



*A Sourcebook for Werewolf: The Apocalypse™  
Tribebook 9*



# TWILIGHT RUNNING




DAMN! GOOD AND CORNERED . . .  
GOT TO BREAK FOR THE UMBRA!  
**SHE'LL** BE WAITING, OF COURSE. IS IT WORTH IT?  
MAYBE IF I . . .  
WHAT AM I THINKING? BETTER HER THAN THEM!  
I'M **THROUGH!**


STORY BY ETHAN SKEMP

ART BY STEVE PRESCOTT





SET'S TEETH, I WAS ALMOST THROUGH PITTSBURGH, TOO. I SUPPOSE THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR TRUSTING ONE OF THOUSAND-TALES' SHORTCUTS.



WELL, I HAVEN'T LOST TOO MUCH TIME. BETTER MOVE QUICKLY. AT LEAST I'M GOOD AT THAT.



PLEASE... PLEASE LIZZEN TO ME...



WAAH!!

PLEEAAZZE...



LET GO!

NO... WAIT...

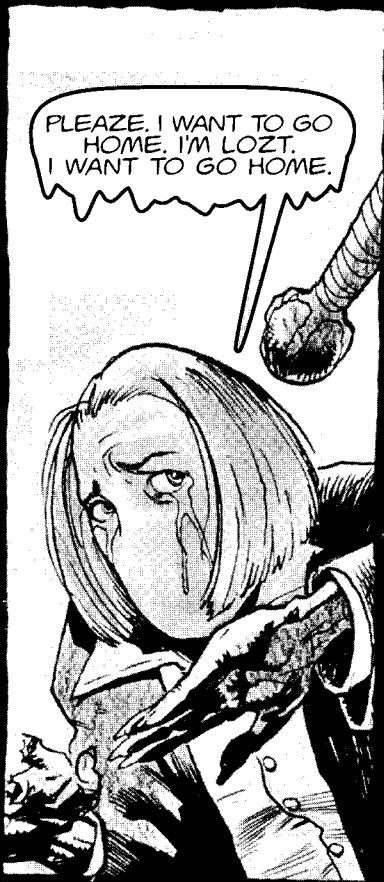


YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN HEAR ME. PLEASE, I NEED...



HOW DOES SHE SURVIVE IN THE PENUMBRA? IS SHE SOMEHOW LINKED TO ME?

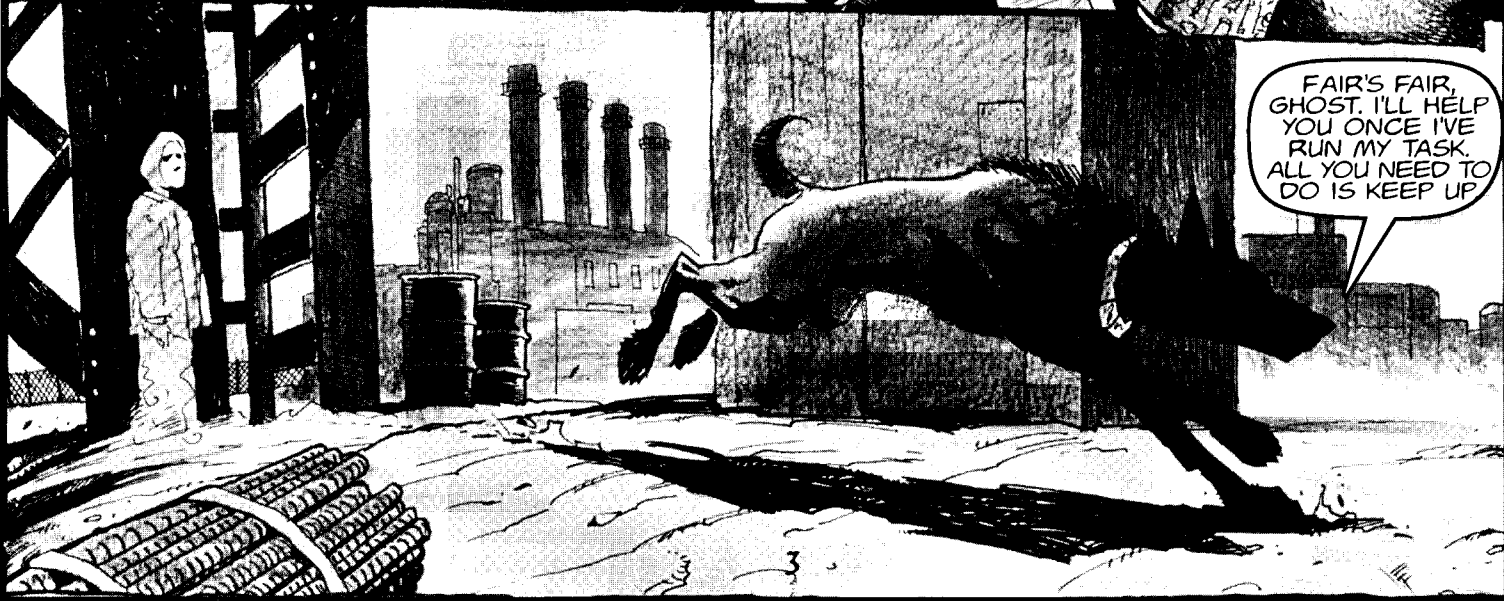
GET HELP FROM YOUR OWN KIND, GHOST. I'M NEEDED BY MY OWN KIN.



PLEASE, I WANT TO GO HOME. I'M LOZT. I WANT TO GO HOME.

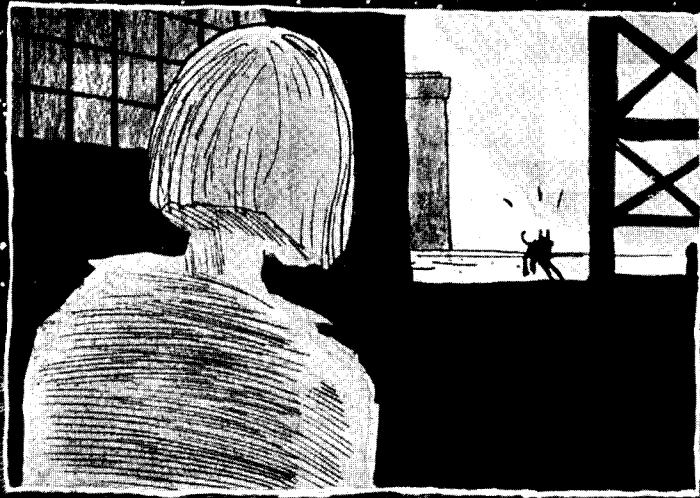


DON'T WE ALL.



FAIR'S FAIR, GHOST. I'LL HELP YOU ONCE I'VE RUN MY TASK. ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS KEEP UP.





WHAT IN  
GAIAS...?!





EASY, YOU'RE SEPT OF THE CHANGING SEASONS, YES?



MAYBE... WHO WANTS TO KNOW?

NAME'S MEPHI FASTER-THAN-DEATH. GOT A MESSAGE FOR YOUR CAERN WARDER.



TRUST ME, HEART-OF-THE-TRILLIUM WANTS TO KNOW WHAT'S ON THIS SCROLL.



Hrrr... What Umbral paths did you travel? You have a strange feel to you.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.



2 DAYS LATER ...

THE DARK UMBRA. I'D GIVE ANYTHING NOT TO HAVE TO BE HERE.

THIS? THIS IS WHERE YOU WORKED?

YEZ. AN EXPLOZION...

DON'T KNOW. NEED SOMETHING FIRZT...

I GET THE IDEA. SO WHY CAN'T YOU GO HOME?

**Roarrrrrhhhh**

HELL!





I DON'T KNOW  
WHAT YOU  
ARE...

AND I DON'T  
CARE!  
DIE, DAMN YOU!



IF IT'S NOT ONE  
THING...  
I HATE THIS PART OF  
THE UMBRA.



AAH!

WHAT  
NOW?



YEZ! I REMEMBER!  
THIZ IZ IT! BLEZZ  
YOU!



SO, ARE  
YOU FREE  
YET?

YEZ.  
MOZTLY.

POLICE LINE DO NOT  
CROSS





YES? WHO ARE YOU?



GLAD THAT'S OVER WITH. I'M SWEARING OFF UMBRA-JUMPING FOR THE NEXT MONTH. TOO MUCH TRAFFIC.

HEY, WHAT DO YOU MEAN? HOW DID YOU KNOW EMILY? WAIT!!!

MR. YOST? I TALKED TO EMILY NOT TOO LONG AGO. SHE LOVED YOU VERY MUCH.





# SILENT SCRIDERS™

C R I M E B O O K



*The Long and Haunted Road*

*By Ethan Skemp and Robert Hatch*



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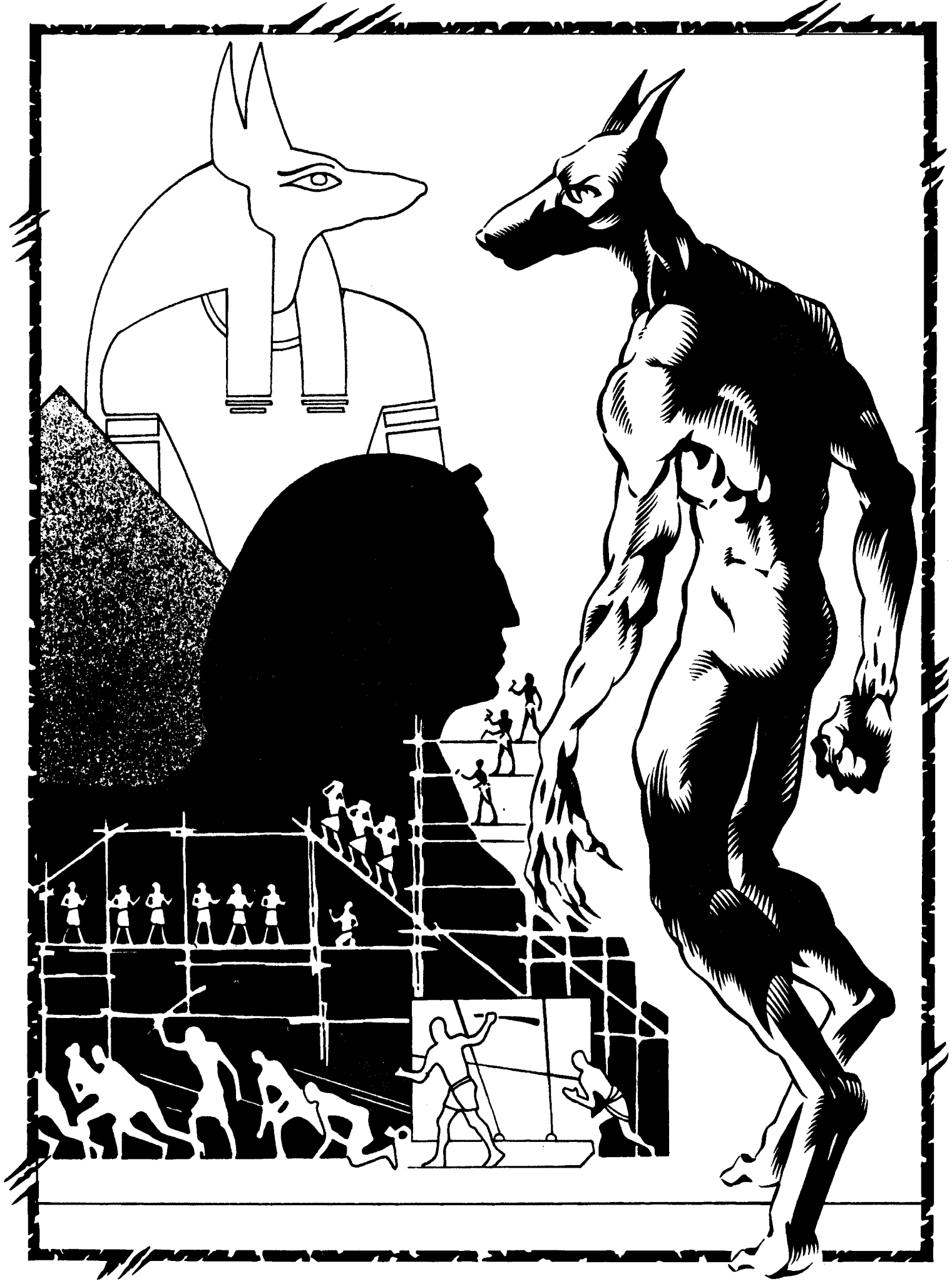
# SILENT STRIDERS™

