidence what he had seen in the mountains with his master.

Their carriage had been chased by wolves, who descended out of the swirling mists of snow and ice to run howling behind the fast-moving vehicle. It was all the driver could do to keep the horses in line. Baron Von Kulk looked out the window and into the eyes of the wolves, whereupon he yelled out in shock. "Gustav! The wolf — it is a man running on all fours!"

At this point the carriage ran onto a thin bridge and thundered away over a gaping pass. The wolves did not follow. After this incident, the Baron became quite agitated and grew obsessed with his own hygiene. He would stare at his palms for long periods, muttering something about hair growing. He would stare into a mirror and worriedly trim his eyelashes, muttering about their growing together.

Well, all this behavior is obviously the sign of a Garou who has never gone through his Change. I bid Gustav bring him to me, and I assured him of a cure.

Finally, an interesting and important case.

February 18

Baron Von Kulk, I fear, is proving to be a very tough case. I had my first session with him yesterday. He is in a terrible state. He is a very restrained and willful man who is channeling all his

reserve into denying his Change. Of course, he does not know this. He believes he is fighting against an inner daemon, a passionate urge to succumb to sin.

It is his upbringing that has ill-prepared him for this event. He was brought up to be a stern and disciplined Prussian lord. Thoughts and urges, such as have been occurring of late, have no place in his world. They must be denied.

But he *cannot* deny these urges. He does not realize they are telling him what he really is. They are not seeds planted by the Devil, but instincts gifted by Gaia. I shall have to be careful with him, so as not to drive him towards madness.

There is a hope, a course that has presented itself to me through interview. It seems the Baron has been having vivid dreams. Some of these he remembers, others not. I will begin analyzing his dream content. These will surely give me a sign of Gaia's grace, a message on how Baron Von Kulk can come to his heritage whole.

February 20

I began Baron Von Kulk's dream analysis today.

I had bid him before to try and remember his dreams, and to write them down, with no editing, to describe them as they were. He did this, as he does everything, diligently.

His dream was fascinating and revealing. He found himself in a dark forest. He looked about and saw his ancestral castle on a ridge above him, towering over the pines. It was a place far away and beyond his reach, a holy mountain sanctuary. He could not hope to get there, caught in the wild as he was.

He tried nonetheless and soon heard the howling of wolves on his path. He was quite scared and kept running around, looking for signs of them. Finally, he found the path leading up to the summit. He hurried up it, but as he passed only a few yards, the wolves broke through the forest edge behind him, slaving and howling. They pursued him madly, surely out for his blood.

He awoke as the first wolf reached him.

This dream is full of the symbology I expected. His family home, the place of his worldly position, is seen as a far sanctuary, now lost. The wolves are his dangerous pursuers and he is their prey. They represent to him sin, fast overtaking his strongly-willed reserve.

I must convince him to stay and confront the wolves, for they obviously represent his hidden Garou-ness, the wolf in all of our kind.

I will see him tomorrow and help him through a controlled dream experiment, using mild hypnosis.

February 21

A complete failure. Damn the Prussian pride! I almost got my patient to open up, but at the last moment, he mustered all his discipline — and that ruined the dream. I had tried to get him to

reach a state of accepting unconsciousness, but the Baron, like most men of this time, greatly fears his own inner proddings. He is viciously conscious at all times.

We began the treatment with a mild hypnosis. Once he was in a relaxed state, I guided him again, by softly speaking, through his dream of the wolves and the castle. All went fine until the wolves arrived and I urged him to stand his ground and stare them down. He could not. His fear was too great.

However, I believe his wolfen demons are more than mere phantasms of the mind. Von Kulk's will is so great that I believe he has succeeded in turning his Garou-ness, the inner wolf, into a truly demonic force. He has willed it into an autonomy, a life of its own. I believe it is quite real and that is how I must combat it.

My patient is too weak to do this on his own, and hence I shall. I shall step into his dream world, into the Chimare I am sure is there, created of his own powerful will. And there I will force him to change his views.

February 22

The minds of the near-mad are fascinating places. Baron Von Kulk is well on his way to recovery.

I have just sat back and read what I wrote. Minds — places? Yes, at least for this patient.

I performed the same hypnosis as before, except this time setting the Baron into a sleep state. I then stared myself at the shining watch by which I had hypnotized him. Once the view cleared and the Gauntlet opened, I stepped into the spirit world of Von Kulk's dreams.

There I stood, in that pine forest, below the summit with the castle. And there was Von Kulk, heading for the path upwards. I called to him and he turned and smiled. "Doctor, what are you doing here? Am I only dreaming?"

"Yes. It's only a dream. Relax," I replied.

But then the wolves howled and he stared about in fear.

"They are only wolves, Baron," I said. "You can fight them off, master them."

I had appealed to his pride, and I could see it had affected him. He stood, his chest out and looked as if he were considering it. But his face fell as the wolves broke from the woods.

I turned to look at them. I was right. Impressed with Von Kulk's fearful imaginings, they had demonic life of their own. They rushed towards him, ready for the kill. Before Von Kulk could act, I assumed the Crinos form and tore into them, scattering them aside, slicing them with claws.

They were things of the spirit, and their essences evaporated as I struck them with all my strength. Soon, the clearing was empty of them. I stood and turned to watch the Baron, who stared at me gape-jawed.

"Master the wolf, Baron. Become the wolf."

Before he could awaken, I slipped away and stepped again into my office. I assumed a normal, relaxed guise, and was waiting comfortably as my patient slowly arose from his deep sleep. He looked at me in astonishment and began to tell me about this amazing dream he had just had.

When his description was over, I explained to him that he needed to return and we would talk more on the meaning of this dream. I could not tell him the truth yet, that the dream had its own physical reality, for too many shocks at once would not be good for this patient.

I see him again in two days.

February 24

Very bad turn of events. I cannot figure out what has happened.

The Baron returned, in quite an awful state. He had a terrible dream. I asked him to describe it to me.

The night he left my office, he dreamt again of the woods and the castle. This time, the wolves lay dead and nothing could keep Kulk from the castle. He walked up the path and finally arrived. But there was no one there. The family and servants were gone. He walked all around, calling them but receiving no answer. Finally he came to the great hall.

There, a fire roared in the fireplace and a figure sat in the huge chair. Von Kulk could not see him, for the back of the chair was facing him. He cried out to him, demanding that this obvious stranger identify himself. The figure put down a glass of wine and began to turn around.

At this point the Baron broke down and could not describe anymore. I administered him a brandy, to soothe his nerves, and desperately impressed upon him the importance of continuing his account.

He explained that he felt this figure was a being, like a Devil, who was threatening him with his sins.

And how could I say otherwise? I was perplexed. This was something I never expected.

I bid him come again later today, when I shall be ready to again enter his dreams and discover the secret of this mysterious figure.

February 26

Good god. What have I done?

Perhaps they were right all along, that this psychology of mine is a doomed venture. Fool that I am, I believed that thinking alone could solve dilemmas. I thought that by delving deep into a mind, I could reveal wounds and thus heal them, simply by shedding the light of consciousness upon them.

But we are Garou; our wounds are too deep and should never be gazed upon.

I will record the event:

The Baron came to my office for another session. I had thought some more on his new dilemma and came to the conclusion that the figure in the chair was another of his massively repressed psychological contents, given life by the very power he used to deny them conscious sway. I had decided to again enter his Chimare and combat his demons.

I knew this was necessary. It boded well for the Baron that he, for so long unaware of his heritage, could still create a Chimare of his dream self. I surmised that his moon was the crescent, for only a born Theurge can weave such a feat unconsciously.

All went well going in. The Baron succumbed to the hypnosis easily and the step past the Gauntlet was smooth and timely. I stood at the bottom of the path. The Baron was nowhere to be found. I had planned it this way, through simple hypnotic commands as I put him under. I wanted to handle this without interference from his ego.

My climb towards the castle went quickly; the heights were largely illusory. I entered the castle with no trouble, for the doors were open. I wandered from room to room seeking the lounge where the figure sat. After multiple, maze-like hallways, I finally found it.

All was as the Baron described. The figure reclined in the plush chair sipping wine. It was a silhouette before the fire's flames. I could not identify it.

I called out, demanding it show itself, declare who it was. And, as in the Baron's dream, it began to turn.

I shuddered. It was a being of pure shadow. No features on its face — no face at all. Yet I could sense its gaze, coming not from eyes — for there were no eyes — but from the inky void of its self.

"What are you?" I asked.

"I am that which you have always sought. I am the heart of madness at the crossroads, the 'x' that marks where wolf and man meet. I am the dark spectre of what could have been but was not. I am the pain of that failure. I am the dark side of the moon."

As it spoke, I stared at it. It had form, a human shape, but was naught but void. I knew it to be a creature, an entity of the spirit realms, but never before had I seen one such as this. This was wholly different, and I feared that it was Incarna or even more powerful.

"Think not to banish me with your incantations and power words. I am the heart of all the sickness you attempt to cure. You have driven me from others, but now I have you in my realm."

"Liar! You have no realm, but only roost in others'. You creep in, hidden in the shadow of forgotten fears, and set your den. You are filth and scavenger."

"Speak not like this to me! I am within you also, Valkenburg."

I felt a cold chill deep in my guts. It spread up my spine and I was engulfed in memories long repressed, thoughts long denied. There was my father, a harsh man, whipping me as a child simply because he had nothing else to take his anger out upon. I

felt the pain of that moment and cried. I tried to flee, but the shadow was all about me, whipping me as my father had.

But I was not a child any longer. I was a man — no, a Garou. And I was angry.

My rage grew with every lash of its shadowy whip, and the torment faded as the anger exploded and I instantly took the shape of rage, the form of Crinos. I roared and tore into it, ripping shreds of inky substance from it.

It screamed, and I knew it was weak. Its power lay in its ability to scare, to cause fear and dread. In the frenzy of rage, I could not fear, and it had no power over me.

It disappeared, but it was not gone. I sensed it, somewhere, close but far. I suddenly realized what it had done, what it was capable of. I cast about, looking for a passage back, away from the realm. I saw the discarded wine glass, lying on the floor before the raging fire. I focused on the reflections ignited by the flickering flames and the way opened before me. I stepped out of the Chimare just as the Chimare ceased to be.

The Baron sat on the couch, awake. But he was not the normal Baron. He leered evilly at me as his clothes began to tear, too small for his new mass as he took the Crinos. The room grew dark with his very presence. The shadow itself could not kill me, but a Garou possessed by that shadow could try.

The Baron launched himself at me. I could not move aside in time and was hurled to the floor by his blow. He reared back to throw a powerful punch but I rolled aside.

I could not risk this combat here, in my offices. The noise would surely bring others, and I could not count on the ages-old Veil to effectively hide our secret. I flung myself at the window and fell to the street along with the raining shards of shattered glass. I heard his roar above me and whirled to see him ready to leap.

I ran through the streets, which were darkening already as the sun went down. Behind me, I could hear his labored panting as he followed. I could tell the shadow being was pushing Von Kulk past his limits. He was strong but too new at this. He had never before run as the Crinos.

I took the back ways, trying to get to the wooded expanse outside of the town before any saw us. I heard a scream behind, though, and knew that Von Kulk had been seen. I turned to see if he was still behind me, and barely moved aside in time to avoid his rushing form. I caught a quick glimpse of a fraulein fainting to the cobbled ground and sped off down another street as Von Kulk followed.

Through my superior knowledge of the streets, I was able to easily reach the woods before him, and I set myself to covering my trail, in the hopes that I could ambush him by coming up from behind. I counted on his ignorance of tracking instinct in this. But I did not have time to finish my plan.

As I listened, Von Kulk's clumsy forest thrashings ceased. Then came his roar of hate, followed by a strange howl of rage. This was quickly followed by a group howl. They were here — the Red Talons.

I rushed to the source of the noise, hoping desperately to stop the slaughter, to try to save Von Kulk not only from the Shadow

being but from his own kind. The one-on-one challenge had turned to a group melee by the time I broke into the small clearing.

But it was not as I expected. Von Kulk lay on the ground, grievously wounded, but doing nothing. As I watched, the Red Talon pack tore into their leader, Dark Blood Gushing. How could this be? I looked closer and realized what had happened. A dark shadow encompassed the features of Dark Blood Gushing, as if the light were blocked from his face. He was possessed by the Shadow.

Before I could take any action, the Shadow passed from his face only to darken the face of one of his packmates. She roared horribly and tore into her pack. They were tearing themselves up to get at the spirit being.

I had to stop this. I pulled my watch from my vest, which I had prepared to withstand the rigors of shapeshifting and Umbral passages. I held it to the moon and adjusted it until it caught the light, sending off a sharp reflection and then I stared. I stared until the secrets of the worlds became one and I was more spirit than flesh, but yet both together. I stepped into the Umbra and beheld the Shadow of our selves.

As it saw me enter its world, it ceased its possession. It stared at me and I stared back. And then it laughed.

"All right, Valkenburg. This is not to be decided here. You have set your lifelong course against me. You will find, however, that no matter how hard a light you shine at my being, I will always elude you and return when you are weakest."

It disappeared, becoming mere wisps of darkness in the gloom and then not even that. I looked about for any clues that might betray where it had gone. There was no trace, however, that it had ever been there.

I stepped again from the spirit world and into the physical. The Red Talons stood checking their wounds. Some bled very badly, their wounds not sealing, for they had been inflicted by Garou claw. Dark Blood Gushing turned and looked at me. Never have I seen such raw hate and anger. He was wounded, however, and knew he was no match for me now.

"Valkenburg...I will revenge myself on you," he said. "You brought this thing to us. The stench of the Wyrms is all about your Lunatic child. The Children cannot save you from my revenge."

The Red Talons turned and marched deeper into the woods, aiding their limping packmates, but all delivered a searing glance at me before they left.

I picked up the now-catatonic body of Von Kulk and departed.

It is over for me here now. It is only a matter of time before Dark Blood Gushing's wounds are healed to where he will risk a Challenge. Even were I to win, his packmates would never cease to harass me. They would attack my patients. I cannot allow that.

Von Kulk was admitted to the asylum yesterday. I signed the papers myself and described his acute catatonia as a result of long-repressed childhood trauma. This isn't a full lie. If he had undergone his Change at the proper moment in youth, he would have never been open to possession by the Shadow entity.

I am unsure of what to do now.

February 29

I have given much thought to the matter. If I were to give in now, the Shadow will have won. I must continue my work. There is too much good that can come out of it.

But not here. I am through here. I cannot aid others, for any who I associate with will become the enemy of the Red Talons. I cannot inflict that on anyone.

I have decided to leave, to travel elsewhere and set up my practice anew. I have asked the Silent Striders to seek out a place for me. I am hopeful that they will return with news soon.

I must beware, however, not to let my guard down from this point on. We have something inside of us which attracts this thing, this shadow beast. Is it the dichotomy between man and wolf? Is it from the dark abyss between our two selves that this thing arises?

When we cast a light into the darkness of ourselves, we create shadows. These things have a life of their own, hidden from our view, playing their games in the dark periphery of us. We must beware this Shadow of the wolf.

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Back Cover: Chris MacDonough, Joshua Gabriel Timbrook

Special Thanks

Benjamin "Bad Moon Rising" Monk, Jr. for being a bad boy.

Rob "Fatty" Hatch for going up to 98 lbs. — thanks Charles Atlas!

William "Alcatraz" Hale for endangering the roads with only one headlight.

Rene "Toys" Lilly for the her upteenth trip to Germany.

Travis "This is my job, dammit" Williams for his in-depth "research" on computer games.

Josh "Thanks for the mammaries" Timbrook for what the Black Furies don't have in Crinos form.

Sam "Oh, well" Chupp for putting up with a few dents.

Chris "Belligerent" McDonough for smacking, jacking and kracking.

Stewart "Headbanger" Wieck for doing something wacky.

Mark "Gonnnngg!" Rein•Hagen for actually making Ben deaf.

Wes "Emperor" Harris for still having no clothes (thanks Delta!).

Ken "I don't want *your* girlfriend, I want *his* girlfriend!" Cliffe for being missundertood.

Andrew "Tab-head" Greenberg for still pushing that game relic.

Lyndi "R.I.P." Hathaway for listening to Ben's Blood Pit advice.

Richard "It's Doc! It's Doc!" Thomas for discovering the photos of Steve Holland in the Comic Buyers Guide — hey, that really is the Bronze Knight of the Running Boards!

Michelle "Random Destination" Prahler for choosing Atlanta over Chicago.



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A Word From White Wolf

Well, we have another full-time fool — er, employee. Michelle Prahler has joined the production department, the dark pit down the hall where our evil books are layed out, typeset, misstyped and filled full of art. Good luck, Michelle, on the computer and on the four-square court!



Contents

- Legends of the Garou: Shadow of the Wolf* 3
From the journals of Doctor Leopold Valkenburg, founder of the Valkenburg Foundation.
- Introduction* 13
The history, geography and people of the Foundation, including the inmates.
- Story One: When the Wolfsbane Blooms* 21
The characters are recruited to become the Questing Pack.
- Story Two: Hostile Takeover* 29
The Pack goes to New York to bring back an escaped Lunatic — but this Lunatic has allies both in the corporate boardrooms and on the grimy streets.
- Story Three: Skins* 45
The Pack befriends a group of Lunatic lupus only to later discover them dead and skinned — the work of Samuel Haight, a Kinfolk whose plan is to gain full Garou heritage at the cost of other's lives.
- Story Four: Weird Science* 59
The Pack travels to the northwest to free a Lunatic from imprisonment in a government laboratory. Where Science and the Wyld meet, anything can happen.
- Story Five: Dark Union* 79
The dark secret of the Foundation is revealed. The Pack must ally with the insidious Black Spiral Dancers to avert the coming disaster.
- Appendix: Characters* 93
The staff of the Foundation and the antagonists who are attempting to destroy their work.



Introduction

No lesson seems to be so deeply inculcated by the experience of life as that you should never trust experts. If you believe the doctors, nothing is wholesome...

— Lord Salisbury, "Letter to Lord Lytton"

Doctors?! No Doctors!

— Baron Munchausen, *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*

In the wide land of Wyoming there exists an institute dedicated to the care and healing of mental patients, patients who are particularly dangerous and violent and usually of multiple personality. Local residents stay well away from this place, knowing how dangerous the inmates are, for many are famed in tabloid lore for their brutal crimes.

They have good reason for their fear, for these patients are indeed mad. But madness alone could not cause their feats of terror and derangement. Only the blood of the Changing Breed can cause such rage. Only the Lunatic Garou are so crazed.

The institute, called the Valkenburg Foundation, is dedicated to the healing of these poor Garou, those who had no one to aid them in the First Change. Alone and unsure of the horrible feelings they experienced, these Garou resisted their natural urges with supreme willpower. They resisted the Change and their heritage thereof. However, no amount of willpower can be marshaled to deny one's very nature; the strain broke them, leaving them with shattered personalities.

The Garou call these unfortunates Lunatics. Many times have they been born to wolf or human, unknown to their Garou relatives. Either the watchful Kin Fetch could not find them, or

the vast migrations of the Garou over the years have separated them from their Kin.

Many Garou do their best to help these lost souls whenever they are found, but most often it is too late. Garou are forced to kill them, to protect the Veil and prevent them falling into the maw of the Wyrn.

However, there is a place where these Lunatics can be taken for attempted cures: the Valkenburg Foundation. Based in the wilderness of Wyoming, the Foundation gathers Lunatics from all over, extracting them from human or wolf society. They are then brought to the institute, for study to help them adjust to their nature.

Often it is too late for the Lunatics to adjust to being shapechangers. In these cases, the Foundation works to make them comfortable with only one of their forms, Lupus or Homid. They then release them into their form's natural environment, keeping a silent watch on them for the first few months.

Their cure success rate has been phenomenal. But this has not avoided the raging controversy among the Garou as to the Foundation's right to exist. The Foundation administrators are almost all homid, which has brought the hate of the Red Talons

onto them. Many lupus doubt the need for the institute. They believe the Lunatics must be allowed to die or thrive as their mad nature allows. If death be their fate, so be it, but otherwise the Garou should not interfere. They further argue that, by releasing them back into society or the wilderness, they risk the blood line, tainting it with sick blood.

Homids, however, argue otherwise, with help from the Children of Gaia. They see reform of the Lunatics to be healthy for the Garou. In this time of dwindling population, they believe that any Garou is worth saving.

This Book

Valkenburg Foundation is a sourcebook for **Werewolf: the Apocalypse**, providing a short chronicle for the Storyteller, including five full stories meant to be played in chronological order.

Characters from a pre-existing chronicle can be used (such as **Rage Across New York**), in which case the storyteller should see the section "Getting To Valkenburg", in the first story, to see how he can bring the characters into the game.

Theme

I've suffered the tortures of the damned!

— Larry Talbot (Lon Chaney Jr. as the Wolfman),
House of Frankenstein

The overall theme of the Valkenburg Foundation is lunacy. Deviant psychological behavior is what the Foundation was founded to handle. Its patients are the "wolfmen" of popular legend, those who believe they are "cursed" with lycanthropy, received through the bite of a werewolf or some other mysterious circumstance.

Think of *The Wolfman* movie, where Lon Chaney Jr. is bitten by a wolf and thus cursed to become a mad wolf himself. But what if he was already a werewolf, one of the Garou who had not yet gone through his First Change and was unaware of his true nature? The bite of the wolf was the catalyst for his unconscious to begin the Change, but his ego denied it violently—driving him into a battle with himself, played out as civilized man versus wild beast.

The key to this theme is the idea that the battle, based on the division between man and beast, is false. There really is no conflict, if only the Garou would recognize his true nature. It is actually rational and "Victorian" thought which has created this false dichotomy.

The sub-theme is of the book is "Knowledge, Without Compassion, Corrupts." Somewhere along the way the members of the Foundation became more interested in learning from their subjects rather than helping them — and the Wyrms crawled in through the hole in their hearts.

The staff lost sight of the goal of medicine: helping others. They became much more interested in studying their charges, to

discover what could be learned about the Garou. A noble goal indeed, but it became their first step towards cold cynicism.

The Mood

The mood changes with each story. It begins with hope, but ends in disgust. The Foundation seems to be the answer for all the poor Garou who could not change, but soon the answer raises too many questions.

The halls of the Foundation should always have a feel of madness lurking. Behind every cell is a Garou struggling with their very identity and sanity. It is an unsettling place.

The Foundation

History

Doctor Leopold Valkenburg was one of the premier analysts in early twentieth century Switzerland. He was also Garou. Leopold's Change had come late in his life, well after he had already achieved degrees in Philosophy, Philology and Medicine. He used his intelligence and learning to look at his new nature in a way no Garou had before. He brought science to the study of the werewolf.

He knew, however, that the Veil must not be pierced. He set out to study his race to further the Garou's chances of survival, and to understand how Garou and humans could relate, in hope of an eventual end to the Veil. He had already been making a name for himself in the new science of psychoanalysis, and he turned his skills to a study of the Garou. It was not long before he became obsessed with the Garou Lunatics.

Psychoanalysis at the time was based entirely on the study of the abnormal, in an attempt to understand normal behavior. Valkenburg followed in the footsteps of his fellow psychologists in this study. He felt that, if one could understand the emotional trauma wrought by denial of the Change, one could understand more of the connection between wolf and man.

He gained the scorn of the local Red Talons, who despised his study, seeing it as dangerous and insidious to the lupus. However, the Children of Gaia supported his studies, and he was able to continue without fear of Garou reprisals.

Valkenburg encountered a terrible Wyrms creature in his studies, one which cast a dark shadow on all his work and brought the enmity of the Red Talons full force against him. Valkenburg decided to move his Foundation to North America, where he could avoid the anger of the Red Talons and do greater work among the needy, frontier Garou.

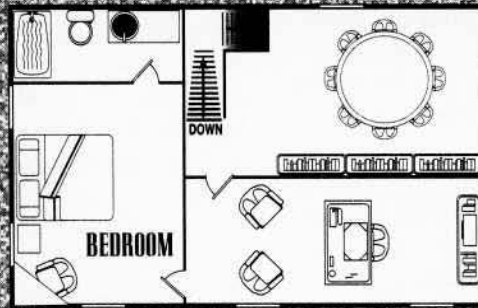
He sent out Silent Strider scouts to search for a place to begin the work anew. They returned speaking of a land called Wyoming, one of the hardy frontier states of America. Valkenburg packed his bags and traveled by ship to the new land of promise.

He first went about making allies among the local Garou, and soon won over the Pure Heart Sept. The sept had largely been

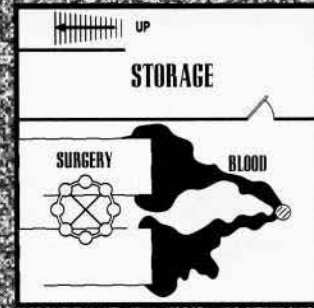
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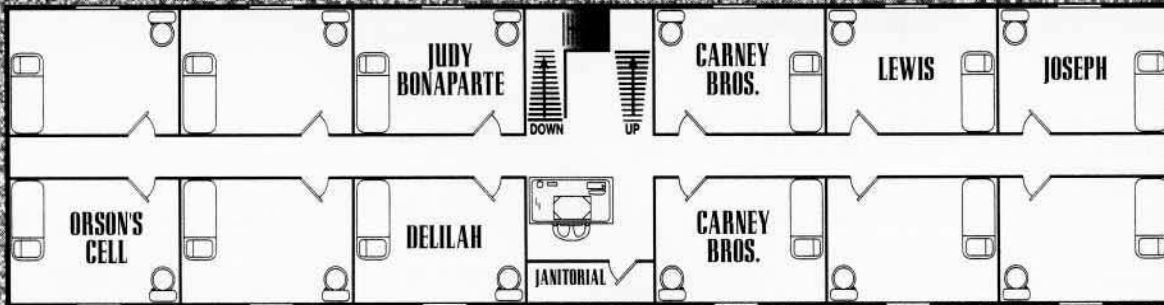
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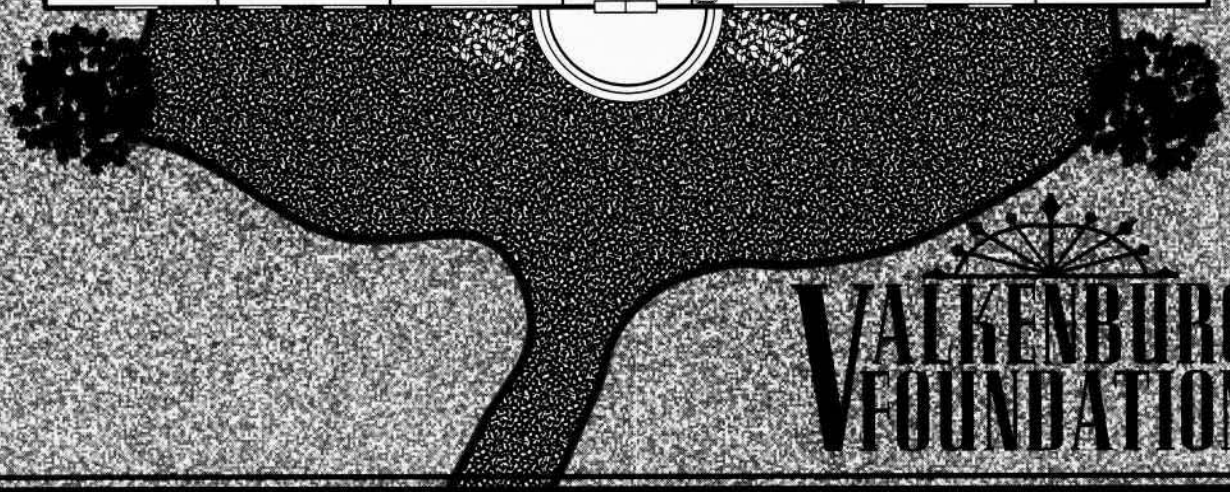
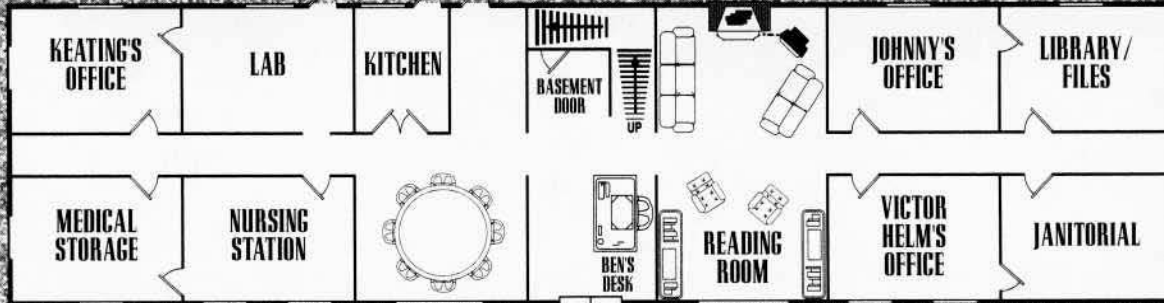
BASEMENT



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GROUND FLOOR



**VALKENBURG
FOUNDATION**

mating with diseased humans, which caused many of their children to be born wrong. They welcomed Valkenburg as a savior, one who would reclaim the mad souls again for their sept.

They ensured he would have frequent access to their Moon Bridge. Using his family fortune, he bought a ranch and set about converting it to hold his patients.

The Foundation did well, with a steady influx of Lunatics from the local Wendigo tribes. Eventually, however, the tribe overcame its malaise. Valkenburg ran out of patients. He then set young packs forth to find Lunatics for him and bring them back for a cure.

In the late '30s, however, Valkenburg's fate finally caught up with him; he lost a vicious battle with one of his deranged patients. He died lying in his own blood as the Lunatic smashed through the reinforced windows and ran off into the night.

Valkenburg's aides (all Kinfolk) shut down the Foundation and moved into the nearby towns. It was not until the 1980s that the Foundation was again reopened, this time by Gretchen Valkenburg, Leopold's granddaughter. Gretchen was not full Garou, but only Kinfolk. A Lunatic ran rampant about the area, and Gretchen rose to the challenge to cure him. For this she needed the Foundation. She reopened the old ranch, long deserted, and began again the work of her grandfather.

She discovered that the need for the Foundation was greater now than before, for record numbers of lost cubs were being discovered. She thus set the Foundation up for a long period of work, work which continues to this day.

The Ranch and Grounds

The Foundation is run out of the Valkenburg ranch. The old ranch has been added to since Valkenburg first bought it. Two wings extend off a central, great hall, with two floors on each of the wings and three floors in the central hall, in addition to a basement level (a converted cellar). Inmates' cells are on the top floor of the west and east wings, and offices and laboratories are on the ground floors of both wings. The upper floor of the main hall holds Gretchen's office and living quarters.

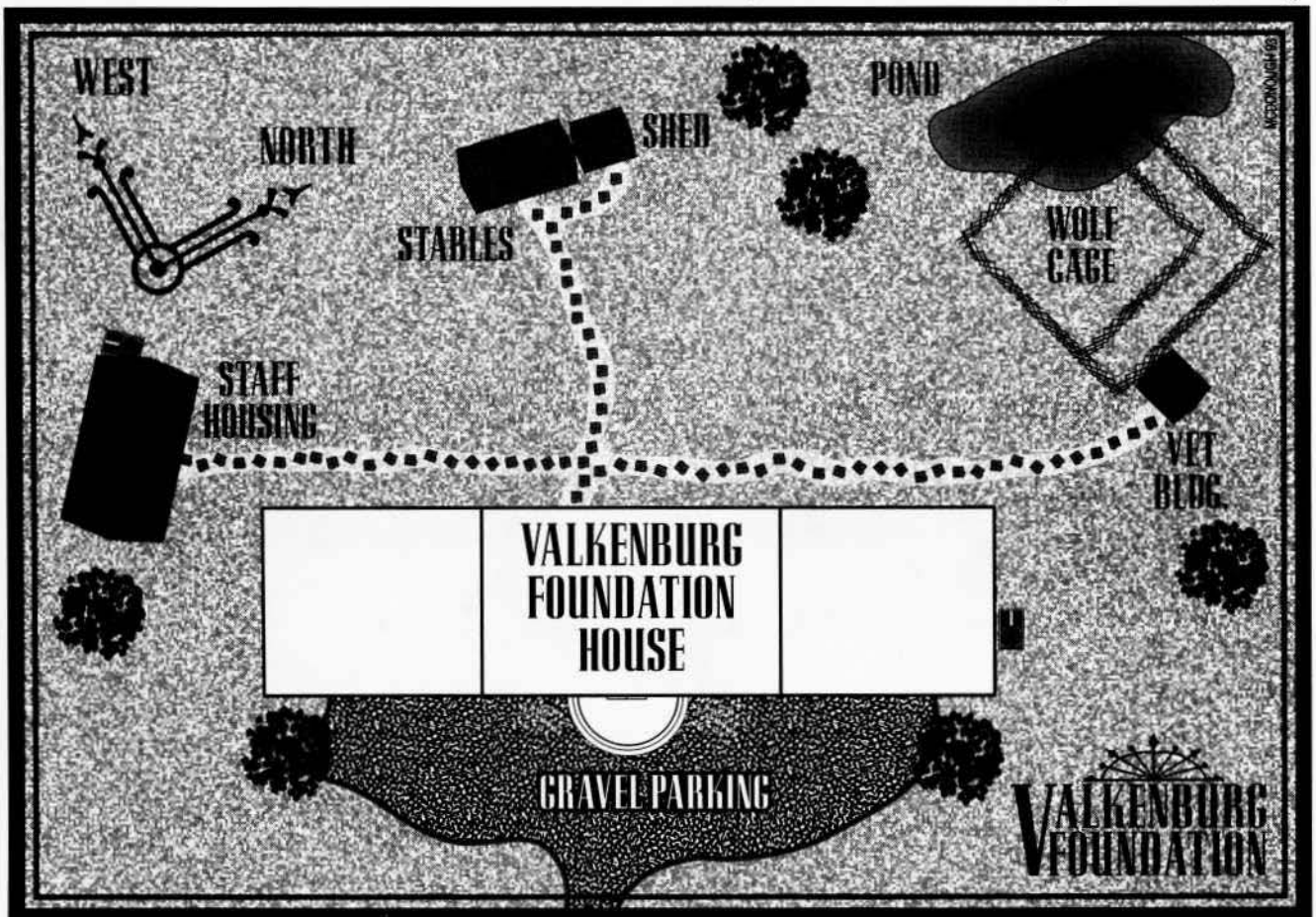
On the surrounding land is a shed, where grounds equipment is kept, along with stables which hold three horses. A large cage for housing wolves is adjacent to a veterinary office. The staff lives in a ranch house nearby. There is a dirt parking lot to the front of the ranch, where the staff's cars are parked.