## CAREER BOOK

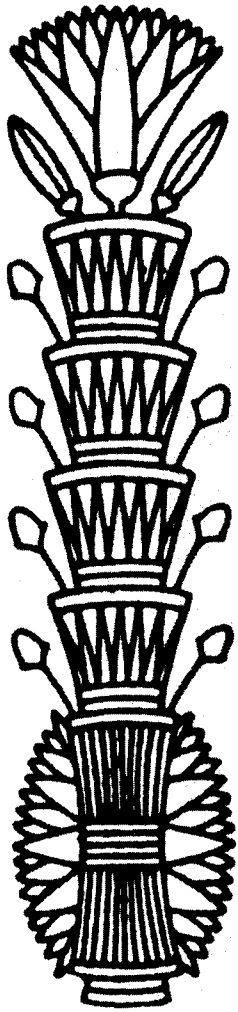
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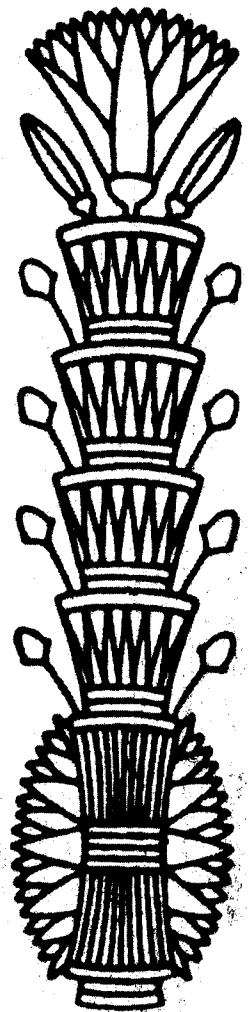








# Introduction: First Steps



*Wealth I ask not, hope nor love,  
Nore a friend to know me;  
All I ask, the heaven above  
And the road below me.*

— Robert Louis Stevenson, *Songs of Travel*

Well, so you finally caught up with me! Good. That's always been my hope for you, young cub. Let me tell you, you aren't done walking yet.

Some elders told you what to do, eh? And then they told you not to do it. Any Silesian riders know their caern? There's a lot to learn, cub. Well, then I suppose your elders left up to me to talk with you. I'm walking, though I had a drink or two before you started chasing after me.

Look around. You see the pines stretching over the road, the brown water in the ditches, the gravel holding the road dirt down, the rail fence over there? Take a good look. This is your inheritance. Not these lands, not that stand of trees over there — the sky and the roads, that's what your sire and dam left you. Open sky above and dirt road below. Take

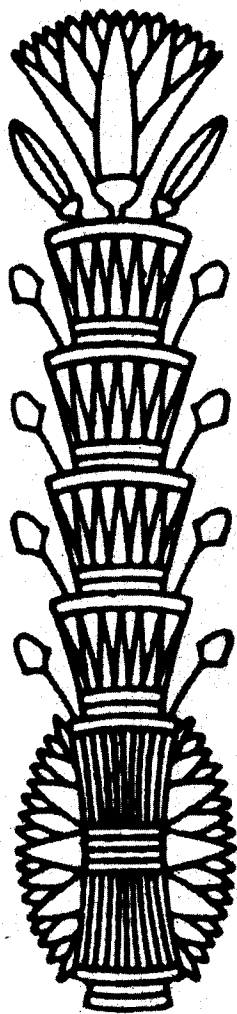
a deep breath now, because not all roads are as pleasant as this one. But they're yours regardless, whether you want them or not.

Once night falls, it'll turn into a different sight entirely, too. Luna watches over you from above, but her light'll stretch the shadows out until you see Samori under every tree. They did teach you about Samori before they sent you after me, didn't they? Thank Gaia for small favors.

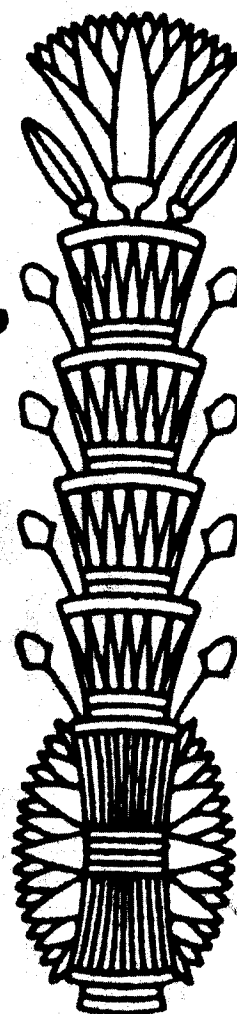
Once it becomes night, we'll do our walking on wolf paws. Human senses just can't cope with the road in darkness. We can also run faster that way, and believe you me, we very well might have to. Let your hackles down, cub, I never called you afraid. But somewhere along the road, you probably will be.







# Chapter One: Dust



*Teach him what has been said in the past; then he will set a good example to the children of the magistrates, and judgment and exactitude shall enter into him. Speak to him, for there is none born wise.*

— Prahhorpe, *The Maxims of Ptahhorpe*

Thirsty already? I could use a drink myself. Come on, there's a stream about half a mile up ahead. We'll run.

Stop your complaining and pick up your paws! We'll rest when we're there!

## *Beginnings*

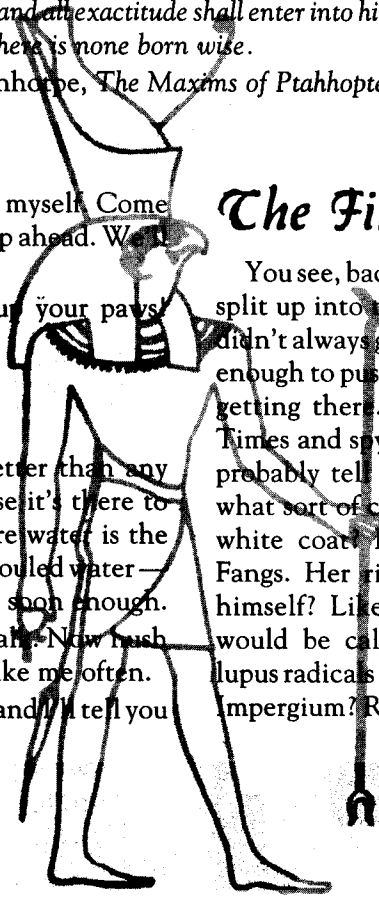
Ahh. It tastes good, doesn't it? Better than any water you'll draw out of a tap, because it's there to quench you after you've traveled. Pure water is the surest sign of Gaia's love that I know. Fouled water—well, that'll put you in a killing mood soon enough.


All right, now I'm in the mood to talk. Now hush up and listen, for the urge doesn't strike me often.

Sit and cool your feet in the stream, and I'll tell you the first Strider story.

## *The First Descent*

You see, back in the oldest times, the Garou hadn't split up into tribes yet. We were all one, even if we didn't always get along. Our differences weren't great enough to push us apart into tribes just yet, but it was getting there. If you could walk back to the First Times and spy on a moot of those Garou, you could probably tell a thing or two about who would sire what sort of cubs. The eloquent moot leader with a white coat. Probably a foremother of the Silver Fangs. Her rival, the intense Ahroun keeping to himself? Likely his six-times-great-grandchildren would be calling themselves Shadow Lords. The lupus radicals howling their arguments in favor of the Impergium? Red Talons-to-be, to be certain.





Now, the world wasn't always as we know it. Once matter and spirit were one — no Gauntlet, no Umbra, just one world where death was nonexistent and to name something was to define it. Then the Severing came. Some say when the Wyrms turned from balance to corruption, its pained thrashings tore the worlds of matter and spirit apart. Others say the Wyrms caused the Severing the instant it was born. According to our tales, however, the Severing came toward the end of the Impergium. We still aren't sure what caused it. But no matter what the explanation, everything was changed. It took the Garou a bit to adapt, but they did.

Well, back then death was still a fairly new thing to the world. Nobody really understood it all that well, but they knew it was a natural thing, and that was good enough for them. For most of them, anyway.

Before the Severing, you see, if something was destroyed it could simply rebuild itself. Desire and form were one and the same. But with the rise of the Gauntlet, a dead Garou was gone forever, after a fashion. You can probably imagine the mourning that came after the first battles with the Wyrms. Parents and children were gone, their bodies inert matter. The Theurges were only taking their first steps in the Umbra as we know it, and they had no idea where Garou spirits went after death. Why would the spirit of a mother abandon her cub?

One Garou asked all these questions, and refused to stop asking them. The elders didn't know the answers; the humans and wolves were even more ignorant. She made up her mind that the Severing had made the world very confusing, and that the spirits of the departed were just lost. With that, she made up her mind to go find them and lead them back.

She left her pack behind, and walked into the woods. She walked for a long time in the physical world, and then she walked for a long time in the Umbra. Finally, she sat and rested under a spreading tree, and an owl came and rested in the tree's branches.

"Where do you travel, daughter?" the owl asked. "There are many new roads in the world, and surely you do not seek to walk down them all."

"No, owl," she replied. "I am looking for the spirits of my parents, who have been lost since they went for a walk with that newcomer that the elders have named Death."

"Ah!" cried the owl. "Why, I have seen them. But they walked down the darkest road of all, and have not returned."



"Well," she said, standing up, "I must go and find them, then, and lead them back. Can you tell me the way, owl?"

The owl ruffled his feathers, and replied, "I can. But you are likely to become lost, for you cannot see in the dark as well as I do."

The young Garou shrugged. "Perhaps so," she said, "but neither can my parents. Please tell me which way they traveled, owl, for I miss them and want to see them again."

"You are a stubborn one," complained the owl. "If you still feel you must follow them, then I will go with you to show you the way." And with that, he took flight.