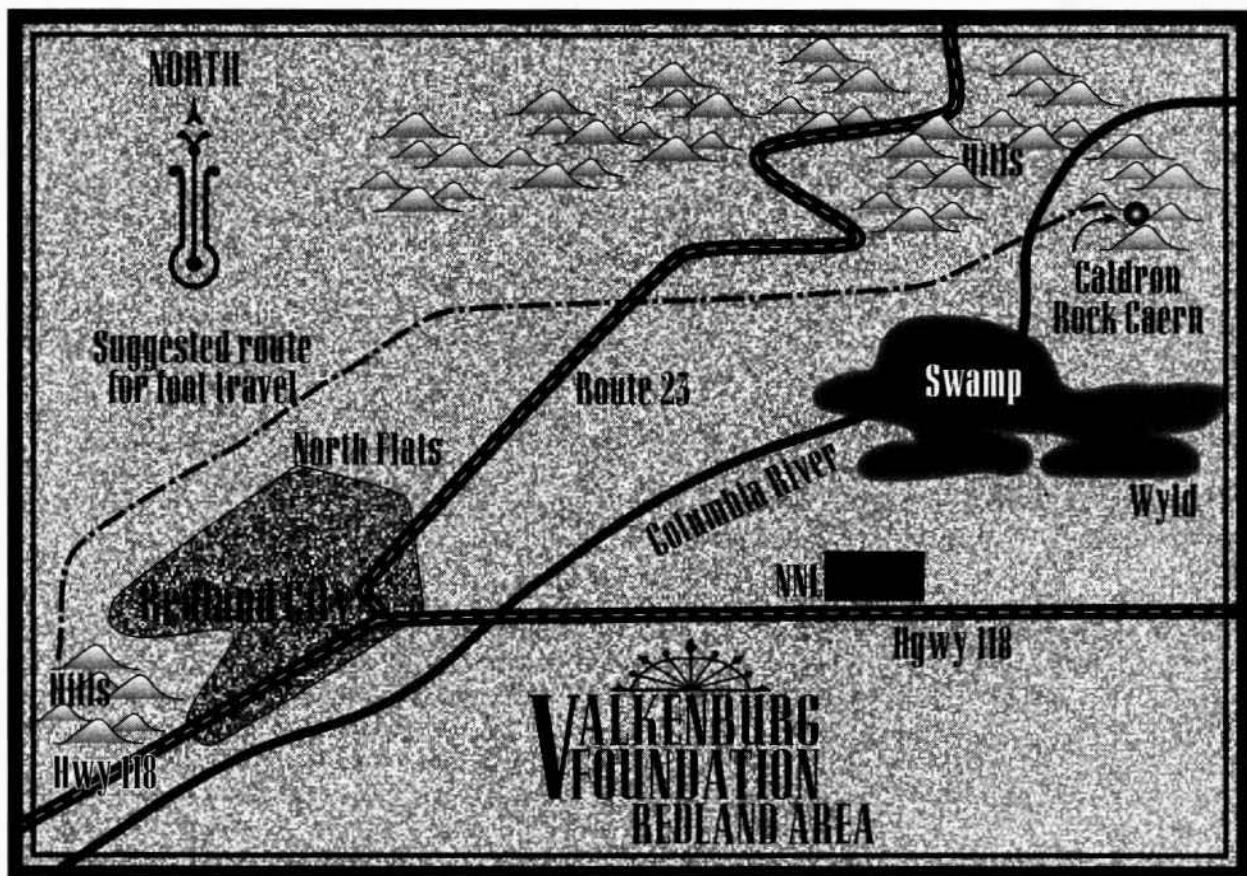
Surrounding the ranch are open plains in all directions, with Devil's Tower to the east. Only one road leads to the ranch, a winding, single lane gravel road, connecting back to a local highway. The closest towns are Oshoto to the south and New Haven to the north.

To the east, in the Black Hills National Forest, is the Pure Heart Sept.

The Pure Heart Sept

The local Garou society is gathered in the Black Hills National Forest, around an ancient caern. The sept is multi-tribal, although





Wendigo make up the most populous tribe, followed by Children of Gaia.

There are no Shadow Lords. They were forced out a few years back, after a bid for power went wrong, bringing Banes into the forests. It is rumored that some of the Red Talons are dealing with them, promising that they can return if they discover any "dirt" on the Foundation, dirt that would prove the Foundation is bad. For now, the leaders are Wendigo, with the Children of Gaia being very influential.

The chieftain of the sept is Taka-kané, an old Wendigo who led the sept through the troublesome years of the seventies, when upheavals among the Kinfolk brought national attention to the area. Gretchen Valkenburg has won his respect, and thus he honors the ancient accord his sept made with Doctor Valkenburg (one of the few "European" pacts the sept still upholds). This allows the Questing Pack to use the sept's Moon Bridge.

The caern has lost power over the years, and the sept Theurges claim it is because of the loss of sacred land to their Kinfolk. The caern is now level three, though remembrances from the very old claim it was once much more powerful.

The sept's totem is the Great Elk, once a spirit of great power, but now diminishing as the years pass and real elk slowly die. The sept thus defends any elk, treating them as sacred, for if they die, the sept's totem does likewise.

Devil's Tower, while not a caern, is a very sacred site to the Garou. On certain nights, the Gauntlet is thin and great spirits return to visit their throne of old.

The Wolves

Once Valkenburg has "cured" a lupus, they release it again into the wild. This is not exactly legal, so the Foundation tries to keep it quiet. Many local farmers would turn their money and influence against the Foundation if they knew, for their sheep have sometimes been victimized by these wolf newcomers.

The Foundation feels responsible for these wolves and thus Gretchen has set up a lobby group in Washington to fight for the wolves' rights in the area.

The Questing Pack

To find the Lunatics in need of the Foundation's aid, Silent Strider scouts are dispatched over the continent (sometimes the world) to investigate rumors that may involve Lunatics. If the rumors are true, they return to inform the Foundation, who then dispatches their Questing Pack to retrieve the lost cub.

The Questing Pack is a young pack seeking Renown by serving the Foundation's needs. Their missions most often involve the recovery of Lunatics, but sometimes they must go forth to protect the Veil, which means slaying Lunatics if necessary. They are the all-purpose military force of the Foundation.

The most recent Questing Pack were all tragically killed on a mission for the Foundation, in mysterious circumstances which Gretchen and Lucius are still looking into.

The object of this book is for the characters to become the new Questing Pack.

The Staff

Valkenburg has a full-time staff that lives on the grounds. These are all Garou, well-prepared to deal with Lunatics. See the Appendix for the write-ups on the people of the Valkenburg Foundation.

All the rest of the employees are Kinfolk who are aware of the Garou. They include: Gretchen's secretary, an assistant psychologist, an assistant veterinarian and a groundsman/janitor.

The Inmates

Every reform movement has a lunatic fringe.

— President Theodore Roosevelt

There are currently nine Lunatics undergoing cures. The Foundation has room for up to twelve homids in the cells and five lupus in the large wolf cage.

Orson Gravely: A multiple personality lunatic. Orson appears as a main character in "When the Wolfsbane Blooms" and "Dark Union". His Traits are listed in the Appendix.

Carney Brothers: A twisted pair of twins. Their mild shapechanging ability became a freak show act. They are in cells across from each other and spend most of their time whispering to each other through the cell doors. They are Ragabash of the Children of Gaia.

Delilah: A woman suffering from some unknown, tragic shock which has caused her to retreat deep within herself. She is catatonic almost all the time; when she is aware, she is extremely paranoid. She is a Moon Dancer of the Stargazers.

Kaloo: A lupus thrown from his wolf pack who has lived most of his life (six years!) not realizing what he truly is: a Garou. He is an extreme outcast, shunning even other wolves now. His age makes his cure harder, for he is set in his neurosis. He is a Philodox of the Wendigo.

Onke: A lupus who was driven mad by the Change and tore apart her entire pack. She disappeared before the Black Furies could recover her, and was finally discovered by Kanak-talé. She is kept fenced off from Kaloo, lest she tear him to pieces. She is an Ahroun.

Joseph: An evangelical cult leader, his innate animal attraction and Philodox auspice allowed him to sway huge crowds of willing believers. He was nabbed by Lucius and taken silently to the Foundation. If his fanatic cult followers were to find him, they would raid the Foundation with submachine guns to rescue him. He is of the Silver Fang.

Lewis: A young boy whose Silent Strider heritage showed itself in wanderlust. He ran away from home at ten, and the cruelty of humanity has scarred him heavily. He no longer trusts anyone. He is a recent inmate, but probably the quickest to cure.

Judy Bonaparte: A very disturbed young Glass Walker. Her family moved from the big city to the deep Louisiana swamps when she was a child. The Kin Fetch lost track of her, so none could come and relieve her of her terror of the wild. Bugs scare

her to hysteria, and she cries herself to night as the crickets chirp. She is a Ragabash with no sense of humor.

The Cells and Wards

The cells are designed to hold powerful Garou. The Lunatics sometimes exhibit great strength, and were it not for the reinforced doors and ritual wards, they would easily escape. The doors is built to withstand up to Strength 10.

The ritual wards emplaced are designed to alert the staff to any escapees. Once an inmate crosses the threshold of a cell, a spirit is released which Keens for all to hear.

In the case of intruders, the spirits will begin Keening once they have detected them. Warding Spirits have been set to watch the Valkenburg grounds. Anyone entering must pass through their watchful gaze.

Warding Spirit

Rage 3, Gnosis 5, Willpower 7, Power 15

Charms: Airt Sense, Harass (cost 2; the spirit can affect beings in the physical plane without having to materialize. This takes the form of minor annoyances, from tripping them [Willpower vs. Dexterity + Occult] to throwing objects at them [Willpower versus a 6 difficulty]); Keening (cost 1; this is a loud screaming which can be heard by all those who have received the Valkenburg initiation. The spirit uses it to warn the staff of inmate escapes or of unauthorized entries); Gaze (cost 1/week; the spirit rolls Gnosis versus an intruder's Stealth + Wits. Any successes means the spirit has detected the intruder).

The Cure

The Foundation uses many methods to cure Lunatics. Most are simple psychological counseling techniques, used either with homids in the ranch or lupus in the nearby reserve. Sometimes, however, the schism is too severe, and the Foundation must be content with adapting the Lunatic to only one of her forms.

This is possible due to Valkenburg's serum. After long study and research (including frequent trips to the Umbra), Valkenburg created a serum whereby a Garou can be regressed into his natural form. It takes much time and many injections, but eventually, the shapechanging ability is made dormant and the Lunatic is unable to change any longer. If the Lunatic is homid, no more will he become a wolf. If a lupus, never will he become a human.

So far, no one has yet counteracted the serum once it has been fully administered (at least 30 injections, only one per night).

The Corruption Within

There is a darkness in the Foundation, a black blot on the hearts of the staff. The Wyrms has crawled in and wrapped its coils about the Foundation. The administrators are being ridden by Banes known as Puppeteers. At night they perform soulless and cruel

experiments on the patients. They awake the next morning unaware of their foul deeds.

The basement is the site of torturous experiments by night, where certain patients disappear, only to return deeper into their madness, now incurable. The staff, due to the malicious powers of the Puppeteers, are unaware of what they do. The Puppeteers operate their sleeping bodies to learn more and more secrets about the Garou, secrets they whisper back to the Wyrms.

The experiments are designed to reveal the secrets of Garou anatomy: specifically, to learn if there are any physical organs that govern the Change, which the Wyrms could use to transplant into its forces and create a dark army of shapechangers. The Black Spiral Dancers are unaware of these experiments, for they might feel betrayed if they knew, and turn against their slithering master. The Puppeteers are careful not to leave scars which Garou regeneration cannot heal.

Garou psychology is also plumbed, to discover the key hypnotics by which all Garou can be controlled. This has so far been unsuccessful. The only victims, as yet, have been the Carney Brothers, Delilah and Onke, who are now close to incurable due to their experiences in the basement.

The Puppeteers are operating slowly, afraid to tax their powers too much, for they must expend energy each week to hide their true nature from the Garou. If they fail to make this expenditure, the possessed staff will begin to take on fomor

characteristics. The staff can still escape the possession without permanent harm if they have not yet become fomori.

Due to the expenditure to keep their "cover", the Puppeteers eventually deplete their Power and are forced to quit the possession and Reform elsewhere. They then must make their way back to begin again, a process which takes about a month. They can usually stay in possession of a staff member for two months, more if they steal power from their victims. (See the Appendix for the Puppeteers' Traits.)

The only staff members who have not been possessed yet by Puppeteers are Gretchen, Victor Helms, Lucius and Kanak-talé. This is because these staff members will have the most contact with the Questing Pack, and it will be easier for them to allay suspicions if they have not experienced possession themselves.

The Stories

The following stories tell the tale of the Foundation, a tale which the player characters are involved in. The characters arrive at the Foundation seeking answers. But the questions are deeper than they first considered. Only through becoming a part of the Foundation, as the Questing Pack, can the characters come to understand what is going on there, and thus come to a greater understanding of their own part in the great war of the Apocalypse.



Story One: When the Wolfsbane Blooms

Written by Bill Bridges, Illustrated by Lawrence Allen Williams

"Even a man who is pure of heart and says his prayers by night may become a wolf when the wolfsbane blooms and the autumn moon shines bright."

— Carl Siodmak, *The Wolfman*

"When The Wolfsbane Blooms" is the first story in a series to be played in sequence. It leads into the events in "Hostile Takeover", and that in turn leads to "Skins" and so on until the climax in "Dark Union".

Herein the characters arrive at the Foundation in search of a lost sept member, a great hero. They find him, but he is hopelessly mad, moaning out the tale of his tragic fall. The characters are invited to stay on at the Foundation to become the Questing Pack, a position ripe for the gaining of Renown.

There is not much room in this story for characters to act on their own and change events; they can do this in later episodes. For this story, they must simply be introduced to the situation at Valkenburg and to the Lunatic, Orson Gravely.

Theme

The theme of this story is Loss. The characters are hit with the full emotional impact of Orson's fall from grace, from great hero to mad Garou. It is a loss not only for their own sept, but for all the defenders of Gaia. The characters are also shown the great

pain of the other Lunatics, all suffering from great loss of self, companionship and place in society.

The Apocalypse is an age of stark truths revealed. No Garou can continue to deny her responsibility for the world, and responsibility begins with one's own kind, the outcast cubs. By joining Valkenburg, the characters can revoke the loss of the previous Questing Pack, to turn back the tide of entropy.

Mood

The mood begins with tension, as the characters are unsure of their place at Valkenburg, or even if it is all a trap. But this gives way to sorrow, as they discover the patients' true need of the Foundation. The twisted and lonely patients have no pack to aid them, no tribe to see them through their travails. Only Valkenburg is there for them.

The halls of the Foundation should echo the loneliness the patients feel. Even the roaring fire of the great hearth is not enough to drive away the chill, the feeling of abandonment as the questions arise: *"That could have been me, if my tribe hadn't come to claim me..."*

Getting There

Valkenburg Foundation is meant to be played as a mini-chronicle in the storyteller's own greater chronicle. The storyteller can either take his players from his existing chronicle or begin a new one with this book. The events that take place, from Story One to Five, have a beginning, middle and end. Once the events have come to a close at the end of Story Five, the storyteller has the task of integrating the events back into his chronicle.

Thus, characters can be from just about any sept, although they should all be from the same sept and part of a pack. Orson Gravely is a member of whatever sept the characters are from. Provisions are given in this book for characters who are from the Sept of the Green in New York, the sept detailed in **Werewolf and Rage Across New York**.

The pack is given the mission of finding a lost hero of their sept, a powerful Theurge called Graveseecker. This powerful Garou disappeared in the Umbra almost three years ago, and the sept has desperately been seeking him since. They have received word from stray spirits that Graveseecker is at the Valkenburg Foundation in Wyoming. But this news did not cause rejoicing among the Theurges, for the spirits shuddered as they told of Graveseecker. No more information can be learned, so the sept has decided to gift a pack with the important mission of discovering the current condition of Graveseecker.

The pack is given a jeep to drive out there, on loan from the sept's Glass Walkers. They are also given a map to the Foundation. It is a long drive, but the pack has as much time to complete their mission as necessary (it will take two to three days of straight driving).

The elders know of Valkenburg but are wary of it. They are curious why the Foundation did not contact them about Graveseecker, and have decided to surprise Valkenburg by having the pack arrive unannounced, thus giving the Foundation no time to hide anything from them.

So, the characters begin the story driving across the open plains of Wyoming, with Devil's Tower seen in the distance.

Scene One: The House on the Plains

Following the directions on the map (a US road map with arrows and scribbles), the pack pulls off the main road and onto a gravel driveway. It is a bumpy ride, as the drive has not been maintained recently. Rain has slid gravel off the path and created mud build-up in some sections. The drive winds around through woods and then breaks onto a wide-open plain. Ahead, sitting alone on the plain, is the house of the Valkenburg Foundation.

The sun is beginning its journey below the horizon, and the darkening of the day feels ominous on the plains. The house is a

dark silhouette before the westering sun. A lupus with the gift Heightened Senses can hear odd mutterings from within the ranch, stray moans and laughs. They make no sense; they are the gibberings of the mad.

The gravel drive ends in a large circular lot. As the pack pulls up, a woman steps out of the front door and walks up to greet them. She is of average height but of striking demeanor. She carries herself in a confident and commanding fashion, and does not seem surprised by the characters' arrival. She steps up with her hand out and says: "*Greetings, Sept of the Green. I am Gretchen Valkenburg.*"

Valkenburg's Scout, Lucius, has informed Gretchen of the characters' sojourn, and she has prepared for them. This should set some of the characters a little off balance if they were expecting to surprise Valkenburg. They will have to revise their plans somewhat.

Before they can do anything but return the greeting, however, Gretchen invites them for a tour, saying: "*You've had a long journey. I know you're curious about us and what we do here, so please, come in and I'll show you our facilities. I'd be honored if you'd stay here tonight. We have guest facilities in the living quarters, around back. It's no trouble.*"

She then opens the front door, holding it open for them, and ushers them into the Valkenburg Foundation.

The Tale

Gretchen begins the tour in the lobby. She first introduces the pack to Ben Thomas, Chief of Security, whose desk is by the front door. He is quite cordial, a man who is very comfortable with his role in life.

Gretchen point out the two wings to the right and left, explaining that the right one is where administration is handled, while the left holds laboratories. Upstairs are the inmates rooms and her own offices. She offers to take them through the labs first, but if the characters suggest otherwise, she will lead them anywhere they want. Use the maps and descriptions provided in the Introduction to conduct the tour.

If asked about Graveseecker, she will look nervous, saying: "*I know why you're here. You seek Orson Gravely, who you know as Graveseecker. I'm afraid I have some bad news. Orson is not the person he once was. He has suffered extreme trauma, a trauma which has shattered his mind. I will take you to him, but it is almost dark now, and he always becomes violent at this time. Please, sit down. I think I should tell you about him first, to prepare you.*"

She leads the characters into the dining room and sits them down around the table. She is silent for moment, collecting her thoughts, but then begins her tale:

"Orson is a very strange person. He was first encountered by Lucius, one of our Scouts. It was in a bleak place in the Umbra.

Lucius was passing through in search of any who needed aid. He found Orson, wrapped up in a fetal ball, giggling and whimpering. He couldn't control his Changes. As Lucius watched, Orson's body shifted to and from the wolf, only in small stages, bits and pieces here, all this with Orson apparently unaware of what was happening.

"Lucius did not know who he was, but he knew that he needed help. The taint of the Wurm was nowhere to be found, so Lucius took Orson in his arms and coaxed him out of the Umbra. He then took him back here, to Valkenburg, where we immediately began treatment.

"It took a long time to get him to speak coherently, but we eventually discovered that his name was Orson Gravely. At least, he insisted it was. Only later, did we find out that he was Graveseecker, of your sept.

"We did not contact you for many reasons. You must understand that our work here is important. We have successfully cured many of our patients' afflictions. However, there are those among the Garou who do not believe this. They would kill people like Orson, seeing them as dangerous and tainted. I had no way of knowing whether this would be the reaction of your sept. I could not take that risk, for Orson's sake.

"Yesterday, I received a call from Lucius, who had heard of your mission. That is how I knew you were coming. Don't worry, I haven't done anything to cover up what we do. I'm proud of our work here, and want others to know that, to know that what we do is good."

Gretchen will then lead the pack upstairs, to Orson's cell.

Scene Two: The Maddening Crowd of Orson Gravely

Two wings stretch to either side of the stairs. Gretchen leads the characters to the left. The hallway is dim, lit only by low watt bulbs along the ceiling. Every few feet there is a door on either side, reinforced steel with bars in the window. Beyond the doors are the cells, where dwell the unfortunate Garou.

At the end of the hall are two men dressed in white uniforms. They are Harry MacReady and Dan Skyseeker, Valkenburg's orderlies. Gretchen introduces them, and they respond cordially but look at the characters warily. Harry MacReady speaks up, with a slight Gaelic accent:

"I think what yer about to do is not wise. Orson is wild at night, and there's no telling how he'll react to seeing others from his own sept. But, if it's what you came for, then let's do it.

"Now, I'm not letting him out, so you'll have to go in, and I'm locking the door behind you. If this bothers you, then some of you stay out here. No, I'll not give you the key. For all I know, you've come to bust him out, and I can't have that unless Gretchen says so."

These are the only terms Harry will agree to, and Gretchen will not step in to change his mind. Some of the characters can stay



in the hall, watching through the window (only two at a time, though), or they can all go in.

Lamentations

The cell is dark. There is no light but that of the moon through the barred window, a gibbous moon. In the far corner, barely highlighted by the faint silver moonglow, sits a Garou in Glabro form, breathing heavily and staring at his "guests". (Orson Gravely's traits and write-up are in the Appendix. Read that section before running this encounter.)

Regardless of what the pack does, Orson will not react, but will slowly smile, an evil and malicious grin. He will then insult the characters, trying to get them angry. He will furiously switch personalities in banter with the player characters, revealing a startling array of madness. He may get violent in his Full Moon stage, but if the players ever mention their sept name or quest (Gretchen will if they don't, to stop violence), he will revert to Ohna, his Galliard personality.

This switching makes him almost immune to any Manipulation rolls, as just when they are about to work, he switches to another personality, against whom that tack won't be so successful. During this banter, raise Manipulation roll difficulties against Orson by two.

When the characters explain their sept and mission, he will stand still, shocked, with mouth open. Then, his head raises back and a slow, low moan comes from him, rising in pitch until it turns into a mourning howl. A howl so lonely and sad that the characters may be overcome with tears, such is the masterful effect of Ohna's sorrow. Roll Ohna's Expression plus Charisma against all the characters' Willpower ratings. One success means the character is greatly moved. Two successes and he is shedding tears. Three successes means he is weeping uncontrollably, feeling Ohna's pain fully.

He will then lament his fall from grace:

"Oh, weep for me. I am not what once I was. Once hero, now numbered among the mad. How did it begin? With the omen. The bird which flew that only I could see. I had to follow, for its blood stained my home and spoke of ill to come. I went to the Umbra, the spirit world and wandered deep, searching for the wounded bird. I followed the clues and directions of stray spirits who had also seen it. I walked and walked until I knew I was lost. I, who had long ago charted the spirit realms, now knew not of where I stepped."

He then stops his tale, staring seemingly at something that is not there, and screams.

"Ahhh! Oh, it was terrible. I found the wounded bird but it was bird no longer. A cancer had eaten it from within and now it was a living carcass, its rotten flesh wafting the aroma of decay to me across the velvet gloom. And then its Master.... No! I cannot inflict upon you even its name, nor my vision of its form. Bid me not tell!"

The mad Graveseecker, now a malevolent personality, lurks ever within and wants the characters to be the new Questing Pack, for they appear ripe as pawns for the Puppeteers' plan. Thus, he

will have Ohna goad the characters into staying and aiding Valkenburg.

"I beg you, you who are the hope of what is to come. Help us, we mad ones who have lost our way. Only in this house of howls can we recover what was lost, can we learn what is needed. Help the young to grow as they should. Or else..."

Graveseecker then "steps" into the body, becoming the dominant personality. His hands are clasped tight on some object. He grins a sly smile and slowly opens his hands. There, cupped in his palms, is a flowering sprig of wolfsbane, which the characters can be sure was not there moments ago. He laughs and laughs like a madman.

The wolfsbane has had its spirit awakened and actually operates as its namesake: it drives away werewolves. The characters begin to feel uneasy as the wolfsbane is revealed, and to even approach it or Orson they must roll their Willpower versus the wolfsbane spirit's Gnosis of 6.

Orson will then curl up into a fetal ball and fall into a deep sleep, exhausted from the strain of personality switching. Nothing will wake him. Gretchen will urge the characters to leave.

Scene Three: Invitation to Adventure

Gretchen leads the characters down the hall. She speaks as she walks:



"As you can see, Orson is very disturbed and in need of our help. But he is not the only one. Here, in these rooms, are others. Some are like him, driven mad from some unknown experience; others are young cubs, scarred by their Changing ordeal. There was no one there for them. They had to do it alone."

She stops outside one of the cells. "Look in here. See her, cowering under her own covers, desperately afraid of even the crickets outside? This is Judy. She was abandoned by her tribe, the Glass Walkers. She was not meant for the deep wilds. She never laughs, and she is a New Moon."

She walks further down the hall, to another door. "And in here, Lewis. He would have been a powerful addition to his tribe, the Silent Striders. If only they had found him; he wandered too early. The cruelty of the world has caused him to trust no one."

"I can show you them all. All lost. All alone. All mad. I can show you the wolves outside. They are the saddest. Even in the deep forest, closest to Gaia, they are hurt and torn from their heritage."

"But someone must help them. That's what we are here for...to help."

She stares into one of the cells for a while. Then says: "I want to show you something. Please, this way."

She leads them to her office. She goes to the closet and opens it with a key. She then leans in and drags out a large chest, barely able to lift it. She sits down on it and faces the pack.

"There was a pack here once. Young Garou who came to our aid, who saw the glory of what we do. For every Garou cured, Gaia is made stronger. They gained much renown among the local septs for their bravery and dedication. We called them the Questing Pack."

"They are all dead. Killed by Banes in the Umbra, fighting to protect a lost cub. But we have their fetishes, their items of power still. You've seen what we do. You've seen the need. Will you help us? Will you become the Questing Pack?"

She waits for a moment, searching their faces for some sign of a reply if they make no obvious response. She gets up and unlocks the chest.

"Here we keep their things. I'll show them to you. They are powerful..."

She lifts the lid. As it creaks back, a glowing radiance shines forth, sparking on the walls and the gathered characters. Inside are the Questing Packs fetishes of power.

Moongleam

Level 2, Gnosis 4

This is a small rock glowing with the essence of moonlight. During the day, the light is dormant, but during the night it will shine as follows:

New Moon: faint candlelight.

Crescent Moon: flickering torch.

Half Moon: steady flashlight.

Gibbous Moon: car headlight.

Full Moon: halogen spotlight.



There is a black cloth sack which will douse the light when the stone is placed inside it.

Whistle Call

Level 3, Gnosis 6

This wooden whistle will allow all the pack members, no matter where they are, to know that the blower is in trouble. A second blow will tell the pack where the whistler is. Roll the Whistle's Gnosis versus a 7 difficulty. Each success alerts one extra pack member, no matter how far away they are.

Spirit Slayer

Level 6, Gnosis 6

This Klaive has a spirit bound into it dedicated to the defense of the earthly realm from Umbral manifestations. The spirit provides the following gifts: Umbral Sight and Sideways Attack.

War Paint

Gnosis 5

This is a ceramic jar of face paint and a piece of buffalo hide with a diagram on it. The diagram reveals how the paint is to be applied and the effects thereof: when a star is drawn around each eye, it provides the gift Scent of the True Form. When an arrow is drawn on the forehead, the gift Staredown is received. When claw marks are painted onto the chest, one level of "mystical scar tissue" armor is received. There is enough paint for ten applications (total), and each application lasts for one scene.

Summons From Across the Gulf

Level 6, Gnosis 7

This is a small mirror, set in a wooden frame and painted with odd symbols. This fetish allows the previous Questing Pack to be channeled through Past Life. The user stares at herself in the mirror and rolls her Willpower versus the fetish's Gnosis. However, it will only work when used by a member of the current Pack, and only after she has proven herself worthy. By the time the pack has finished Story Four, they should be able to successfully use this. They can then discover, through the "reincarnation" of a dead pack member, the Puppeteers which haunt the Foundation. (See Story Five: "Dark Union".)

Initiation

Once the characters have decided to join, to become the new Questing Pack of the Valkenburg Foundation, a moot will be called. This is a minor moot, for Valkenburg members alone, and serves as both introduction and initiation. It is called for the very next night.

The characters are shown to their new quarters, in the newer house, set off from the Foundation building. The old pack numbered six, but there is room for eight. During the next day, the characters are given an in-depth tour of the Foundation building and grounds, but are not introduced to everyone yet. That night, still under a gibbous moon, the moot is called.

The characters are led to the open field behind the grounds. There, a large bonfire crackles, light flickering over the landscape. Gretchen stands before the fire along with Mary Canoe.

Here they finally meet all the members of the Foundation, but not all at once. There are two "shifts" to the moot, as some of the staff has to watch the patients. Gretchen and Mary Canoe stay for the entire moot.

First Shift: Joshua Keating, Leslie Thomas, Dan Skyseeker, Victor Helms, Lucius (newly arrived from wanderings).

Second Shift: Johnny, Ben Thomas, Harry MacReady, Kanak-talé.

The meetings will at first be rather ritual and formal, but this will break into reveling and a dance around the fire, with all shifting into different forms (either Crinos or Lupus). After all the introductions have taken place, Gretchen will calm everyone down and sit them by the fire. She then pulls an old book from her jacket pocket. Solemnly, she begins to read.

She reads the "Legends of the Garou: Shadow of the Wolf" aloud to the characters. It is a fragment from her grandfather's diary. You should pass around the book to let the characters read the tale, or read it aloud to really get the feel of storytelling.

After this tale, Mary Canoe will step up to the fire as Gretchen sits down. She will begin to sing a song of mourning, which she turns into a song of hope and joy, emphasizing through gesture that the characters are the cause for this new song. The others will goad the characters to arise and dance once more around the fire. Doing so will complete the Rite of Initiation, which will allow the



characters to ignore any of Valkenburg's various mystical wards meant to restrain the patients. They can go where they please within the Foundation now.

There is also another benefit for the pack: upon completion of the Initiation Rite, they each receive 100 points of Honor and 50 points of Wisdom.

It is now about 3:00 a.m. as the moot closes and everyone breaks up to go to bed or their night posts. The characters are now the official Questing Pack. They will have a week to get to know the place before their first mission arises, Story Two: "Hostile Takeover".

Refusal

The characters should be urged in every way to take Gretchen's offer. They have been shown the tragedy of the lost cubs and Valkenburg's work to aid them. They have been shown the powerful items due the Questing Pack. If they are waffling on the decision, use one of the following tactics:

- Lucius returns to inform them that he can gain the permission of their sept, if they feel it necessary. He will leave and return in two days bearing a note from Mother Larissa (or their sept elder, if they are not of the Sept of the Green). She bids the pack take



Story Two: Hostile Takeover

Written by Phil Brucato, Illustrated by Bryon Wackwitz

Whoever dies with the most toys wins.

—Yuppie slogan

Whoever dies with the most toys dies anyway.

—Bumper sticker slogan

When the Questing Pack goes to retrieve an escaped Lunatic who has only recently become aware of his Garou heritage, they must face off against the ultimate predator, corporate raider Harold Masters. His madness, his allies, and his plans threaten both the Veil and the safety of the Sept of the Green.

Pity the Questing Pack...

How To Run This Story

"Hostile Takeover" is an exercise in suspense. The players should be aware at all times that Hitchcock's proverbial ticking bomb is under their table.

The story presents many opportunities for both combat and extensive roleplaying; the exact mix is left to the storyteller, but players should be reminded to use their heads. The city is deadly territory to nearly any Garou, while their quarry is on home ground. Attempts to simply rush in and slaughter everyone will probably end in a massacre, but not quite the one the players intend.

Preservation of the Veil is also important. Careless Garou may put their entire race in jeopardy!

Don't let the characters sit too long in one spot. Inactivity is suicide. Police, corporate headhunters, and angry Garou will be competing with the characters for the prize of Harold Masters' head. Encourage the characters to make allies of these potential rivals, and keep the clock ticking!

The Plot

Scene One — The pack arrives in New York via the Central Park Caern. The trip becomes ugly quickly as they confront a survivor of the Darkrunners, the pack that betrayed Masters to the Foundation and was exterminated in turn. To find their quarry, the characters must locate their contact and gather information.

Scene Two — The vengeful Garou attacks Masters and his rival Albert Laror, in a public place. Chaos ensues, and the attack is captured on film.

Scene Three — Masters flees to rally a counterattack. Other hunters enter the picture, and may be bargained with.

Scene Four — Masters goes berserk, unleashing his gang. The characters must prevent an attack on the Central Park Caern without being arrested, photographed, or killed.

Scene Five — Masters' last stand. His insane ravings about Valkenburg have just enough truth to them to plant doubt in the minds of the pack.

Scene Six — The wipe-up. Whether Masters is dead or alive, the pack must get him to the Moon Bridge in Central Park. Other hunters, police, etc. may be in hot pursuit. Even if Masters is killed, loose ends will have to be cut, ruffled fur smoothed, and the Veil maintained. Back home, questions raised will beg for answers...

What Is Really Going On

When Shadowpad, a well-meaning Garou, learned that corporate raider Harold Masters was a lost Garou, she quickly informed Gretchen Valkenburg. The last Questing Pack came through a Moon Bridge to take him to the Foundation for help. Because of Masters' ability to repress his transformation, he became a favorite subject for the gruesome research of the Puppeteer Banes and their pawns.

Masters flipped out, ripping through the Foundation and anything else in his path until he escaped. Days later, he reached civilization and phoned his partner, Jenny Yehn. With her help, he returned to New York and swore to make all of his enemies pay...

Unknown to Shadowpad's pack (and to the Foundation), Masters had begun a flirtation with a street gang, the Freddie's, known for fighting with razor-tipped gloves. Something in this had appealed to Masters' Garou heritage. When he returned from

Valkenburg, Masters took control of the gang and snatched up a number of smaller gangs, welding them into a single entity. Now Masters strives to eliminate his competition in both the boardroom and the streets. He expects his tormentors will return, and he's right.

Theme

The past century has seen the rise of two vicious breeds of predators: The street gangsters of the underclass, who destroy the cities they live in and prey on those trapped within, and the equally callous "white collar" criminals of corporate greed, who ruin anyone standing in the way of expanding profits. Only a fuzzy line of civility and class stands between them.

"The Law of the Jungle" is frequently invoked by urban human predators. In "Hostile Takeover", the wolf comes to the door, literally.

The similarities, and the differences, between the predatory spheres of wolf, raider, and gangster present a funhouse mirror to each other. Perhaps somewhere in the frenetic action of Masters' retrieval, the characters may gain a reflection into their own killer instinct, or into the urban predator's place in Gaia's eternal chain.

There's something to be said here, too, about good intentions and bad results. Shadowpad unwittingly unleashed a monster by turning Masters over to the Valkenburg Foundation, who are themselves the victims of good intentions gone awry. As the agents of those good intentions, the Questing Pack may learn to reflect on the consequences of their own future actions.