The young Garou thanked the owl, which is proper and polite, and set out after him. He was a swift flyer, however, and it was all she could do to keep up. She took the wolf form for speed, and still she had to run as quick as possible to keep the owl in view. It was a long, tiring run, and as they turned onto the darkest road, she had been stretched out long and lean.

Now, the road the owl had guided her to was unlike any road in the new-formed Umbra. It led down and down, and as she walked along it, the countryside she passed was leached paler and paler, until there was no color in it at all. The only color she could see was the burning yellow of the owl's eyes. But she kept on down that road until they came to a great gate made from a dark, glassy stone. There the owl rested on a gate pillar, and she made to open the gate.

The gate was locked, however, and a great black spirit arose from the ground as she touched the handle. In a voice like a rockslide in a hollow well, it demanded to know her business.

"I have come to find the lost spirits of my people's families," she replied. "You must undo this gate, for it likely confuses them and prevents them from returning to us."

The great midnight spirit laughed, and asked, "Why must I do that? They have died unready, and have brought nothing to appease me. What will you offer to persuade me to open this gate?"

The young Garou quietly opened her chest and drew forth her heart. Amazed, the spirit dropped to its knees before her and took the heart in its hands. Its tongue carefully flicked over the still-beating heart, tasting its virtue. Finally, the great black spirit shook its head and placed her heart back in her chest, closing her skin back as if new.

"Your heart tastes of life, young one," it sighed. "It is a taste I rarely sample, and it is far too rich for me. I will open the gates for a short time, and those who wish to follow you home may do so. However, I must close the gates again, so they had best be quick."

With that, he opened the gate wide, shouting, "Run! Those of you who would see the sunlit world again, run!" The owl took wing as well, crying, "Run, young Garou! If you would lead your kin home, run!" And so she ran, and as she ran back up the darkest road, she felt the presence of spirits at her back.

But when she reached the physical world again, she was almost alone. Most of the human spirits had been afraid, and never passed through the gate. A few did run with her, but couldn't keep up. These were stranded between one world and the other, and became the first wraiths.

The Garou spirits that followed, however, kept up. Among them was her father, who said, "We cannot stay long, child. The rules are no longer the same, and Gaia will be angry if we defy Her will. But your courage has showed us the way back here. Now, should you call, we will return to advise you for a short time. And so shall you return to advise your descendants, and so on until the End Times."

And just as he had promised, the Garou spirits ran from the Umbra to the young seeker's caern, laughing and calling to their children. But the young Garou who had brought them back only walked quietly after them. Some of her people were startled to see her, for her travels on that road had stretched her lean and strong, and the Dark Umbra had stained her coat a deep black. From that day, she spoke little of what she had seen. And yet she would often return to that one tree in the Umbra, and Owl would come and rest in the branches, and they would talk.

## The Impergium

Ahhhh. This water feels damn fine, doesn't it? Tell you what, since I'm feeling so flat-out chatty, I might as well pass on a little more of our history.

Have they told you of the Impergium yet? Some tribes look on it as the glory days of the Garou, the time when all was right with Gaia. Never mind that the Wyrms had already uncoiled and sunk its fangs into our hearts. No, what mattered back then was that the humans knew their place. And if you listen to the Talons, the Impergium was a failure because we didn't take it far enough and exterminate our human kin!



Here. Just close your eyes and think about it. Let's say that there's a small camp of humans, with ragged skin tents and some meager, smoky fires. Their best spears are made of sharp flint strapped to the straightest wood they can find. Now let's say that one of the young women has just given birth to twins. Twins! Why, they celebrate that sort of thing these days, don't they? Imagine how proud your sept would be now if you walked back to the caern one evening with twins in your arms — Kinfolk, or maybe even Garou.

Oh, it wasn't cause for celebration during the Impergium. That was a sign that the humans were getting just a little too fertile. Sure enough, a Garou would have to see that one of the humans died. Maybe one of the newborns — that would be fair, wouldn't it? Maybe one of the clan elders — why not kill the firemaker? That should keep them in their place. As long as you're at it, why not kill the mother of the twins for the crime of making too many

humans? Or her mate, one of the clan's most promising hunters?

Now I won't lie to you and say that the Impergium was something unnatural or wrong to Gaia. Not on its own terms, it wasn't. Spending some time in the wild should teach you that well enough. Look at the way the lions and hyenas of Africa go to war. They kill one another's cubs out of spite easily enough. And yet both species have lasted for years on top of years. It's hateful, cruel business, but it's the way things are.

No, what was unforgivable about the Impergium was the sheer idiocy of such a practice. Not just idiocy, but hypocrisy! Did we cull the wolves to make sure they wouldn't run amok and someday tear Gaia apart? No. We lived among them, guided them, helped them. And all the while we battered and abused the other half of our kin, the humans. Actually, I shouldn't say "we" — even back then, our thousand-times-great-grandparents saw the foolish-



ness in the killings. Why were the Garou so surprised when our abused cousins became abusive? We hardened their hearts, set them against their Mother and her animal children. We raised the Veil, unknowingly destroying our chances of ever being able to fully share a world. In their Rage, the Garou of so long ago made a terrible mistake. And now our Mother suffers from our error.

Come on, let's get walking again.

## *The War of Rage*

As long as I'm opening old wounds, I might as well tell you of our other great failing. When we appointed ourselves humanity's keepers, we set ourselves above all other sons and daughters of Gaia. Not all skin-changers wore the pelts of wolves, you see. We knew of the Children of Cat, Cobra and Crocodile — there were others, too. But pride told us that we were first in the eyes of Gaia, and in our pride we fell on our shapeshifting siblings.

Of course, we had the advantage of numbers. After all, Gaia had crafted us to be her warriors — it was

only natural that we'd win a full-scale war against the others. Our Changing Breed cousins were all but exterminated, and only a few survived. These days, we know that at least three races have died out completely. Funny how it wasn't them who started the War, isn't it?

Anyway, once both the Impergium and the War of Rage had ended, the tribes split. Everybody was bitter as hell about the way things had worked out. So groups of like-minded Garou each selected a territory or human culture to watch over, and went their separate ways. As for us, we selected a just-beginning-to-blossom group of humans, a newborn civilization that lived along a great river.

## *The Land of Khem*

Egypt.

Now, be patient, listen to my ramblings, and you'll learn something.

It's a hard thing, remembering how it was thousands of years ago, but we remember anyway. Egypt





was ours. Even if we forget the details, the whys and whats, Ibis is always able to remind us.

Too many times, I've heard thoughtless humans or even Garou scoff at the land that was once ours. Desert, they think, and promptly dismiss Egypt as a homeland worth having. They don't know anything. Our homeland was a fertile strip of vibrant green between the great red deserts. Red and green — that's what we still say where others mean "black and white." The green was ours, but we also walked freely in the deserts. The sands were the place of spirits, Set's place. You recognize his name? God of darkness, they called him. It wasn't too far from the truth.

But I'm getting ahead of myself.

The Egyptians were a culture fascinated with death, true. Some of that was our influence. Once the Impergium had ended, we freely walked among the people of the Nile. We were careful not to rend the Veil, but our Kinfolk knew, and many others remembered the killing nights. Look at the paintings of Anpw and Heru, the beast-headed gods. You don't recognize the names? Hmph. In Greek they came to be known as Anubis and Horus. Ah, now you know who I'm talking about. You see, some spirits remember the old names of the gods, and many Seekers have delved into human libraries deep enough to unearth the old truths. It's hardly necessary to know the old names, but it's respectful.

Those were rich, full times. The Nile gave us the most fertile, giving land in all the deserts, and the people were full of love and vigor. Morbid? Not the people of the land of Khem! "Eat, drink and make merry, for tomorrow we shall die" — that was Egyptian philosophy, cub. They invented the phrase! You see, they figured that the Duat, the underworld, was a green place. So if you worked hard, played hard, and went to your judgement with *ma'at* in your heart, then you were sure to spend eternity as happy as you were in life.

Damn. If only.

Well, we've seen the Shadowlands of the dead. For most folk, it's a far cry from what the Egyptians called the Duat. But the underworld's a big place, and Anpw and Tehuti's court may still exist somewhere down there. That's why we have to keep to *ma'at*.

I can already hear your question: What's *ma'at*? All right, listen closely. *Ma'at* is all things true, just and balanced. It's the force that our Philodoxes strive for, the law tempered in justice. It's many things, just as the ankh is many things as well as life. *Ma'at* is part of your heart, the purity of soul that all Garou should



pursue. You see, once the Wyrms themselves were a force for *ma'at*. But with its turn to corruption, the job fell to us Garou. Do you see?

Here, think about this old legend. A man dies, and prepares to enter the Duat. Anpw takes him by the hand, and escorts him to the hall of Maati, where the dead man is judged. If his heart is light and pure as the feather of *ma'at*, he is worthy and may pass on. If not, he's cast to a soul-devouring beast.

A clever metaphor, isn't it? We Garou were appointed by Gaia to shepherd the humans, to teach them. If they don't learn the ways of *ma'at*, then the Wyrms devour them forever. Now, the problem is that our fellow tribes, even our tribesmates, are falling from the grace of *ma'at*. If they don't learn otherwise soon, they'll be lost. That's why we Striders travel among them, reminding them of what they're meant to do. We could be more successful, too, if we hadn't been split and scattered by the false gods, the ancient vampires of Egypt.

## Set and Osiris

Our undoing always comes back to these two. Ancient and terrible, they were, and if only we'd slain them when we'd first met! For these two, I prefer the Greek words — keeps things simple, and they don't deserve the respect of the true names. Osiris and Set. Damn them both to Atrocity, they were the ones who cast us out.

Set was the lord of the desert, the red king of Upper Egypt. Osiris was master of the delta, Lower Egypt. Now the two of them hated each other for any number of reasons. For one, both wanted control of the whole country. But most important was that Osiris was an ascetic, which was highly uncommon in those days. He hated the corrupt part of being a vampire, and all the temptations thereof. Naturally, Set represented everything he despised — red and green, like I said. So the two went to war, with all their cold-fleshed minions for soldiers.

We didn't much care for either side — would you want a Leech reigning over your land? But of the two, Set stank far worse of the Wyrms' fetid touch. So we slew the children of Set when we encountered them, and picked off the occasional follower of Osiris. After all, we reasoned, when one was destroyed and the other weakened, we would be able to drive the survivor from our lands. We also learned of the mummies during the war. No, not bandage-wrapped lurching corpses, but immortals created by ancient

ritual. One such was Horus (not Heru, mind), an ally of Osiris and his sorceress wife. When Osiris fell beneath Set's power, Horus took up the banner. Their midnight war lasted for thousands of years while we quietly went about our business.

Finally, Horus was driven out and Set was triumphant. Foolishly believing him weak and unprepared, we threw ourselves at him. But by this time, the Dark One had created his own bloodline of vampires, descendants that drew their power from rot and depravity. We fought hard, but it wasn't enough. Set had grown vile and strong in the long years, and he was able to beat off our attacks. While we slew his children by the hundreds, he learned the names of our greatest heroes. Names, you know, hold great power. And with that power, he doomed us all with the most powerful curse that has ever been spoken.

*"By the names I have spoken, O Lupines, I curse you. I place my mark upon you, that you shall be forever severed from thy dead fathers and mothers. I damn you with my touch, that never again shall you rest in the lands of thy people. May the names of your ancestors be forgotten, and may their ghosts fade from hunger in the Duat. As I was cast out, so then shall you be exiled, voiceless and lost forevermore."*

And that was it. Somehow Set marked us, the whole tribe, with his vast power of corruption. Not one of our ancestors has ever come to the aid of a descendant again. Some say they journeyed deep into the Umbra, and there found Ancestor-spirits of our tribe, but I don't know what to think of those tales. Personally, I don't know if I could face one of my many-times-great-grandparents. Better, I figure, that I don't feel the loss even worse than I do now.

## Scattering

Our exile marked the end of our tribe as a concentrated group. Ten thousand roads led in ten thousand directions, and so we went our separate ways.

Some of us went into Africa. There we ran with the jackals and dealt with the human tribes, but very carefully. After all, the other shapechangers still held sway in Africa, and the wounds we Garou had dealt them were still sore. The culture there was quite to our tastes, but our ancestors had to dodge a few werewolves to trade knowledge with the humans.

A few tried tracking the Croatan, Uktena and Wendigo, to see where they'd traveled. We never heard from these ones again.

Many traveled to the East, where they traded riddles with Stargazers or walked the high mountains. It's here that we met the Romani, and began our long association with them.

And some trailed the Greek invaders back to Europe. That's when we struck our first friendly relations with the Black Furies, and that's where we watched the rise of a whole new empire.

## Rome and Christendom

Too much law stifles a place. The Roman Empire was so caught up with its own self, with its glory and power, that it was hardly a fit place for us. They say Romulus was suckled by a she-wolf — well, if that was true, he would have surely wept to see what his city became. Now, we didn't avoid Rome entirely. No, there's been a Strider or two nosing about almost any human society since Egypt. But we'd be damned before we'd walk the Empire in numbers.

Even when the Christians took over Europe, the continent wasn't to our tastes. So we wandered the back roads, dealt with the local tribes and generally watched quietly from the shadows. If we had any influence at all in Europe, it only came when we returned in greater numbers with the Gypsies.

## The Gypsies

Our association with the Gypsies has nothing to do with what you might think. Their name's just that — a name. Other folk called them the Egyptians, or Gypsies for short, but the Romany had nothing to do with the land of the Nile. No, we adopted them and bred with them because we recognized kindred spirits among the humans. I'm sure you've heard the stories of how they were chosen forever, or maybe how they were blessed by the God of the Cross for stealing a Korpis. I don't know any of these stories, but I do know that the Romany were dealing with us, or if these stories are true, that our ancestors to them in the first place. My personal feeling is that they repaid us of our Egyptian riddles. After all, both groups were thoroughly devoted to enjoying themselves in this world and whatever came after. A love for life and an interest in death — the two aren't exclusive, you know. Whatever the reasons, we'd found more Kin. Our association continues even today.

And so some of us traveled with the Rom caravans into India, and back to Europe again. I think one of every four Striders that I've met over the years was

born to Gypsy parents, but that's hardly a scientific count.

Anyway, we returned to Europe in numbers (such as they were) when the Gypsies traveled there. Of course, we scattered again just as soon as we got there. Some of us took note of the Renaissance, and followed the rise of learning with interest. Others prowled around the fringes of European society, dealing with rebels and outcasts. A few even went into the bustling cities, there marking the rise of the Weaver and the faint of the Wyrm. We reestablished our feud with the vampires around this time, and more than one of us might say outright bloodshed between Garou and Leech.

## Colonialism

When the Europeans learned of a New World, it naturally caught our interest. To many, it was the promise of a new home. Surely in that vast continent there would be room for a vagrant tribe.

Not hardly. The Garou that first made the journey found that our lost cousins, the Uktena, Wendigo and Croatan, had claimed rights to the continents. Well, he choked back his disappointment and parlayed with the locals. He even made peace of a sort with them, and agreed to act as a go-between for them and the European tribes.

But then the other tribes arrived on the American coast, hungry for new territory. Sure enough, it was war again. But it was a long, slow war of attrition, one that the Pure Ones were doomed to lose. When the Croatan vanished, we were one of the few tribes to weep.

I wish I could say that we never did the Pure Ones any wrong, but it just isn't true. Many of the Wayfarers took English money and Silver Fang fetishes in return for scouting out the local caerns. A few more Striders stepped places they shouldn't have and unsealed things that should've remained sealed. That's our shame, and the rest of us are still trying to make amends for it. I hate to sound like a Child of Gaia, but we need to have the Uktena and Wendigo fighting alongside the other tribes. But when you don't travel in numbers, it's hard to be taken seriously. And so the few of us that were there could only watch as things worsened.

Even worse, it happened all over again in Australia. And this time, one of the Garou tribes was completely exterminated. I can only imagine our ancestors helplessly watching, seeing the whole story unfold again, powerless to stop it.

# A Changing World

Giving you a history lesson of the last few centuries would be ridiculously long-winded. We were everywhere, so what's to say? We saw the Gnawer Kinfolk turn the British away at Bunker Hill and were chased by the ghosts swirling around Madame Guillotine. We slipped behind Napoleon's lines, and we watched the Boxer Rebellion fail. Even if a Strider wasn't present for some great war or cultural shift, there was another one along later to sift through the spirits and learn what had happened. The Fianna pride themselves on being Garou lorekeepers, but we make it our business to know as much as possible about everything. Our knowledge is the only possession that can't be taken from us.

Of course, there were a few times and places that were of particular interest to us. And in at least one case, we're one of the few tribes who dares to remember what happened.

## The Old West

We came to the Americas in ones and twos, and most of us showed up during the 1800s. Curiosity compelled us to meet our long-lost cousins in the Pure Lands, and so we tiptoed into their territory to see how they were doing. Not so well, it turned out.

You'll never hear most tribes talk about the Old West. Truth be told, most would just as soon forget about the events of those days. Nowhere else was the fighting between European and native Garou greater. Damn few would listen to reason; no, they kept brawling over caerns and ambushing one another. Only we would pass between the sides, trying to teach them and learn from them as well.

Whew! You'd never have believed the Umbra in that place and time, either. Wyldlings went tearing across the Umbrascap, ripping into whatever Weaver or Wyrms spirits they came across. It was a stormy, furious mess. It was only the coming of the Storm Eater that got the tribes to act together as they should have. Even today, no tribe that isn't a Pure One will talk about what happened. Most were too ashamed to tell their children that they helped unleash the Storm Eater, and the secret died with them.

Now, their story isn't mine to tell, but in 1890, the Storm Eater was gone. Unfortunately, the Wyld's hold on the West was broken during the struggle. There are still wild spaces out there, but malls and convenience stores clot the land, same as everywhere

else. One Seeker I talked with once told me that in the quiet time that followed the Storm Eater's passing, Pentex itself was born. Some victory, eh?

## Into the 1900s

Let's go back to Egypt for a bit. The Victorian era and the turn of the century saw a lot of change along the Nile, not to mention the rest of North Africa. Some of us were there when the English began gutting the tombs of our ancestors, but they weren't able to stop the unearthing of the Boy Pharaoh.

The opening of Tutankhamen's tomb changed things for us. Suddenly, Egypt was popular among the Europeans and Americans. They began to flock to the Nile's banks, looking for souvenirs and photographs to carry home. Locals would dig up their ancestors, hawking the foreparents' bones to curious whites. One relic after another found its way to Britain, there to sit behind glass as sightseers wandered past. Look at the influence that Egyptian culture had on Western architecture and art of the time.

Things changed in the Dark Umbra, too. As all the interest in dead things swept the living world, the Deadlands were stirred by the new tides of sentiment. You see, the Restless are creatures of passion. It's emotion that holds them to existence, and emotion that fuels their powers. Not only that, but the Dark Umbra is just as much a reflection of the physical world as is the Middle Umbra. That's why there are places where you never want to step into the Dark Umbra. Think about the spiritual mirror-image of a battlefield or concentration camp, and what it might look like. Whatever you can imagine, the real thing is probably worse.

As you can probably guess, the First World War had a pretty strong effect on the Dark Umbra. It would be nice to say we were shocked by the level of slaughter, but a lot of Striders were just plain resigned. We'd seen our share of human wars, and this one was just as pointless as all the others. The only thing that was different was the scale.

As I was saying, there was a lot of European interest in Egypt, and it didn't slow down for some time. A lot of archaeologists, amateur and otherwise, took it upon themselves to do more digging than ever before. It was a race to see who could drag out the most ancient gold or the most unusual bones.

We took it upon ourselves to keep the bones of the dead buried. Nothing howls louder than a hungry wraith whose goods have been stolen, you see. Be-





sides, we did it out of respect for the dead. More than one ancient chief's burial curse came true, if not the way he'd expected, as his tombrobbers fell beneath Strider claws.

### *The '30s*

In the 1930s, when the Depression squatted in America, pretty much the whole world went bust. If you take a look at the pulps, you can tell that most considered this an adventurous time. Now, you already know enough about this world to realize that the "great white adventurers" weren't all they were put up to be. What do you expect? Nobody would have bought pulps based on ragtag cliques of minorities, Anglos and foreigners.

From what I understand, though, it was a strange time to be alive. Hitler's madness had already infected Germany, and the Nazis were stirring up like-minded evils from all over the globe. There was a secret revival movement among occult-minded humans, and little good was coming of it. And, of course, archaeologists kept rabidly tearing up whatever tombs they could find. The end result was that

there was a lot that needed doing, in all manner of distant places. And with our penchant for being where the action is, we had our work cut out for us.

### *World War II*

We had few enough kin at the time the Second Great War began, and fewer when it ended. Many of us heard the thunder before the storm, and stayed well clear of Europe for the war's duration. That was a mistake. Hitler's ethnic purges lashed out at the Gypsies like no other persecution of the Rom throughout history.

We had no choice: We had to go into Germany. Cub, if ever you want to know what the war was like, then step into the Umbra and wander over to Atrocity. While the Get of Fenris tore at each others' throats, we slipped into the back streets and shadows, doing what we could to get our Kinfolk out.

One or two of us made the mistake of entering the Umbra to sneak inside the concentration camps. In some places, you can still hear the echoes of the screams.

# The Apocalypse

Here's the worst part: No matter how hard our past has been, it's nothing compared to what's ahead.

Who do you think Phoenix brought the Prophecy to? Not the Fangs, no matter what they say. It wasn't the Furies, despite their claims that they're the keepers of every scrap of important mystic lore. No, it was one of the Garou that was a Strider before there were Striders. We're the keepers of the Prophecy, and have been ever since Phoenix first spoke those words a mountain's lifetime ago. We're the prophets, the oracles, the seers of the days to come.

And a long time ago, Phoenix showed one of our ancestors the Eighth Sign. The end of the final battle.