The Mood

*This is a dangerous place...
it's a dangerous place...*

— King Crimson, "Thela Hun Ginjeet"

The overall tone of this story should be one of desperation, a mirror of the controlled hysteria in the heart of the Wyrms' urban sprawl. The physical discomfort the characters feel in this alien environment compounds with the increasing danger from all sides as the story progresses.

Emphasize the general sensory overload. Rural Garou should be considered under stress simply from dealing with the input.

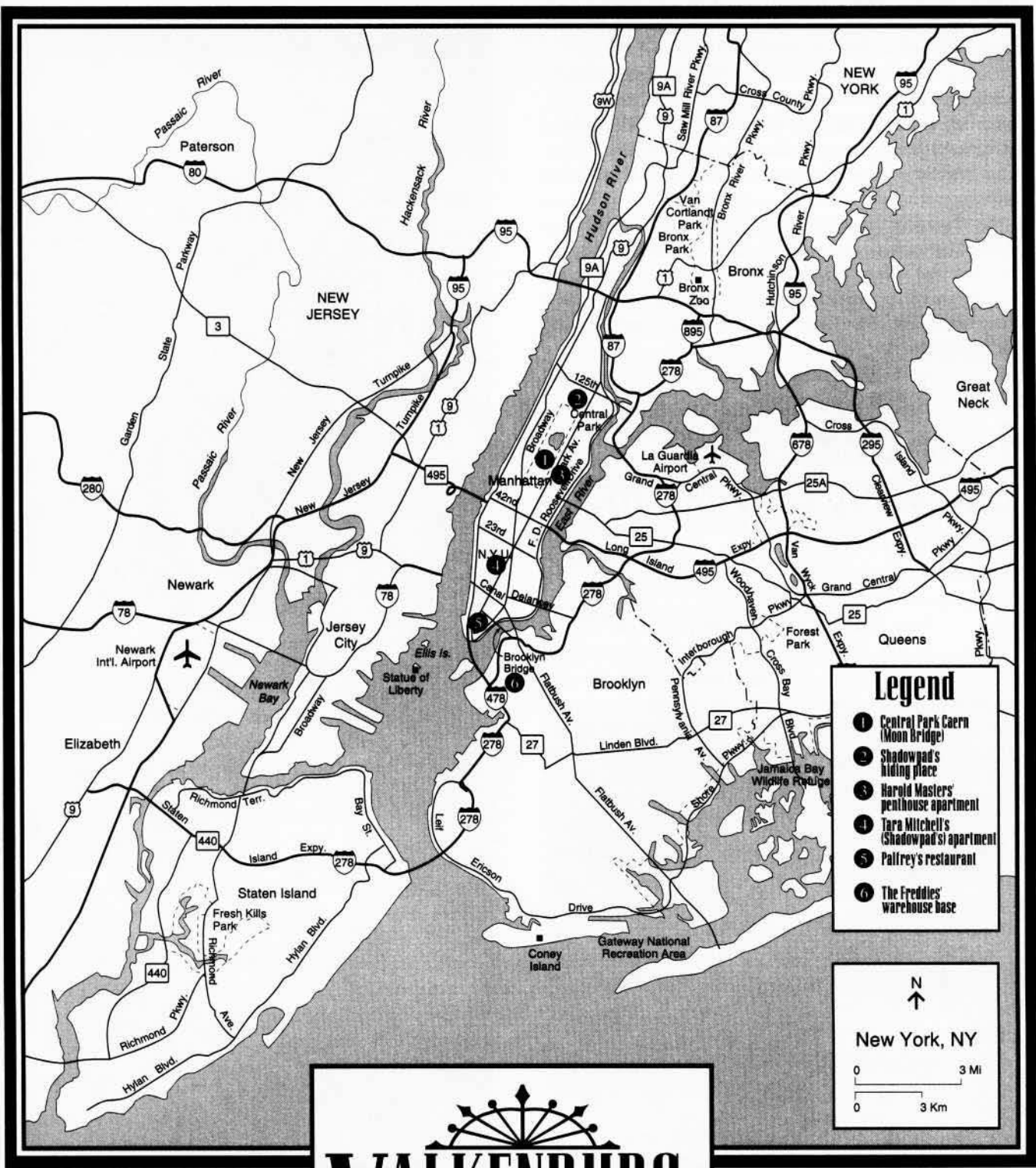
A background soundtrack of rap, thrash, and industrial music may help the mood, so long as it doesn't distract from the game itself.

For all its frenzy, however, the looming Gothic-Punk city is possibly the most impressive sight the characters will ever see. Invest your descriptions with a sense of perverted grandeur. More importantly, show them some hope beneath the horror of New York City. Give them something to salvage from the Wyrms.

The Setting

As mentioned above, New York City is virtually a living organism. Garou are sensual creatures after all, so describe the sensory details of their surroundings; the reek of exhaust, the





- Legend**
- ① Central Park Caern (Moon Bridge)
 - ② Shadowpad's hiding place
 - ③ Harold Masters' penthouse apartment
 - ④ Tara Mitchell's (Shadowpad's) apartment
 - ⑤ Palfrey's restaurant
 - ⑥ The Freddie's warehouse base




**VALKENBURG
FOUNDATION**
HOSTILE TAKEOVER

Story Two: Hostile Takeover

stench of decaying waste, the tremble of passing trains, the scrape of concrete beneath paw-pads. New York never sleeps, or even rests.

The Gauntlet rating of most of New York is eight, although some areas, like Wall Street, rate at nine. Glimpses into the Near Umbra reveal a dizzying web, crawling with Pattern Spiders. Banes prowl the street corners. Characters with a Gnosis of 7 or higher might even sense the despair of Gaia, deep beneath the streets.

The **Werewolf** supplement **Rage Across New York** has a wealth of background details for storytellers who wish to run a more involved scenario in this city. It's possible that player characters may have already adventured in New York or may belong to the Sept of the Green; if so, adjust any specifics to fit your own chronicle.

For the purposes of Auspice, assume that this story takes place during the half moon (waning) phase.

Scene One: *The Best-Laid Plans...*

You know where you are?

You're in the jungle, baby.

You're gonna die...

— Guns & Roses, "Welcome To The Jungle"

The story begins at the Foundation as Victor Helms assigns the Questing Pack to retrieve renegade Harold Masters. He will brief them on Masters' known history and tell them to expect Shadowpad of the Darkrunner pack to meet them at the Central Park Caern, the other end of the Moon Bridge (from the Pure Heart Sept).

Although Masters is considered dangerous, he is to be taken alive if possible. If questioned, Helms will only reply that Masters has "certain qualities" that would make him valuable to the Foundation if he is cured. A fair amount of Renown may rest upon a clean mission.

The pack is given the following information:

- Masters was a Big Wheel at Amhurst Resource and Development, an acquisitions company, and held an unusually high position for someone his age.
- Masters' penthouse address.
- A brief childhood history (see Harold Masters' write-up), which should arouse some sympathy for Masters among the players.
- The general history of Masters' discovery, treatment, and escape, mentioning the Darkrunners, and omitting, of course, the "after hours" experiments at Valkenburg.

The Pure Heart Moon Bridge

The Questing Pack travels to the Pure Heart Sept with Lucius, who will introduce them to Taka-kané, the sept leader. He will be glad to hear that Valkenburg has a new Questing Pack, hoping that they can improve his opinion of Valkenburg by their deeds.



He wants to be able to fully support Valkenburg, but he needs an event to rally his supporters around or else the rest of the sept will be displeased.

The caern itself is in a deeply wooded area, in a clearing open to the sky. On the ground, a Medicine Wheel is laid out with colored stones. This is the center of the caern. The stones have sat unmoved for ages, carefully guarded by the sept warders. They are very hard to move (Strength 4) and anyone trying to move them will be kicked out of the sept and declared an enemy.

The Moon Bridge opening is a simple rite. The luminous portal opens in the center of the Wheel, and the pack is bid to step through. As they pass the gate, they will notice, in the brief flash between worlds, a great elk, gazing upon them as if in judgment. They then come out the other side, in New York City.

Arrival

Arriving in Central Park should probably leave the characters slightly disoriented. The Moon Bridge comes out near the edge of the Ramble. The pack is met by the metis Fengy, who greets them and offers to escort them to Shadowpad, their contact.

"She won't come," he says, searching the shadows, "She's afraid she'll put the caern in danger." He explains that two of the four Darkrunners have been killed, in apparent retaliation for the Foundation abduction.

It's obvious that there is more than Fengy is telling. At a dramatic moment, the characters should notice (Perception + Primal Urge, difficulty 7) that they are not alone. Hacktalon, the other surviving Darkrunner, comes forward, spewing abuse and spoiling for a fight, flanked by a couple of Kinfolk allies.

"Go on home," he growls, "you've done enough already!" Hacktalon was there when his packmates were slaughtered by silver bullets. One of the pack, he relates, had been abducted earlier and tortured into betraying the others. "What kinda torture can make a Garou betray pack, huh?" he howls. Hacktalon himself is clearly wounded, but will refuse any treatment. He loudly blames the Foundation for provoking Masters to murder, and Shadowpad, his former packmate, for calling the Foundation in.

Characters should bear in mind that Garou fights, particularly in Crinos form, are forbidden in the Caern. Fengy will bring other members of the Caern running if a fight starts anyway. Hacktalon's Kinfolk, for their part, will try to persuade him to leave peaceably, but treat the Kinfolk as gang members for stats if they are forced to fight. Eventually, Hacktalon and his friends retreat, vowing to trash anyone in their way.

If the characters follow Hacktalon, he will lead them on a merry chase down Broadway before losing them in Times Square (which ought to brain damage any self-respecting Garou). If they follow Fengy, he will lead them to Shadowpad's hiding place.

"I'm so glad to see finally see you." Shadowpad tells the pack. She lies, in Lupus form, huddled in a basement in Harlem, about ten blocks north of the furthest edge of Central Park. Once he has led the characters to her, Fengy will leave for his own good. Shadowpad then fills the characters in:

- Masters has been struggling to maintain his position at Amhurst after his abduction.

- She has visited his usual hangout, Nothing Shocking, every night this week, but hasn't seen him.

- She saw him several days ago outside the Amhurst offices, and he had five bodyguards, including Roy Hell.

- Roy, one of Master's more psychotic bodyguards, was waiting outside her apartment. She attacked him, but he slashed her with a silver-bladed glove (she still has the wound). Her apartment is still under guard.

- Someone else is following Masters (it's Rick Woods, but she doesn't know that).

- Someone is following her as well, and her friends will no longer speak to her.

- Masters has a meeting with Laror tomorrow at noon at Palfrey's.

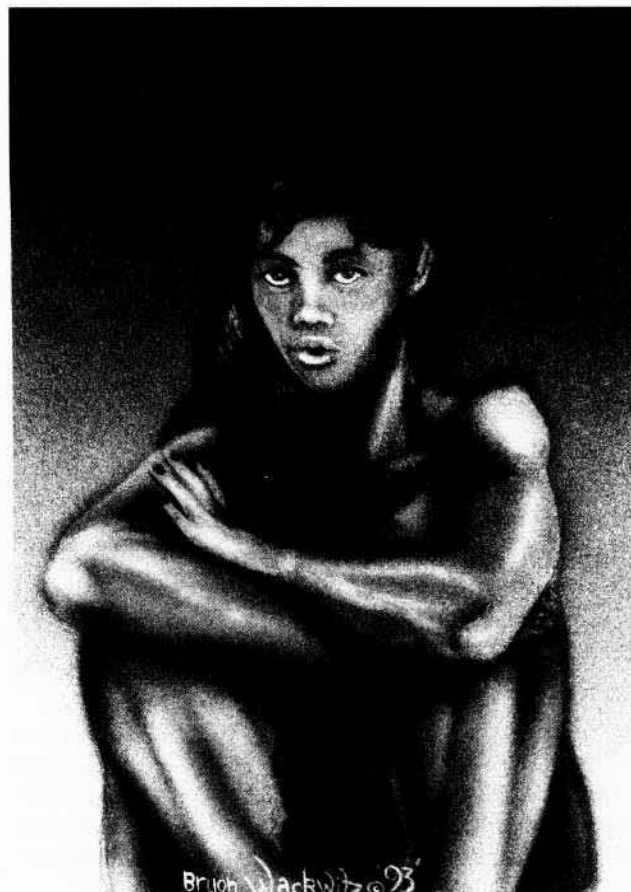
Shadowpad has stayed in Lupus form to pass as a dog, and has no clothing, money, or I.D. She is understandably miserable, but insists upon joining the players. "I started this, I'll help finish it." Her real motive, however, is to kill Masters herself.

Shadowpad (Tara Mitchell)

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Philodox

Tribe: Children Of Gaia



Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Intimidation 1, Primal-Urge 1, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3, Etiquette 3, Stealth 4, Computer 3, Enigmas 1, Investigation 3

Gifts: Persuasion, Resist Pain, Truth Of Gaia

Rank: 1

Rage 4, Gnosis 3, Willpower 6

Image: Once vivacious and enthusiastic, now hungry, afraid, and guilty. 5'8", slender build, African/Native American bloodline, with shoulder-length curly hair and large, expressive eyes. As a wolf, she has a fine pelt of black hair with brown streaks, and can pass in bad lighting as a shaggy Elkhound. She is 22 years old.

Roleplaying Notes: Be wary. Tara is used to having a pack, friends, and a home. Now all of them are gone. Hide your true agenda until the proper time.

Background: As a girl growing up in a commune in upstate New York, Tara was always fascinated by the city. Tara's extended family were largely Kinfolk, friendly with the Sept of the Hand of Gaia.

As an adult, Tara joined two Garou friends, Whitemane and Sheckley, in an effort to infiltrate New York's corporate sector to change what they could and pass on warning for what they could not. As a member of the Darkrunner pack, Shadowpad worked her way into Amhurst as a data processor. She met with Harold Masters, and immediately realized his Garou heritage. She accessed his background and pitied the corporate raider. Knowing of the Foundation and its work, she not only contacted Gretchen Valkenburg, but led the old Questing Pack to Masters personally.

Weeks later, a group of armed men attacked Whitemane's haven and mowed down Whitemane with silver bullets. Shadowpad fled. Now, consumed with guilt, she has decided that Masters must die by her hand. She will do her best not to show how deeply the death of her pack (and the hatred of Hacktalon) has wounded her, or to betray her true agenda to the characters.

Hacktalon

Breed: Metis

Auspice: Ahroun

Tribe: Glass Walkers

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5, Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Primal-Urge 2, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 3, Melee 1, Stealth 4, Survival 3 (urban)

Gifts: Razor Claws, Sense Wyrms, Persuasion

Rank: 1

Rage 6, Gnosis 4, Willpower 4

Image: White and bald, seemingly about ten years younger than his true age except for his squat, powerful build. Dressed in torn jeans, barefoot, and wearing the most obnoxious T-shirt he

can steal. He is an impressive, if ugly, wolf, with gray fur and black/blue streaks. He is 24.

Roleplaying Notes: A child of the streets, and every inch an Ahroun. Nearly everyone is your enemy. Stare everyone down, and cuss a lot.

Background: It was cruel joke that a metis should be raised in a Catholic orphanage; small wonder that Hacktalon is such a punk. When Whitemane, Shadowpad, and Sheckley "adopted" Hacktalon as their resident warrior, he found the first family he had ever known. When Masters obliterated the pack, Hacktalon swore vengeance. He still suffers from silver bullet wounds in his chest, and blames Shadowpad and the Foundation for what happened. He realizes that revenge will probably cost him his life, and does not care.

The Next Move

From there, the characters have several options:

- Approach Albert Laror, Masters' rival.
- Go to Tara's (Shadowpad's) apartment.
- Go to Masters' penthouse.
- Go to Central Park to rest.

Resting at Central Park is the easiest option, but accomplishes little.

Masters' Penthouse

Masters' penthouse is some fifty stories up, off 79th street in Manhattan's East End. Hopefully, the characters will be in



Homid form. Traveling inconspicuously in any other form might be amusingly difficult. Taking the subway, which runs at all hours, makes the most sense, as cabs don't like to come to this area of Harlem. Remember that even for Garou, the city at night is a dangerous place.

If the characters take the subway, a group of toughs may accost them on the platform, two for every one of the characters. Use the stats for Gang Members. Besides foreshadowing fights to come, this encounter should test the problem-solving abilities of the players. Ripping the muggers apart may be fun, but will definitely attract the attention of Detective Janice van Landingham (see Scene Two).

The East End is a very exclusive and expensive area. Shady-looking individuals (including the characters) may attract attention from the frequent police patrols. Masters' penthouse is located in a high-security building, with a doorman and surveillance cameras. Bribing or intimidating the doorman and the security guard is possible but expensive (minimum \$500, as Tara could tell them. Guests must present I.D. and sign their name in a register at the front desk. Consider guards to have Willpower 7). Killing the guards is not advised. Remember that Shadowpad has no clothing; the guards aren't likely to allow a wolf into the building under any circumstances.

If characters get past the doorman and guard, they may elude the cameras using Perception + Streetwise, difficulty 8. Four or more successes get all characters past the cameras without incident, while a botch sets off a silent alarm to the police. Cameras are located at the front door, the lobby, the hallways to the elevators, and the guard area in the parking garage. Tara has been to Masters' apartment and knows the locations of the cameras.

Another possibility is the parking garage beneath the building. This is likewise covered by security cameras and a guard desk. Worse, Masters has alerted the staff to be on the lookout for anyone asking about him. If characters do this, staff will probably not react openly, but will note the characters in a security log.

Stepping sideways into the Umbra is one way of avoiding security, although this is difficult considering the city's Gauntlet of 8. Players should think of this option themselves without help from the storyteller.

If the characters reach the penthouse, they will find that Masters himself is out (he's across the river with his gang), though Jenny Yehn is there with three bodyguards, working over details for tomorrow's meeting. Breaking into the penthouse will require picking the locks; five successes needed with Dexterity + Streetwise, difficulty 8 (good locks). Also, they will have to make a successful Dexterity + Stealth roll, difficulty 6; a botch will alert the guards inside, and may catch the characters on videotape from a hidden camera.

Characters in the Umbra may bypass both the Stealth roll and the locks, but will face a different problem; a Net-Spider has built a huge web across the door (high-tech locks). The web takes five levels worth of damage to tear through.

The apartment itself is luxuriously appointed with heavy wood furniture, thick carpeting, and neo-classical prints. The three guest rooms are set up for four bodyguards and Roy Hell.

Several guns are set up for easy access, and examination will show that they are loaded with silver bullets. One of the bodyguards sits in the dining room making bullets from a pile of silver and 9mm bullet molds. Use the Gang Member Traits (see Scene Four) for Jenny Yehn and the guard's stats.

The eventual resolution of all of this, if indeed the characters even choose this course of action, remains in the hands of the storyteller.

Shadowpad's Apartment

Going to Tara Mitchell's apartment combines many of the difficulties of the last option. The security measures are the same and present similar difficulty. A successful Perception + Alertness, difficulty 7, will reveal several shady figures watching the building. These are gang members who have been promised a fat reward for catching Tara Mitchell.

If caught and interrogated, they will admit that they were waiting for Tara, but have never heard of Harold Masters. If someone describes him, they will remember him as "that geek" who used to hang around with Roy Hell. They will not, however, reveal who Roy Hell is or where the players can find him (their fear of Masters and Hell is worse than their fear of the players).

Meeting Laror

Contacting Albert Laror is a possibility. If Tara calls him, he will agree to a meeting in an hour or so, then call Rick Woods and a few thugs. He knows that she had something to do with Masters' disappearance and wants to find out all he can, by any means necessary. If someone else calls him, he may still agree to a meeting, but will be wary and have at least ten thugs waiting out of sight when the meeting occurs.

Laror may even join in some sort of arrangement with the characters, and might even tell them of his meeting with Masters at Palfrey's in the morning if he likes them. Whatever happens, he will make sure that he gains as much as possible while giving away as little as possible. Play this by your own judgment, keeping in mind that Laror is a master manipulator and is unlikely to end up on the short end of any deals he makes. In any case, he will set Rick Woods after them to learn what he can.

What Laror knows:

- Masters' general history, including his childhood difficulties, but not including his Garou heritage.
- Masters' employment of gangster Roy Hell, and some information about Roy Hell's gang, the Freddies. This last is not public knowledge, nor anything even the police know.
- Masters' recent eccentric behavior and his purchase of nearly ten pounds of pure silver.
- Any personal or business information about Masters that the storyteller wishes the players to know.

If a confrontation occurs, get Laror away from the characters intact. If anyone attacks him, Laror will spare no effort to make them pay.

Albert Laror

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Abilities: Empathy 3, Intimidation 2, Subterfuge 4, Etiquette 3, Firearms 2, Investigation 2, Law 3, Politics 3

Willpower 7

Image: Power junkie. 5'10", stocky, slightly flabby, but with sharp eyes, impeccable designer suits, and expensive hairpiece. He is 43.

Roleplaying Hints: Think of Michael Douglas in *Wall Street*, but not as attractive. Exploit everybody. Albert can be played for laughs to a degree, but never forget the dagger behind his back.

Background: Teased for his bookish habits and stocky build, Albert swore while growing up in Brooklyn that he would become rich enough to own everything. In the upper echelons of Amhurst Resource and Development, Albert met his match in Harold Masters. Against the younger man's animal magnetism, Albert faltered to second place.

Albert seized the opportunity to fill the void when Masters disappeared. When Masters returned, Albert's plans seemed ruined. Masters' strange behavior, however, inspired Albert to dig into Masters' life, discover the truth, and expose him. He is not yet aware of just what that truth is, but the answer may not be long in coming...



Rick Woods

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Streetwise 2, Performance 3 (photography), Stealth 4, Investigation 3

Willpower 5

Image: Oily. Short blond hair, scraggly beard, flabby build, vaguely dog-like features. He is 32.

Roleplaying Hints: Herb Ritts and Ansel Adams rolled into one (or so you think). Try to flatter women into getting their pictures taken.

Background: Rick always wanted to be a world-class photographer, but his vision was uninspired at best, though his work was technically competent. Rick was a teenage geek, and has never risen above his insecurities.

Albert realized Rick's potential as a spy after catching him sneaking shots of Jenny Yehn. In return for Rick's talents, Laror helps Rick indulge his more illicit photographic tastes. Rick resents his role as a spy, and will take any chance to regain his self-respect if he thinks that he will come out the better for it.

Equipment: Rick has all the best photo gear money can buy, including infra-red filters and film, auto-winders, and high range telephoto lenses.

Laror's Thugs

Laror has a number of hired hands to do his dirty work. Treat each as a Gang Member for stats, with Willpower 5, Brawl 3, and Intimidation, Firearms, and Melee of 2. Each is armed with a light revolver and sap.

In whatever form, night passes...

Scene Two: Let's Do Lunch

Regardless of how the night may be spent, the pack should attend the "Power Lunch" at Palfrey's, next noon.

Characters must be appropriately dressed to enter Palfrey's. Reservations are required, but the Maitre'D may be intimidated into letting characters in with five successes of Manipulation + Intimidation, difficulty 7. Threats, however, will cause the staff to phone the police.

Palfrey's is fancy without being formal. Bare brick and timber contrast with hanging Tiffany glass lights and windows. The restaurant rises three stories up, with a cocktail lounge in the center and the second and third floors rising in galleries above it. A wrought iron elevator and curving wood staircase lead to the second and third floors. Waitresses in stylishly brief black dresses flit between the crowded tables while soft music underscores the buzz of deals being made.

Although the atmosphere of the restaurant is congenial, characters in the Umbra or employing the gift Sense Wyrn can



sense or even see one or two Kalus Banes hovering about, eagerly feeding on the greed and ambition in the room. Discreet questions or potent senses will tell the players that Masters' party is meeting on the second floor.

A few tables remain open on that floor, but many are filled.

A successful Perception + Streetwise, difficulty 6, will enable players to see two groups of bodyguards, three for Laror and four for Masters. Three or more successes will show the character the bulge of weapons under the bodyguards' jackets. Masters himself sits at a table with Jenny Yehn, Laror, and one of Laror's assistants. All four appear tense and wary.

Soon after the characters enter, screams and crashes begin downstairs, moving towards the staircase. The players have one action before an agonized howl rips the air. Two actions after that, Hacktalon, in Crinos form, and his Kinfolk charge up the stairs, spot Masters, and attack!

Both sets of bodyguards rip out weapons and open fire. Their Delirium reaction is Terror — controlled enough to draw and fire, berserk enough not to care where the bullets go. If the characters do nothing to stop him, Hacktalon will leap at Masters' table as bullets from the guards rip him apart. One in every five is silver. Hacktalon is dead before he hits the floor.

Stray shots shred the room. Bystanders are hit, the characters too, if they botch any action while the bullets fly. Anyone who approaches Masters in any way will be shot at. If a character manifests Crinos form, Masters will freak out, spending a Rage point to transform into Crinos himself! As he changes, he howls that *"The bastards won't get me again, drag me back, never, die first, kill all"*

Even enraged, Masters will quickly realize that he is both outnumbered and risking capture; he will try to flee. He should be successful; there are enough distractions around to cover his escape. Albert Laror should probably escape death as well, as he may hold an important key for the characters later. Sirens approach outside. At the last moment, someone should notice Rick Woods snapping off a last picture before disappearing into the crowd.

Anyone trying to follow Masters if he remains in Homid form will encounter another surprise outside. Four Freddie's have been ordered by "Pitt" to watch "the Yuppie", and will attack anyone, human or otherwise, who pursues him.

If no one else realizes it, Tara will point out that the pack should take Hacktalon's body with them. The characters should barely escape the police. Attacking the cops, it should be noted, wouldn't be particularly smart...

Harold Masters

We meet up with other men, we see them and then deep inside our blood begins to boil, like the tiger in the cage, we begin to shake with The Rage...

— Judas Priest, "The Rage"

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Galliard

Tribe: Glass Walker (ancestry)

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4, Perceptions 1, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Empathy 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3, Intimidation 3, Melee 1, Firearms 1, Computer 2, Investigation 2, Law 4, Politics 3

Rank: none

Rage 9, Gnosis 1, Willpower 9

Image: The yuppie ideal. Broad shoulders, classical features, muscular build, light brown ponytail, intense green eyes, and an almost tangible aura of power. With his gang, he goes by the name of "Pitt", manifesting Glabro form with the appropriate changes in attributes and appearance. He is 34 years old.

Roleplaying Hints: Never back down, and always look for the knife you know is at your back.

Background: Harold's problems as a child should be familiar to any Garou of human parentage. Fearing that the "permissive" influences of the mid-to-late sixties would corrupt their already unruly son, Harold's parents packed him off to military school at the age of ten. There, Harold was taught to suppress his inner turmoils or face the consequences. Refusing to break under constant harassment forged Harold's iron will. As he grew, Harold also began to manifest an almost irresistible charisma, and soon learned to manipulate those around him.

This charisma is an offshoot of the "animal magnetism" effect innate to Garou, though Harold had not, until recently, manifested any outward signs of his lineage. This charisma, together with unusual good looks and an utter determination to get his way, paved the way for his adult career.

Beneath his controlled surface, Harold seethed with rage.

Crushing his enemies gave him direction for that rage, but neither money, nor power, nor his friend, partner, and lover Jenny Yehn could ease the pain of his repressed nature. His tastes turned more bizarre, more dangerous.

The Freddies attacked Harold one night down in Brooklyn, but his powerful presence and spirited resistance gave them pause. Harold soon recruited Roy Hell as a bodyguard and became buddy to the Freddies. Ever the businessman, Harold speculated about wielding several small gangs into one large fighting unit and taking over the local drug trade, but was not mad enough to seriously consider it.

His trip to the Valkenburg Foundation made him mad enough.

Now possessing the powers of the Garou (though no Gifts), he returned to the Freddies in the guise of "Pitt", killed their old leader and took command. He raided the Freddies rival gangs,

giving the ultimatum; join or die! Anyone who opposed him was slashed to bits and dumped in an alley.

Harold Masters is a monster, though not entirely of his own making. Whatever decency he may have had is submerged in Rage now, which only his equally strong Willpower keeps at bay. He now lives only to destroy his rivals and build enough power to crush both the Valkenburg Foundation and the Sept of the Green. He lives in terror that Valkenburg will try to come get him again.

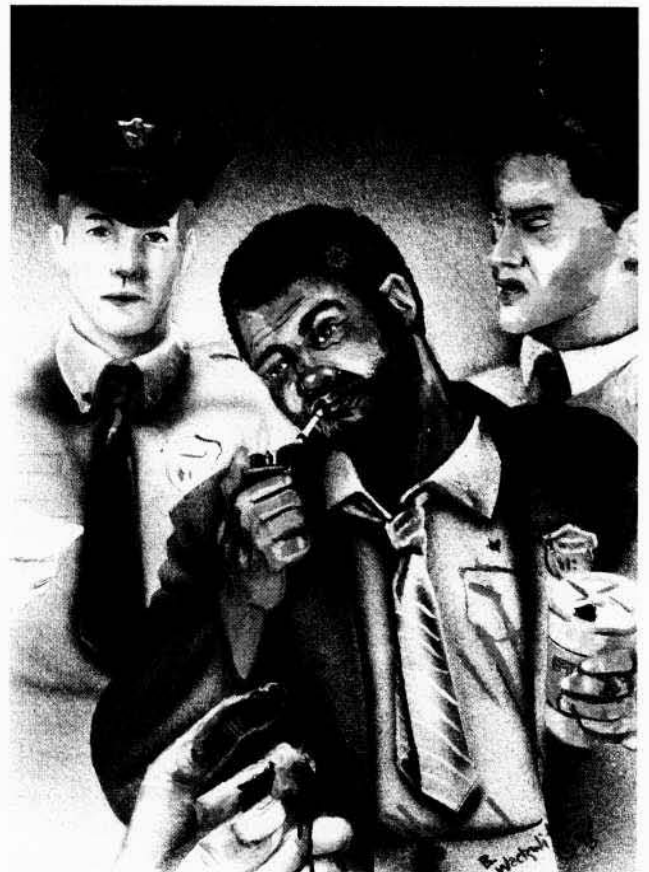
But this time, he'll be ready for them!

Masters' Bodyguards

Fearing a return visit from the Foundation, Masters has equipped a large bodyguard force (ten in all) with Mac-10 submachine guns, their clips mixing normal bullets with silver ones (one in five).

It was members of this group that wiped out the Darkrunner pack. There are between two and six (storyteller's discretion) with Masters whenever he is in human form. Only Roy Hell guards him in his "Pitt" persona.

Image: Masters' guards could be Secret Service men; expensive suits, sunglasses, cool manner, and automatic weapons. They wear Kevlar vests, (+2 to Stamina for soaking bullet damage) and have stats as per Gang Members, with a Firearms skill of 3, an Alertness of 2, and Willpower of 7.



The Detectives

Among the police to respond are detectives van Landingham and Caldwell. Although they would never admit it, the two detectives already believe that something is afoot involving werewolves, or at least someone who may believe in werewolves. She holds several keys to the mystery of Harold Masters, although she has not yet put all the pieces together.

What van Landingham knows:

- The Freddies have grown in members and turf, probably killing whoever stood in their way, and have begun dealing drugs, which they did not originally do.
- The other gangs in their area have not openly fought the Freddies, but a number of their members have been found slashed apart in various alleys.
- Someone called "Pitt" may be connected with the gang.
- Two bodies were recently found in an a Soho apartment (Whitemane's place). The apartment had been ransacked, and a pile of paperwork and computer disks had been found burned. (This was info gathered by the Darkrunners about Amhurst.) One of the bodies had been tortured to death, the other had been riddled with silver bullets. A trail of blood indicated that someone else had been hurt but had escaped.
- The coroner has confided to van Landingham that the bodies had physiological differences from human beings, and that apparent pet hair around the apartment did not belong to normal house pets. This information is not generally known, not even to most police.
- Prominent executive Harold Masters had recently disappeared, then reappeared. This means little until witnesses confirm that Masters had something to do with the carnage in Palfrey's.

• Masters had also recently purchased a large quantity of pure silver. After the incident in Soho, van Landingham had put out feelers for such transactions.

Not surprisingly, the detectives have begun to carry silver weapons. Because of the strange nature of the Palfrey's fight, van Landingham will take jurisdiction over this case as well.

Within an hour or less, the police will come to arrest Masters for questioning. Masters knows this, and will go to ground at his apartment in South Brooklyn, rented in the name of Pitt. From there, he will rally his gang together for a counterattack.

Detective Janice van Landingham

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 4, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Intimidation 1, Subterfuge 3, Streetwise 4, Drive 2, Firearms 4, Leadership 2, Melee 1, Repair 1, Stealth 1, Computers 1, Investigation 4, Law 2, Occult 3, Politics 1

Willpower 9

Image: Tall and lean, short blonde hair, good looks, nonsense personality. Nicknamed "Kolchak" (as in *The Night Stalker*), she has cultivated a reputation as the one to call when you have a strange case. She is 38.

Roleplaying Hints: Be alert! Keep control! Remember that the only ones who would believe what you know would kill you for knowing it.

Background: Even Janice doesn't know about her Garou Kinfolk heritage. All she knows is that for as long as she can remember, she has been privy to things that few others would believe. As Kinfolk, she is immune to the Delirium.

Unfortunately, Janice's insight has cost her a normal life. She shuns close companionship, knowing that her credibility would be shot if she were to speak freely. Only her partner Ed Caldwell shares her knowledge of the shadow world. She does, however, have several powerful friends in the media, on the force, and in the occult subculture.

Any obviously bizarre activity (bodies ripped apart and such) will bring van Landingham into the picture within six hours, less if the characters did something really unsubtle. Characters must avoid tangles with the police at all costs, as arrest, background checks, and incarceration will pose a serious threat to both the group and the Veil in general.

Detective Ed Caldwell

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 1, Intimidation 1, Subterfuge 3, Streetwise 4, Drive 2, Firearms 3, Leadership 2, Melee 1, Repair 1, Stealth 1, Computers 3, Investigation 4, Law 2, Occult 2, Politics 1

Willpower 8

Image: Husky black man, slight gray tinges in hair and beard. About 5'9" and muscular. he is 42.

Roleplaying Hints: Bluster. You have a way of making your quarry underestimate your intelligence. Try not to think too much about the weird things you see.

Equipment: In addition to the usual police gear, Janice and her partner carry two speed loaders of silver bullets.

For a typical police officer's Traits, see **Werewolf** rulesbook, p. 248.

Scene Three: Stormwatch

*We've all gotta duck
when the shit hits the fan.*

— Circle Jerks, "Shit Hits The Fan"

Unless the characters do something to prevent it, the following things will happen:

• Masters will flee to his South Brooklyn apartment, become Pitt, and summon his gang. If the characters have fought any gang members before now, he will learn of it now. If they have broken into his apartment, he'll be really put out.

• Laror will return to his office and call Rick Woods, then set things in motion to dislodge Masters at Amhurst. If he is wounded at Palfrey's, he will get assistants to search for any information they can find about the fight and all participants. If the characters have been involved in other public scraps, Laror will probably find out.

- Woods will rush home to develop his film, then hit the streets again to sell his pictures and dig up more dirt. Sadly for him, all of the papers know his reputation by now and will throw him out. The tabloid Weekly World Views, however, will buy his pictures unless the characters catch him first.

- Janice will conduct a thorough investigation of the scene at Palfrey's. If the characters took an active part in the fray, she will try to identify them, especially if one assumed Crinos form in front of witnesses.

Any clues that the characters may have left in regards to their identity will be investigated, and warrants will be issued for them if they have a legal residence or record. Warrants will be issued for Masters and Laror. Any bodyguards or gang members caught will be interrogated.

If any Freddie's were left incapacitated at the scene, van Landingham will link the gang with Masters. A contact from the Weekly World Views will call her about the pictures around nightfall, and any character photographed will be sought after. All of this will take the rest of the day.

- News teams at Palfrey's will interview van Landingham at the scene, commenting on her reputation as the expert on "weird crimes". If the characters see a news broadcast, they will learn of her involvement in the case. If they don't, a member of the Sept of the Green should track them down and tell them about it. In any case, the Sept's reaction is clear: Clean this mess up, now!

As stated earlier, keep the bomb ticking! The above complications should spur the players into action.

What Do We Do Now?

First of all, the characters must learn who they are dealing with.

This search should be roleplayed out as much as possible, with Tara offering options if the characters are completely baffled.

Van Landingham and Laror make the best sources of information if handled right. The press and most police will be totally in the dark about the whole thing, and may follow the characters around themselves if they seem to know something.

If the characters fought gang members, they may search for the gang's turf. Fifteen successes on an extended Wits + Streetwise roll, difficulty 7, will be needed to trace the Freddie's to South Brooklyn unless they consult the police.

Inquires to the police will probably be referred to van Landingham. Unless the players have already decided to seek her out, this is probably when they will meet...

Both storytellers and player characters should handle van Landingham carefully. She and Caldwell are both smart and suspicious. Janice might be willing to make a deal with the characters, even if she suspects them of being werewolves, so long as it leads her to Masters.

If she meets with the pack, five other officers will be waiting out of sight (Perception + Alertness, difficulty 7, to notice) with

shotguns. If the characters have kept their claws clean up until now, the officers will only be on guard. If the characters have shed innocent blood, the cops will have two tear gas canisters and will attempt to capture the characters.

Effects of tear gas: Each grenade fills a 10 by 10 yard area for up to ten minutes. Tear gas irritates the eyes and causes gagging, subtracting two dice from all dice pools, subtracting four dice if in Hispo or Lupus form due to heightened senses.

If the characters attack or kill any police, the detectives will not rest until the characters are captured. If they surrender, the detectives will interrogate them and keep them in custody if they have evidence to hold them on, but will conceal the Garou's true nature. If there is no evidence to hold them on, the characters will be released, but watched.

By nightfall, Masters/Pitt will have assembled his entire gang, numbering about fifty, at a local warehouse. Trashcan bonfires light the scene as Pitt commands his masked legions to eliminate Albert Laror, Detective van Landingham, and "the nest of monsters gathered in Central Park..."

Scene Four: Bowels of the Devil

*Let's have a party, there's a full moon in the sky,
It's the Hour Of The Wolf, and I don't wanna die...*

— Oingo Boingo, "No One Lives Forever"

Soon after nightfall, the streets of South Brooklyn will run with blood. Taking Pitt's orders as a carte blanche, the Freddie's charge out to commit mayhem. Depending on your wishes as storyteller, the characters and whatever allies they may have picked up will reach the Brooklyn Heights area...

- in time to stop the Freddie's as they leave the warehouse, before they do any real damage.

- in time to see packs of Freddie's begin to take their frenzy out on whoever happens to be around, swarming into the subways, looting, beating and killing anyone within reach.

- after the Freddie's have already begun. Burning cars and dead bodies mark the trail of the mad gang, from their own turf across the river into Manhattan. Some warriors will settle old scores with rival gangs, others will head off after their intended targets, and still others will simply destroy everything in sight. At this point, the Freddie's will be almost impossible for the characters to stop. Cars with shooting parties will be headed off across the Brooklyn Bridge after Laror and van Landingham, and might encounter the pack en route.

Either of the last two options is a scene out of hell, and storytellers should play up the horror of the Wyrms unleashed.

Outside the warehouse, several cars have already been loaded with high powered weapons and incendiaries. Masters plans to lead an assault on the Central Park Caern with this convoy, aided

by Roy Hell, any surviving bodyguards, and a handful of Freddies. For maximum suspense, the pack should meet Masters just as the convoy begins its trek towards the Brooklyn Bridge, and from there to Central Park. For the record, a car packed with incendiaries explodes for 20 dice of fire damage in the car itself, -3 dice per foot away from the car.

Rick Woods will be following up any possible leads he may have found in the meantime, trying to get more action shots. If the characters have not seen him since the fray at Palfrey's, they'll see him now. If van Landingham has connected Masters with the Freddies, she will be en route with several cars and a SWAT team. If not, she will be dispatched to the scene once things get out of control.

The storyteller should run this scene with an eye towards action and suspense. Keep things moving! A long slugfest gets tedious quickly, so shift the battleground from place to place. From the warehouse to the streets, from the alleys to the tracks of the "El", to the back of moving cars and possibly even the Brooklyn Bridge. Concentrate on drama rather than die rolls.

The Freddies

You are all my children now.

— Freddy Krueger, *Nightmare On Elm Street II*

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Streetwise 3, Intimidation 4, Melee 3, Stealth 3

Willpower 9 (5 normally)

Background: Originally one of several small gangs disputing turf in South Brooklyn, the Freddies have expanded, absorbing the other gangs into one large bizarre gang. Any who have disputed the merger have been summarily shredded.

It is recommended that the storyteller customize the various small gangs that make up the Freddies. Remember that gangs provide security and fellowship in a hazardous environment; in many areas, gang membership equals survival.

Combat Note: If you wish to speed up combats, assume gang members can take one good shot to injure them or two good shots to kill them, a "good shot" being at least three health levels before soaking. Their Willpower has been artificially raised by a combination of berserk fury and psychoactive drugs.

The Original Freddies

Images: In all New York, few gangs match the bloodlust of the psychotic Freddies. Each Freddie wears a mask and costume reminiscent of the "heroes" of slasher films and utilizes an array of frightening weapons (chainsaws, axes, drills, sledgehammers) in addition to razored gloves. The storyteller should give vent to her most perverted impulses when equipping individual members. One may heft a spiked club while another may hurl sharp sawblades at his targets!



The six original Freddies had been a group of white scapegoats huddled together around a VCR, venting their rage with endless splatter films. Roy Ellis/Hell first came up with the idea of dressing up like slashers and terrorizing the local gangs. Adding psychoactive drugs into the mix brought out a fearsome bloodlust.

Equipment: As stated above, the Freddies utilize an imaginative array of brutal weapons. All of the original gang also use razored gloves (Strength +2 damage). Consider axes and sledgehammers to do Strength +4, large cutlery to do Strength +1, and power tools to do Strength +2, all with a difficulty of 7. The Freddies conceal their identity with evocative masks and costumes, and usually psych themselves up for "fun" with LSD or PCP.

Roy Hell

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Streetwise 3, Melee 4, Firearms 2, Stealth 5

Willpower 9

Image: Roy's garb consists of a (stolen) leather duster jacket, a black cowboy hat, ratty jeans, boots, and wraparound shades. He wields a barbed-wire whip (Strength +1) which he also strangles people with, and razored gloves. His blades are silver, and do aggravated damage.



Roleplaying Notes: Aside from a dusty chuckle, you never make a sound. You are Silent Death and will do whatever it takes to scare the crap out of your prey before they die.

Background: Although he never liked to speak much, Roy Ellis always thought of himself as a leader. His father thought he was a wimp, and the neighborhood toughs agreed. Roy found himself as leader of a pack of unfortunates like himself.

Persuading his friends to join him in a video-inspired vengeance trip, Roy found his birthright. He killed his parents and fled to the streets to live forever as Roy Hell, the Silent Killer.

Scene Five: Masters' Last Stand

"You not take me! Never! Never go back! Die first!" Masters howls the words as he confronts the pack. Despite all that he has done, the pack should see that the Lunatic is driven by fear, fear of returning to Valkenburg. *"Dark halls,"* he gibbers, *"Robed men — needles! Taint of Wyrms!"*

Although he will be no match for a group of determined Garou, the fight should be run for all its worth. Roy Hell will probably be on hand, along with enough Freddie's and bodyguards to make life interesting. Although the bodyguards have used up all their silver bullets, they still have their guns.

Someone should remember to try to take Masters alive, if only to find out the substance to his fear of Valkenburg. Masters, of course, would rather die, and he will spend any effort to free himself if he is captured alive.

Meanwhile, Tara/Shadowpad will wait for her chance to strike. With Masters within reach, she will frenzy, not stopping until either she or the Lunatic is dead. Neither honor, Renown, nor possible death at the characters' hands will stop her. Actually, death is what she's hoping for, so long as she can send Masters to hell ahead of her.

Whatever happens, Masters' last stand should be a memorable experience.

Scene Six: A Job Well Done?

I'm okay, you're okay, but yechh, look at that!

— Stephen King

When Masters falls, the Freddie's will scatter. Screaming sirens approach from all sides. Now what?

Capture is imminent, and the characters must not only escape, but find their way back to the Central Park Caern and the Moon Bridge. You may make this as difficult or as easy as you wish, but don't belabor the climax of the story. If they've won a hard-fought victory, don't sour it. All the same, the sight of a pack of gore-splattered werewolves trying to take the subway into Manhattan should be good for a few laughs.

For the sake of the Veil, any fallen Garou, including Shadowpad or Masters, should be taken away. The two Darkrunner bodies have already raised suspicions; more than that would be danger-

ous to the sept. If van Landingham sees the Garou as something other than bloodthirsty monsters, she may cover their escape, but will remain curious about the true nature of werewolves, and may become either a helpful ally or an implacable enemy of the Sept of the Green.

If he has survived the carnage, Rick Woods will still be snapping pictures. He represents a true threat to the Veil, and should be stopped and his pictures destroyed. This might become the basis for a later scenario (see *Complications*).

The police will probably assume that the characters are part of the "riot" going on, and will shoot first and ask questions later. If the police are in hot pursuit, the White Mouse totem of the Caern may itself open the Moon Bridge for the players. Otherwise, Mother Larissa must be sought out, and the pack's actions will be deeply considered before they are sent back...

Nearly anything the characters do during the climax will probably be explained away as part of the "weird stuff" that happened during the night, so long as they leave no concrete proof of their true nature. Any attacks on police officers, however, will cause problems for the Garou of the sept, who will not be thrilled with the characters!

Masters will probably die during the climax. If he does, Victor Helms may be displeased but will probably understand, given the difficulty of the mission. The characters should be rewarded for a reasonably successful mission so long as they bring Masters' corpse back to the Foundation. If the Lunatic survives, the pack should be well rewarded, both in experience and Renown, once the difficulty of the quest becomes known. If Masters gets away from the pack in New York, both Valkenburg and the Sept will hold them responsible for his capture.

Masters' sorry fate, should he survive, is to return to the darkened torture pits of the Bane researchers. While there is a certain harsh justice in this, the pack should realize, once they discover the corruption of the Foundation (in *Story Five*), that any additional agonies he suffers will be partially their fault.

Like Shadowpad, they may learn a hard lesson about good intentions and the path to hell.

If the characters relay Masters' obvious terror of the Foundation, both Gretchen and Victor will be distressed, and will assure the pack that nothing of the kind is occurring in Valkenburg. The Puppeteers will do whatever is necessary to allay the Questing Pack's suspicions. For now, the explanations will probably be sufficient. Neither of these two heads of Valkenburg is under the control of the Puppeteers, and their explanations are sincere. Nonetheless, when later developments occur, the Questing Pack will have cause to look back at this mission and wish that they had seen things more clearly...

Awarding Renown

In general, both experience and Renown should be awarded by the storyteller as per the guidelines in *Werewolf*. Some specific deeds, however, may merit the following Renown:

- Killing Harold Masters: 400 Glory
- Saving the Central Park Caern from being blown up by Masters: 2000 Glory
- Stopping the Freddies' rampage: 1000 Glory
- Saving Masters from Shadowpad so as to fulfill the pack mission: 500 Honor
- Putting self in jeopardy to save the Veil and conceal the Caern: 1000 Honor
- Making wise choices for allies rather than stumbling around: 500 Wisdom
- Gaining van Landingham as an ally: 1000 Wisdom
- Restraining self from public violence which could bring attention: 500 Wisdom
- Covering all tracks as you go (stopping Rick Woods and destroying photos): 500 Wisdom
- Bringing Masters back alive: 2000 Wisdom

Complications

The following are a few extra ideas that could make the Questing Pack's job even harder than it already is or add to future adventures...

- Albert Laror may be a Tremere Kindred, with all the attendant powers and resources. Such a vampire may manipulate the characters into a mutually destructive confrontation with Masters, and may try to gain some hold over the caern in the bargain.
- Someone important, either a witchhunter, a paranormal researcher, or a government agent, sees Rick Woods' pictures and wants to find out more. One or more of the pack is recognizable, and the hunt is on...
- Detectives van Landingham and Caldwell pursue the characters in some way. This will probably happen if the pack makes a large mess in New York and will definitely happen if fellow police officers are killed by the pack. The police will post whatever information that they may have about the pack on the nationwide police computer network (where it may fall into the hands of Wyrms agents), or may even follow the Garou personally, if the characters did something awful enough.
- The Sept of the Green may be displeased with the Questing Pack and the Valkenburg Foundation in general. If the pack makes a large and costly mess in New York or threatens the security of the caern, Valkenburg will lose some of its already shaky support among the Garou. Conversely, if the pack saves the caern from being blown to Kingdom Come, the Foundation will gain some friends that may come in handy later.



Story Three: Skins

Written by J. Morrison, Illustrated by Jeff Rebner

*Uncovering things that were sacred
manifest on this earth*

*Conceived in the eye of a secret
and they scattered the afterbirth.*

— Ozzy Osbourne, "Mister Crowley"

The pack discovers that someone is killing lupus Garou, seemingly for sport, and soon find that all is not as it appears. Someone is planning to use the skins of the dead Garou for his own dark purposes, and that someone is involved in attempts to destroy the Valkenburg Foundation.

The pack should become aware of the traps set for them slowly, as one of several hunters escapes their vengeance, leaving behind only small clues as to who he is and what he is attempting to do. This story is fairly fast paced, and can be run in a single night or in several sessions depending on the actions of the Questing Pack. In the event that several nights are spent in the adventure, the storyteller should try to keep a strong sense of outrage at the callous, bloody acts of the remaining hunter.

From the second scene on, this story is meant to keep the pack on edge, surprised by a suspicious series of events that show possible compromises in Valkenburg's sanctity as well as showing the darker nature of man. The mysterious hunter manages to stay one step ahead of the pack almost all of the way through the story, again and again seeming to know what the pack is planning.

The Plot

Scene One — The pack is asked to assure that all of the Lunatic lupus that have been released into the woods near Valkenburg are doing well, after rumors in town suggest that hunters in the area are preparing to hunt down the animals that have killed several head of sheep. The first time they meet the lupus, all will be well, and they should get a solid chance to meet and befriend the nervous Garou.

Scene Two — A second viewing of the Lunatic lupus will show a drastic change. Upon locating the cured Lunatic pack a second time, they will find that three of the poor lupus are dead, skinned and beheaded. A search of the area will show easy to follow clues leading to the hunters.

Following the trail, the pack will confront a group of extremely intoxicated hunters and one very sober leader who is in the process of abandoning his companions. Most of the hunters are too drunk to do anything; the sober one however, is carrying a rifle complete with silver bullets. One way or another, the one with the silver bullets escapes.



Examination of the bodies shows that all of the men live in New Haven, and all have security passes for the Nolan-Harker Mining and Transit Company.

Scene Three — The pack checks out the connection between NHMTC and the hunters, discovering much more than they had expected. In the offices containing employment records, a letter from Victor Helms is found, thanking Samuel Haight for a donation. The Garou discover that Samuel Haight is the hunter they are pursuing.

In addition, they learn of the Pentex connection to NHMTC and the plans to buy up local land, threatening the Pure Heart Sept and Valkenburg. The guards of NHMTC are all Sioux, some of them Kinfolk. Leaving the office may not be as easy as getting in.

Scene Four — The pack goes to confront Sam Haight, locating him just as he is finishing a hideous ritual by which he will become Garou. They find Haight's home protected by wards as well as by traps.

What Is Really Going On

Samuel Haight, a Kinfolk of the Children of Gaia Tribe, has resented his lack of Garou ability since the time when his cousins, the Carney Brothers, Changed. Haight has developed a hatred of Garou as a whole, and of the Children of Gaia and the Pure Heart Sept in particular. Haight plans to do everything in his power to destroy the Garou Sept in Wyoming, and in the process he plans to destroy the Valkenburg Foundation, a foundation that could never have done anything for him.

But that is only part of what Haight has planned. In his twisted mind he feels that all Kinfolk must believe as he himself believes, and this mind-set has opened the door to the Wyrms. The Wyrms has led Samuel Haight through plans to destroy the Foundation and to gain even more Garou to its side; for Samuel Haight has found a powerful Thaumaturgic spell that will allow him to become Garou himself, and will show him the way to change even more Kinfolk into Garou.

Working from inside a seemingly friendly company not far from the Valkenburg Foundation, Samuel Haight has schemed and planned carefully, setting in motion the actions that will permit him to destroy the Foundation and the sept at the same time that he becomes Garou. Unless the Questing Pack can reveal all of his secrets and stop him in time, it may already be too late.

Theme

Waiting for to follow the Worm

Waiting for the Worm to come.

— Pink Floyd, "The Wall"

Revenge is the overall theme in this story. In a time when Garou are all too scarce, someone has been hunting and killing lupus. Contrary to what the people in town have claimed, the hunters are obviously not very worried about the loss of a few head of sheep. The hunters have something much more serious in store.

The Garou want revenge for what has been done to their kind. Samuel Haight wants revenge for what his cousins achieved that he could not have. Samuel Haight is Kinfolk, and wants more than anything else to be full Garou. Samuel wants the powers and the strengths of the Garou without the duties and beliefs.

Jealous of what his cousins have shared without him, Samuel was easy prey for the Wyrms' corruption. Samuel's desire for what he could not have has led him to seek power for its own sake, even at the cost of his own sanity. Samuel may well get the power he wants, but he will never feel the pleasure of truly being Garou.

Mood

The mood of "Skins" is rage. Samuel's rage and jealousy have led him down the path of corruption, straight into the very heart of the Wyrms' domain. The pack must fight back with rage against a fiend who knows all of their secrets and all of the best ways to hurt them. In his desire to be Garou, Samuel Haight has become all that the Garou despise.

Samuel has gone so far as to set in motion the devastation of the lands surrounding Valkenburg, calling on Pentex as a way to raze the land of the Garou he so envies. Nothing will stand in his way, because to Sam nothing is sacred. Samuel Haight's outrage at being denied has led him to seek the destruction of the Pure Heart Sept. Killing the Lunatic lupus is only the first step in Samuel's plans. Haight would like nothing more than to see the entire sept destroyed, because that sept is the very location where his cousins were accepted as full Garou.

Scene One: The Lonely Wolves

Mental wounds still screaming

Driving me insane

I'm going off the rails on the Crazy Train.

— Ozzy Osbourne, "Crazy Train"

The pack is asked by Leslie Thomas to look in on the cured lupus that roam the woods near Valkenburg. Leslie has recently heard that farmers are planning to hunt down the predators that have killed several of their sheep. Leslie's love of the wolves should be very apparent in the request. Leslie can also supply the pack with information on the wolves' normal stomping grounds.

The four lupus that roam in the woods near Valkenburg are quiet and very shy around other Garou. They will be cautious in approaching the Questing Pack, only coming forward when they are certain that the pack members mean them no harm. Should a member of the Questing Pack so much as snarl at these poor creatures, they will run.

Anyone attempting to befriend them will be accepted almost immediately and be introduced to the rest of the four-member pack. To date, the Lupus have had no trouble with hunters, they are careful to avoid being seen by humans on their infrequent forays into farm land.



None of the lupus have the ability to shapechange. Their cure required Valkenburg's serum. They will live the rest of their lives as wolves.

Red Fur: Red Fur is a lupus of the Red Talon Tribe, no longer accepted by the tribe due to the Red Talons' belief that the Lunatics should be left untreated to fend for themselves. While several members of the tribe might actually want to see Red Fur returned, the leaders of the Red Talons are opposed to the idea. As a result Red Fur is left to himself, with only the other lupus of his pack. He is a Theurge.

Like all of the lupus pack in the woods, Red Fur is extremely shy. He will only attack any creature if he is cornered. Also, like the other Lunatic lupus, he has no Gifts as he has never been taught them.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Empathy 2, Expression 3, Primal-Urge 1, Stealth 3, Survival 3

Rage 3, Gnosis 4, Willpower 2

Clawless: Clawless is a lupus of the Fianna tribe. Like her name states, she has no claws. Clawless is quite old, and her once fine brown pelt is more gray than anything else these days. Clawless wandered for many a year before being taken by the Valkenburg Foundation, and of all the lupus in the pack, Clawless is by far the shyest. It will take a great deal of coaxing to get her to accept the strangers. Clawless still bears truly repulsive scars on both of her front paws, from a time before Valkenburg when



she was forced to chew off her front paws to escape from a bear trap. The trap was manufactured by Pentex and intended for Garou. These scars have never healed, nor have her claws grown back. She is a Galliard.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 1, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 3, Expression 3, Primal-Urge 3, Stealth 2, Survival 4

Backgrounds: Pure Breed 3

Rage 4, Gnosis 7, Willpower 3

Snarl: Snarl is a very large lupus, larger by far than is average. But his size comes not from being a fearsome and powerful animal; rather, it comes from a large gut and a slow metabolism. Snarl also bears his namesake on his face at all times, as a result of his own attack against a previous Questing Pack. The scar on his face splits his upper lip. It healed poorly, leaving Snarl with one canine that is always exposed. He is a Ragabash of the Bone Gnawer tribe.

Snarl looks more like a shaggy bear than a Garou. With gray fur and a tail that perpetually wags, Snarl has been mistaken for a very large and mangy Saint Bernard more than once. By far, he is the most outgoing of the pack, constantly in the mood to rough house and desperate to get his back scratched. Still, he approaches strangers with caution. It is only after the strangers have gained his trust that he is affectionate to a fault.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 1, Empathy 2, Expression 1, Intimidation 2, Primal-Urge 2, Survival 3, Stealth 2

Rage 8, Gnosis 4, Willpower 6

Eats Pinecones: As her name indicates, Eats Pinecones has a strong affection for the fruit of the pine tree, and as often as not can be found munching contentedly on a pinecone, sitting against the tree that dropped the tasty morsel. Eats Pinecones is normally a friendly enough Garou, but has obviously run across trouble with homids before. Homids make her leery, and metis scare her senseless. But any lupus approaching is her friend for life, just as long as they can accept her unusual dietary habits...

She is a Philodox of the Children Of Gaia. Eats Pinecones is a truly beautiful lupus, with luxurious fur the same color as the leaves in autumn and strong features on her face. Her eyes are blue, and her teeth are even, though the latter seem to constantly be covered with fragments of pinecone and a healthy layer of pine sap.

Some could say that she is the most sane of the ex-Lunatics, but they consider her habit of constantly chewing pinecones to be a sure sign of her instability. She is shy and quiet, and altogether would prefer to eat her special treat in peace rather than join in on conversation.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Expression 3, Intimidation 2, Primal-Urge 1, Animal Ken 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2

Rage 5, Gnosis 8, Willpower 4

Scene Two: The Hateful Bounty

A few nights later, the pack is asked to check on the lupus in the woods again. The storyteller might want to have the pack check on the lupus several times before this chapter starts, but only once is really necessary.

The woods are dark, the sky is cloudy and a new moon hides what little light it could have given behind the cloud cover. The forest is alive with the sounds of Gaia's breathing: crickets, nocturnal birds, and far away from where the pack starts out, wolves that once had nightmares of being human.

After a short time in the woods, the pack hears the sound of gunfire and the sharp yipping howls of pain from wolf throats, a few miles away. By the time the Questing Pack arrives, it is already far too late.

The scene that the pack comes across should fill all of them with horror and outrage (all lupus gain an automatic two Rage points; all others gain one point). Someone has killed three of the wolves and they have done more than just kill them, they have skinned the wolves and beheaded them as well.

The remains show not a simple hunt, but a malicious attack on animals that, at first, seems only to have been fun and games with automatic rifles and shotguns. All three of the dead wolves have been shot several times each.

A simple tracking roll (Perception + Primal Urge, difficulty of 5, the tracks are very fresh) will show the pack that the hunters have only just left the scene a few minutes ahead of them. The hunters are in two vehicles.

The dead wolves are Clawless, Snarl and Red Fur. There is no sign of Eats Pinecones, but her tracks lead away into the woods, the opposite direction from the hunters' vehicle tracks.

Should the pack give chase to the vehicles, they will have little difficulty following the trail, and can locate the hunters in about fifteen minutes. There are a total of eight hunters in two large pick up trucks. Oddly, seven of the hunters are in one of the trucks, the truck closest to the pack when they catch sight of the vehicles.

The hunters are all very intoxicated — they have actually left an easy to follow trail of beer cans along their route — and will be surprised by the pack's attack. The hunters are also armed with an assortment of hunting rifles, and they will shoot on sight if they see the pack coming. Without exception, Sense Wyrms will show the hunters to be Wyrms-tainted.

At this point, the storyteller should have each character make a roll to resist frenzy. The sight of the humans who have perpetrated the lupus slaughter is too much to bear. Any character

who goes into frenzy will leap at the truck carrying the hunters, slashing away until she comes to her senses. Anyone who successfully resists the frenzy can act as they please.

Yes, this is extreme behavior, and some players may not want their characters to act so. However, the purpose of the frenzy is to drive home the point that, as Garou, the characters are not always the masters of their turbulent emotions. Instinct takes over, and acts which would normally be considered with horror can be performed with relish by a berserk werewolf.

There is one exception to the drunken state of the hunters: Samuel Haight, the only person in the pick-up truck in the lead. Samuel is stone-cold sober and perfectly willing to kill the pack. Samuel is also immune to the Delirium, for he is Kinfolk. The other hunters are simply here as Samuel's early warning for approaching Garou, and he is the only person here fully prepared to attack the pack.

Samuel is carrying three weapons, all firearms loaded with silver ammunition: a heavy pistol, a heavy sub machine gun, and a semi-automatic shotgun. Samuel is the mastermind behind the assault on the Lunatic Garou, and has been preparing for over two years. He has no intention of being captured.

At the first sign of difficulty, Samuel will abandon the hunters completely, driving as quickly as he safely can, and making as much distance as possible between himself and the pack. Should the pack abandon the other hunters and head straight for Haight, he has a few other surprises in store.

Samuel has several Molotov cocktails prepared, which he will throw into the surrounding woods, starting a forest fire. If this is not enough to slow the Garou, he also has a large box of Oriental throwing spikes, all silver coated, which he will scatter across the ground for anyone that follows. Being coated with silver, the spikes will automatically do one level of aggravated damage on contact with a running Garou's feet, effectively reducing the pack member's running speed by half. Samuel Haight will also have any additional items he should need to ensure his escape. One way or another, Samuel should get away from the pack in this scene.

After the pack has defeated most of the hunters (with only Samuel escaping), a search of them will give the pack a solid clue as to where to look for Samuel Haight. Every member of the hunting party has a security pass for the Nolan-Harker Mining and Transportation Company. These passes have magnetic strips along the back, as well as addresses and names with photographs on the front side. Without exception, all of these men work as security guards for the NHMTC.

The Hunters

Samuel Haight has deliberately culled the best hunters and the worst thinkers for his lupus hunt, casually screening the truck-drivers and security guards for the ones who were most out for fun and least out for success. Samuel has also picked the best ones at keeping their mouths shut about potentially illegal operations, the ones that have been known to drink far too much on a Saturday night and then attempt to drive home.



The hunters are all just out for a good time, completely unaware that they are being manipulated by their supervisor into doing something that is truly hideous. They assume that they are simply out to stop a few coyote from killing the sheep of their friends and neighbors, which is exactly what Samuel Haight wants them to assume.

In Samuel Haight's eyes, the hunters are expendable, and while all of them have firearms, Samuel Haight has deliberately avoided telling the hunters what is at risk when the Garou show themselves.

Haight has also provided his good buddies with a huge amount of beer, ensuring that the hunters will not be able to properly defend themselves, and certain that the Garou will take care of any potential witnesses for him. Should any of the hunters be left alive to answer questions, they will honestly have no answers to give, except that Mister Haight thought they could do the town a little good by getting rid of the "varmint" that have been killing off their neighbor's sheep. The hunters are quite in the dark about what Haight has in mind, and in their present state, wouldn't be able to recall anything anyway. The only clue any of the hunters can give is the name of the hunter that got away.

Hunters

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 1, Stamina 2, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 1, Drive 2, Firearms 3, Stealth 1, Survival 1, Law 1, Medicine 1

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Resources 1
Willpower 4

Equipment: Shotguns and six-packs of beer.

Scene Three: NHMTC

If the characters have any sense at all, they will realize that the only linking factor for all of the hunters is the Nolan-Harker Mining and Transport Company. Even if this clue does not register — we all have our off days — Samuel Haight's truck tracks lead directly to the NHMTC, before disappearing and leaving a slightly blood-scented truck behind.

The Nolan-Harker Mining and Shipping Company rests on the edge of the woods, near New Haven. The building itself is unimpressive, a single story cinder block rectangle with institutional wire covered windows. Surrounding the building is an electrified fence with high voltage warnings posted every twenty-five feet. The fence is six feet in height, and topped with barbed wire. Use the jumping rules in *Werewolf* to determine if the jumper can clear the fence without risking damage from the barbed wire and the electrical current.

The fence causes one level of aggravated damage (difficulty 5 to soak) on contact. A character who makes his jump roll by one success takes damage from the current in the fence while successfully passing over, while a botch means that the pack member has become ensnared in the barbed wire and will continue to take electrical damage until she is assisted out of the tangle. Any character ensnared in the barbed wire will effec-

A Letter from Victor Helms

Dear Sam,

Thank you as always for your kind donation to Valkenburg. You may rest assured that the money will be put to good use, treating our patients and ensuring the continued professional care that these poor souls so desperately need.

While the donation is greatly appreciated, I fear it would be imprudent to allow the Carney Brothers visitors at this time. They are still in a very agitated state, and would likely be very hostile towards even so caring a relative as yourself. Again, our thanks, and please be assured that as soon as the brothers can receive visitors, you will be the first to know. The brothers have shown great promise in their recovery and we all hope that they will soon be back with their loved ones.

Sincerely,

Victor Helms

Director of Operations, Valkenburg Foundation

tively lose all Dexterity as a result of muscle spasms. A Willpower roll with a difficulty of 8 will nullify this effect. Any Garou ensnared in the wire, taking damage, must make a Rage roll to resist frenzy. Any Garou attempting to help the ensnared pack member will also take damage from the fence, as electricity passes through both forms on its way to the ground.

Aside from the locked doors, the fence is the only security on the outside of the property. Also, there are no trees anywhere near the fence, so simply leaping from atop a tree will do the characters no good.

If the characters have brought the security passes from the hunters with them, gaining access through the main entrance is easy. There are no security codes, and the magnetic stripe will open the front door without difficulty. If the pack did not bring a pass key, Strength 5 is needed to open the door. The latter option will also alert the guards inside.

Once inside the building, there are only three offices that could be of any help, and all are situated in the front of the building. The offices of Samuel Haight, and of the receptionist are right at the entrance, and the Personnel offices are directly behind the reception area. None of these doors are locked. NHMTC sees no reason to bother with locking individual offices, as in their eyes, gaining entry would be almost impossible.

A search of the receptionist's desk is fruitless, producing only a Rolodex and a list of office numbers inside the building. A search of Haight's office will give uncover some interesting items, one of which is a letter from Victor Helms at Valkenburg.

In addition to this letter, a very careful search of the office will produce two other clues. The first of these is a proposal package that lies under several piles of paper on the desk of Samuel Haight. The proposal involves the purchase of the land around Valkenburg itself for the purpose of strip-mining, though what would be strip-mined for is unknown. This proposal has a quick hand-scrawled note from another person. The note is on paper with a Pentex logo, and is signed in an unintelligible scrawl. The note effectively says that a great deal of work is needed before the



proposal could be passed, and that Samuel should continue his research into the legalities of exchanging lands in the National Forest for lands in another area.

The only other clue that can be found in this office is a series of check stubs from several payments to the Valkenburg Foundation. These checks have all been for exactly five thousand dollars, and are several months apart.

In the Personnel offices, the pack can discover all they need to know about Samuel Haight. Haight is the Manager of Operations at NHMTC, and has been assigned to this location by the owners of the company, Pentex. Haight's photograph can be found on his file, as can his home address. That is effectively all of the information that can be found on the man. But if the pack have had any doubts before, they can now gain the answers to any questions by paying a visit to Haight's home.

Additionally, the personnel files reveal a great number of Sioux working on the premises, a fairly serious number of whom are actually Kinfolk. Should any members of the Questing Pack be Wendigo, they might well recognize familiar names in these files. An Intelligence + Investigation roll with a difficult of 6 is all that is necessary to make the connection.

The guards inside NHMTC have been almost as busy as the pack themselves, making their routine routes of the building. Should any of the pack members have waited outside and kept watch, they will find three guards heading in the direction of the front offices. Stealth and a few whispers will prevent any potential encounters, but if the pack has been less cautious, the guards will certainly gain the advantage of surprise.

The guards are all Native American Sioux, and all of them are quite loyal to NHMTC, as the company pays well and has excellent medical benefits. However, like Samuel Haight, some of these men are Kinfolk. The guards are rational and they will listen to the words of the Garou, should the pack members try to explain their breaking and entering. It is even possible that they might know a member of the Wendigo tribe by name and reputation. In any event, a member of the Wendigo tribe should be willing to try to discuss the differences rather than attack. These guards are not Wyrms-corrupted.

Should the Garou make an honest plea with the guards, they will be allowed to leave. They will not be permitted to take any evidence with them, but they might be permitted to take photocopies of any paperwork. Should the pack opt to attack instead, the guards will do their very best to defend the property, possibly dying in the process. Samuel Haight has used special rituals on the building itself, that will prevent even non-Kinfolk from suffering the ill effects of the Delirium. No guard inside the halls of NHMTC will be the least surprised by a werewolf; though it is fair to say a few Garou might be surprised by angry guards cutting loose with machine guns.

Any Garou who kill these guards without very good reason will certainly gain the enmity of the Wendigo tribe in the area. By the same token, informing the Kinfolk of the risks they are taking in working for NHMTC could very well earn the Wendigo tribe's gratitude. The guards are unaware of the Pentex connection and have never heard of Pentex anyway.