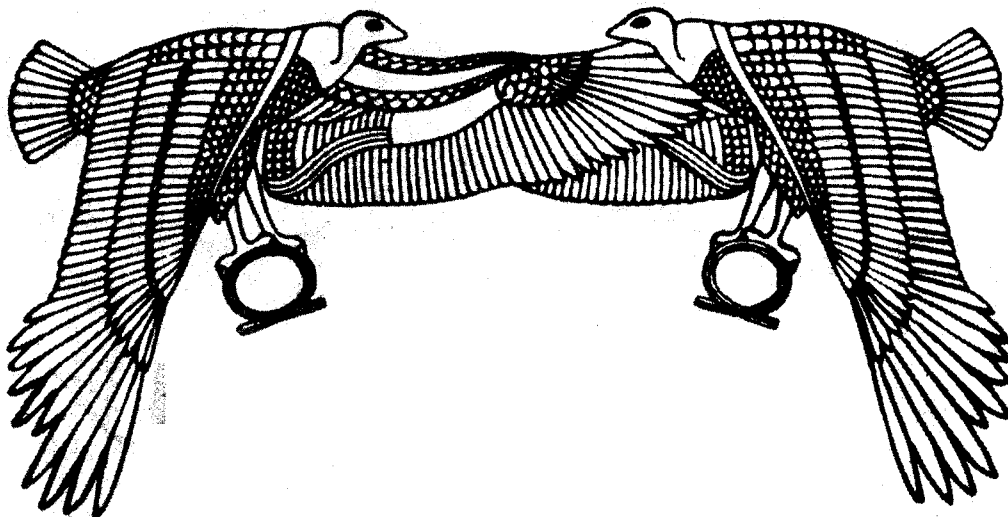
Easy there, youngling. That's not something you learn the whole of until you've walked a lot more miles than you have. I'll say this much, though: It's not pretty. In fact, it's pretty damn grim, but there's still room for a touch of hope yet. Once you've proven you can keep a secret, we'll teach you the words that we've handed down from parent to cub for centuries.

But you'd better be able to keep that secret. Can you imagine what would happen if the Get of Fenris discovered we knew the truth about Ragnarok? And if we told it to them, and they didn't like the answer? I'd bet my *d'siah* that they'd figure we were lying to them, just to lower their spirits. And you don't have to be Klaital Stargazer to figure out what would happen next.

That's why you have to be able to keep a secret. Remember, whatever truth you learn, or whatever rumor you find, you have to think carefully before you share it. *Ma'at* is a hard thing to carry, and not everybody is prepared shoulder the burden. Pick your friends carefully. Teach them to keep secrets. And keep in mind that they don't have to know everything you do.

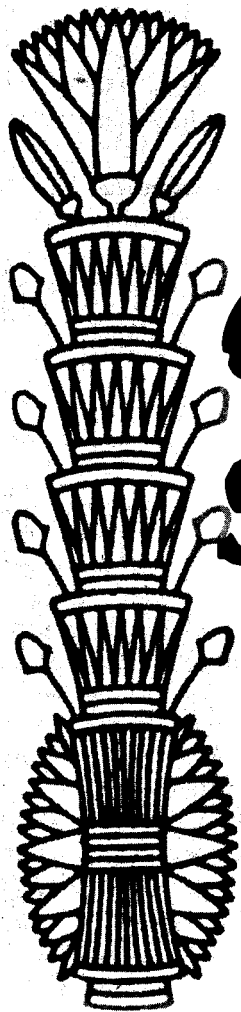
## Further Lessons

Come on then; we still have a ways to travel, and you still have a lot to hear before we set you on your own road. Enjoy it while you can — we're at our most talkative when we're instructing cubs like you. So if you miss something the first time, you'll probably have to figure out some way to learn it on your own. I hate repeating myself, and so do most of our kin. Try to keep up.

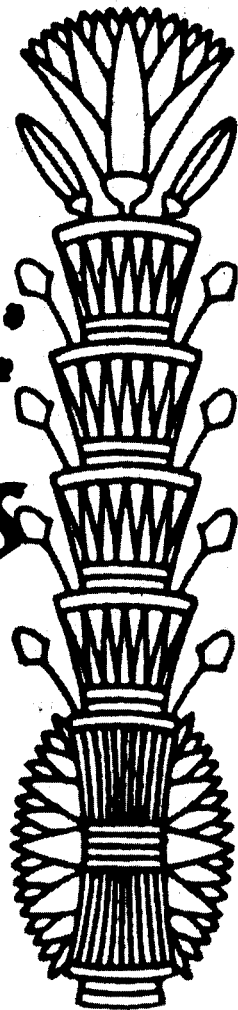








# Chapter Two: Shared Roads



*Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground.*  
— Lord Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*

You're not hallucinating, cub, that's music you hear up ahead. There's a camp of Gypsies just down the road; from what I can hear of the songs, they're Kinfolk. Sounds like they knew we were coming. I wouldn't be surprised if there are one or two other Striders just "dropping by" tonight either. It'll be good to exchange some quiet words with tribemates.

I've rambled long enough. It's time somebody else did the talking.

## Moots

*For solitude sometimes is best society,  
And short retirement urges sweet return.*  
— John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

Welcome, young one. I am Aset Spee for Many Galliard to the Silent Striders. For the past ten turns of the seasons, it has been my satisfying duty to instruct young cubs in the ways of our tribe. This is, I presume, why your elder companion has brought you here.

Do the music and dancing distract you? Would you rather be among the young ones around the fire than listening to the words of a gray-haired Garou woman? If you

would prefer, you may dance. Go and celebrate with the others, and I shall keep my dusty wisdom to myself.

No? And why not? No, don't tell me. I can already see why. You want to revel, but you feel set apart from the dancers. Although they'd let you join in, you wouldn't feel truly welcome. And not just that, either — were you to pass the evening enjoying yourself, you wouldn't get a chance to hear a few secrets.

You're a true Silent Strider, you are. This is what attending moots is often like for us, particularly moots held by a mix of tribes. While the others posture, brawl and howl to Luna, we wander from elder to elder, gathering lore and news. The Kinna would call it lonely business, but would they really welcome us to their drunken dances and wild hunts? No. We are the walkers on the outside, and the role suits us well.

Ah, but our tribal moots are an entirely different story. I have attended only three in all my years, and I am no more standoffish than the next Garou. We meet very infrequently. But when the Striders gather in numbers, it is the finest of things.

We have few caerns to call our own. Thus, most of our moots are held far from wide roads, often on a forgotten bald or remote stretch of plain. It takes a long time to gather all



the Striders in the area. Can you imagine? The only way to find most of us is by happening across one of our trails, or by chance meeting. The last moot I attended was called three years before it convened. Even then, some arrived late.

The other tribes would be astonished were they to see a Silent Strider moot. You may have noticed that we only speak freely among ourselves. Look at your guide over there, by the fire with that young man. Neither one would converse so casually with a Get of Fenris or a Wendigo. But among one another, we... well, we don't become verbose, but we do talk openly.

## Of Tales

Now if you want to listen to the finest stories of a moot, you'll have to learn something of our other languages. You see the dancer there, the one with the blue sash? Watch her carefully. She is telling a story, weaving a dance-tale. That is the *Pakiv Swatura*. The closer you watch her, the more of the story you will see. Look at her energy, her passion. She leaps as lightly as a hare, and twists as would a leaf in a dust devil. And yet every step, every gesture is a word. See? She tells of heroism and wonder, of open sky and swift running. Were the Fianna to see her, they would likely gnaw at their wrists with jealousy. You see, we are not always somber!

It looks exciting, does it not? Perhaps she will agree to teach you something of the art. Once you have the time, that is. Best learn to walk first, then to dance!

We have another custom of talesharing, but this one is much simpler. In fact, you will likely be expected to participate when you attend your first moot. If one of the Striders begins a ridiculous, comical tale, pay attention. This is the *Darane Swatura*, told simply to bring humor to a dark night. You will be expected to carry on the tale, adding to it and improving upon it. The tale only ends when all present are clutching at their sides, weeping with laughter.

It is the height of excellence to weave a true story into the *Darane Swatura*, distorting it until it is outrageously impossible and intolerably funny. Of course, it is equally admirable to tell as patently incredible a fiction as you can. And why not? With the *Darane Swatura*, we laugh at ourselves as hard as we can. We have little other time to do so.

Even a splash of color can tell volumes to another Strider. If you see a red berry stain smeared on a rock, that can mean that danger is nearby. Green is our color for safe haven and peace; blue means purity, innocence or *ma'at*. These associations are as old as our tribe, and come from our Egyptian roots. By simply wearing a scarf of a certain color, we can communicate wordlessly amongst ourselves, even at a Shadow Lord moot. Remember! Knowledge is priceless, and quiet communication is an art of the highest order.

## The Forgotten

The music's loud and fast tonight. Listen. When one fiddler tires, the next picks up the tune as quick as he can. Nobody wants to listen to the empty air between songs tonight.

No, cub, I grew accustomed to silence a long time ago. All of us have. We will you. But sometimes it is painful to gather with the tribe on a cold night. You see, our gathering can't be that we are all we have — the Striders still have the only eyes we can reach. In losing the spirits of our forebears, we have lost almost all of our past.

Whenever we gather, not one of our ancestors is with us. The air may be filled with ghosts, but they aren't kin. Set's curse saw to that. Even after millennia, we still feel the loss as a tribe. It colors even our moots. Most times we simply carry on quietly, but not always. Tonight we sing, dance and play.

## Totems

As a tribe, we have run into the Umbra more times than any other. We have also made many allies there. As a Silent Strider, you may well walk under the blessings of many different totems in your day. While you are young and strong, you are a fine child of War, appearing from nowhere to cut at your enemies and then vanishing again. Once you have trod many lands, then perhaps your focus shall shift. With maturity comes Respect, and the example you set may guide those who watch you run. True Wisdom will come when you are honed by experience.

But who am I to name the direction in which your paws will take you? The spirit allies of our tribe know you as well as you know yourself. Look within, and your totem will meet your gaze.

## Owl

Great Owl is a most selective guardian, and admits only the wisest into his broods. Is it any wonder that we have access to secrets of which even the Stargazers and Uktena know nothing?

We are as one with Owl because that is the way things should be. Tell me, do you know of any bird that flies more silently, or sees more in the shadows? Owl knows the way of death and the Dark Umbra; his wisdom has guided those of us who have walked the paths of the Underworld. His eyes reflect all things, and yet he keeps counsel with a few. He is master of the night and the things that run through it.

My first pack ran under Owl's protective wings. He lent us his eyes, and I saw countless things I would not have otherwise seen. He lent us his quiet, and I ran swift as lightning, the sounds of my passing as soft as a lazy snowfall.

And he lent us his wings, and in the Umbra, I flew. Now I serve a different totem, but I am still a Silent Strider. My heart will always be dedicated to Owl, and I shall always remember.

## Ibis

Ibis is a wise and perceptive bird, and he remembers much. We remember his old name of Tehuti, and he graces us with his stories of the past. Ibis holds the power of memory, which he shares with Crocodile, and holds the power of *maat*. Ibis grants us long memories and strong minds; his wings spread over our thoughts and lend them strength. Many Seekers pay homage to Ibis, and he will never let them forget their knowledge.

## Crocodile

Even we have our Totems of War. Our greatest is Crocodile, the lord of the rivers. Crocodile counsels us to wait and bide most quietly, but his anger is pure and terrible. He enjoys being called Sebek, as it is by this name that our ancestors and their Kin knew him. Crocodile has a long memory, and remembers any slights done to him or his children. Although other Goraun may disdain you if you ally yourself with him, you may find you have other allies of a most... unusual cut.

## Scarab

There is power in knowledge, and therefore those who learn many ways are greater for their learning. Scarab teaches patience, a wise lesson for any of our kind. She is a builder, and at the same time her tunnels can bring down fortresses. Always the key is patience. If you choose to follow Kheptra the Scarab, she will lend you such quiet diligence that no knot nor maze will hinder you.

## Sphinx

We Striders speak with Totems of Wisdom even more enigmatic than Owl or Ibis. One such is Sphinx.

Some years ago in Mexico, my pack was pursued by Black Spiral Dancers. We slipped into the Umbra and scattered, the better to avoid our enemies. I myself ran deep into the spirit world, pausing neither for food nor rest. I had no idea where I ran — to this day, I could not show you the paths I took. Finally, I came upon a scene from the land of Khem itself.

Faceless humans toiled in the fields. Chariot-soldiers brandished reeds at one another, while spears sprouted from the riverbanks. The sun shone with cold light, while the moon burned with fire. Then I saw a lion, with the face of a human neither man nor woman. Its gaze fell on me, and a question sounded in my mind. "Are you lost, cub?"



I awoke in the physical world, curled inside a forgotten caern of the Uktena. The rest of my pack lay around me, still asleep. I have been Sphinx's child ever since.

## Tsetse Fly

Each tribe has its lost and angry. And although most of us spend our Rage in the full and furious way that Gaia intended, a few bottle it up. These ones wither away to mere skins covering hate and maliciousness, almost as bad as the Wyrms-dancers we fight against.

The bitter ones sometimes call on Tsetse Fly. She's a wise old totem, but she's spiteful. She embraces the Striders that turn to her as if they were her grandchildren, as any totem should. But she makes for a horrible, vindictive crone of a grandmother. If anyone crosses one of her adopted kin, she demands that her young ones repay the offender in blood. Tsetse Fly may not be of the Wyrms, but she's not a clean one. Best to avoid her and her grandchildren, lest you wind up with a curse on your back simply for failing to say "good evening" in a properly fawning tone.

Well, I've spoken my piece. Excuse me — I believe I'll dance for a bit now.

## Solitude in Numbers

Hey, cub, you waiting for Aset to get back? Don't bother; she's pretty much done. Talking, at least.

Name's Lerli Moonless-Sky. Sit back, relax, I won't bite you. Your traveling companion asked me to stop by and have a few words with you. Always good to get more than one perspective, you know. Besides, any one of us can only talk for so long without getting antsy. Hope there's room in that head for some more learning tonight, because I'm not staying with you to answer more questions tomorrow morning.

Well, what do you know? You're an attentive one! Good. Now, pass me a beer from that ice chest, and I'll share some of what I've learned.

## Kinfolk

Well, as you can see from our celebration here, even we have Kinfolk. But our Kin are a lot fewer and farther between than those of the other tribes. We are related to so many bloodlines, so many ethnicities, you see — from Arab and African to Indian and the rare Anglo. No Strider could possibly keep track of all our blood relations, but we do our best to remember who's wandering where.

And I do mean wandering! Our Kin are circus performers, vagabonds, nomads, grifters... our wandering habits rub right off on them. At least we have something in common. In fact, the best thing about circus Kin is that they often keep wolves with them, as part of some act or another. Oh, there are a few sedentary Kinfolk families as well, but rumor has it they don't breed true quite as often.



They say it's part of our curse — I figure that's just pessimism talking.

## The Rom

But of all the ethnic groups we breed with, we're most often associated with the Gypsies. No wonder — we're kindred spirits. A cub like me that's born into a Romani family grows up learning history by remembering stories. It's a lot easier to carry a library in your head than on your back. Even if a *kumpania* is only Kin, it feels something like family.

But I'll tell you to be careful. For one, a Strider who's not of the Blood will likely be treated like any other *gaje* when she comes calling. Some Romany Kinfolk allow you to marry into the family, but only if you're a true Strider. Second, many of the Gypsy families have nothing to do with us. And why not? Many of us Striders are born of other folk.

Now, the trick here is that there are some vampires roaming the world that claim Rom blood. *Shimulo*, we call them. And some Gypsy families — the Ravens, for instance — don't so much mind allying with the dead. Watch out, cub, or you might find yourself sharing a campfire with a Leech who wants to sample Garou blood. Although you won't be coming to blows while you're with the *kumpania*, you'd better watch your back after you leave. No amount of family relations going to dim the hate between Garou and vampire.

## Camps

The camps that have formed within our tribe aren't so much societies or factions as they are mindsets. We're not given to gathering frequently, so a camp is a philosophy you agree with and carry out. You can still find allies among members of your own camp, but you'll tend to only run into them randomly. Old news, hey?

## Harbingers

Well then. It would almost do them disrespect to toss out their name and open up their philosophies just as a coroner dissects a slab of cold meat. Anyway, you should learn a thing or three about them, because one might save your life someday.

Some say that the Harbingers were the first Garou to take the Prophecy of the Phoenix seriously. They gathered together, spoke words that none but the Harbingers remember, and split up to wander the far corners of the world. There they found Wyrmsign, and began to carry the news back. But the nearer they drew to the caerns of their brothers, the more Wym-taint they noticed. In their initial travels, they saw so much of the Wym's tracks that they still aren't done telling the Garou of all the dark places. I've also heard that they believe the Apocalypse can't be staved off — but that Gaia, like Phoenix, will rise

again from the flames. And so their role is to help others fight back the tendrils of the Wym. But most of all, they bring hope.

Of course, these are just stories. The dead-certain truth is that they're among the wisest of all Garou, and if one tells you to jump, your feet had damn well better leave the ground before she draws breath again.

## A Harbinger Cautions

*Your Caern Warder speaks falsely. The Wym is coiling at your doorstep, and has its fangs in the hearts of your own Kin. If you would cut it from their breasts, then go ye to the campground upon the river and find the minions of the Wym that rest there.*

## Seekers

We're all Seekers, in some form or another. Human society doesn't hold much for us; Garou society is just as bad. So the only option left is to pack your bags and find your own way.

An old friend once told me that the mind carries far more than a thousand broad backs. He was a Seeker, of course. He didn't need any journal or tape recorder to recall what he'd learned — no, his memory was good enough for him. He had most of the traits I've come to associate with the camp: clever, resourceful, inquisitive and stubborn as all hell. If you want to learn something specific, your best bet is to find a Seeker. If she doesn't know it herself, she can tell you where to look. The Harbingers may know what's to come, but the Seekers hold the lore of what's happened and what's happening now.


## A Seeker Reminisces

*Whew. How was Russia, you ask? Just as damned miserable as I thought it'd be. Toward the end of my visit, I slipped into a local chantry to do a little reading. The residents chased me all the way to the Kumbum Shan, which was another horror story in and of itself. I'd ask what the world's coming to, but I already know the answer, damnit.*

## The Dispossessed

I can't help but be concerned with the Dispossessed. Their members are trying nothing harder but to settle down. The problem is that there's nowhere for them to go. This is something we Gypsy-bloods are well used to, but even so we sympathize. In fact, some Striders of the Rom join the Dispossessed, figuring that they deserve a home both from their human blood and Garou heritage. It never works, though. Something — be it human settlers, territorial Garou of the Wym's touch — always forces them to move on.

This eternal rejection must affect them in some way. I spent time among a few, and they gave off the stale scent of Harano. You don't smell it at first — but once you've shared



company with one for a month or so, you pick it up. They're as morbid as they come. Maybe that's why they study all about the Apocalypse. Like carrion crows, they watch for the portents and croak out warnings to those who'll listen. They always seem to be right. But the Final Days are moving so quickly now, their advice always seems to be too little, too late.

### *A Dispossessed Snarls*

*We have wandered long enough! Even the man-children of Israel now have a home, and we faithful of Gaia must still meander from caern to caern? No, I tell you, no.*

*You were wise to ally yourself with us. Once the Apocalypse is at an end, then we shall have a land to call our own once more. Of course, the sooner it begins, the sooner our victory shall come. Here, listen to my plan....*

### *Wayfarers*

Now, these ones really raise my hackles. There's no place for their breed of selfishness among our tribe. The very idea of looking at our war as a profit opportunity — hrrr, the Wayfarers need to grow up fast. Of course, that won't happen any time soon. The other tribes want access to our talents, but don't enjoy dealing with most of us. They understand the Wayfarers, though. Greed isn't respectable, but it is comprehensible. Your average Shadow Lord probably looks on the Wayfarers as cousins!

I have to admit they're a talented group. Once a Wayfarer gives you a guarantee that she'll run your message for you, she'll do it. They avoid giving out guarantees, though, unless they're certain the job is well within their skills. Such assurances also cost extra.

There are actually a few in this camp who look on their task as a duty and not a career. These runners are an honorable lot, and are said to have long-standing ties with the magi. They'll even forego asking a fee, if they figure the job's a good one that needs doing. Unfortunately, most Wayfarers argue that they need to ask for payment, in accordance with the "way things are." These folks argue that just as you should offer chiminage to a spirit in exchange for favors, you should present payment to a Garou willing to do you a service. I figure this is going too far.

### *A Wayfarer Bargains*

*Whoa! Easy there, friend. No need to get huffy. I'm just following one of the oldest of Gaia's laws, y'know? It's pure and simple. I'll drop that chunk of jade into the Abyss for you, and you pass over that medicine pouch. I help you — you help me. What could be fairer?*



# Secret Societies

We're a solitary and taciturn lot. The other tribes never truly accept us, and we don't have enough of our own to satisfy some of our children. So a few Striders start turning inward, gathering with others and sharing their discontent. The two most famous of these groups are hardly tolerated by tribe elders. If anyone from these societies approaches you about joining them, stall for time. Then when you've got your opportunity, run. Better to walk alone than waltz arm-in-arm with a friend into the Wyrms' maw.

## Eaters of the Dead

One of the most gruesome reasons that we're associated with the dead is the Rite of Dormant Wisdom. Now, our ancestors figured out fairly early that the brain is the seat of knowledge. Thing is, they decided that by eating the brains of humans, they could gain a measure of the humans' knowledge. They were right.

Now, right after our exile, some of the more foresighted elders saw that this rite was a sure way to open ourselves to the Wyrms. They declared the rite taboo, citing the Litany to back up their ruling. So we stopped — all of us, that is, but the Eaters of the Dead. They kept on devouring human brains, in even more secrecy this time. They've grown learned over the centuries, but they've begun to smell strange. If we find one, we gift him with the Voice of the Jackal, and warn him to change his ways. Other tribes would do worse.

They've been getting worse of late, if you believe the rumors. They say that a cult of Eaters has been carefully preying on the leeches, attempting to learn the secrets behind vampire powers and influence. Of course, once you kill a vampire for good, the corpse returns to the state it should be in for its age. And naturally, the most knowledgeable vampires are the real bad ones. So these Leech-Eaters basically stake their prey or immobilize them some other way, and pry out their brains while the Leeches are still conscious. Think about that for a while. You'll probably agree that some knowledge isn't worth the learning process.