The Guards

Samuel Haight has replaced a good portion of the staff at the Nolan-Harker Mining and Transportation Corporation with people he carefully chose himself. Haight has placed a substantial number of pure blood Sioux in employment at NHMTC. This has not been done out of a sense of loyalty but to ensure that a great number of Kinfolk like himself work for the company, Kinfolk to the Wendigo tribe. Samuel hopes that by using Kinfolk, he can slow down the Garou assault that is almost inevitable at this time. The Kinfolk are unaffected by the Delirium, and could just as easily be related to any Garou who decides to attack. Even if the Kinfolk are not directly related, the deaths of the guards would certainly assure the Garou who caused the slaughter would gain the enmity of the Wendigo tribe at the Pure Heart Sept.

A careless Garou could very well sign her own death warrant at the hands of the Wendigo tribe, at the same time causing inter-tribal strife at Pure Heart. Nothing would please Samuel more than to see the sept torn apart by its own protectors.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Dodge 1, Intimidation 2, Animal Ken 1, Drive 2, Etiquette 1, Firearms 3, Melee 1, Stealth 2, Investigation 1, Law 2, Medicine 2

Equipment: All of the guards carry M-16 assault rifles.

Scene Four: The House That Sam Built

*Jumping at shadow that come from behind
Scared of the darkness that's there in your Mind
You're frightened to move because of what you might find
Someone is watching you (He's gonna get you).*

— Alan Parsons Project, *The Voice*

Following the clues found at NHMTC, the pack should head next for Haight's home. Haight fully expects retribution, and has prepared his home for any emergencies. The house is a two-story A-frame with a large front yard and back yard. The house is guarded by two Doberman Pincers that have been trained as guard dogs, and Haight has set booby traps as well.

The pack really shouldn't have a great deal of difficulty against the Doberman Pincers. Like any sane animal, they will run at the first sighting of a Crinos. The booby traps, on the other hand, could prove to be a nasty surprise for an unwary Garou.

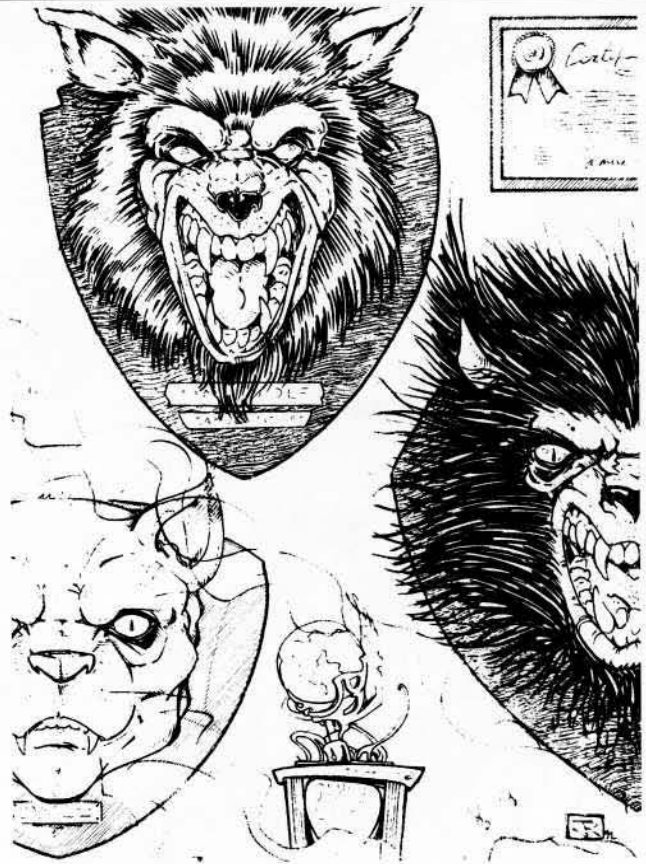
Haight has planted simple trip-wire traps at every entrance to the house, on both levels. Windows, doors and even the fireplace are set with primitive but effective spring-loaded traps, using ordinary silverware. The careless Garou will find himself taking aggravated damage unless he notices the trip-wire (Perception + Awareness, difficulty 9).

The traps are spring-loaded holes cut into the door and window frames around the house, and covered with a thin layer of spackling gum that has been painted to match the door frames perfectly. Should the trip-wire be sprung, the holes will be filled with silver plated cutlery that will strike through the thin layer of spackling and into the flesh of unwary Garou. The cutlery is propelled by fifty pound springs that will drive the knives forward with enough force to cut into steel. These traps are meant more to maim than to kill, and will strike a Garou in anything but Lupus form in the legs. Should a Lupus trigger the traps, the damage will likely be to the chest or abdomen.

Samuel Haight has set these traps in literally every doorway, but after noticing the first one, the difficulty to notice others is only a 5 on a roll of Perception + Repair. Each of the traps does one automatic level of damage (aggravated) as a result of the silver coating on all of the knives, and unless a soak roll succeeds, one additional level of damage will occur.

An examination of the rooms in Haight's house will show several unusual surprises, ranging from a room filled with various hunting weapons on the first floor, to his bedroom, filled with odd books and scrolls of all description. The entire house bears a strong scent of the Wurm, and is mildly repulsive to any Garou who can sense the presence of the Wurm. There is no sign of Haight in any of the rooms on the upper two floors, which leaves only the basement to examine.

The basement is heavily protected by more lethal traps of the same nature as encountered earlier and by a fire-proof steel door. To break down the door, Strength 6 or greater is required, or else



a Willpower roll will be necessary. This door is locked from the inside. Any Garou with Heightened Senses will notice a faint chanting coming from the other side of this doorway, as well as smelling a foul stench that fairly burns the nose with its potent reek.

After getting past the traps, and the door, the odor will become almost overbearing to all Garou, and any Garou with Heightened Sense must make a Stamina roll, difficulty 6, to avoid retching. A thick green smoke will rise from the depths below, coming up from a concrete stairwell.

The pack will soon discover the first room downstairs, a trophy room that runs almost the full length of the house above. The room is filled with bizarre trophies, ranging from a lion that has been stuffed and placed against one wall, to the full stuffed skin of a mountain gorilla. Any close examination of these two animal's hides will show that the eyes have been replaced with cameras, allowing the Garou to be taped as they pass through the room.

The wall farthest from the pack hides a concealed passage that is made noticeable only by the bilious green cloud of smoke that leaks out from beneath the edges. On that wall are what appear to be special trophies. Several heads are mounted on this wall, some of which look to be made of papier-maché, along with the heads of deer and even a grizzly bear.

At the very center of this menagerie, the head of a Get of Fenris can be seen, snarling ferally, side by side with the head of a Black Spiral Dancer. Any Rage spent that has not been regained should easily come back to the pack members at this point. The death toll



of Garou at this hunter's hands is now four (not including the Black Spiral Dancer, of course).

Here lies the final trap set by Samuel Haight to prevent his ritual being disturbed. The entry way to his secret room is barred not only by a wall, but by a wall reinforced with solid steel bars. It will take Strength 9 to remove this barrier. Beyond the barrier itself are two Claymore mines. The Claymores have been set to fully encompass the entrance to this final hidden room, and unless a character states that she is stepping back or preparing to dive away, the mines will unleash seven levels of damage (non-aggravated), difficulty 9 to Dodge and difficulty 8 to soak. The Claymores are set to explode if the door is not opened properly.

Samuel Haight has set the final irony in his entranceway: to open the door without triggering the mines, a character must reach into the snarling mouths of the Get of Fenris and the Black Spiral Dancer, simultaneously, and flip switches concealed in the mouths. These switches can be noticed with a roll of Perception + Enigmas, difficulty 7. If only one switch is flipped, the spring-loaded mouths of the two mounted Garou will snap shut violently, causing three levels of aggravated damage to the unfortunate Garou's hand. A recorded tape will fire off a Song of Mockery and a Wail of Foreboding from the heads mounted on the wall. The speakers are well concealed, and the overall effect should be extremely unsettling. This dual message is also the final warning for Haight that he has unwanted visitors, and he may well have time to set the Claymore mines to go off anyway.

There is a long tunnel that leads the Garou to the room where Samuel Haight is finishing his ritual. The tunnel is very dark, and

should cause the pack a few moments of worry looking for nonexistent traps. Samuel has no desire to kill the Garou at this time, only to delay them. As a general rule, Samuel prefers the thrill of the hunt to anything as paltry as trip wires and bear traps. He finds a greater satisfaction in the personal touch when it comes to killing.

The Change

*Like a mirror held before me
Large as the sky is wide
And the image is reflected
back to the other side.*

— Alan Parsons Project, "Some Other Time"

When the pack finally breaks in, Samuel Haight will have just successfully finished the Ritual of Sacred Rebirth. As the pack approaches, they will see a man covered in the hides of five different Garou. As they actually reach a point where they can attack, the pack will witness the five pelts being literally pulled into Samuel Haight's body, and he will assume the Crinos form and become Garou in his own right.

As he Changes, pain obvious on his face, alongside a twisted smile of triumph, Samuel Haight has this to say: "You chase me for killing others of your type, but I let you live. I never wanted to kill any Garou, but it was necessary. I was just Kinfolk, just another person to be treated like dirt by the Garou. But now, now I am Garou as well. Leave it alone, go away and I might even let you live."

Haight has absolutely no desire to fight the Garou at this time, and is fully prepared to make good his escape a second time. Insanity is very obvious in the newly created Garou's eyes, and his hatred of the other Garou is very apparent.

Should the Garou attempt to attack him, Haight will grab the fetish around his neck, look deeply into its glassy eyes, and instantly disappear into the Umbra. If the Garou attempt to follow, they will come across a hideous sight indeed. Samuel Haight, now in the Umbra for the first time in his life, sees what has happened to his dreams.

Samuel sees the dark and blasted landscape where his house was, replaced in the Umbra by shadowy walls infested with Banes, twisting around his body and willing him to join them. Samuel screams in fear and horror, grabs the fetish around his neck and dissolves before the pack's eyes.

As soon as Haight disappears, the Banes will turn their attention to the Garou. Five Skrags hover around the blighted house, all eager to attack the Garou. In addition, three Kalus are also present, and they will attempt to pervert the Garou with evil thoughts. Use the Traits given in **Werewolf** (pgs. 162-163).

The house itself is a Blight in the Umbra, a blasted place which has long harbored the hateful presence of Samuel Haight. The house will forever be a lair and breeding ground of Banes unless the pack can destroy the Banes that are here and then demolish the physical house. Afterwards a Rite of Cleansing must be performed.

Haight has escaped. His hate of the Garou is undiminished, but he has received a dark glimpse into his own soul. This will only fuel his drive to revenge himself, however. The storyteller can use Haight as a continuing nemesis in future stories, having him show up to hatch dark plots, perhaps even accompanied by dread allies.

Samuel Haight

*You're scratchin' an itch that nothing can ease
You lie down with dogs you get up with fleas.*

— Alan Parsons Project, "You Lie Down With Dogs"

Breed: Homid

Tribe: Children of Gaia

Auspice: Theurge

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Intimidation 3, Primal-Urge 1, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 2, Animal Ken 2, Drive 1, Firearms 4, Melee 2, Leadership 4, Stealth 3, Survival 4, Computer 2, Enigmas 3, Investigation 3, Linguistics 2, Occult 4, Politics 2, Rituals 5

Backgrounds: Resources 3

Gifts: Thaumaturgy 3 (see below)

Rage 8, Gnosis 4, Willpower 6

Fetishes: Shedding the Spirit Skin (Level 5, Gnosis 7; this "necklace" is actually a mummified snake painted with bizarre runes. Samuel took it from a Black Spiral Dancer he killed a time



back. It allows the wearer to Reform in the Umbra as if he were a spirit. The area he reforms in is random, and normally linked to an area under the dominion of the Wyrms.)

Thaumaturgy: Samuel Haight knows several Thaumaturgic spells and rituals, most of which can be found in the **Vampire: The Masquerade** rulesbook. Movement of Mind 2, Lure of Flames 1, Weather Control 1. He also knows a rite: the Ritual of Sacred Rebirth.

Ritual of Sacred Rebirth (Level Five): this allows the caster to become Garou, but only after successfully gathering the skins of five Garou. Each of these skins must be prepared using an ointment made of very rare herbs and minerals, and each must be taken under the same moon stage. In Samuel Haight's case, each had to be killed under the Crescent Moon. This ritual can take an incredible amount of time to prepare, and the pelts of the Garou must be constantly preserved under the same moon sign they were killed under. The pelts may be years apart, so long as they are always preserved in the proper way.

The final ceremony must again come under the same moon stage, and must be completed in under one hour. The caster rolls Intelligence + Occult against a difficulty of 9. Only one success is required. At the end of the ceremony, the skins of the five victims will merge into the caster, forever becoming a part of the caster's body. There is no known reversal for this ritual. When completed, the caster will be Garou. He will be tainted by the Wyrms (unless the Garou willingly gave of their skins for him).

Image: A middle aged man with hazel eyes and brown hair that is starting to gray. Samuel Haight is in excellent physical shape. Once he Changes, Haight will appear as a powerful-looking wolf in Lupus form. He will retain his brown hair with gray streaks in all his forms.

Roleplaying Notes: You are a schemer, and you have a desire to destroy all Garou save those that you help free from their obviously hideous life as mere Kinfolk. Never tolerate a Garou to live, if you have a weapon. But you are also smart enough to know when the time is right to turn away from your enemies — if only so you can kill them at another time.

Background: Haight was born 47 years ago, to a Garou father and a human mother in the woods of Wyoming. Samuel was the youngest of seven children and, like the rest of his siblings, did not breed true. His father, of the Children of Gaia, had hoped that Samuel would be Garou as well, but Samuel was not so lucky. To Samuel, being merely Kinfolk was a disgrace.

His cousins, the Carney Brothers, were born with the true blood. Samuel burned with hate and jealousy. But the Brothers could not stand the strain of the Change, even with their tribe to help them, and they ran off to travel the country in a carnival, sinking ever deeper into madness with each shapeshift. Even after they were brought to the Foundation and shown to be mad, he still yearned for what they had: Garou heritage.

Samuel tried to make up for what he saw as a personal flaw, seeking physical perfection and glory by being the best in the sports programs in high school and later in college. While Samuel was good enough to make the all-state teams in both football and baseball, he was not destined to have luck as a professional athlete. Instead, he found himself injured beyond

repair in his last year of college, and his chance to be a professional athlete was destroyed along with his right knee.

By the time he was recovered enough to walk without the use of a cane, Samuel had decided that if he could not join the Garou, he would beat them instead. Samuel left home and went off on his own to become a hunter. By age thirty, Samuel had hunted and killed almost every type of natural animal on the planet. With no challenges left, and a burning rage in his heart, Samuel decided to move on to bigger game. Samuel started hunting vampires, after meeting a Nosferatu who bludgeoned him and fed off of his unconscious form.

It was Sam's good fortune to slay a Tremere Warlock, and it was double his good fortune to slay him at home. Soon he started studying the ledgers and books of his victim, books of magical lore that told of powers even a mere Kinfolk could learn. Armed with these books and a heavy supply of vampire blood to give him extra strength and endurance, Samuel spent his time traveling the world and learning as much as he could of the magics called Thaumaturgy.

Samuel Haight spent time in Australia with the Aborigines, while hunting the kangaroo and even the Tasmanian Devil. In South America, Haight hunted and failed to kill a werejaguar while spending time learning from the medicine men of the Indian tribes. In Africa, Samuel hunted down the rare Mountain Gorilla. In India, he hunted with the secret cults that even today worship the forbidden gods. In every country where there were legends of shapechangers, Haight hunted and studied mystic lores until he had at last learned the secret that he so desired: the secret of becoming Garou.

Many cultures tell tales of shapechangers, and most of these tales are actually of Gaia's creatures, the wereanimals. But one cult in India told Samuel so much more; one cult told of the Ritual of Sacred Rebirth. Samuel learned of a way in which he too could have the powers of a Garou, but the cost would be high.

Samuel thought long and hard about the cost of changing. All he would have to do would be to sacrifice five Garou in order to gain the powers of the Garou himself. Had Samuel run across the ritual a decade earlier he would have scoffed. But Samuel learned of the Thaumaturgic spell after drinking the blood of Kindred for almost a full decade. Nothing would stop him now. In Sam's eyes he was only claiming what was his by birth right. Samuel had hunted all of the game that was a challenge. Now he had one more to hunt: his own kin.

The hardest part for Samuel Haight was finding solitary Garou. The Garou were too tribal to be easily found alone. He tried the ritual using other more solitary werebeasts, but to no avail. He could find no other werebeasts and began to doubt that others even existed. Only the skins of five Garou would permit the Change. After years of searching and hunting with limited success, Samuel learned of the Valkenburg Foundation.

Lunatics were not known to have long life spans, often being hunted down by their own packs and tribes. But at Valkenburg, they actually cured the deranged beasts. At Valkenburg, they cured the Lunatic Garou and then released them on their own, to live in their natural forms.

Fully five more years were spent learning the secrets of Valkenburg, learning the routines of the company from a dis-

tance and preparing for the day when all would be ready.

Rare minerals had to be located, rarer herbs grown and cultivated for the long ritual that would grant him all he so desired. The chants of preparation had to be performed dozens of times, and of course his addiction to vampire blood had to be sated as well. Samuel was so busy working on his own plans that he never even noticed the Wyrms' corruption of his body and soul.

When Pentex took over the company that Samuel worked for, they found in him the perfect pawn. Samuel Haight's jealous hatred of the Garou proved the perfect breeding ground for Wyrms-tainted dreams of vengeance and destruction. Samuel's own plans were once only to gain the powers that his father and cousins, the Carney Brothers, had shared. Now he also desired the destruction of the other Garou. What better way to destroy the hated Guardians of Gaia than from the inside? Samuel was ready, as ready as he would ever be.

Through his connections at Pentex and through his own Thaumaturgic abilities, Samuel prepared NHMTC for a new level of destruction. Plans have been made to buy all of the land near Valkenburg and to give these lands to the Wyrms. Lands that are still mostly in the realm of Gaia will soon be destroyed unless the Garou can stop the devastation. Even now it may be too late.

Pentex has plans to purchase a good deal of the land through their subsidiary Nolan-Harker Mining and Transportation Company. They intend to trade lands with the federal government, an attempt to take the land away from the National Parks Reserve and trade away land that is further to the north. If these plans succeed, the Pure Heart Sept, the very sept of Haight's family, will be destroyed. Nothing could bring Haight more pleasure.

Now, the ritual he so desired has been completed, and Samuel Haight has the power of the Garou. Haight has set the wheels in motion that could destroy the hated Pure Heart Sept, and is prepared for any attacks the Garou might make against him. Should his plans reach fruition, this will only be the beginning.

Haight has met many people during his travels, and he has met many Kinfolk. A small number of them agree with Haight. They too resent being only secondary, resent the power that their other family members have. It only takes five Garou to create a new, shapechanging agent for the Wyrms. Haight is patient, and now he is armed. Soon there will be others like himself. Soon the Wyrms' sacred army will have a new division...

Conclusion

Soon after the pack returns to the Foundation, a wolf will limp tentatively from the woods nearby. It is Eats Pinecones, still hurting from her wounds. If the pack approaches her (assuming they befriended her earlier), she will come closer, seeking aid for her wounds. She will run from anyone else (except Leslie). From this point on, she will live near the Foundation, but will always be afraid of any humans.

However, there is still the mystery involving the Valkenburg Foundation to consider. Just what does Victor Helms know about the Nolan-Harker Mining and Transportation Company?

Nothing, save that the Carney Brothers are related to Samuel Haight. The packs however, may be very suspicious of Victor by

this point. The man they just did battle with has been sending money to the Valkenburg Foundation for some time, and Victor Helms has been sending letters of thanks. The pack would be justified in wondering if Victor's intentions are honorable.

But who do the pack talk to about this information? Do they confront Victor openly? Do they talk the mystery out with Gretchen Valkenburg? Or Ben Thomas, Chief of Security?

Whatever their decision, the answer will be the same: Victor knows nothing about what has been going on or what the NHMTC has planned for the lands around Valkenburg. Victor has documentation running quite a good distance back involving the donations that NHMTC has been sending to the Valkenburg Foundation. Even before Victor was working for the Foundation, the donations had been coming in, going directly to Gretchen. Does this information then put Gretchen in the hot seat? That is up to the individual storyteller as well as the pack, but Gretchen certainly has nothing to gain from the land around her ancestral home being purchased for mining purposes.

Gretchen will strongly defend Victor Helms — and herself, should she be accused — pointing out all the good that Victor has done for the Valkenburg Foundation. She will also try to placate the pack, as in Gretchen's eyes, everyone who works for the Foundation in any capacity is helping in a very important task.

Ben Thomas, should the pack come to him, will go with the pack to confront Victor Helms, primarily to make certain that the discussion does not get out of hand. He will also inform his mother and Gretchen of what has transpired.

Leslie Thomas will certainly want to know what transpired in the woods, especially as regards the three slaughtered lupus; these were after all her patients, and she cared greatly for them.

As a number of the Lunatics in the area have come at one point or another from the Wendigo tribe, Dan Skyseeker will be very interested as well. It is also possible that Dan has relatives working for the Nolan-Harker Mining and Transportation Company; if he should hear what occurred at the NHMTC and if the guards were met only with violence, it is very possible that Dan will respond in true Ahroun fashion: with violence. He will certainly pass the information along to the other Wendigo at the Pure Heart Sept, whether the pack have assaulted the guards or spared their lives. The pack could easily gain or lose Renown in the eyes of all Wendigo at the sept depending on their actions.

Is the information brought in by the Questing Pack enough to aid Victor Helms in his secret goals? Probably not, but it is certainly a strong start.

For Gretchen's part, yet another long course of lobbying in the country's Capitol will be necessary. Possibly just the threat of legal actions will be enough to ruin the plans of the Nolan-Harker Mining and Transportation Company and its parent company. In any case, another burden has fallen on Gretchen's shoulders.

Did anyone truly know about what was occurring in New Haven? If so, who? These questions should rest heavily on the minds of the Questing Pack, as well as the question of just what will be done about the plans that NHMTC has made for the lands they have already purchased. Can the Nolan-Harker Mining and Transportation company be stopped by civil means, or will the pack be forced to Rage?



Story Four: Weird Science

Written by Richard Strong, Illustrated by Chris DiNardo

*Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time.*

— Alfred Lord Tennyson, Locksley Hall

*The great tragedy of Science — the slaying of a beautiful
hypothesis by an ugly fact.*

— T.H. Huxley, *Biogenesis and Abiogenesis*

After having completed another mission for the Foundation, the pack returns expecting some well deserved rest. But the Banes are nervous about the pack — they ask too many prying questions. To keep them out of the way, they are sent on another mission almost immediately

Plot

Scene One — The pack is briefed by Gretchen and Victor on their next mission.

Scene Two — The pack arrives by Moon Bridge at the Caldron Rock Caern and is greeted in an odd manner. Grey Nose, one of the sept members, shows the pack the local area.

Scene Three — The pack can hunt down leads in Redland City to get a better idea of what is going on at NNL. If they go straight to NNL instead, proceed to Scene Four.

Scene Four — NNL is a bizarre, blighted place in the Umbra and in reality. There are many dangers to approaching the complex, and getting to the Lunatic won't be easy for the pack.

Scene Five — The pack follows a silver cord into the Wylding, searching for the Lunatic's soul. Many strange sights

are seen. The pack must deal with Mir-Herta, an old totem spirit who has taken the Lunatic's soul for his own uses. If they are diplomatic, they can gain a good spirit ally.

Scene Six — The Lunatic is restored to health, but the Bane which has haunted her attacks one of the characters. Matters are wrapped up and the pack returns to Valkenburg.

What Is Really Going On

The Lunatic who is being held at NNL is not really a lost cub. She is a Black Fury who has been possessed by a Bane. In addition, her soul has been removed to the Umbra by Mir-Herta, a totem spirit searching for allies in the mundane world. NNL has no idea what their "patient" really is; they just know she exhibits some amazing "hypnotic suggestion" abilities.

NNL also is ignorant of the bizarre form their lab takes in the Umbra. NNL is a truly dangerous site, a time-bomb waiting to become the center of Wyrms-corruption in the area. The Caldron Rock Sept is also unaware of how strange NNL really is, and the hazardous waste they have dumped. Once they find out, however, they will begin to act to clean it up.



Theme

Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is the countenance of all science.

— Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads*

The theme of “Weird Science” is twofold. One: scientific pursuit gone horribly wrong, leading to the vast build-up of dangerous, uncontrollable and misunderstood applications. Two: the similarity of science in its most extreme form to unreason; the more fanatic the push for knowledge, the stranger the forms of science become, leading to the chaos of quantum theory. This takes the form of the clash of science and the Wyld in this story.

Mood

The mood is bizarre reality. The kind of science going on in this story is very weird and strange. It is hard to discern the dividing line between it and the Wyld, regardless of the Pattern Spiders that crawl throughout. The laboratory is a place become weird in the both the Umbra and the real world, allowed to grow unstopped in its own world of nuclear study, regardless of the needs of the outside world.

Scene One: Briefing

Early one morning, only two or three days after the incident with Samuel Haight, the Questing Pack is called to a meeting

with Gretchen Valkenburg and Victor Helms. The meeting takes place in Gretchen’s office.

Gretchen will begin the meeting by asking for a report on the last mission. Use this as an opportunity to have the characters tell a story. Encourage them to tell the story as a group by asking each of them in turn for a personal narrative. Don’t let lazy players get away with “I tell her what I did.” Make sure they act out their character voices and mannerisms, and that they tell the story from the character’s point of view.

During the report, Gretchen will take notes and ask questions. After the report, she will make specific suggestions on how the pack could have worked together better and how they could have used resources better. These suggestions should be on a positive note — Gretchen is very proud of the work that the Questing Pack does.

After the report has been given and the last mission discussed, Gretchen will take the floor.

“Let me state again that we are very proud of you and grateful for the work you do. But, as much as I would like to give you some down time, we have received word of a rather serious case involving a Lunatic.

“We have heard of experiments by the US Government at a lab in the Northwest. I sent Lucius for preliminary investigation based on a letter we received. A Kinfolk of mine, who works at the University of Washington, obtained this letter.”

Gretchen will read the letter (see sidebar) to the characters, then continue.

The Letter

Dear Dr. Greffig:

Researchers here at the Center for Psychiatric Studies have need of advice dealing with an interesting violent multiple personality case.

The subject seems to have a hypnotic ability to alter the worldview of those around her, including some post-hypnotic suggestions.

The subject is a Jane Doe in her late 20's, in fairly good physical condition. She shows periodic outbreaks of incredible violence, exhibiting psychotic strength and no regard for personal safety. Frequently these outbreaks are cohesive and directed at staff members with the obvious intent not only to kill but to literally rend the victim into pieces. The subject is nearly catatonic the remainder of the time.

We are seeking help in stabilizing the patient's condition so that we may better understand the unusual psychology concerned.

Yours Truly,

Dr. Rolf Hergmann

Center for Psychiatric Studies

Northwest National Laboratory

"This sounds suspiciously like a Lunatic Garou. The details are very vague, suggesting the Veil is still maintained, but I fear that this situation could prove very bad for all Garou.

"Kanak-talé states in his report that the 'subject' was recovered from a 'traveling show' by the Redland City Police after several disappearances were linked to the show. It was also rumored that 'that crazy women' has killed several people at>NNL.

"I have had Kanak-talé make arrangements with the Caldron Rock Sept, near Redland City, so that you may Moon Bridge to their caern. I would like you to leave as soon as possible, within a day or two at the latest. I have a bad feeling about this one."

If there are badly injured members of the pack, postpone this meeting until they are healed. During this time, the staff (at the urging of the Puppeteers) will try to keep the members of the pack busy with errands requiring travel away from the ranch (sending them to town to get supplies, etc.). Although the Banes will try not to raise suspicions, it may become obvious to some that the administrators are trying to minimize the time that the Questing Pack spends at the ranch.

If confronted with this, Gretchen will explain that Joshua believes the necessarily war-like nature of the Questing Pack is disruptive to the calm mood needed to cure the patients.

Scene Two: Caldron Rock

The Questing Pack takes the Moon Bridge from the Pure Heart Sept to the Caldron Rock Sept in the northwest. This has already been arranged with the Caldron Rock sept.

Caldron Rock is located in a pocket of virgin forest in the center of a small section of hills. Although the area of the hills is

small, they are very steep and rugged, making logging unprofitable.

The Questing Pack will arrive in a small flat clearing, about 30 yards across, with a large boulder in the center, surrounded by huge trees. There is a natural stone cauldron formed by a pit in the central boulder, which is streaked with dark blotches.

On arrival everyone can make Perception + Alertness rolls, difficulty 6 (if a character has Heightened Senses, he succeeds automatically). Those who succeed realize that the ground here is permeated with human blood, some of it less than a month old. Those who make three successes or more will realize that the clearing is littered with fragments of human bones that have been shattered and ground into the earth.

The members of the sept are waiting for these visitors. They lie hidden in the trees outside the clearing. As soon as the Moon Bridge is closed, Grey Nose and another Red Talon will attempt to grab something valuable from their visitors. The sept will then play keep-away, running through the woods with Mocking Howls.

If they cannot grab anything (they will try only one time each) then they will pelt the "visitors" with pinecones and taunt them. Once the visitors give chase they are led round about through the woods and back to the caern to meet Tall Wolf.

Tall Wolf is unusually large. As a wolf, he is the size of a pony; as Crinos, he is 14' tall. As Homid (a form that he will not take unless forced) he is 9' tall. He is very old, but the sept willingly supports him.

He is a Philodox with a broad streak of practicality running through him. He has lived to see much of the forest fall under the might of the Wyrms-driven apes, and he knows that the way to stop them is through combining trickery and strength — neither alone will suffice.

When his pack comes streaming back into the clearing with the characters in hot pursuit, he will rise to his full height in Crinos form and loudly howl his Roll Over Gift, spending a point of Willpower to ensure success. Having played his trick upon the newcomers, his intent is to stop any fighting. In the moonlight beneath the trees, surrounded by his own pack, Tall Wolf will be so impressive that three or more successes (on a resisted Willpower roll) will be needed to defy him and try to continue fighting.

In the silence following his howl, Tall Wolf will speak to his guests. To keep them off balance, he will at first act as if he knows nothing of their mission. His voice is deep and guttural, even for a Garou.

"Who are you?"

After the characters give their names Tall Wolf will grudgingly admit that Kanak-talé asked permission for them to Moon Bridge here.

"The Far Wanderer asked that you be allowed to come here."

Then he will continue.

"We hold this place, this caern, and we name it Caldron Rock. I am Tall Wolf. Those who you see here follow my words and my wisdom in protecting this place. We follow Hawk, he is our Totem. Why are you here?"

This is an honest question, as Kanak-talé was very vague when he spoke to Tall Wolf. After the pack explains what they know, Tall Wolf will continue.

"You are welcome here, but we are occupied fighting the apes who rape our land. We cannot waste our time with this lost child.

"Do not draw attention to these hills. There is a moot at full moon. If you come to it, bring blood for this caern. Grey Nose will help you this night, that you may find your own way. We have no more time for you."

After giving this speech, Tall Wolf will shapeshift to Lupus form and walk away among the trees, followed by some members of the sept. Grey Nose and Shred will stay and speak with the pack.

Although he has almost brushed the pack aside, Tall Wolf is actually very interested in their mission. He knows all too well how the "apes" can pervert any knowledge they gain, thus he fears the consequences of NNL being able to study this Garou. But Tall Wolf's first concern is to halt the logging in this area. Unless the pack gets in desperate trouble, he will not intervene.

Grey Nose can answer questions about the area, but his sept despises the city and flatlands, so he knows little of it. He knows of the presence of Bone Gnawers in Redland City, but has no contact with them. Caldron Rock sept laughs at them as weaklings, unwilling to live in the wilds of their true heritage. He knows nothing of any Garou at NNL, although the pack may notice that, after he understands their mission, Grey Nose seems to have more respect for what they are doing.

Grey Nose will also warn the pack of the dangers in the Umbra nearby, and will even take them on a short tour.

"Come, I will show you the rift of Wyld that boils in the Umbra. I will show you the twisted spirits and the Wurm-ridden blight. Come step sideways with me now."

Once in the Umbra, the pack will notice the spirits near the caern. The trees by the clearing have been fertilized for dozens of years by the blood and flesh of humans; any homid will feel their gaze to be slightly threatening.

Grey Nose will lead the pack out of the steep valley that the caern is in. From the hills around the valley the pack can see far over the plains. The flat lands are divided by the Columbia river, and at the bend in the river there can be seen a boiling, roiling disturbance that looks like a standing wave of fog.

"The blight is on the far side of this Wylding", continues Grey Nose, *"and to the north — there — you can see the human web."* He refers to Redland City, which appears from this distance as a dark smudge on the horizon. After this he will lead the pack back into the physical world at the caern. Grey Nose will answer any questions the group has to the best of his ability, then he will say goodnight and slip away through the trees.

Caldron Rock Sept

Location: Beard's Hills, SE Washington State

Level: 3

Gauntlet: 3

Type: Rage

Totem: Hawk

This sept is dedicated to the fight against the human destruction of the wilderness and for the defense of Gaia. It is composed only of Red Talons. The sept follows the wisdom of Tall Wolf, an elder who lives at the caern.

There are two rites which have been performed on the caern to protect it: Badger's Burrow and Rite of the Shrouded Glen.

Tall Wolf

Breed: Lupus

Auspice: Philodox

Tribe: Red Talons

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Empathy 3, Expression 3, Intimidation 5, Primal-Urge 3, Animal Ken 5, Melee 5, Leadership 5, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Enigmas 3, Medicine 1, Occult 2, Rituals 5

Backgrounds: Pure Breed 4

Gifts: Beast Speech, Heightened Senses, Resist Pain, Scent of Sight, Beast Life, Elemental Favor, Wisdom of the Ancient Ways, Weak Arm, Roll Over

Rage 5, Gnosis 4, Willpower 8

Rank: 4

Fetishes: None

Image: A huge wolf, almost the size of a pony. He stands 9' tall in Homid form, and 14' in Crinos. His fur is patchy in some areas, where it was ripped out in old battles. There is a nasty scar on his neck.

Roleplaying Notes: You are old but your responsibility to Gaia won't let you lay down and rest. The humans always do something to raise your anger and rage.

Background: Tall Wolf inherited the leadership of the sept when the previous alpha, Dark Strip, was killed by werewolf hunters in Redland City. Since then, Tall Wolf has led the sept in midnight raids in logging factories and clearcut areas. Reports claim that these raids are the work of "violent environmental radicals". Tall Wolf doesn't care — he just wants to destroy the defilers of Gaia.

Grey Nose

Breed: Lupus

Auspice: Ragabash

Tribe: Red Talons

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Primal-Urge 2, Subterfuge 2, Animal Ken 2, Performance 3, Stealth 4, Survival 2, Enigmas 1

Backgrounds: Mentor (Tall Wolf) 4

Gifts: Leap of the Kangaroo, Blur of the Milky Eye, Scent of Running Water, Taking the Forgotten, Scent of Sight



Rage 4, Gnosis 6, Willpower 4

Rank: 2

Image: A shaggy young wolf full of energy. He almost never takes Homid form.

Roleplaying Notes: There is so much to do, but you don't have much common sense about doing it.