### An Eater's Assurances

There, there, my friend. The worst of your hurting is behind you now, yes? Of course it is. Rest easy. I do apologize for what I'm about to do, but be assured that you are going to participate in one of the greatest of our sacraments. You might find it a bit gruesome, but I'm sure that you've encountered worse in your own studies. You see, I've wondered about your type of magic since the first time I heard of your ilk. I wish I could ask a few questions of your chantrymates, but the social morés of our



respective kinds rather forbid it, don't they? Not to worry — the Rite should do nicely.

Ah, here's my bone saw. Shall we?

## The Bitter Hex

Then there's the Bitter Hex. They keep their names secret, but they don't hide their existence. The poison's gotten into them pretty fierce. You see, the Hexers are so ill-natured and spiteful at this point that they've taken it upon themselves to avenge all the slights the Striders have suffered over time. No, they aren't some violent terrorist cell like some of those Fianna you occasionally hear about. The Hexers' favorite weapon is the curse, the evil eye, the bad mojo, the *amria*. Cross one of them and you're likely to take a sending that'll twist your guts into knots and leave you puking and feeble as a cub for a week. They're a dangerous mob. They say they're acting on our behalf, but with cousins like them...

### A Hexer Snarls

So, the mighty conqueror has bested the mongrel Strider, has he? Well, savor your victory this night, for you'll know no peace on any other. By my blood, spit and tears, I swear my Rage'll drive you mad by the next moon. Ptui!

## A Note on Names

Many Striders take on the names of ancient Egyptian gods, goddesses and heroes when they assume their heritage. However, names such as Osiris and Anubis owe those forms to Greek invaders more than to the original Egyptian forms. The Striders who keep the oldest traditions alive prefer to use the original names; a few of these names follow hereafter, as do some old Egyptian words that are still in vogue with certain Striders.

Asar — Osiris

Anpw — Anubis

Heru — Horus

Aset — Isis

Tehuti — Thoth

Nebt-het — Nephthys

Het-Heru — Hathor

Menu — Min

Nuit — Nut; the night

Wepwawet — the black wolf, opener of ways

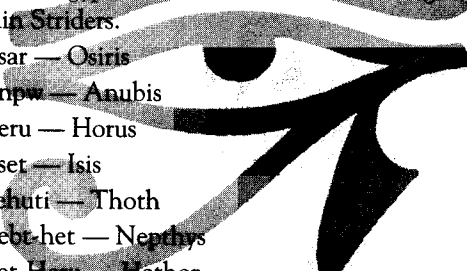
Khem — Egypt; the lost homeland

Duat — the Umbra; the afterworld

Apep — The Wurm, Apophis

Aten — Helios

Bennu — Phoenix



## Breeds

*Live with wolves, howl like a wolf.*

— Russian proverb

## Lupus

In the times of old Egypt, we had a strong lupus population. Some say that we bred with the black jackals or wolves of North Africa, the ones that you can only see today in hieroglyphs and ancient paintings. Without our protection, they vanished. I sought after their spirits in the Umbra, back when I was young. I never found them. Some Theurges I've met claim to have found the lost ones' spirits, but they're gone in the flesh. You can still see their features, though; our purest-bred tribemates often resemble their distant wolf ancestors.

Our lupus blood is much thinner now. We breed when the opportunity is there (with quality mates, mind), but the truth is we've few packs to call our own. Recently, though, some of the packs have birthed wolf cubs that resemble our lost kin, if only a little. Now most of us are willing to do whatever we must, even bargaining with the Shadow Lords and Get of Fenris, to gain hunting grounds for these wolves. No tribe can survive losing its wolf blood. We have to preserve our kin.

## Metis

Sigh. We breed where and when we can; few of us have the luxury of traveling with Kinfolk. I won't burden you with theories and excuses, but sometimes the partner you never see again is Garou. And believe it or not, occasionally we even fall in love with other werewolves. Anathema though it may be, I'm sure you know how difficult it is to deny your feelings.

What this is leading up to is that we have a healthy metis population, so to speak. It's nothing we're proud of, but Garou is Garou. Our metis pups have inherited fewer blessings and a harder road than the rest of us, but they don't deserve ill treatment for it.

## Homid

What can I say about those of us who are human-born? What haven't you guessed already?

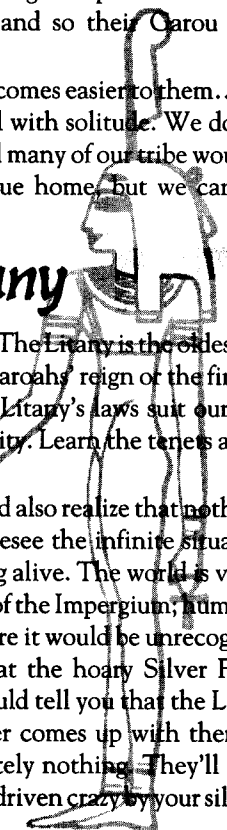
Most homid cubs of our tribe don't grow up in what Middle America would consider an "ideal family environment." The majority only ever know one parent; many even believe themselves orphans until a Strider comes to collect them. We homids are the most numerous Garou, and at the same time those born farthest from Gaia's mysteries. Perhaps this is why we Striders choose outsiders, nomads and recluses as our human mates. The children born to such lifestyles begin life free of many of civilization's conventions. They don't grow up slaves to materialism and scientific rationality, and so their Garou nature comes easier to them.

Yes, loneliness also comes easier to them... us. But we're better prepared to deal with solitude. We do not offer the solace of numbers (and many of our tribe would reject such consolation), nor a true home, but we can give a child learning.

## The Litany

Even we have rules. The Litany is the oldest code of laws, older even than the pharaohs' reign or the firstborn laws of Sumer. Not all of the Litany's laws suit our tribe, but we must respect its authority. Learn the tenets and wear them in your heart.

That said, you should also realize that nothing is perfect. The Litany cannot foresee the infinite situations that we encounter just by being alive. The world is vastly different than it was in the days of the Impergium; human society has evolved to a point where it would be unrecognizable to our ancestors. I'm sure that the hoary Silver Fangs and the Fianna lorekeepers would tell you that the Litany is inviolate; if the subject ever comes up with them, smile, nod quietly and say absolutely nothing. They'll either assume you agree, or they'll be driven crazy by your silence. Neither is that bad an option.





## *Garou Shall Not Mate With Garou*

I'll be honest with you: It gets lonely on the road. Sometimes you'll find yourself being — well, a little less careful than you could be. We Striders accept this, but other tribes often won't be as understanding. Still, for all the intolerance and condemnations, a lot of Strider metis have the blood of a second tribe in their veins.

## *Combat the Wyrms Wherever It Dwells and Whenever It Breeds*

Common sense forbids that we follow this rule to the letter. We're far more useful to Gaia if we find all the places where the Wyrms dwell and breeds, and then let the local Garou know what they're overlooking. Somebody's got to point out the soft underbelly to the Ahrouns, right? We're scouts, not shocktroopers — let those full of piss and hellfire do the bulk of the killing. Our task is just as vital.

## *Respect the Territory of Another*

Ahem. We can't exactly keep to our own lands, can we? If you go looking for truth under every stone and carrying

news from sept to sept, you're going to end up crossing somebody's territory without permission. Many Garou shrug their shoulders and let us pass; they know we're not exactly looking to move in. The rest are considerably less understanding. My advice is to run quietly, cub; what they don't know can't hurt them, at least in this case.

## *Accept an Honorable Surrender*

Most Garou would rather be throated than yield to a Silent Strider, so "honorable" surrenders are few and far between. Still, it's a good rule, and one that should be upheld. We werewolves aren't getting any more common....

## *Submission to Those of Higher Station*

Respect your elders, cub. They've been places you can't imagine and have outrun things you wouldn't believe. Most importantly, they know things. And the only way they'll share their learning is if you treat them with respect! Now, I'm not saying you have to offer your throat to every senile Silver Fang who's feeling testy and imperious, but you should always watch your elders carefully. Pretty soon, you'll figure out who's full of hot wind and who's got the wisdom you'd damn well better attend to.

Why yes, cub, I'd love another beer. Thoughtful of you to ask.

## *The First Share of the Kill to the Greatest in Station*

This is sheer courtesy, and a right-thinking leader will keep the loyalty of his packmates in mind. Some among us tend to pocket certain goods taken from fallen enemies, not bothering to let their elders know. This goes double for valuable information: coded messages, maps and the like. I don't know about the other tribes, but if I found out one of my packmates was keeping secrets from me, I know I'd be downright enraged. Something to think about.

## *Ye Shall Not Eat the Flesh of Humans*

We're not one of the tribes that frequently gets carried away with bloodlust. Now, I said before that we used to ritually devour humans to gain their strength and knowledge. From what I know, it's true, but that doesn't make it acceptable. Humans and wolves are not prey animals for Garou, and that should be the end of that.



## *Respect for Those Beneath Ye — All Are of Gaia*

You are our future. If you live long enough to see your own cubs draw breath, you'll understand. We're bound to instruct you just as you're bound to obey us. Extend respect both above and below, and you'll be all the better for it.

## *The Veil Shall Not Be Lifted*

This is pure common sense. Life's difficult enough without the rank-and-file of humanity learning we exist. It doesn't matter how long you're going to be in a given place — do *not* let the locals find out about your true nature.

This even applies to the Gypsies, most of the time. Some families know of our existence and are Kinfolk like any other. If you're of the Blood, then they'll never speak of your nature to the *gaje*. But there's no harm in keeping a few secrets to yourself, hey?

## *Do Not Suffer Thy People to Tend Thy Sickness*

If I were too weak to run, I wouldn't want to live any longer. In this, the old ways are best. Perhaps in death we'll all find our homeland at last.

## *The Leader May Be Challenged at Any Time During Peace*

If the leader is being a fool, he forfeits his right to lead. No self-respecting Silent Strider follows an idiot. If you can't beat him in gamecraft, a facedown or battle (and remember that he'll choose which!), then maybe you should think about leaving.





## *The Leader May Not Be Challenged at Any Time During War*

I can see the point of this tenet, but it has its limits. The leader whose reason has slipped, as I said, is no leader at all. True, all must be ready to sacrifice themselves for Gaia. Just remember that as a Strider, you won't be able to return to aid your descendants. A pointless death is the worst fate we can suffer.

## *Ye Shall Take No Action That Causes a Caern to Be Violated*

There are some among us who resent the fact that other tribes have more caerns than we do. Therefore, if they don't have an equal share of a Garou holy place, they don't give a damn about guarding it. Listen! Not even the Shadow Lords let the Wyrms into our midst! Those Harano-taken fools say we've already lost everything. Well, violate this tenet of the Litany and you'll appreciate just what you have left — before we take it from you.