Background: Grey Nose has proved himself valuable to the sept on the many raids against local logging. His tricks have provided diversions for the rest of the raiding parties. He is a bit bored with all the anger in the sept, though, and wishes they could just make friends with humans occasionally. Tall Wolf looks upon this idea as mere youthful naiveté.

Scene Three: Hunting for Clues

The pack may want to "case" the area to find some clues on what is going on. There are various places they can go to follow up on the information they already have, although the main clues will come from Detective John Painted-Elk and Guy Videretto, the janitor of NNL.

The Local Area

There is a path down the hill, and the pack can make their way across the plain skirting the Wyld zone in the Umbra, north to Redland City or south to NNL.

Hunters from Redland City frequent the Beard's Hills area. Even out of season, the area is prime ground for poachers because of its inaccessibility. These hunters typically travel in twos and threes, and are armed with high powered rifles.

Also, farmers near Redland city will shoot wolves on sight, as many of them suffer heavy losses due to local wolves. This is illegal, but the sheriff's office is far too busy chasing criminals to harass the local farmers. The fact that the county sheriff is elected by the same farmers also bears noting.

There is a swampy bend in the Columbia river where an outbreak of Wyld occurs in the Umbra. The flora and fauna of this swamp have been affected by the Wyld, and the place has a strange brooding atmosphere. This swamp has also been used as a dumping ground for radioactive and hazardous chemical wastes from NNL. Mutant cattails grow 9' tall with thorns that drip poison. Pools of mud that look like solid ground will swallow a man instantly. Beautiful flowers with hallucinogenic scents dot the edges of brackish pools where huge, deformed and fanged catfish lurk beneath rotting logs. This is a place of power, but the power here is, at best, uncontrolled; and at worst, malevolent and Wyrn-ridden.

The Columbia River is not particularly difficult for a wolf to swim across. Although the river here is mildly polluted by urban standards, to a Garou it has a foul stench. There are two bridges in the area, one railroad bridge south of the city and a two-lane freeway bridge on Hwy 118.

Chi Chuan Gang

± 50 members

The Chi Chuan gang is a direct descendant of the "coolie" labor gangs that flourished when Chinese laborers were brought to the area to build railroads and logging camps. The gang leaders are in their 30's, and have strong connections with Chinese organized crime in San Francisco and Hong Kong. Although the gang runs some local gambling and prostitution, its mainstay is smuggling drugs into the logging community. Gang members are told to avoid conflict with the law, and the gang leadership has been known to turn troublemakers over to the police. Due to an agreement with the Bloody Fist, gang rules specifically forbid dealing in stolen goods. Unknown to most of its white members, the local Kung Fu school (Wah Lum style) is controlled by the gang and is used as a drug warehouse.

The leader is Kiao Fong Xijang, and his seconds are Run Thao and Hua Zhi Laotung

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 1, Intimidation 2, Melee 2

Willpower: 4

Equipment: Various martial arts equipment, from nunchaku to knives, all concealable.

Bloody Fist Gang

± 60 members

The Bloody Fist gang was formed in the '80s as older gangs collapsed and consolidated. The gang is loosely organized and has no firm connections with other organized crime. This lack of outside connections forces the Bloody Fist to rely on local crime for its income. As a result, Bloody Fist runs most local prostitution and gambling, fences stolen goods, and arranges holdups and robberies. Because the gang runs these "high visibility" crimes they are in constant conflict with the police, and in contrast to Chi Chuan, most of the older gang members are convicted felons.

The leader is Rick "Duza" Anduza. His second is Steve Leftridge. Kelly Beritelli is Rick's girlfriend.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 1, Intimidation 2, Firearms 2

Willpower: 3

Equipment: Knives; "Duza" has a small pistol.

The only two major roads in the area are Rt. 23 and Hwy 118. Both are two lane highways. At night, crossing these roads should not be difficult, although the corpses of animals can be found by the road at any time, victims of freeway traffic.

Redland City

The axis of the earth sticks out visibly through the centre of each and every town or city.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*

Redland City has a population of nearly 500,000. Nestled against a small section of hills next to the Columbia River, it is a sleepy logging and farming town except for the presence of NNL.

The town got started in 1855 after gold was discovered to the northeast, on the plateau. Although the "gold rush" turned out to be fools' gold, the dense, old growth forest of Douglas fir was gold in its own right. Logging was rapidly established as the city's mainstay. The town's biggest boom came during WW II when the Manhattan Project chose this site to construct one of the uranium refining plants needed to build the atomic bomb. The Uranium Refining Plant later became NNL, a multi-disciplinary research laboratory.

Redland City has a quiet, middle class suburban neighborhood on its northwest outskirts, comprised of winding, wooded streets and older, single family homes. Occasional strip malls and small stores are the only commercial properties here. Closer to the center of the city is a "working class" neighborhood, with numerous apartment blocks and small stores in addition to single-family homes and duplexes. Laundromats and corner bars are frequent here.



The danger of being spotted as a prowler (if in Crinos or Homid form), or shot at as a stray dog or wolf (if Lupus form), increases as the characters get closer to Redland City. If the characters are not actively using stealth, then the storyteller should roll four dice against a difficulty 7. The number of successes is the number of people who will notice the group and be concerned enough to do something. If the players are using their Stealth skills have them roll as appropriate, but only on a botch will they be noticed.

It is important to remember that most people who notice a group of men or a pack of large, "stray dogs" lurking in the shadows will call the police or animal control, not confront them themselves. The exception to this are those farmers that live in relative isolation, further from the city.

North Flats, located in the northeast of the city, is where the truly underprivileged in Redland City live. Many immigrants and minorities were forced to live in this part of town over the years. This is the only part of the city where gangs are a problem. Crime is high and hope for a better life is low.

If the pack wanders this area at night, they risk a confrontation with the Chi Chuan or the Bloody Fist gangs.

Downtown is where the pack can find the town hall, hospital, main library, fire and police station, all within the same five block area surrounding a large city park. Most of the buildings downtown date from the turn of the century, and all are in need of restoration. This gives downtown a slightly shabby look. In the park are statues of several of the local logging magnates whose contributions have funded public works in the past.

Redland City Police

The main police station is located in the center of the downtown area, next to City Hall. The desk sergeant will forward characters who seem reasonable on to speak with the magistrate on duty, who will determine what to do about the character's requests.

As the case has not been closed, the magistrate will not release information on the raid without reasonable need. Reasonable need might be a lawyer working on the case, or an investigation of the procedures that the police used on the raid. Acting as a journalist will also work. A possible cover is that the characters are private investigators looking for one of the missing persons that the show has been linked to (Manipulation + Performance roll, difficulty 6). A successful Manipulation + Law roll, difficulty 7, will get the characters pointed to the police records office, with a letter giving them permission to view the files.

Records of the Raid

At the records office, the characters will discover that all records pertaining to the raid have been impounded by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The official reason for this is the "ongoing federal investigation of the kidnapping ring led by Ralph and Timothy Bear." The real reason is the suppression of information that might lead anyone to guess what is happening at NNL. The only information remaining is a receipt

for the records signed by Frank Pritchett, Federal Marshall, and by Detective John Painted-Elk, Redland City Police.

Detective John Painted-Elk

John Painted-Elk will be very hesitant to talk about the raid for two reasons. He knows that something happened on the raid that neither he nor anyone else can remember (he cannot remember seeing the Crinos form of the captive Garou Lunatic). He also knows that the Federal authorities have no authority to take over an investigation in the manner they have done, and that they cannot legally remove prisoners from a local jurisdiction without due process. Being a Native American, he is no stranger to the government making up its own rules as it goes along, but he has no desire to be caught in the middle.

Once they have begun to ask about the raid, a Manipulation + Law roll, difficulty 6, will be necessary to allow the characters to continue talking with him (if the roll fails he gives the characters the brush off). Even if this roll succeeds, the characters must convince John Painted-Elk that they are not going to cause trouble with the authorities before he will divulge any specific details.

John Painted-Elk's story:

"The Bear Brothers Traveling Show was linked by date to disappearances in British Columbia, Washington, Idaho, and Oregon. Most of the missing persons were young women from poor or troubled families. Investigation showed evidence of prostitution, drug smuggling, and possibly white slavery. Based on the preliminary investigation a raid was authorized. About 30 police participated in the raid on (date, about a month ago) which resulted in a fire, and which caused a fire in one of the shows RV's.

"Three show people died, two of gunshot wounds and one of smoke inhalation. Five officers were wounded and seventeen persons were arrested, but approximately twelve people escaped in the confusion surrounding the fire." John Painted-Elk will be very vague about just how these people got away. (The truth is that the Lunatic Garou was released by the show owners in order to sow confusion.)

"Ten of the arrested people were customers of the show, and they were charged and released. Most of the customers who were arrested live in the North Flats district of Redland City."

Only if specifically asked about NNL will John Painted-Elk recall that one of the customers was Guy Videretto, a janitor at NNL.

"Seven employees of the show were arrested, but none of the ringleaders. One of the 'employees' (the Lunatic) was violently insane and was taken to the psychiatric ward of the Father of Mercy Hospital." (Although he does not remember it, the Lunatic was gunned down by the team of Police led by John Painted-Elk. By the time they reached the hospital, only superficial wounds remained on the victim.)

"Three days later, Federal Marshals from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms came, took all of the arrested employees of the show into custody, and impounded the evidence and police records of the raid, including the dispatchers' tapes



of radio broadcasts during the raid.” (Roll Intelligence + Law to realize that this violates basic police procedures and is obviously part of a cover-up.) “The records were released on the police commissioner’s verbal authority, and the only written record of the raid that still exists is the receipt for the records, signed by me.”

From what he remembers, the only hard evidence found indicated drug dealing, prostitution, and gun-running, although John thinks that he recognized some of the women from missing persons reports.

John Painted-Elk will allow the characters to view the impounded trucks that belonged to the show. He will not accompany them himself, but he will write a pass that will give them access to the impound yard.

If the characters investigate through the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in Seattle, they will find the following: The arrested employees are awaiting arraignment before a federal grand jury on kidnapping charges. They have been taken to a federal prison in Pennsylvania. Visitors will be politely but firmly refused, then thoroughly investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

Detective John Painted-Elk

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 1, Empathy 2, Intimidation 3, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 1, Ani-

mal Ken 1, Drive 1, Firearms 3, Leadership 2, Repair 1, Stealth 1, Computer 1, Investigation 4, Law 2, Linguistics (Yakima 1), Medicine 1, Science 2

Backgrounds: Resources 2, Contacts 3, Allies 4
Willpower 5

Equipment: .45 automatic pistol, radio, 4-wheel drive police jeep with shotgun in rack.

Image: A pot-bellied, balding man in his mid- to late-40s.

Background: John is one-half Yakima Indian and grew up on a nearby reservation. He served two terms with honor in the Marine Corp during Vietnam, rising to the rank of Staff Sergeant. He was among the last Marines to be evacuated from the country, an experience that has left him bitter towards the government. He attended college in Seattle after the war. Although he is proud of his Indian heritage, he is a realist and has no belief in the supernatural.

Impound Yard

The impound yard is surrounded by a 12' tall chain link fence topped with barbed wire. The fence requires Strength 4 to rip through. At night, the yard is lit by bright street lamps on 30' poles, but there are so many shadows that any Stealth rolls add two dice to the dice pool.

In one corner of the yard are two RVs that have been badly burnt. The characters will notice bullet holes and spent shell casings here and there.



One was set up as a brothel and sleeping quarters. There is nothing here but trash and ashes.

The other RV was used as offices and quarters for the owners. Anyone using Sense Wyrm will find, hidden under the floorboards, a box protected from search and flames by a Wyrm-fetish. The fetish is the snakeskin covering of the box itself. It will hide the contents from mundane eyes and will protect from normal fires. The box contains porno shots and movies of kidnap victims, and about 1000 dollars in Canadian money. One of the photographs is of a homid Garou (roll Perception + Rituals against a difficulty 7 to tell).

Next to the RVs are three semi-trailers shabbily painted with the Bear Brothers' logo. The trailers contained all of the show's equipment that survived the raid and fire. This includes a large tent, rigged arcade games, etc. A Psychomachia Bane inhabits one of the three trailers.

Trailer Psychomachia

Rage 9, Willpower 6, Gnosis 7, Power 30 (+ 10/death inflicted)

Charms: Possession, Airt Sense, Materialize (cost 14; Str 3, Dx 3, Sta 2, Brwl 4, Claws: Str + 2)

The Janitor

If the characters follow up the clue to the NNL employee, they will find Guy Videretto in the North Flats neighborhood, within the area claimed as turf by the Bloody Fist gang. He lives on the

third floor of a battered frame row house, in the apartment in the back.

His apartment is a seedy, run-down two-room affair where he lives alone. The only remarkable items amid the shabby furniture and dirty dishes are a huge 48" television set and expensive VCR, and hundreds of movies on tape, ranging across a very wide variety of subjects. If the characters befriend him, Guy will gladly talk all day about movies. His favorites are spaghetti westerns.

Guy knows that he could lose his job at NNL if his arrest becomes known, so this threat will get him to talk. Threatening him with harm will also work. Unless he is threatened, Guy will be very uncooperative, as he assumes that anyone asking questions is working for the NNL security. Once he is convinced that his questioners are not working for the government, Guy will relax and tell all that he knows.

Guy is a janitor at NNL. He has worked there for the last 15 years, ever since he hurt his back working in a lumberyard. He plans to retire in five years. Guy has a very low security clearance; he does not work in the weapons research complex.

Guy has heard the following facts through the grapevine at work:

- Part of the weapons complex has recently been cleared out and is under very high security.
- Food goes into the newly secured area, but not much of it seems to get eaten.
- Medical doctors go into the building at least once a week.



- One scientist has been violently killed by whatever is in there.
- They are hooking up lots of equipment in there all the time, some other equipment is being custom-built inside the new area.

Guy Videretto

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 1, Stamina 2, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 1

Abilities: Empathy 1, Drive 1, Repair 2, Science 1
Willpower 2

Image: Guy is a balding, overweight man in his mid-fifties. His shirts are always stained and wrinkled, and he normally wears brown or blue work pants and steel-toed work shoes. He is clean shaven, and his breath smells permanently of garlic.

Background: Guy was raised Catholic; he still wears a crucifix and makes it to Mass about once a month. Aside from occasionally gambling and whoring, he is a basically decent person. He is very worried that word of his arrest will make it back to NNL and cost him his job.

The Bone Gnawers

There are three Bone Gnawers in Redland City. They live in the hills, sometimes sleeping in the city park. About 10 years ago, the Bone Gnawers made a pact with the local vampire, Ethan, a Nosferatu. The Bone Gnawers will try to protect Ethan. Basically this means they will not talk about him, as the vampire can otherwise take care of himself.

The leader of this pack is Dan "Dumper" Ferrel, a Galliard. The other two are Chico, an Ahroun, and Racer John, a Ragabash.

Any of the Bone Gnawers will be able to tell the characters the following information:

- More than one death has occurred at NNL recently
- The logging company (Pacific Timber, Inc.) is working with the FBI to infiltrate the local Greens—who are occasionally aided by Caldron Rock Sept, despite Tall Wolf's hatred of humans.

Scene Four: Northwest National Laboratory

It is from the midst of this putrid sewer that the greatest river of human industry springs up and carries fertility to the whole world. From this foul drain pure gold flows forth. Here it is that humanity achieves for itself both perfection and brutalization, that civilization produces its wonder, and that civilized man becomes again almost a savage.

— Alexis de Tocqueville

The pack may skip Scene Three entirely by heading straight for NNL, or they may go to NNL first and then go to the city for clues. Scene Three and Four are chronologically interchangeable.

History

NNL started as a branch of the Manhattan Project during WW II. Originally built for the government by Korman Inc., the Uranium Refining Plant produced most of the plutonium used in the bomb that was dropped over Nagasaki. After the war, the Atomic Energy Commission was in charge of the site, although day-to-day operations have always been carried out by Korman Inc. The name was changed to Northwest National Laboratory in 1956, when the Eisenhower administration decided to fund multi-disciplinary research at the site. The Department of Energy was formed from the Atomic Energy Commission in the late '70s, and is now in charge of researching and manufacturing nuclear weapons, as well as conducting general scientific research.

Gaining Access to the Site

NNL is surrounded by a 40' chain-link fence (Strength 7 to break through) topped with barbed wire. In the center of the western side is the complex's only gate, flanked by 60' tall guard towers. The towers are left over from the original wartime construction and are no longer manned. However, they are filled with electronic surveillance equipment that monitors all traffic in and out of the site. This equipment includes video cameras, infrared detectors, directional microphones, radar and Geiger counters. This equipment is controlled from the main security building just inside the gates.

NNL is classified as a Nuclear Weapons Manufacturing Site, and is therefore under very high security. Parts of the site are protected by armed guards who can and will shoot to kill. The guards are high-priced "Rent-a-Cops" from a private agency. They have impeccable credentials and are very well trained.

Guards

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 1, Intimidation 3, Drive 2, Firearms 4, Melee 2, Repair 1, Stealth 2, Computers 1

Equipment: Kevlar vests (soaks two bullet wound levels, or one melee wound level), .9mm automatic pistols with two clips each.

NNL Buildings

Security & Visitors Center

No one is admitted to the site without an employee identification card unless their name is on the visitors list. The visitors list is maintained on the Dedicated Security Computer. All visitors to the site will be escorted, not merely directed, from the gate to this building by a security guard.

If further access to the site is necessary, visitors will be assigned a guide who will accompany them until they leave. If someone is visiting a particular person on officially approved

Use Of Lethal Force Authorized In This Area

business, then the guard on duty at the visitors center will have that person paged.

Under no circumstance are non-employees allowed to roam free on the site, and many areas are further restricted. All visitors are given bright orange visitor badges with their name and photograph.

Non-Weapons Research Buildings

These two buildings are offices and laboratories for research in areas not currently being used for weapons. Much of the research that occurs here is still classified, however, as it is theoretical backing for future weapons programs or other defense-related research (like cryptography or robotics).

88" (Heavy Ion) Accelerator

An older accelerator still useful for some basic research. Built in 1959, this was one of the first accelerators of its type ever constructed. Due to the length of time this building has been used by the same group of scientists, it appears in the Umbra exactly as it appears in the mundane world. While there are no Atomic spirits here, the Accelerator's computers are home to many Electricity Elementals.

Weapons Research Complex

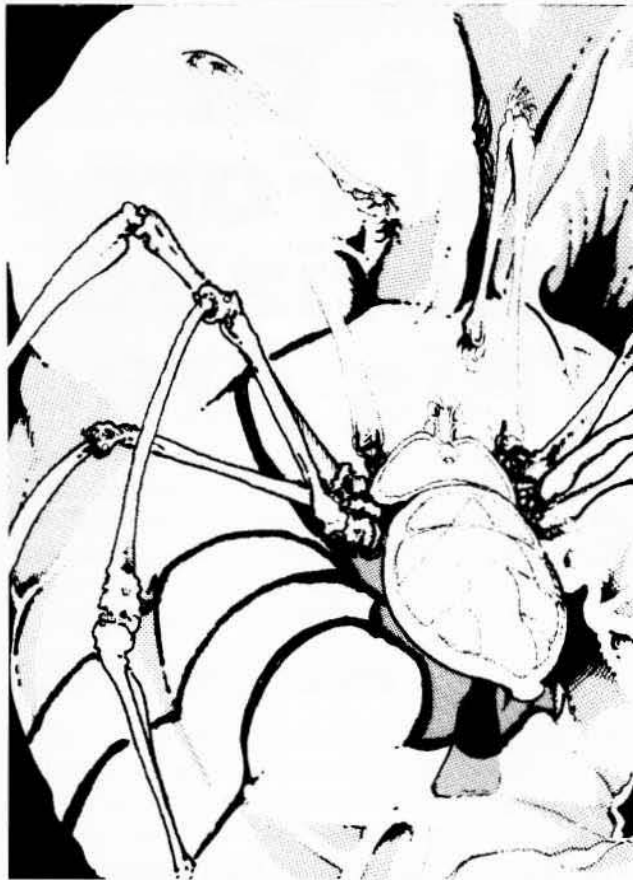
Seven identical concrete blockhouses surrounded by a 12' electric fence topped with barbed wire make up this complex. Signs are posted on the fence that read "Use Of Lethal Force Authorized In This Area." There are *always* four guards on duty in the tiny security building by the gate.

Each building is identified by a number (1 through 7) painted beside each door. Each of the buildings has two doors, one on the south side and one on the north. The buildings are five stories tall and are made of utterly featureless white concrete. There are no antennas, windows or aboveground wires leading to or from these buildings. These buildings have been designed to withstand nearly direct hits from strategic nuclear weapons. Each building has three levels of basement, and the lowest level basements are connected by tunnels.

Inside the ground level doors are airlock-style security stations. These require a plastic cardkey (looks like a credit card) to open the first door, which must then be closed before the second door can be opened. The second door is controlled from the security station on the second floor of the building. There are no manual overrides for these second doors. The only items in the "airlock" are an intercom and a video camera. The only way to gain admittance to the building is for the guard on duty on the second floor to "buzz you in." The guard will only admit you if your name and photograph appear on the duty roster for that time of that day. Even employees who arrive more than an hour off schedule (early or late) must report to the main security building and arrange to be admitted.

The Weapons Research Complex has its own emergency generators, in the lowest level basement of building 7.

The Weapons Research Blockhouse outer wall is impregnable through use of Strength, and the security doors require a Strength 10 or more to bust down.



Computer Operations Center

This building is the physical location of NNL's mainframe computers. Each mainframe is in a separate room, as is the security mini-computer. All of the computers are in the basement, while the first and second floors are devoted to office space. Also in this building is the emergency generator for the site, on the first floor.

Each of the interior walls in this building require Strength 6 to break through, while the doors require Strength 4.

In the Umbra, this building seems to be made of glass. Inside can be seen strange patterns of energy that flow and coalesce into one another and form odd shapes disturbing to the eye. Net-Spiders form out of and meld into the masses of energy, seemingly at random.

With a successful Perception + Computers roll, difficulty 7, a character can tell what programs are running on the computers and what those programs are doing.

Guardian Net-Spiders

The COC is guarded by large aggressive Net-Spiders, armed with venomous fangs and extra arms ending in sword-like blades. There are usually three present at any one time.

Rage 7, Willpower 8, Gnosis 6, Power 40

Charms: Solidify Reality, Airt Sense, Reform, Spirit Static, 1/2 difficulty with computers and electronics, Calcifying Venom (cost 3; on a Rage attack which does at least one wound level, the

Net-Spider can inject venom into its victim. This subtracts one from the victim's Dexterity per injection.)

Database Squid

The central database manager is an octopus-like spirit with about three dozen arms that form and reform.

Rage 5, Willpower 9, Gnosis 9, Power 25

Charms: Solidify Reality, Airt Sense, Reform, Spirit Static, 1/2 difficulty with computers and electronics, Anti-Virus Aid (cost 5; the Squid can call for more Guardian Net-Spiders from the central computer core. Roll its Gnosis against a difficulty of 7; the number of successes is the number of Net-Spiders which come in one turn.)

Fusion Reactor Studies

This building houses laboratories researching magnetically contained fusion. The dome structures are the containment buildings for the Tokamak Fusion Reactor. This reactor has successfully run controlled fusion reactions in "pulse mode". That is, the reactions are pulsed on and off very quickly to enable containment. The reactor cannot yet produce anywhere near the amount of energy that it consumes.

A large Atomic Spirit inhabits the Tokamak (see **Werewolf**, pgs. 159-160, for its Traits), and this spirit will gladly help any Garou who can manage to turn the reactor on and let it "run wild". Unlike a fission reactor which would "melt down" if allowed to, the Tokamak will go up in a thermonuclear explosion. Because the amount of fusion material is so small, the explosion will not escape the containment building, although the destruction inside the building will be total.

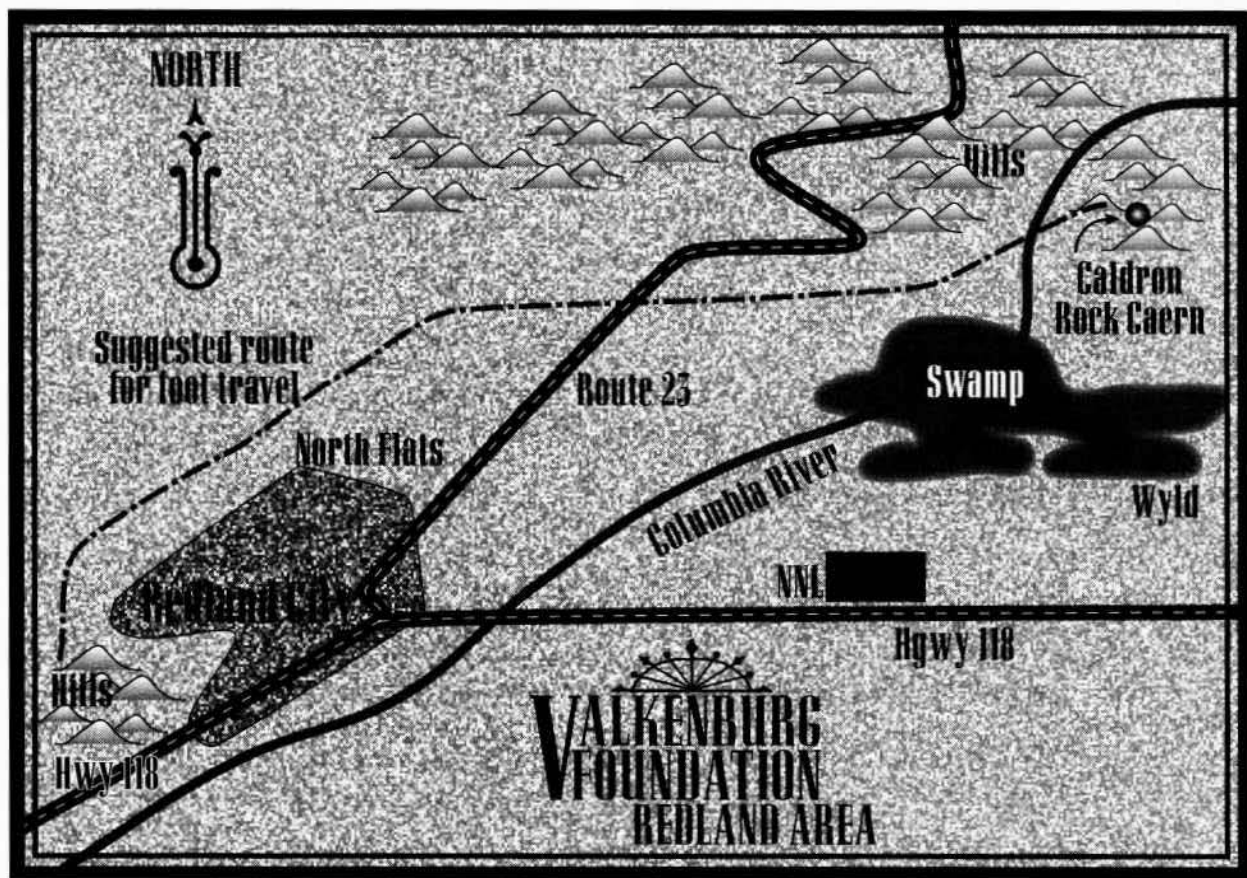
Consider the explosion to be equal to one ton of TNT (.001 Kilotons), or 30 dice of damage to anyone and everything inside the containment building. The blast will also cause an electromagnetic pulse (EMP) that will cause 10 dice of damage to all electronics, reduced by 4 dice per mile from the Tokamak reactor. The difficulty of these rolls will be based on how well protected the electronics are, starting with 5 for no protection, up through 10 for military specification hardware.

Hazardous Waste Handling Facility

The HWHF is where radioactive and hazardous chemical wastes are now packaged for shipment to disposal sites. The wastes are loaded into drums and carefully labeled, then the drums are hauled by truck to "Permanent Storage Sites." Information about each drum is entered into a federal database of hazardous wastes. The information includes what is in the drum, where it is being shipped and how it is being shipped.

Waste Dump

Up until the mid 1970s, there was no Hazardous Waste Handling Facility at NNL (or any of the government labs, for that matter). The wastes were simply taken to the back of the property, or to a nearby site, and buried or dumped. The waste dumps thus caused are a nightmare of "mixed waste". That is, these sites are



contaminated by hazardous chemicals that are also radioactive. Since no records were kept of what or how much was dumped, no one has any clear idea of what chemical or radiological reactions have occurred in the ground at these sites. To put it another way, *no one knows what the poison is, therefore no one knows an antidote.* The local ecology was not protected in any way from these wastes, and they have “bled” into the water table and “migrated” far away from their original locations.

The dump at NNL is fairly typical of these sites. The fenced-off area is about one third of a mile on its longer sides. Within this area can be seen stacks and stacks of unlabeled, rusting and leaking 50-gallon drums. Work crews in full NBC gear can be seen moving carefully around, sampling and testing various chemicals in the drums or the ground itself, or moving drums with forklifts equipped with mandible-like barrel grabbers.

The Waste Dump is inhabited by a large, viscous Bane. The Bane will appear in the Umbra as a large worm with many clawed legs. In the mundane world, the bane can sometimes be seen as tendrils of fumes drifting lazily across the dump site.

Chemical Worm

Rage 8, Willpower 5, Gnosis 5, Power 20

Charms: Airt Sense, Kiss of Glowing Corruption (cost 3; a successful Gnosis roll against the target’s Stamina+3 will cause the target to lose a point of Stamina. This can be healed like an aggravated Health Wound)

Administration Complex

Offices occupy this four story building, which includes the cafeteria. The cafeteria is designed to feed 500 people at a time.

The Center for Psychiatric Studies

The offices are located inside the non-weapons research laboratories, in the center of building 35. All building entrances and windows have silent alarms that will be triggered by forced entry, and most of the offices in these buildings have separate silent alarms. This double layer of alarms allows the security staff to pinpoint an intruder’s location.

Inside the offices is a reception area with a secretary’s desk, a glass-topped table with magazines, and a counter against the far wall holding a fax machine and a coffee maker. If the next day is a weekday, the coffee maker will be set to automatically make a pot of coffee stating at 5:00 AM.

There are four offices opening onto the reception area. The nameplates on three of the doors read Marsha Catford, Kelly Edwards, and Rolf Hergmann. The fourth office is lined with bookshelves, and has a small copy machine in the corner.

Marsha Catford – Director: Marsha’s Office is clean and orderly. Dominating one wall is a large blackboard with a rough graph labeled “Events” on one axis and “Time” on the other. Roll Wits + Science, difficulty 6, to determine that “events” peaked about 10 days ago at more than once per day. According to the graph, events were happening more and more

frequently, until sometime about 10 days ago when they stopped altogether.

There is a neat stack of paper on the desk. The cover page reads, "Preliminary Report on Physiologically Induced Perception Projection." Each page of the report has the word "DRAFT" printed in gray behind the type. The report will take two hours to read in full, and will require a roll of Intelligence + Science against a difficulty of 8 to understand. So much of the report is scientific double-talk that it will require at least three successes to be certain that it is about a Lunatic Garou. One important fact in the report is that the "subject" seems to have had a breakdown and is now completely catatonic.

The report also contains a description of what are referred to as "events". It is a description of the change from Homid to Lupus from a scientific point of view, but because of the influence of the Veil, the change is viewed as a hypnotic experience. The Crinos form is not mentioned.

Kelly Edwards: The nameplate on Edwards' desk identifies him as a consultant from DNA, Inc. The same report is on the desk in his office, with some remarks penciled in the margins.

Rolf Hergmann: Hergmann's office is unremarkable, except for the large aerial photograph of the surrounding area that dominates one wall.

Blight: NNL

In the Umbra, the area immediately surrounding NNL appears as dry and arid ground, parched and cracked. The area is

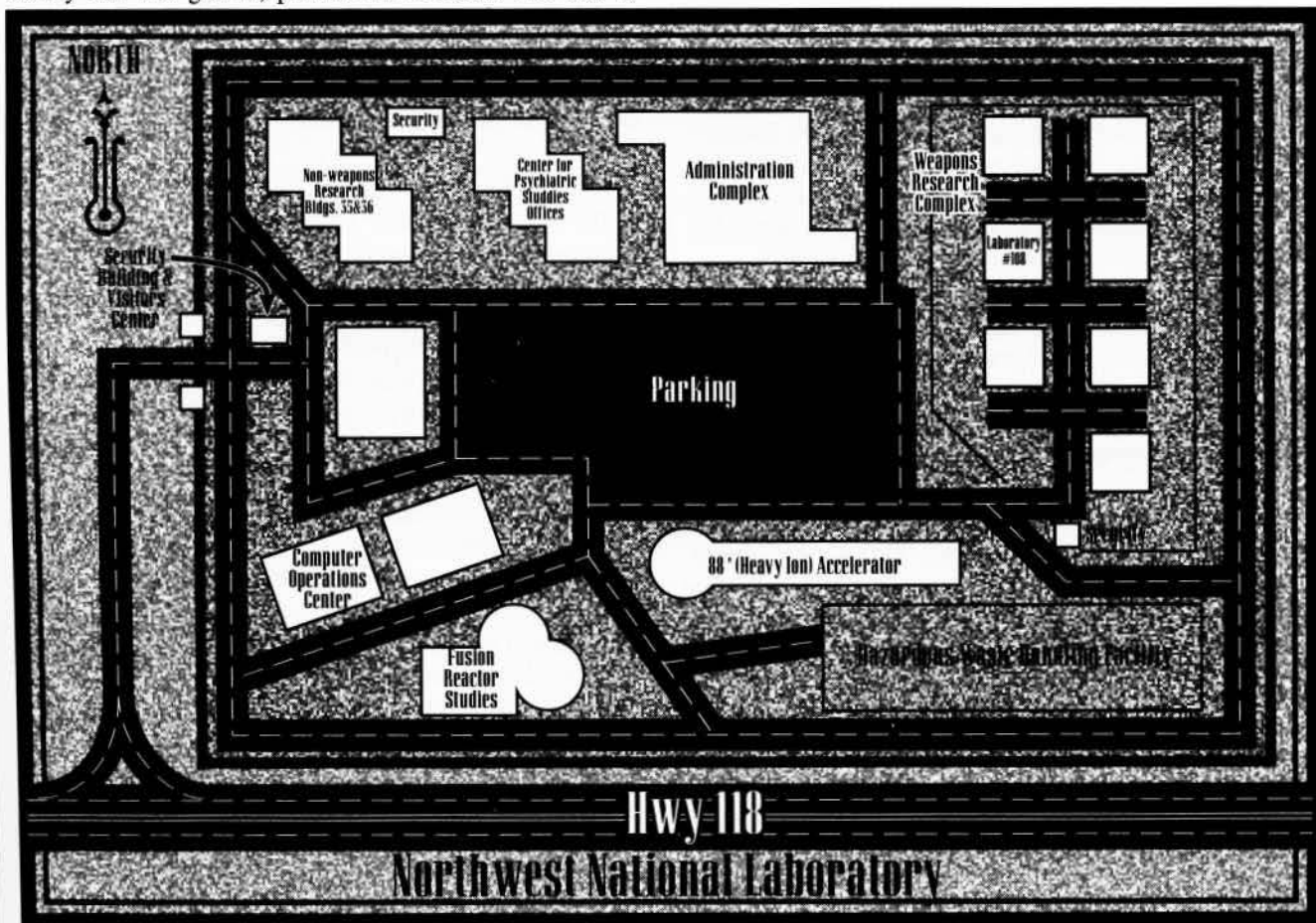
unnaturally flat, like a tabletop, except that towards the outbreak of Wyld, the surface slowly swells and ebbs like ocean swells in slow motion.

The only spirits are small, ant-like, Weaver spirits that ceaselessly crisscross the barren terrain on mindless missions of order. The large pattern-web structures of power and telephone lines cross the arid plain leading to and from the web of Redland City. Net spiders and other, less clear, computer spirit aspects can be seen traveling on many of these lines.

NNL itself is surrounded by the spirit aspect of the security fence that surrounds the site in the mundane world. This is a 40' tall, menacing, hedge-wall of misshapen thorns that slowly turn and writhe with a clicking sound. This hedge is inhabited by Electricity Elementals. Touching the hedge will cause them to attack. (Note: when the Electricity Elementals attack, the silent alarms on the electric fence in the mundane world will be triggered by the voltage fluctuation.)

The gate is flanked by two tall towers that are Banes. These Banes watch the mundane world to detect any threats to NNL. As they are focused on the mundane world, these Banes are almost unaware of happenings in the Umbra, and will take one turn to refocus their energies before responding to any attack.

Inside the hedge, the buildings of NNL appear as featureless blockhouses in the same places as their material world counterparts, without any of the pleasant landscaping that exists in the mundane world.



In the Umbra, the ground between the buildings is the same parched earth as the plains outside, and the landscaped trees and bushes are Blight Children. Large patterns of fractal energy hover over sections of the complex, the spirit aspects of short-range infrared and cellular radio communications, and the air and earth are permeated with the sounds and vibrations of huge, unseen machines.

NNL as a whole should have some of the atmosphere of Dante's *Inferno*. That is, the characters should feel as if they are walking through the workings of hell itself.

Weaver Ants

These spirits will ignore the characters unless they bring elements of the Wyld into the NNL area. If this occurs they will attack *en masse*. The stats given are for a swarm of Ants.

Rage 5, Willpower 2, Gnosis 3, Power 15

Charms: Airt Sense, Repair Pattern (cost 1; this allows the ants to make minor repairs to the Pattern Web around NNL. The Web is subject to erosion due to the proximity of the Wylding.)

Hedge Electricity Elementals

Rage 7, Willpower 4, Gnosis 4, Power 15

Charms: Spasm Shock (cost 1; if a Rage attack is successful, the target will suffer muscle spasms for a number of turns equal to the attack's successes. The target is at minus two dice to do any action during this time), Airt Sense

Gate Tower Banes

Rage 6, Willpower 6, Gnosis 4, Power 45

Charms: Airt Sense, Embodiment (cost 14; Str 3, Dx 3, Sta 2, Brawl 4, Claws: Str + 2)

Breaching Security

The security guards at NNL rely heavily on computerized security systems. The electric fence around the site also has voltage sensors that will report the location of any contact with the fence. All major buildings are wired with separate sensors in each office, allowing the guards to track the location of any intruders.

If the outside fence sensors report a contact, a team of four guards will arrive in a jeep within about five minutes. They will use the spotlight of the jeep to check for any sign of intrusion. Fence alarms are considered a fairly low priority because stray animals and wind-blown debris frequently will set off the fence sensors.

If a buildings exterior alarm goes off, two jeep loads of four guards each will arrive within five minutes. Building alarms are considered serious. The guards will not leave until they are certain that the area is secure. They will enter the building and look for signs of forced entry. The guards will not hesitate to shoot, although they will always shout for surrender first (unless, of course, the intruder shoots first).



If they find signs of illegal entry, the guards will call for further backup, and another three jeep-loads of four guards each will arrive within ten minutes. If the guards feel overpowered for any reason, or if they feel a trespasser remains on site, they will call the local sheriff and the State Police to help cordon off the site, and they will comb the area until they are satisfied. Depending on the specifics of what happened, the guard may be doubled for the next several days, or, in a severe case, the site might be shut down while a room by room search is conducted.

Security around the Weapons Research Complex is even tighter. The area is lit by banks of halogen lights. The four guards who are always on duty wear bulletproof vests and carry military issue M-16s with three extra clips of ammunition each. They are in constant radio communication with the central security building.

Breaking in By Computer

NNL is a heavily computerized site. The computers can be accessed from outside the lab, if you have another computer and an account on NNL's "host" machines. One section of NNL's computers are actually open to the public. The information stored in this section concerns things like tour schedules, information on NNL's status as a "Superfund" cleanup site, and public relations information on the fusion energy research program. To access any other part of NNL's computers requires an account — or "hacking" into the system.

To hack into NNL's computers requires a roll of Intelligence + Computer against a difficulty of 15. Four hours of solid work are required for each attempt on this roll, and at least 5 successes must be gained. The successes can be accumulated over time, but all of the work must be in one session at the computers. You cannot stop and then start up again later. There are two ways to lower the difficulty of this roll: software designed to help hack into the system, and/or the help of net-spirits.

Software to help hack into a computer can be created by any character with a computer skill. Make 3 rolls of Intelligence + Computer against a difficulty of 7. The total number of successes rolled is the rating of your "hacker's toolkit". Subtract this number from the difficulty of any roll to break into a computer while using that software.

Net-Spirits can attempt to invade NNL's computers by attacking the security software with their Rage. Roll the spirit's Rage against a difficulty of 6; the number of successes subtract from the difficulty to "hack" the computers. (The Net-Spirit cannot use Solidify Reality to halve this.)

After successfully breaking into the system, the characters will be on Host 1 at Level 2, the Security and Access manager (see sidebar). At this level they can attempt to assign themselves a password so they can return to the system later without having to break in again. This requires a separate Computer + Intelligence roll against a difficulty 6. (Note: Any password they assign themselves will only remain in effect for a few days, as the operations staff will "clean up" the system at some point.)

NNL Hacking Graph

NNL Host/Level	Difficulty	Info
Host 1/Level 1	0	Public
Host 1/Level 2	15	Password
Host 2/Level 1	8	Location of Lunatic
Host 2/Level 2	8	Location of information
Host 3/Level 1	10	Information about Lunatic
Host 3/Level 2	15	Central Operations (and Tokamak Atomic Spirit)

Information concerning the location of the Lunatic Garou can be retrieved from the database manager software on Host 2. Accessing Host 2 will require another Hacking roll (Computer + Intelligence) but the difficulty is 8, not 15. The database manager will "point" to Host 3 for all other information about the Lunatic Garou. Accessing Host 3 means another set of hacking rolls, against a difficulty of 10.

If the characters desire, they can attempt to have the Dedicated Security Mini-Computer add their names to the NNL guest list, or put them on the list for access into the Weapons Research Complex. This requires a separate hacking roll against a difficulty of 12.

There is an on-line method of communicating with the Tokamak Atomic spirit. If the character receives more than three successes while accessing Host 3, she will become aware of the fact that there is an atomic spirit in the Tokamak Fusion reactor and that it might be possible to communicate with this spirit through the NNL computers. To establish the communication requires another hacking roll at a difficulty 8.

Any botch while hacking the computers at NNL, either by a Garou at a terminal or a Net-Spirit in combat, will result in the operations staff becoming aware that "hackers are on the loose." If the character can roll a successful Wits + Computer roll, difficulty 6, she will immediately realize what has happened. Otherwise, she will remain oblivious to the fact that the operations staff are hunting for her.

If the character is unaware that she is being hunted, the Operations Staff must roll their Intelligence + Computer against a difficulty of the character's Intelligence + Computer in order to "find" her on the system. If they roll one success on this roll, they will be able to restrict her access but not be able to find out how she got into the computer. Three successes will tell them exactly how she got into the computer, but give no information about her physical location. Five successes will enable the Operations Staff to pinpoint the character's physical location, even if (for example) it is a pay phone in Redland City. The operations staff will quickly call the police and the FBI if they discover this. If the Operations Staff botch any of these rolls the character will automatically realize that they are onto her.

If the character is aware that she is being hunted, she and the operations staff will make resisted rolls, the difficulty being the opponent's Intelligence + Computer. If the character gets five successes first, then she has given them the slip, and they will cease looking, thinking that whoever it was has "logged off."

The Lunatic

In the first level basement of building 5 is an old vault that was housing classified records dating back to WW II. This has been cleared out and is now housing the Lunatic.

The hallway leading to the vault has its own manned security station, consisting of a video camera and intercom to the security room. The vault door requires Strength 12 to bust down, and weighs 3 tons.

Inside the vault the Lunatic is chained in a very heavy straitjacket, under constant sedation. Sedation is only relieved during experiments, as one unfortunate researcher was torn to shreds before the Lunatic could be subdued.

Across the hallway from the vault is a small office used as an examining/experimenting room and meeting room for the three researchers. In this office are a desk, a stand-alone computer terminal, and a battered psychologist's couch. Against one wall is a locked metal cabinet that holds tranquilizers and syringes, a stack of blank notebooks, and several full notebooks.

Reading the laboratory notebooks will give a rough chronology of events concerning the lunatic.

- Subject arrived about a month ago.
- Two weeks ago, the subject killed Dr. Otwell.
- Subject "events" more common within the last week.
- A few days ago, the subject went catatonic; no response to anything.

The Lunatic is completely incoherent and very violent. She is of homid stock, and naturally reverts to that form when unconscious.

Unknown to the researchers at NNL or the staff of Valkenburg, this Lunatic's sickness was not caused by the Change, but by possession by a powerful Bane. The Lunatic is young Black Fury.

An old spirit of the Yakima Indians, Mir-Herta, has captured the soul of the Lunatic and is holding it in the Deep Umbra. This is the cause of the recent catatonia. Because of this, her body cannot be taken into the Umbra. There is a "silver cord" that can be followed (in the Umbra) from the body to where the soul is held. The characters must either retrieve her soul first, or take her body out of NNL to a safe location and then track the cord.

The cord leads straight into the Wylding.

Janet Shirek, "The Lunatic"

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Philodox

Tribe: Black Furies

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 1, Primal-Urge 3, Animal Ken 2, Melee 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Backgrounds: none

Gifts: Smell of Man, Scent of the True Form, Heightened Senses

Rank: 1

Rage 8, Gnosis 4, Willpower 3

Image: Olive skin with long black hair. She looks in terrible shape now: eyes sunken, somewhat malnourished and unkempt. In wolf form, her once luxurious hair is now dry and scraggly, falling out in patches.

Roleplaying Notes: Janet is normally a very quiet young woman. Her desire for glory has been greatly tempered by her current travails.

Background: Janet is originally from Melbourne, Australia (where there is a large Greek population). She came to America after her First Change to fight the Wyrn.

She was possessed by a Bane while fighting fomori who were illegally trapping for furs in British Columbia. The Bane turned her against her pack; all of her friends were slain by herself and the fomori. This broke what little mind she had left after resisting the Bane so furiously, and she became an unwilling toy of the fomori, one of whom was Reginald Bear, half owner of the Bear Brothers' traveling show.

The Bears decided that the attractive, idiot Janet made a fine addition to their show, and she was an exotic dancer with them for over a year before the police in Redland City raided the show. Janet's rather unusual abilities were used to frighten customers into giving up all their cash, events which they never seemed able to recall afterwards.

Scene Five: Following the Silver Cord

Welcome, all wonders in one sight!

Eternity shut in a span.

— Richard Crashaw, "Hymn of the Nativity"

If the pack see the Lunatic's body while in the Umbra, it will appear as an empty shell. The eyes are missing and there is only black space inside the head. The body will hold its shape, but there are no internal organs. A thick silver cord runs from the navel of the Lunatic's body off across the Umbra. The cord leads straight to the Wylding.

As the pack follows this cord in closer to the Wyld, they will first begin to notice the ground beneath them shifting and rolling like waves on the ocean, but more slowly. Currents in the Umbra will begin to draw them into the Wylding, feeling like wind at their backs.

The ocean-like swells will become steeper and larger, eventually becoming taller than a Garou in Crinos form. When the swells are about waist-high, the pack will begin to notice strange



plants dotting the landscape, and the color of the land will change to shifting hues of gold, brown and violet. The ground will become soft and muddy, clinging to the pack's feet.

Many of the plants here are spirit versions of the plants in the swamp, so the characters will find themselves walking past 12' cattails that turn and stare at them as they go by. Large rainbow colored flowers that sing hypnotic songs will try and lure them within reach of their foot-long thorns.

As the pack travels deeper into the Wyld, brackish creeks will appear, running along the bottoms of the shifting swells in the earth. Catfish will appear, and will walk between these creeks on their fins. As the swells become steeper and larger, the plant and animal life will increase. Climbing to the top of a swell will allow the characters to see that the Wylding apparently goes as far as the eye can see in all directions. If the pack loses the silver cord for any reason, they will be lost.

Although the silver cord seems to travel straight in the Umbra, a character peeking into the mundane world will realize that the pack is traveling in circles in the swamp.

This journey leads through the Wyld to an Anchorhead to the Deep Umbra. The trip should take some time and should be an adventure of discovery. In this strange world, nothing is quite as it seems. Even the friendly entities can be deadly.

Following is a list of sights or ideas for encounters. The storyteller should also embellish the journey with ideas of her own.

- The back of a huge serpent is seen, not of the Wyrn. No head or tail ever comes into sight.

- Talking catfish try to have a rambling discussion with the pack on subjects like card playing and whiskey drinking.

- A Skrag inhabits an old waste barrel.

- Stray Weaver spirits desperately try to lay down Pattern, but it breaks up behind them.

- Rainbow flowers sing to the pack as they pass.

- A flock of carnivorous birds tries to eat the pack; they are annoying but harmless to Crinos Garou.

The gateway to the Deep Umbra appears as a dry hole leading down into the earth. It is large enough for a Crinos to stoop in. In order to enter the hole, each Garou must spend a Gnosis point.

Inside the hole, it is utterly dark, and no light will work at all. The silver thread can be seen dimly shining. The cave leads into a complex of caverns, with many turns and branches. After a long time groping their way downwards through the rough passage, the characters will emerge into the Glen of Mir-Herta.

The pack will find themselves in a pine forest nestled in a small valley. There is a cold clear stream running through the center of the valley. The spirits of Naturae surround the character.



Whether or not they continue to follow the cord, Mir-Herta will find the pack within five or ten minutes.

Meeting with Mir-Herta

Mir-Herta appears as an elk with the head, fins and tail of a salmon. The antlers of a stag sprout from the head. The silver cord disappears into a bag tied at the spirit's side.

Mir-Herta will be openly friendly towards any Wendigo present, and openly hostile towards any Glass Walkers. He will greet the pack and ask why they have come. When asked about the silver cord, he will explain that he is trying to use the soul tied to it to remanifest on the mundane plane.

Mir-Herta has been largely forgotten on earth, and he wishes to revisit the land. Without a pack as allies, however, he cannot manifest there. Thus, he is trying to use Janet's soul to forge a path.

If they negotiate, Mir-Herta will agree to surrender the soul, although not without some form of compensation. If the pack agrees to let Mir-Herta be their totem, he will gladly agree, for he has not had followers for many ages. Mir-Herta respects pacts, and if the pack already has a totem, Mir-Herta will still ally with them. This is a rare opportunity for the pack to gain two totems, for most other totem spirits respect Mir-Herta and will not mind a double alliance.

Mir-Herta can show the pack the way out of the Wylding.

Mir-Herta is an Incarna Totem spirit, and cannot be fought in his own domain. Anyone trying to attack him will be ejected into the Wylding, and thus lost with no landmarks.

Mir-Herta (Totem of Respect)

Cost: 5

Mir-Herta is an old spirit of the earth, mostly forgotten in current times. He used to aid many Wendigo packs of the northwest. Mir-Herta grants the following: the Gift Wisdom of the Ancient Ways, and one level in both Enigmas and Rituals. All difficulties for remembering sacred traditions are at one less.

Ban: Mir-Herta does not allow his followers to treat sacred customs with disrespect. Followers must know at least one Rite, to prove their commitment to the Ways.

Scene Six: Restoration

Upon alliance with Mir-Herta, he will return with the pack to release Janet's soul. Upon reaching her body, he will pull a glowing ball out of his sack; the silver cord is tied to the ball. He places the ball into Janet's head — it passes through insubstantially— and she awakens, sane for the first time in years.

Mir-Herta will then disappear back into his domain in the Umbra and act just like an allied totem in every way (he must be contacted through Gifts hereafter, like any totem).

Janet Shirek's soul is inhabited by a Psychomachia Bane which will not fully manifest until after it is freed. Mir-Herta does not realize that the soul is possessed by a Bane; he is aware only that the soul of the Lunatic is sick.

The Bane is hiding in a dormant state inside the captive soul for the time being, as it is not strong enough to fight Mir-Herta. After the cord is traced back and the soul is reinstated into Janet, the Bane will release her and attempt to possess one of the characters. It will flee if it is losing.

The Hidden Psychomachia

Rage 10, Willpower 7, Gnosis 8, Power 20 (+10/death inflicted)

Charms: Possession, Airt Sense, Materialize (cost 12; Str 2, Dex 2, Sta 2, Brwl 4, Claws: Str + 3)

Epilogue

Janet will be forever grateful to the pack for what they have done for her. If they suggest she return to the Foundation for counseling, she will go with them gladly. Otherwise, she will try to return to Melbourne and her old sept.

The Caldron Rock Sept will be glad the incident is over, and they will want as much information on Mir-Herta as possible. He will be considered a possible totem for future packs.

Tall Wolf will also decide that he must turn his attention to NNL, besides just concentrating on lumber developers. Soon, after the pack leaves, they will begin midnight assaults on NNL, causing panic among the guards due to the Delirium. They may eventually cause the Atomic Spirit to explode its confines.

The pack returns to Valkenburg for a well-deserved rest. But dark shadows will soon engulf them...



Story Five: Dark Union

Written by William Spencer-Hale, Illustrated by Lawrence Allen Williams

So it was with the Republic at its height. Like the greatest of trees, able to withstand any external attack, the Republic rotted from within though the danger was not visible from outside.

— George Lucas, *Journal of the Whills*

Like a writhing, sentient maggot, the whispers of corruption can charm their way into the most noble of hearts and destroy the ideals which once shone a light into our lives. This darkness can, at times, assume the guise of morality and virtue and seduce those who are too preoccupied to realize their actions. Yet there are those who, despite the horrors, will peer into the madness in order to find something akin to truth, although one must be careful as to how long and how far one looks into that darkness lest it corrupt the soul as well.

How To Run This Story

In this story, the characters will learn of the true corruption of the Valkenburg Foundation and of the atrocities which have been committed against the unfortunate Garou inmates.

The characters, through the previous stories, have gained the knowledge that something is not quite right. In this story, they will learn that the original mission of the Foundation, noble as it was, has been pushed aside by the minions of the Wurm; and that the Foundation itself has become no more than a concentration camp for the tortured Garou locked within the dark, lonely cells. It is no longer a haven of compassion, but a personal hell for those trapped there.

The storyteller should assault the players with clues in this story. Knock them over the heads in order to make them as obvious as possible. The time for mystery has passed.

The key to this story is tragedy. Open the character's eyes to the atrocities which the inmates have suffered and to the pain which lurks in every shadow. The Wurm has infested this once-respectable haven and, with the exception of Gretchen, Victor and the Silent Striders, now guides the actions of once-honorable men and women of medicine.

The staff of the Foundation have no idea that they are the cause of this suffering, although they should be somewhat suspicious of everyone, including the other members of their staff. An atmosphere of tension should permeate everything. The integrity and pride of the Valkenburg Foundation lies on its deathbed.

The storyteller is encouraged to add as many different encounters as she sees fit in order to personalize this story to the needs of her chronicle and the desires of the players as well.

Theme

To pacify the darkness. The players should be pushed more toward thinking problems through and avoiding a violent confrontation, although the opportunity for such will often present itself throughout this story.

The pack is encouraged to cast aside prejudices and try to find goodness in old enemies, for their help can prove valuable and may just save the pack's lives during the more violent scenes. They should also consider all aspects of a given situation and not be so quick to condemn those who may be innocent, for they may prove to be allies as well. There is compassion here, although it hides silently and fears to show itself. It is here nonetheless and should be sought after, for it is the only way the tortured inmates of the Valkenburg Foundation can ever be made whole again.

If the pack rushes to the rescue in a rage, it will bring nothing but disaster to everyone. The alliance with the Black Spiral Dancers will prove invaluable in the final scene. If the characters turn their backs on the possibilities of this alliance, they will surely be overcome by the forces of the Wyrms.

It should also be made clear to the pack that even in the darkest moments, there is time for other emotions as well. One should not dwell on that darkness lest one be blinded to the light which is always present at the end of any noble endeavor.

Mood

The primary mood of this story is disgust. The players should be inundated with the tragedy which the insane Garou have been made to suffer over the years and the fractured spirits of the same.

The staff of the Foundation should always choose their words carefully and give the characters the feeling that they are not always telling the truth or are holding back pertinent information. The staff members should always be presented as friendly and caring to the inmates. They should be mysterious and cautious, however, and try everything within their power to lead the characters astray of the truth although they are unaware of the injustices which they have committed.

When the characters are in the Foundation, continually torment them with the whispers from the cells and the insane ramblings from the inmates. The screams from the various cells should constantly assault the characters and make them feel pity for their deranged brethren. Something is up, something no one can put their finger on, but the inmates sense it and are restless.

The Plot

Scene One — As the night's shadows play across the Foundation, the Black Spiral Dancers, not knowing of the Puppeteers' atrocities, launch a raid against Valkenburg to put an end to the place of healing once and for all. The characters will be caught in the middle of this attack. During this raid, a different emotion will come into play, that of love, which may or may not complicate things later.

Scene Two — After the assault, the characters discover Victor Helms sneaking toward the basement level of the institution. If confronted by the pack he will tell them of his suspicions of the staff and of their activities. This will give the characters the opportunity to discuss various clues which have been uncovered with Helms and pave the way for an understanding of the horrible actions of the Puppeteers. They will also have the opportunity to witness the horrors in the basement first hand.

Scene Three — The pack leader from the Black Spiral Dancers, Rorgrath, confronts the characters, after using Lish'ta as an emissary. They want an alliance to help uncover the true plans of the Foundation — they know things are not as they seem and suspect they are being double-crossed by the Wyrms. It would be in the best interest of the pack to consider this proposition but if they refuse, the Black Spiral Dancers are quite prepared to meet force with force and will not hesitate to attack the pack if a violent encounter seems imminent. If the characters refuse their plea for a union, it could prove fatal to them later in the story.

Scene Four — After discussing the clues provided by Helms and the Dancers, the pack discovers that the best course of action would be to hunt the Puppeteers in the Umbra and break their link to the staff members, thus putting an end to the suffering and free the institution to perform its original purpose. Here the characters will discover the truth about Orson Gravely and his connection with the Puppeteers. The storyteller should create an atmosphere of tension as clues are discussed, due to the presence of the Black Spiral Dancers.

Scene Five — Orson Gravely plays his final card — he summons a Nexus Crawler to stop the two packs. But he is not content with just one; he attempts to summon another. Lish'ta makes the ultimate sacrifice for love and dies preventing this second creature from coming. The pack wrap up events and returns to the Foundation — but what happens now?

What Is Really Going On

Murder and torture are nightly occurrences at the Foundation and the characters cannot be kept in the dark as to these happenings any longer. Overwhelm the characters with the stench of the Wyrms, the writhing, sinister darkness which has become the true administration of this establishment.

The Puppeteers have been possessing the bodies of the staff members, guiding them to perform horrible operations on the Lunatic Garou, to see if there are organs which can be transplanted into others. This would aid the Wyrms in creating an army of shapechangers. These would be more controllable by the Wyrms and its minions than the rageful Black Spiral Dancers. These shapechangers would also be very detrimental to the Veil as more and more humans would realize there is more to the myths than meets the eye. This could help complete the final plans of the Wyrms by bringing the destruction of the Garou.

The staff members who have been forced into these actions have no idea as to what is going on. They awake refreshed each morning with no memories of the previous night (with the exception of one, whose diary will be explored later). If accused, they will know nothing and will deny everything.

Victor Helms, who should come across as cold and logical with a suspicious air about him, is in reality a Shadow Lord who is digging for dark secrets on the Foundation. Helms is searching for clues, as are the characters, and will become a valuable asset if the characters are prudent. When presenting Helms to characters, he should be a completely unlikeable character whom the characters will believe is possibly more of a problem than not. He should be suspicious and presented as always trying to avoid the

characters when in fact he is merely intent on his mission and has no time for them. The characters must use discretion and wisdom in order to gain him as an ally.

Orson Gravely is in reality an incarnation of the Shadow which caused Leopold Valkenburg to flee his homeland. He is utterly Wyrn-tainted and far beyond hope of ever casting out the demons which inhabit his tortured mind. It is because of him that the Puppeteers have been able to take hold of the Valkenburg Foundation and he is the true instigator of all the suffering which has occurred there. If confronted in his cell, he will merely laugh at the characters and glare at them with sad yet knowing eyes as he mumbles of things which are coming to take their minds from them.

Scene One: Howl of the Nemesis

Your poor army, those poor contemptable men, came up hither.

— Oliver Cromwell

As this scene opens, it is late and no moon is present in the sky. With the the Ragabash moon prominent, it is a night of infinitely dark possibilities.....

No shadows dance around the Valkenburg ranch and no breezes disturb the few trees which surround the Foundation. The night is still and death-like.

In the distance, forms gather in the mist. Angry, dark forms bent on an unholy quest, a sinister mission whose purpose is to soak the night-dyed ground with scarlet vengeance. . . .

The Black Spiral Dancers, ignorant of the injustices of the Valkenburg Foundation, gather for a raid in order to destroy the place once and for all. They have assembled in order to utterly destroy the Valkenburg Foundation.

They have gathered on the outskirts of the ranch near the stables, four strong, and have nothing but death and destruction on their minds this quiet night.

Once the attack has begun, all hell will break loose, so to speak. As soon as the Dancers have entered Foundation grounds, the wards will activate and spirits will scream the alarm. This will be cut short, however, as Sha-Draak's Bane Protector shuts them up.

One of the Black Spiral Dancers will break away from the pack to go around back and try to set fire to the Foundation. The others will concentrate on their frontal attack of the Foundation and its staff. The purpose of this attack is simple; to completely destroy the Foundation and its grounds and kill the staff to the last person. Once this is completed, their plan is to systematically murder the insanity-stricken Garou and then flee into the night as silently as they came.

During the raid, Lish'ta will make eye contact with one of the characters and discover in herself something that she thought did not exist. Love. For the first time in her life, she will be completely and irrevocably immersed in this emotion. She will rush to Rorgrath and lie to him, saying that a large pack of



Wendigo are advancing just over a small ridge. She advises that it would be prudent for them to flee and save this feasting for another time.

Reluctantly, Rorgrath agrees and they flee into the night. But Lish'ta carries with her into the darkness the vision of the healing emotion of love, which presented itself in the form of one of the characters. She will return with the pack in Scene Three in order to speak of an alliance to find out the true nature of the Foundation. However, her real reason for doing so is to unite herself with the one she now considers her lifemate.

During the raid, two staff members were killed before the Dancers raced off into the night: the groundsman and the assistant psychiatrist. Storytellers should describe in detail the grisly way in which they met their demise, as this will help set the mood for the next confrontation with the Dancers in Scene Three.

In this scene, storytellers should inundate the players with the violent moods of combat. Tell the players of the screams of both the dying and the killers and fill their imaginations with the stench of blood as it spills upon the ground. As it is night, and a rather dark one, keep the characters ignorant as to the true numbers of the Dancers and to where they may appear at any given moment. Play heavily on the fears of the characters.

The character who captured the attention of Lish'ta will find a small dagger with a heart-shaped hilt (Perception + Alertness, difficulty 7). Lish'ta left this in hope that the object of her affection would find it and realize the love that has blossomed in her heart. A Wits + Rituals roll (difficulty 8) will allow the character to realize that this is the type of dagger used by Black



Spiral Dancers in their wedding rituals. It is used in combat by the lovers to determine who will be master of the relationship. Sometimes only one remains to be master.

The Insidious Fist, the Black Spiral Dancer Pack

The Insidious Fist is a pack originating from the Black Belch Hive, located in the deep caverns underneath Yellowstone Park's geysers. It was once larger than it is now, but two members, Goltak and Shtüm'ta, were killed in a recent raid against the powerful Yellowstone Sept. Since then, the rest of the pack has wandered Wyoming looking for ways to wreak havoc. The pack's totem is the Bat.

Rorgrath

Breed: Metis

Auspice: Ahroun

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Intimidation 4, Primal-Urge 4, Melee 4, Leadership 4, Stealth 3, Survival 1

Backgrounds: Mentor 3

Gifts: True Fear, Wyrn Hide, Shroud, Create Element, Razor Claws

Rage 8, Gnosis 4, Willpower 5

Rank: 3

Fetishes: Wyrn Fang Dagger

Image: Rorgrath stands 6'6" tall in Homid form and just a tad over 8' tall in Crinos form. His coal-black hair is dull and matted in both forms, and his eyes are just as black with no compassion whatsoever. His body is covered with many scars, most of which his parents gave him, including an area on his chest which is completely devoid of fur as if scarred in a fire. When in Homid form, Rorgrath walks with a discernible limp but no injury is apparent.

Roleplaying Notes: Rorgrath's personality is harsh and jagged and the fact that he has no compassion for anything is immediately obvious. Even in his most passive state of mind he will seem to always be looking for a fight. He is very physical and will always put his hands and claws on whoever he is talking to; if he cannot do this, he will lacerate himself with his claws and lick at the blood which clings to his hairy paws.

Background: Rorgrath is the leader of the Black Spiral Dancers pack and perhaps the most insane of them all. As a metis child, he was tortured by his parents on a regular basis so as to make him fiercer in battle. Once he was forced to cast his gaze on the horror that is the Wyrn and his mind was forever destroyed, he returned home to slay his parents and feast on their remains. It is said that this process took all of three weeks.



This hideous act of violence has earned Rorgrath great renown among the Black Spiral Dancers, as all acts of this nature do. Rorgrath is a fierce warrior, quick to rage, with no respect for anything living, dead, or in between. It is better to die at his hands and bathe in the glory of an honorable death than to risk being taken prisoner by this insane creature. The suffering that he can bring upon the unfortunate soul fool enough to bow down to him in battle is truly unspeakable.

Hosh-Grom

Breed: Metis

Auspice: Ahroun

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 5, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Intimidation 3, Subterfuge 2, Melee 3, Leadership 3, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Politics 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 3

Gifts: Sense Wurm, Razor Claws, Create Element, Ears of the Bat (-2 difficulty on rolls due to Bat totem), Foaming Fury

Rage 7, Gnosis 4, Willpower 7

Rank: 3

Fetishes: Wurm Fang Dagger

Image: In Homid form, Hosh-Grom's waist length, poorly-kept dull brown hair is always in his face as if he tries to hide his eyes from whoever he may be confronted with. His hair is just as shaggy in wolf form and nearly the same lifeless color. His eyes are always squinted as if to reduce the intense effects of the sun, yet this is not the case, as this mannerism is obvious during the night as well.

Roleplaying Notes: Hosh-Grom is always quiet. He seems to be gazing at something just beyond the horizon, somewhere past the vision of whoever he is talking; he will never make eye contact. He is a plotting, scheming, untrustworthy individual who will befriend you to your face while simultaneously conniving your downfall, although, if given compassion, he will return it despite the conflict which it will create within him.

Background: Hosh-Grom is the younger brother and lieutenant of Rorgrath. As a child he was completely ignored by his parents and left to fend for himself as Rorgrath was the chosen offspring. Due to this, his mind still holds some compassion for things besides himself. A master politician, he is quick to choose a logical, peaceful conclusion to an encounter rather than a violent one, as his brother does. There is a great rivalry between the two, and Hosh-Grom completely hates his brother. He continually plots Rorgrath's downfall and patiently awaits the day when he will lead the pack.

Lish'ta

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Galliard

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 2, Charisma 5, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3



Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 4, Dodge 4, Intimidation 1, Primal-Urge 2, Subterfuge 2, Streetwise 4, Etiquette 2, Melee 3, Stealth 5, Survival 1, Medicine 2, Politics 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Pure Breed 3

Gifts: Sense Wurm, Persuasion, Mindspeak, Dreamspeak, Reshape Object

Rage 8, Gnosis 6, Willpower 7

Rank: 3

Fetishes: none

Image: Unlike her two lovers, Lish'ta is well-groomed, almost to the point of being vain. Her hair is a stunning, luxurious



copper which falls lightly upon her shoulders and her eyes are of the purest green. In wolf form, her hair takes on a more scarlet shading and seems to be as well kept as her Homid form. Her eyes remain the same color and maintain the same passion in all forms.

Roleplaying Notes: The primary goal that Lish'ta has had in life is to find love, and this is evident with every move that she makes. For this reason, many Black Spirals consider her truly mad, seeing her quest for love as some kind of bizarre dementia. If she is teased about this or mocked because of her obvious romances with other Garou, then she will fly into a rage and attempt to harm the one who brought such scorn upon her. She is a very defensive creature and will not reveal her true self to anyone other than one who has genuine emotions for her.

Background: Lish'ta is a beautiful creature to behold but her mind is scarred by the visage of the Wyrn nonetheless. She is the lover of Rorgrath, as such incestuous relationships are permitted among the Black Spiral Dancers. But in secret, she is also the lover of Hosh-Grom, for she knows that he shall someday slay his brother and take command of the pack. She is a very sensitive creature and very quick to rage. Despite the fact that she is so sensitive and also the lover of the two brothers, she has no true emotions for either one, and her romantic entanglements have so far been for nothing but personal gain.

Sha-Draak

Breed: Lupus

Auspice: Theurge

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Intimidation 2, Melee 3, Stealth 5, Survival 3, Primal-Urge 2, Enigmas 2, Occult 3, Rituals 2

Backgrounds: Mentor 2, Contacts 2

Gifts: Bane Protector, Heightened Senses, Razor Claws, Leap of the Kangaroo, Catfeet

Rage 7, Gnosis 5, Willpower 6

Rank: 3

Fetishes: none

Image: Sha-Draak's impressive form is well over 7' tall in Homid form and nearly 9' tall in Lupus form. His hair is the deepest of black and is well maintained. Sha-Draak's eyes are a shadowy dusk-gray and show no signs of emotion whatsoever. Sha-Draak only speaks when he is spoken to or when he believes that he has something very important to say.

Roleplaying Notes: As stated, Sha-Draak is quiet and always seems to be contemplating something in a most brooding manner. If spoken to he will reply in a harsh, menacing whisper in a few words as possible. He will never make physical contact with anyone unless in combat. If Sha-Draak touches you, consider it a challenge to the death. It is not advisable to touch him as he will consider this a challenge as well.

Background: Sha-Draak has been the companion of Rorgrath since they were children. He is very suspicious of Hosh-Grom and Lish'ta and has always been concerned about their motives.

The Diary of Dr. Jacob Runstler

October 11: "Early last night I awoke in the library, dazed and confused and unsure as to how I had arrived there. Rather uncanny, as I have never been known for sleepwalking or the like. Reflecting back upon the past several mornings it seems as though I've felt somewhat tired, as if I had not slept well. Something akin to how I felt when I found myself in the library this morning."

October 15: "Upon waking this morning I found several flecks of dried blood caked beneath my fingernails. One of the patients was found dead this morning. They assume it was by his own hands. I know it was me that took his life. It must have been during one of my late night sleepwalking episodes, which seem to have become more frequent of late. What is it that I'm doing on my unconscious journeys? What kind of monster have I become? I must find a way to stop this insanity before.... My God, it's too horrible to mention."

October 17: "Oh please help me. Please shine some kind of light into my confusion. I can write no longer. I must find peace to calm my anguished mind."

October 19: "Another patient was found dead this morning. Again, they believe it is suicide. I know that I am to blame and I have come to the conclusion that there is only one way that I can bring a stop to this madness. May Gaia have mercy on my soul for what I am about to do. Good-bye, my friends. Forgive me."

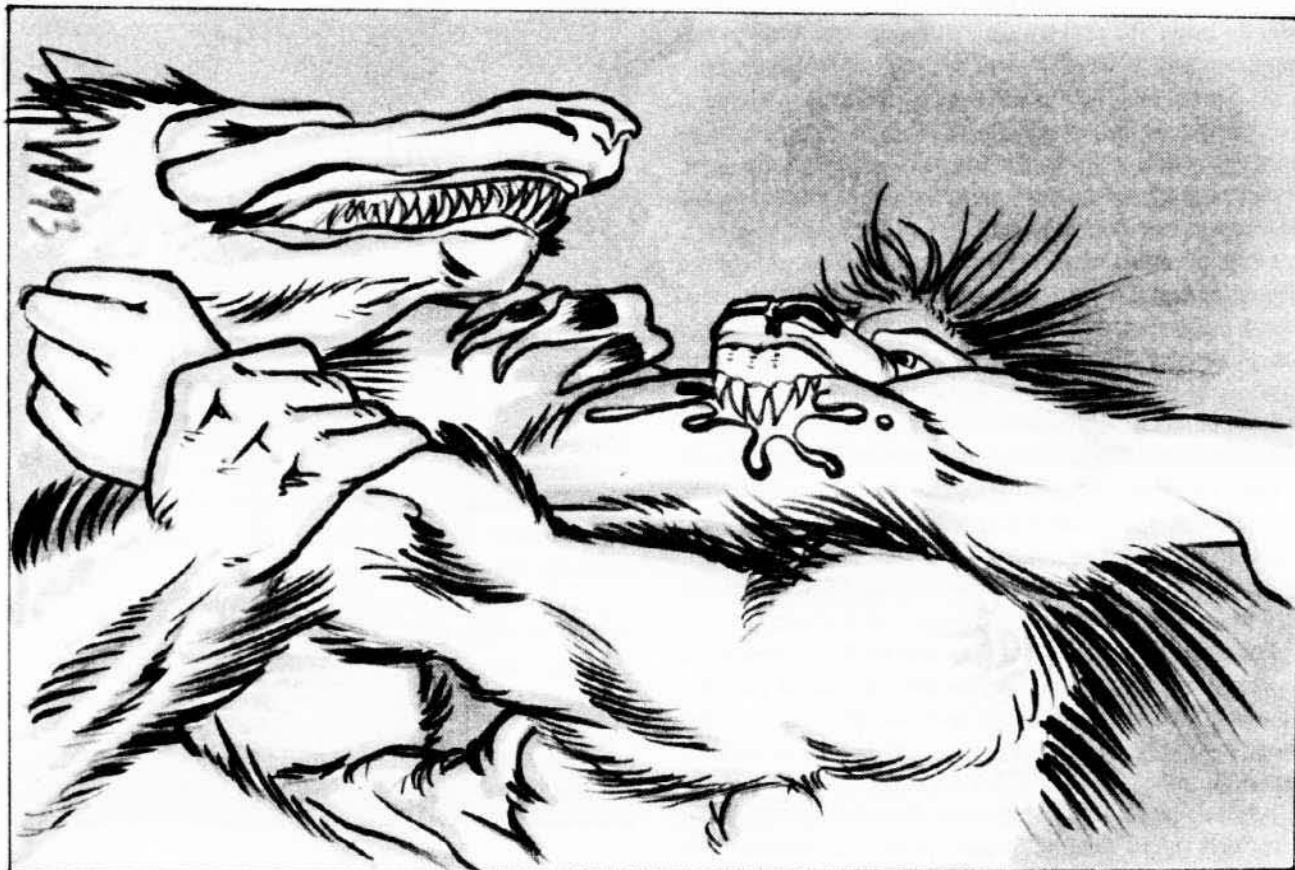
His joy has always been in combat. It is the only time when he feels that he is able to truly communicate with the world. His mentor was the father of Rorgrath and Hosh-Grom; he looked upon him as a father figure.

Scene Two: An Unexpected Ally

Later that night, the pack is dispatched to guard the Foundation and things settle down and return to somewhat normal operations; the Foundation falls into silence once again. The characters will hear the soft creaking of footsteps against the wood floors and the ominous creak of doors, devoid of maintenance for too long, grinding in the darkness of the Foundation halls.

If they choose to investigate, they will find Victor Helms studiously making his way to the basement level. If confronted, he will tell them that his curiosity finally got the best of him and he was in the process of investigating the horrible noises which so often emanate from those dark depths. If the characters challenge Helms with violence then he will flee to the offices of Gretchen Valkenburg for safety.

She will reprimand the characters for their violence and ask them the meaning of such actions. This would be a good time to discuss some of the suspicions which the characters and Helms have had and to plot a means of discovering the cause of such.



Characters who venture into the Umbra in this scene will see a spiraling, scintillating vision of Orson Gravely. He writhes in the distance, supported by the entropy which he has given himself to as the Theurge fragment of his soul splits away from his body and sails out of sight into the distance. If the character attempts a search of the Umbra to find him, it will be fruitless; Orson Gravely has entered dark corners, which all sane Garou fear to tread.

The Puppeteers appear as dark, shadowy, writhing monkeys on the backs of the doctors. It seems as though these Puppeteers carry with them a portion of the doctors which they possess wherever they travel in the Umbra. If attacked, they will flee, only to return later when the characters have left the Umbra.

Scene Three: An Uneasy Alliance

It's a maxim not to be despised, 'Though peace be made, yet it's interest that keeps peace.'

— Oliver Cromwell

With the dawn, Lish'ta comes to the character whom she has become enamored with. She tells him that she has set up a meeting place where the Black Spiral Dancers and the Questing Pack can meet in peace to discuss the Foundation. Rorgrath has grudgingly agreed to this, as he truly believes it will be beneficial to all and will bring him more glory in the end.

Lish'ta explains that the Dancers have only just discovered the Puppeteers themselves, and have no more love for them than does the pack. She explains their suspicions that the Wyrms are betraying them with the knowledge gained by the Puppeteers.

Also at this time, Lish'ta will make a romantic advance upon the character in hopes of winning his affection. If she is successful, then she will gleefully tell him to meet the Dancers that night. If she is rejected, she will relay the same information then run off into the early morning sobbing.

Off to the north, where the forest becomes heavy, there is a clearing where the meeting will take place. This clearing is not of natural origin. The trees are dead or dying and the sparse foliage surrounding the clearing is pale and diseased. The whole area stinks of the Wyrms and this should be expounded upon in order to make the characters feel uncomfortable and give them the full understanding of the creatures which they are dealing with.

Once the characters arrive at the site, Rorgrath will rush the leader so as to assure that they have truly come in peace. If the character in question uses restraint and tries to avoid a conflict, then Rorgrath will offer his paw at the urging of Lish'ta and will not accost the pack again.

Rorgrath will explain to the pack that the Dancers' mission was to destroy the Foundation, for they despise its purpose. However, after the assault, they received information on the Puppeteers. They queried some Banes and discovered the Puppeteers' purpose. The Dancers see the Puppeteers' experiments as betrayal by the Wyrms. However, they believe that if the Puppeteers can be stopped, this will prove their worthiness to

their dark lord. Rorgrath's proposal is this: to ally and destroy the Puppeteers. If they can do this, Rorgrath's pack will ignore the Foundation afterwards.

During the entire conference, Lish'ta will stay close to the character she has chosen to give her affections to. At this time, the storyteller should make it obvious to the chosen one that she is quite taken with him. She is attempting to be enticing to the character, seductive with a childlike innocence which masks some of the madness inherent in her breed. If the character acknowledges her in a friendly or loving manner, then she will take on a wonderful glow which will be apparent to everyone at the meeting (including Rorgrath) and slowly begin to move closer to the character in question.

If she is obviously rejected, then she will stalk off into the forest not to be seen again for the remainder of the meeting. During the entire encounter, Rorgrath will show no signs of jealousy. It is as if he has no emotions kin to any of the Garou; as if the Wyrms took his soul at the same moment that it shattered his mind. A sword forged in madness.

If the pack agrees to ally with the Black Spiral Dancers, Rorgrath will demand that the leader of the pack join with him in a bonding of blood in order to seal their alliance. If the pack leader agrees, Rorgrath will not betray the alliance for the duration of their mission, unless the Questing Pack does so first. Rorgrath makes it clear, however, that once this endeavor is completed, no reason remains for the two groups to continue their alliance.

Although the Dancers have no true information about the Foundation which could prove useful to the character, they do have Bane lore which grants them the ability to understand certain Banes and their purposes. They will prove themselves useful comrades to the pack and will begin to follow their directions as their alliance continues.

Scene Four: Journey Through Mists

In this scene, Victor Helms will begrudgingly discuss the situation with the characters and their new allies, the Black Spiral Dancers. He is apprehensive due to the presence of the Dancers and he does not trust any bargains they make. This could make for an interesting encounter which can push the boundaries of the alliance. Helms will never show the Dancers any respect or courtesy and will always be on the edge of violence. Play this encounter so as to force the characters into using their diplomatic skills in order to avoid a violent situation and preserve their much-needed coalition.

Victor Helms has formulated a plan (if the characters have not already) which he believes will be successful in putting a stop to the outside influences on the staff. He suggests that the pack step sideways into the Umbra and hunt the Banes which infest the Foundation. Although he can give them no information as to the true nature of these entities, he recommends that the characters stay close to the Umbral shadow of the Foundation. He explains

that he will watch Orson Gravely closely while they are in the Umbra, as he suspects Gravely is somehow linked with the Banes. He will also ask for a volunteer to accompany him into the cell of Orson Gravely. If more than one character volunteers then he will simply pick one.

The Black Spirals agree with this plan, and give some further information: the Banes have an odd form of possession on the staff. If they can be destroyed in the Umbra, then the staff will be unharmed. However, if it is not done quickly, they will assume full possession, warping and corrupting the staff into fomori. They can never be cured then. The Black Spirals, as an afterthought, volunteer to "take care of them" if this happens...

Gravely's Defense

Upon entering the Umbra, the characters will find that it is hauntingly quiet. In fact, the whole area which surrounds the Foundation is devoid of spiritual traffic of any kind.

As the pack moves into the Umbra, Helms will quietly make his way toward the second floor cell of Orson Gravely. Gravely is in some trance-like state as his body rocks to and fro in the dimly moonlit room. As Helms enters the room, he unsheathes a silver blade which was hidden in the folds of his longcoat and quietly move toward Gravely. His intentions were not to observe him but, rather, to slay him instead. If the character which accompanied him moves to intervene, he will back off and not make any violent moves toward the character. If he receives no



interference then he will continue forward, a look of complete apathy firmly etched upon his face.

As Helms approaches, Gravely will begin to emit a low, guttural humming sound although he will never open his eyes or acknowledge the existence of others in the room. As suddenly as the humming began, it will cease, and a soft, frigid breeze will be felt within the confines of the cell. Several footsteps can be heard coming down the hall. The door swings open and a sudden breeze blows into the room.

Meanwhile, in the Umbra, the characters see several dark and mysterious shadows moving quickly in the direction of the Foundation (as Helms and his companion make their move toward Gravely). They appear as shadowy monkeys and their color is that of the darkest night. Within these dark forms dance the anguished, mournful faces of the staff members, writhing in terror. These entities are the Puppeteers.

If the characters pursue these creatures at this time, the Puppeteers will attempt to avoid them as they rush to Gravely's rescue. The characters also notice that, in Gravely's cell, a spiritual manifestation rises from his body and soars off into the depths of the velvet shadow. This is Gravely's Theurge personality, on its way to summon a dread entity for aid. If anyone follows it, see "The Nexus Crawler", below.

Back in the cell, Helms and the character notice that the physical form of Gravely suddenly goes limp and seemingly lifeless. Further investigation reveals that he remains in a trance-



like state, although somewhat deeper than when they first entered the cell.

The Puppeteers will spread out into the Foundation building and take possession of the staff. The staff will then rush to Gravely's cell to protect his body. They will be intent on surrounding him and making a barrier of their bodies, knowing that Helms will be reluctant to attack them.

The character's only chance to free the staff is to attack the Puppeteers in the Umbra. If attacked, they will not defend themselves; instead, they will use their energies to manipulate their possessed staff member, by threatening to jump out of a window or stab themselves, hoping that this will cause the Questing Pack to cease their assault.

The Black Spirals, however, have no compunctions about letting the staff member die; they simply want to destroy the Puppeteers. This may cause conflict with the Questing Pack.

The Nexus Crawler

One of these spiritual manifestations, the Theurge fraction of Gravely's personality, has flown to the Umbral extension of Devil's Tower.

If any character manages to follow this Crescent Moon spirit (and regardless, Sha-Draak will), they will notice a dark, misty spiral staircase which rises out of sight, as if into eternity. This is Devil's Tower. Once Gravely arrives at the tower, he begins to

orbit the staircase while emitting a high pitched chant in a language which the character will not understand. If the character attempts to follow, she must roll Gnosis (difficulty 9) in order to overcome the psychic barrier which Gravely has erected around the area of the staircase.

Gravely reaches the top and stands screaming and chanting over a small, clay totem, resembling something akin to a cross between a squid and a spider. The statuette is encircled in blue-white flame, and Gravely stands alone, arms and voice raised to the unseen heavens, as he collects on the dark promises sworn to him by the horrors lurking in the uncharted expanses of the Umbra.

Before either the character or Sha-Draak can get to him, Gravely will successfully complete a strange ritual. A dark vortex appears in the Umbral air and a Nexus Crawler slides from the slick and slimy portal.

Sha-Draak yells to the character, and then flees back to the Foundation to warn the others.

Sha-Draak will arrive back and tell everyone to cease their fighting; there is a greater threat. Gravely has summoned horrible aid from beyond. Sha-Draak tells the Questing Pack that they must rally to fight it; he tells Rorgrath that this thing will not be kind to them either.

This sets the stage for the next scene and the final confrontation.

Scene Five: Call To War

*The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave!*

— Thomas Campbell, *Hohenlinden*

Devil's Tower looms ominously over the Wyoming wastelands and dwarfs the nearby forests. It stands as a dark silhouette against a brooding, silent sky. As the two packs arrive at Devils Tower, in the Umbra, they find it is horribly changed. It has become a twisted, macabre place. The stench which fills this area is unlike any concocted by man.

Wilted plants bow their heads as if in mourning for what has passed and seem to look accusingly at the pack for allowing this fate to befall them. The whole area stinks of death and corruption and it seems as if even the moonlight avoids this sanctuary of despair. All is unnaturally quiet; no form of life inhabits this place or the area around it. It is a little sliver of absolute death in a dying world. It is the glory of the Wurm; a masterpiece of evil.

Characters will experience an overwhelming sorrow when entering this place, a feeling not unlike that felt at a funeral for a dear friend. The Black Spiral Dancers, on the other hand, will seem to bathe in this debauchery as one would in a gentle spring rain. The exception to this is Lish'ta. She seems to feel the same sorrow which has assaulted the characters and hollow sobs can be heard by all. At this point, she will stay close to her object of

affection; perhaps for comfort or perhaps to prove to the character that there is more to her than the madness which is intrinsic in her breed.

The pack can see Orson Gravely, sitting on top of Devil's Tower in a pool of shadow. Suddenly, the shadow rises up and takes form. Orson Gravely twists his mouth in a crooked smile as the Nexus Crawler rushes forth to engage the pack and their allies.

As stated earlier, concentrate on the horrors of battle. Help the characters to feel the mood of the battle and not just roll the dice.

As soon as the two packs are busy combating the Nexus Crawler, Orson Gravely attempts another summoning from the nether depths of the Umbra. Arms reaching toward the sky once more, Gravely begins his chanting again, at a much greater pace than before and with a more feverish pitch to his macabre voice.

Upon witnessing this, Lish'ta will embrace what remaining wisps of compassion and glory still live within her and prepare to stop the summonings. She will close the portal in the only manner which will ensure its closure.

With grim resolve she casts her gaze to the eyes of her would-be lover. Her eyes search the depths of the one who has inspired such emotion in her; if no sign of his affection is given, she will look upon him questioningly as if begging for the answer which she has sought and been denied all of her life. If the character shows at least a sympathetic emotion for her, then she will shyly smile and whisper something which will be carried away by the





din of battle and never reach the ears of the one it was intended for.

With this, Lish'ta will resign herself to her fate and, with an expression of pure determination etched upon her face, will cast herself into the horrid portal. With a deafening roar, the portal implodes into itself. Gravely screams and is sucked into the void between worlds.

Nothing remains to prove it ever existed; nothing, that is, except the character's memory of the courage which is forged through love.

At the storyteller's discretion, if the characters are having too much trouble with the Nexus Crawler, it may get sucked away also.

In the heat of battle, Hosh-Grom will consider this his chance to take leadership of the pack. He will assassinate Rorgrath while he is preoccupied in the struggle. Then, once the conflict has been resolved, he will accuse the characters of slaying their leader though he will not challenge the pack to combat.

Sha-Draak will whisper that he saw Hosh-Grom take the life of Rorgrath and that Hosh-Grom's accusations are false. Hosh-Grom will lunge at Sha-Draak and they will proceed to fight. After a few moments, it will be apparent that Sha-Draak has gained the upper hand and Hosh-Grom will run off into the forest screaming threats of vengeance as he disappears into the darkness.

Epilogue

Once the battle has ended, the only remaining Black Spiral Dancer approaches the Questing Pack leader. He tell the leader that they are not so different in their ways, that this day they danced with the Wyrms in battle, side-by-side with the Black Spiral Dancers, and felt no guilt as to their alliances.

Sha-Draak will travel back to the Foundation with the pack to destroy the remaining Puppeteers, only to find that they are gone (they, too, were sucked away when the portal closed). The staff is confused but in one piece. The stench of the Wyrms is nowhere about them.

Sha-Draak, as his final duty to the alliance, and to ensure that the hated Puppeteers cannot betray his tribe again, will explain to the Questing Pack the method by which they can detect the Puppeteers. Each character must roll Intelligence + Enigmas against a 6 difficulty; any success means that they will understand how to use their gifts (Sense Wyrms, Sense the Unnatural, etc.) to uncover the Puppeteer's Charm: Cloak of Innocence. The Valkenburg staff will also learn this secret lore.

Although the Valkenburg Foundation is now free of the Banes which infested it, difficulties lay ahead in re-establishing the fine reputation which the Foundation once enjoyed. The staff, although thankful of the sacrifices which the characters have made on behalf of the Foundation, will be quite apprehensive to assume their former positions. The pack must push their diplomatic skills to the utmost in order to persuade the staff how important they are

to the welfare of the insanity-stricken Garou who wait for a cure in the cells of the Foundation, as well as all those who will come in the future.

However, those lunatics who were experimented upon in basement are well beyond cure. The Pure Heart Sept will demand that they be destroyed. They will even volunteer to do so, if the pack or the staff cannot bring themselves to do it.

Victor Helms is returning to New York. He will be quite grateful for the pack's help and tells them that if they ever need his help, they should not hesitate to call. Before he departs, he will give the pack leader a stone charm which he has worn around his neck since he was a child, stating that it was a gift from his father. If the leader or the pack is in danger and require his aid, this charm will alert Helms of their danger and enable him, with the aid of other Shadow Lords, to rush to their assistance.

Victor Helms will use his new renown to forge a place for the Shadow Lords in the local caern, but he will emphasize to the Pure Heart that Valkenburg is still a worthy institute, and that

they are more prepared for the dangers of corruption than ever before. With this, Victor Helms will leave, his mission complete.

Taka-kané, the leader of the Pure Heart Sept, greets the pack and thanks them for what they have done for the Foundation. He still expresses his suspicions about the Foundation but feels as though the place will be able to live up to its mission now that it has been freed of the Banes.

If the chance presents itself, he will explain to the pack the treachery inherent in the Black Spiral Dancers and will warn them to be wary of future dealings as they are a deceptive lot and they will use their knowledge of the pack against them.

The sun sets as the characters are left to ponder the victory which they have achieved and to decide what path they will follow now. Whatever choices they make, it should be made clear that they will always be welcome at the Valkenburg Foundation and that they have earned the eternal gratitude of all the future generations of Lost Cubs.



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Appendix: Characters

Gretchen Valkenburg

Position: Director

Breed: Kinfolk

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 2, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 1, Brawl 1, Empathy 4, Expression 3, Animal Ken 2, Drive 3, Etiquette 3, Firearms 2, Leadership 4, Computer 2, Investigation 3, Law 4, Medicine 3, Occult 2, Politics 3, Science 1

Backgrounds: Resources 3, Contacts 4, Allies 5
Rage 0, Gnosis 0, Willpower 7

Image: A well-groomed woman in her early forties with strong features. She is dressed in conservative business attire. Her hair is black and her eyes blue.

Background: Gretchen is the granddaughter of Doctor Valkenburg, but is not Garou, only Kin. She spends most of her time ensuring that the Foundation's funds are properly managed and expanding on the Foundation's image. She is thus not always at the Ranch, sometimes being called away to New York for financial reasons, or to Washington to fight against lobbies hostile to wolves' rights.

<3>**Joshua Keating**

Position: Chief Psychologist

Breed: Homid

Tribe: Glass Walkers

Auspice: Philodox

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 1, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Empathy 4, Expression 4, Primal-Urge 2, Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Firearms 1, Leadership 2, Computer 2, Investigation 4, Medicine 4, Occult 2, Psychology 4, Science 1

Backgrounds: Resources 2, Contacts 2, Allies 1

Gifts: Persuasion, Truth of Gaia, Control Simple Machine, Strength of Purpose, Stare-down

Rage 1, Gnosis 4, Willpower 6

Rank: 2

Image: A thin black man in his late thirties. Joshua wears glasses for reading and is usually seen in a lab coat. As a wolf, he has black fur and is rather thin. He is not used to assuming the Lupus.

Background: Joshua was a up-and-coming psych student when the First Change came upon him and his Glass Walker tribe retrieved him. He has since received his degree and come to work for the Foundation, at Gretchen's request. He is in many ways as brilliant as Valkenburg, but a little too clinical.

Leslie Thomas, "Keld"

Position: Chief Veterinarian

Breed: Lupus

Tribe: Children of Gaia

Auspice: Theurge

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 4, Manipulation 1, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 4, Expression 1, Primal-Urge 2, Animal Ken 5, Leadership 1, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Medicine 3, Occult 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 2

Gifts: Heightened Senses, Mother's Touch, Sense Wyrms, Dazzle, Sight From Beyond, Calm

Rage 2, Gnosis 5, Willpower 4

Rank: 3

Image: A beautiful grey wolf; in Homid form Leslie is a blond-haired, green-eyed woman in her early forties.

Background: Leslie once ran wild and free on all fours through the Black Hills Forest before her Change. She has a deep love for her wolf heritage, and sees the Foundation as the best way to help the lost wolves, regardless of what the Red Talons tell her. As a Child of Gaia, she is very well adjusted to her human side, and spent a few years learning veterinary medicine.

Mary Canoe

Position: Chief Nurse

Breed: Homid

Tribe: Children of Gaia

Auspice: Theurge

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Charisma 4, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Primal-Urge 3, Animal Ken 3, Leadership 1, Stealth 3, Survival 2, Enigmas 3, Medicine 3, Occult 3, Rituals 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Kinfolk 2

Gifts: Persuasion, Mother's Touch, Sense Wyrms, Calm, Stare-down, Pulse of the Invisible

Rage 2, Gnosis 6, Willpower 5

Rank: 3

Rites: Rite of Initiation (Level Two): this allows a person or a group to become a member of a particular society. In Valkenburg's case, it allows them to be recognized by warding spirits.

Image: A sturdy, roundish woman in her forties. She has long braids in her deep black hair. She is Native American. As a wolf, she is stocky with brown hair (still tied in braids in all her forms).

Background: Mary was trained by her grandfather in the ways of Medicine. She is a Medicine Woman of the Sioux tribe, in addition to being of the Children of Gaia.

Johnny

Position: Researcher

Breed: Metis

Tribe: Bone Gnawer

Auspice: Philodox

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Expression 2, Primal-Urge 2, Streetwise 2, Animal Ken 1, Stealth 3, Survival 2, Computer 2, Enigmas 1, Investigation 4, Law 1, Medicine 1, Occult 1, Politics 1, Science 1

Backgrounds: none

Gifts: Sense Wyrms, Resist Pain, Cooking

Rage 4, Gnosis 4, Willpower 4

Rank: 1

Image: A small man in his twenties, Johnny looks somewhat malnourished, but is actually in good shape. His hair seems to always be unkempt, as if no amount of combing can get rid of the tangles. Johnny is a scrawny wolf, and his deformity is his lack of a tail.

Background: He was outcast by almost every Garou in the area until Gretchen recognized his intelligence and set him up as the Foundation researcher.

Ben Thomas

Position: Chief of Security

Breed: Homid

Tribe: Children of Gaia

Auspice: Ahroun

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Empathy 1, Primal-Urge 3, Animal Ken 3, Drive 3, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Leadership 2, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Medicine 1

Backgrounds: Kinfolk 2, Allies 2

Gifts: Persuasion, Inspiration, Resist Pain, Luna's Armor, Sense Silver

Rage 5, Gnosis 3, Willpower 6

Rank: 2

Image: A tall and sturdy man in his twenties, Ben Thomas has a look of calm and patience on his face. His strong arms, however, show that he can mean business. His wolf markings resemble Leslie's, showing his lineage. He is a handsome wolf.

Background: Ben is Leslie's homid son, and the gene bred true, for he is also Garou. He is at home in both his Homid and Ilpud form, thanks to his mother's early training. He is an Ahroun.

Victor Helms

Position: Director of Operations

Breed: Homid

Tribe: Glass Walker (actually a Shadow Lord)

Auspice: Ahroun

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Subterfuge 4, Intimidation 4, Primal-Urge 2, Drive 1, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Leadership 3, Stealth 2, Survival 1, Computer 1, Enigmas 2, Investigation 2, Law 1, Medicine 1, Politics 2

Backgrounds: Resources 3, Allies 1, Contacts 4

Gifts: Smell of Man, The Falling Touch, Fatal Flaw, Paralyzing Stare, True Fear, Stare-down

Rage 6, Gnosis 4, Willpower 8

Rank: 2 (3)

Image: Victor is a broad man in his late thirties. He always has a serious look on his face, as he has a job to do. He has a bushy mustache. In wolf form, he is large and imposing, with uniform grey fur.

Background: Victor is a Glass Walker from New York who Gretchen met and hired while on business. He has excellent managerial skills. What the others have yet to discover, however, is that he is actually a Shadow Lord, attempting to get some "dirt" on the Foundation that would help his tribe's case against the Pure Heart Sept.

Harry MacReady

Position: Orderly/Nurse

Breed: Homid

Tribe: Fianna

Auspice: Ahroun

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 3, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Empathy 1, Intimidation 2, Primal-Urge 3, Animal Ken 2, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Stealth 2, Medicine 1

Backgrounds: Allies 2

Gifts: Persuasion, Razor Claws, Resist Toxin, Inspiration
Rage 5, Gnosis 3, Willpower 5

Rank: 1

Image: A large man with a hearty smile and a firm handshake. He has strawberry-blond hair and beard stubble. He usually wears t-shirts. As a wolf, he has yellowish fur and a fine physique.

Background: A kind and friendly guy, but with well-honed fighting skills. He is a Fianna Ahroun.

Dan Skyseeker

Position: Orderly/Nurse

Breed: Homid

Tribe: Wendigo

Auspice: Ahroun

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Intimidation 3, Primal-Urge 4, Animal Ken 2, Drive 1, Firearms 1, Melee 1, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Medicine 1

Backgrounds: Kinfolk 3, Allies 2

Gifts: Persuasion, Razor Claws, Call the Breeze, Camouflage
Rage 6, Gnosis 4, Willpower 6

Rank: 1

Image: A somewhat stern-looking man in his twenties, Dan is a Native American. He wears vests and long-sleeve shirts, sometimes adorned with bead-work. His black hair falls well below his shoulders. As a wolf, he has long black hair that turns to grey on his extremities.

Background: A somewhat cynical but loyal Wendigo Ahroun.

Lucius

Position: Scout

Breed: Homid

Tribe: Silent Strider

Auspice: Philodox

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Expression 2, Primal-Urge 2, Animal Ken 2, Drive 4, Firearms 3, Melee 2, Leadership 1, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Computer 2, Enigmas 2, Investigation 4, Linguistics 2, Medicine 1, Rituals 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 5

Gifts: Smell of Man, Scent of the True Form, Speed of Thought, Blissful Ignorance, Messenger's Fortitude, Adaptation
Rage 3, Gnosis 7, Willpower 6

Rank: 3

Image: A quiet but intense man in his late-twenties. Lucius wears a jeans jacket and pants. He looks like an outdoorsman, and his face shows years of hard living before his First Change. As a wolf, he appears more like a coyote, thin and shirt-haired with long ears.

Background: Lucius endured the first years of his Change alone. Gretchen found him and aided his entry into the Pure Heart Sept. He has been extremely grateful, and currently goes on long-range scouting missions across the continent, searching for Lunatics.

Kanak-tale

Position: Scout

Breed: Lupus

Tribe: Silent Strider

Auspice: Galliard

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Primal-Urge 4, Animal Ken 4, Drive 1, Melee 1, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Investigation 2, Medicine 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 2

Gifts: Speed of Thought, Heightened Senses, Beast Speech
Rage 5, Gnosis 5, Willpower 6

Rank: 1

Image: A black wolf with silver markings along the sides. Kanak-talé almost never assumes Homid form.

Background: Kanak-talé is in love with Leslie Thomas, though the love is of course unrequited. He now scouts among the wolves for Lunatics, to please his true love.

Antagonists

Orson Gravely (Graveseeker)

Breed: Homid

Tribe: Bone Gnawers

Auspice: see below

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Expression 2, Intimidation 2, Primal-Urge 2, Subterfuge 2, Performance 2, Stealth 3, Enigmas 2, Occult 2

Backgrounds: none

Gifts: Spirit Speech, Persuasion, Staredown, Sight From Beyond, Command Spirit, Exorcism, Umbral Sight, Spirit Drain, Spirit Ward; Bone Gnawer gifts: Scent of Sweet Honey, Blissful Ignorance; Grasp the Beyond (see below)

Rage 9, Gnosis 8, Willpower 5

Rank: 4

Renown: Glory, Honor, Wisdom

Personalities: One for each moon phase:

New Moon: Oswald, a giggly child of thirteen. Malicious. Subterfuge +2

Crescent Moon: Graveseeker, a powerful Theurge. When not in command of the body, Graveseeker can split off and travel the Umbra as a spirit; thus Orson can be in two places at once. Orson has kept this personality secret. Valkenburg knows its there, but has not "extracted" it yet, allowing Graveseeker to travel the Umbra freely. Enigmas +3, Rituals 5, Occult +3

Graveseeker has a special, rare fourth level Theurge Gift: Grasp the Beyond. This allows him to take things from the Umbra without having to step sideways. He can also put things into the Umbra. Graveseeker has a stash of odd items that he keeps in the Umbra near him, such as his wolfsbane from Story One. He must spend one Willpower point to grasp hand-held objects (stones, knives), two for larger objects (swords), and three for huge objects (an unconscious Garou). Fetishes can resist with their Gnosis versus the grasper's Willpower.

Half Moon: Oliver, a stern and harsh disciplinarian. Leadership 4

Gibbous Moon: Ohna, an emotional and expressive young man. He will be extreme in all his behavior and is quite persuasive. Charisma +2, Expression +2, Performance +2

Full Moon: Orson himself, the most dominant personality in the body. The personality of Graveseeker's rage given form. Orson bullies the other personalities. This is his most common, and angry, face. Athletics +2, Brawl +2, Dodge +1, Intimidation +3, Primal Urge +2

Image: In Homid form, Orson is a slightly-built man in his early forties. His eyes, however, are piercing, staring from their cavernous sockets. His eyebrow grow together in a bushy tangle. In wolf form, Orson has a startling silver-furred pattern up and down his black-furred back. The pattern seems to form meaningless runic writings.

Background: Orson was once Graveseeker, a powerful and high-ranked Theurge of the Sept of the Green, in Central Park, New York City. Following an ominous vision, he traveled to the Deep Umbra and there met the source of his current madness.

The Wounded Bird of his vision was a sign of the Defiler Wurm, whose machinations run so deep into New York City that they gravely threaten the sept there. By following the bird to its source, Graveseeker encountered the Wurm of Corruption itself. His mind could not survive the encounter and was shattered into different shards, his moon personalities.

While he cowered on the ground, the Puppeteers came to him, whispering of their plan and his part in it. This new purpose, no matter how corrupt and foul, was the only shred of meaning left to Graveseeker, so he grasped it heartily and rebuilt a core of sanity around it. Now, he serves the Puppeteers in their plot to corrupt Valkenburg.

Note: If there are no Bone Gnawers in the characters' sept, then simply change Orson's tribe to one which will fit, by changing his Bone Gnawer gifts to that of another tribe.

The Puppeteers

Rage 5, Willpower 5, Gnosis 9, Power 40

Charms: Possession, Ignore Call (Power cost: 3; the Bane can choose not to respond to the Gift: Call of the Wurm), Cloak of Ignorance (Power cost: 5/week; the Bane, while in possession of a body, can hide the fact of its corruption from Sense Wurm, Sense the Unnatural, Detect Spirit and Scent of the True Form. While using this Charm, the Bane may not manifest characteristics in the possessed, such as those the fomori have), Steal Essence (Power cost: 1; the Bane can make a Gnosis roll versus a possessed target's Gnosis. If successful, the Bane can "steal" temporary Gnosis points to recharge its Power, point for point, one for every success made on the roll. This can only be used once per week).

Image: Puppeteers look like large spider monkeys made from shadow. They have unsettling, glowing orbs for eyes. When they have possessed someone, they bear a piece of that person's soul for the duration of the possession. That person's face can be seen as a ghostly image on the Puppeteer's chest.

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VOLUME 1

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