## *Departure*

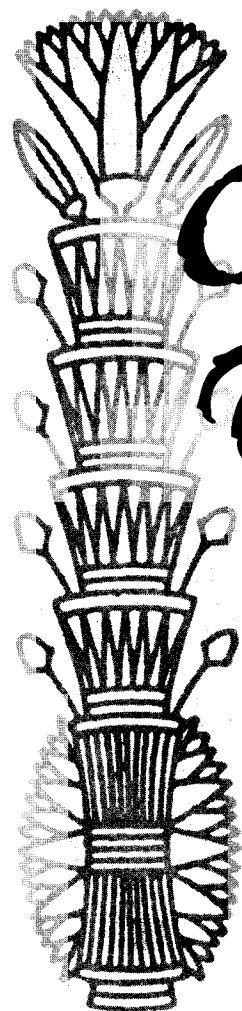
Looks like Aset and I've talked your ear off for the better part of the night. Still, there's some light in your eyes yet. Think you'll remember what you've been told? Good. A strong memory's worth more than any human gold or Garou fetish. If you can remember well and true, then you take any road you walk down, any caern you visit, along with you on your travels. Lacking a land to ourselves, we do our best to own the world.

Easy there — don't fall over! Tired, are you? Well, lay your head on this blanket, and close your eyes for a while. May your rest be quiet and dreamless, for your waking hours are going to be full of speed and fury.

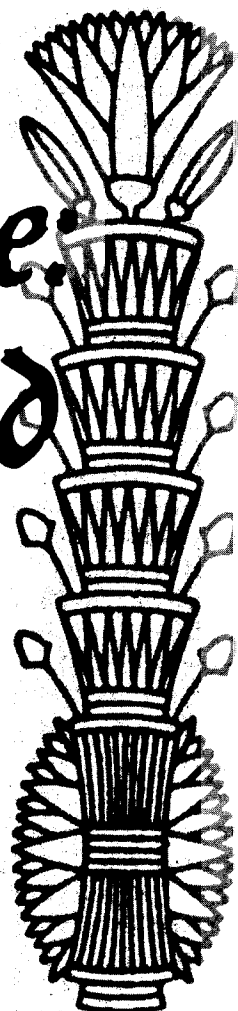
Give me a kiss for the road, and to sleep with you.







# Chapter Three: Ten Thousand Leagues



*I am half inclined to think we are all ghosts, Mr. Manders. It is not only what we have inherited from our fathers that exists again in us, but all sorts of old dead ideas and all kinds of old dead beliefs and things of that kind. They are not actually alive in us; but there they are dormant, all the same, and we can never be rid of them.... There must be ghosts all over the world. They must be as countless as grains of the sands, it seems to me. And we are so miserably afraid of the light, all of us.*

— Henrik Ibsen, *Ghosts*

So, did you enjoy yourself last night? That Lerli's a fine-looking Strider, she is. Clever, too, which counts for twice as much. Had I the time...

Never mind that. You're now due for the last part of your education: learning about the world and your neighbors. I say this is the best part of all. For one, it never ends. Every day you spend breathing Gaia's air, drinking Her water, is a day you spend collecting knowledge. Gather a new taste every night, and you're richer than Solomon by the end of the year.

Right. I'll bring you before one more Strider with something to say. He's tired of treading physical roads, though I've seen it hit Striders before — you get tired of having no home of your own in this realm, so you go into the Umbra and never come out again. A Harano all our own, you might say. As if we needed another kind.

Oh, and be sure to watch where you walk when we get to his territory. The Twice-Born are always coming and going, bringing him news and listening to his tales. If you step on

one of those skeletal Mouse-spirits, you're going to cause some offense.

Come on then; let's cross over to the Umbra. I'll go slowly for the first of it.

## Walking the World

Greetings, my friends. Come to visit an old Ragabash in his twilight years? Heh. Never thought I'd last long enough to see myself an authority figure, much less an honored counselor.

But you've come to ask about the wide world, and what I've seen, eh? Well, I must admit I've been more places than most people's shapeshifters and spirits in all of Gaia. So listen carefully, cub. Since you'll be traveling these roads, like it or not you'll be wanting to know where they lead.

Remember, first and foremost, that you won't be heartily welcomed wherever you go. Many septs respect us and what we have to say; many more don't. Human society can be

even worse, which is a shame because their libraries, computers and storytellers have a lot of information that you'll be wanting to carry away.

Travel. Watch quietly. Offer advice when it's invited; hurl the truth in their faces when it's not. Make friends and allies where you can. And always note the quickest way out.

## Africa

If any Garou has business in Africa, we do. Some Bone Gnawers eke out a living there, just as they do anywhere, and a few Glass Walkers occupy the cities, but only we can truly walk the wild places of Africa.

Even then, we have our boundaries. What few Children of Cat survive don't welcome Garou to their plains, jungles and savannahs, and the Children of Crocodile make river travel a risky thing. Worst of all, we're still barred from Egypt by the hand of Set. I hear that those who try to settle there have a creeping doom come on them in the night, one that leaves them withered and lifeless for the morning sun. Some Harbingers say that someday there will be a reckoning, but most of us feel such a thing could only happen if we survive to the last battles of the Apocalypse.

Still, you might do well to walk the ruins and plains of North Africa. There's much to learn there, and many memories that wait to be remembered again. We have scattered villages of Kinfolk there, and the blood runs pure in their veins. If you would choose a mate to bring a strong new Garou into the world, you could do far worse than to visit this land.

## The Americas

Ah, the New World. Spectacular country, quickly going to hell. Between the Ulte'na and Wendigo on one side and the Silver Fangs leading the Europeans on the other, there's little room to lie down for a nap. But there are still plenty of back roads crisscrossing the continents. That's where we spend most of our time.

Oh, there's plenty to be done in the Americas. For instance, some tribes say the Amazon is the decisive battlefield of the Apocalypse. Whoever wins there, wins forever. Not necessarily true, but it does point out how important the rainforests are. Then there are the "Pure Tribes." They have a thousand thousand restless ancestors wailing at their heels, and they're not quite sure what to do to placate their kin's ghosts. We might be able to advise them — if they let us. And don't forget that Industrial America's so filled with the Wurm's toxins and bureaucrats, you could spend ten lifetimes fighting and make only a tiny mark.

The Americas are fairly young countries by most standards, and the newest to us. But they have their secrets, just like any place does.





## Europe

We have few good memories of Europe. We also have few if any caerns there. Gypsies are still unwelcome in Germany and Eastern Europe, so if we go there at all, we do so to protect our remaining Kin.

The struggle to control Europe would cost far more than it's worth, even if we were inclined to try. The Get and Silver Fangs vie for the North, the Furies rule the South and the Shadow Lords squat in the East. They're welcome to the continent; here's hoping that they manage to keep it in one piece.

## Asia

India's cities resemble nothing so much as cesspits, but there are countless secrets in the crevices and ruins. A few of us are of Indian blood, and they're often the best sources for Asian news. However, Asia is for the most part not Garou territory. The *hengeyokai* can be dangerous to cross, particularly since we've very little information on them. That doesn't mean we don't wander over into their territory, but you do have to be careful. In Asia, they are as numerous as we are few. Watch yourself.

## Australia

You'd think the Oz would be the ideal place for us. Open, dusty roads, miles and miles between towns... Well, it's a lot more than it seems. There's no land more haunted than Australia, and the worst part of it is that we're responsible for the ghosts. We scouted the outback for our allies, and opened the way for the War of Tears. If you're the sensitive sort, they say, you can sometimes feel the blood on the red dirt under your paws.

Still, we've an obligation there. The ghosts of the Bunyip must be placated, and these days nobody walks the Dreamtime better than we do. Once you're fit and have a number of miles under your feet, go to Australia and find the Strider Circus. There are far worse ways to spend time and effort than trying to find any Bunyip who survive in the Dreamtime. A fool's quest? Only for those who cannot look ahead.

## The Umbra

Well, look around you. It's not the most hospitable of realms, but then, neither is the physical world.

I've been back and forth across the spirit world, just like the physical. Parts of it are utter hell — literally — others are the kind of paradise that could make you forget the wolf. At any given time, there's probably one of us in any particular Realm you'd care to mention.

Once you've gotten accustomed to your place in Garou society, I recommend you go on walkabout in the Umbra

for a time. It'll broaden your mind better than anything. It's also a fine place to meet new and interesting friends — and enemies.

## The Dark Umbra

We still remember the "darkest road," too. But I'll tell you, the Dark Umbra's a dangerous place to go. It's nothing like the Duat we remember. No, the spirits of those who die unfulfilled inherit an afterworld that's a far cry from a green and vibrant paradise. If the Duat lies somewhere in the Dark Umbra, I've never seen it.

Down there, the ghosts have their own society. It's some sort of colossal empire, forged out of the souls of the weak or criminal. And the empire's in chaos. This howling stuff called the Tempest wails around the lands of the dead, sucking the careless down into it. As far as I know, it's impossible to swim in that phantasmal whirlpool — Owl himself would have to get you out if you fell in. I hear that the bottom of the Tempest is just one more of the Wyrms' hungry mouths.

But if you can avoid the Bane-ghosts they call Spectres, and find your way through that gray pit, you can talk to people dead a *long* time. The temptation of such knowledge, of learning the secrets of the past from those who lived it... powerful stuff. But don't go looking for the ghosts of your family — there's nothing but grief in that.

A few of our Galliards visit the Dark Umbra to listen to the songs of the dead. I have to say that their howls are never again the same.

## Among the Garou

There just aren't enough of us to go around. That's why we join intertribal packs. Listen, cousin, you're going to rely on another tribe's hospitality more times than you can count. So you're best off knowing when to smile, when to give a little bow, and when to run.

They don't understand us. Most of them don't even try. But you should make the effort to understand them.

## Black Furies

They're a gruff bunch, they are, and there's no denying that they're never quite as chatty with our males as with our females. Still, we have a good professional relationship with the Furies. You see, they're always looking out for whatever "lost treasures" they can get their paws on. They're great hands at archaeology, but most of them don't get around much — they take their caern guardianship very seriously.

That's where we come in. Our tribes have been partners in the arcane and mysterious for quite some time. You have to put up with a lot of holier-than-thou "Goddess talk" when you deal with Furies, but when the Wyrms' on the march, they're as brave and ferocious as you could ask for.

## Bone Gnawers

Although they don't look it, the Gnawers are privy to many more secrets than some believe. They're close to the underbelly of human and Garou society alike, and more than one gets approached by recruiters for the Wyrms. Now, they aren't the most hygienic of companions — you have to set your more rarefied tastes to one side if you want to deal with them and keep smiling — but if you're ever in the mood for macabre humor, drop by one of their moots and ask about the truth behind those urban legends they're so fond of.

## Children of Gaia

It's hard to find quarrel with the Children. If you slap one of them in the face, half the time she'll smile back at you instead of going for your throat. That means that they're fine companions on a midsummer eve, but you do have to kick them a little when you need them riled up and ready to fight.

## Fianna

They tell some of the best stories around, even if you do have to sit through a deluge of rambling to hear the rarest tales. Don't drink too much of their brew (only the Fianna would bind a spirit into a jug of alcohol), and be careful about bringing up the subject of tribal unity. But if you can catch one while he's sober and curious, you can learn quite a bit with practically no prodding.

## Get of Fenris

Oh, they're a charming crew. They consider themselves superior to all other Garou — “at least we've kept our blood and homeland true,” they argue. Naturally, they don't care for a raggletaggle Gypsy-blooded tribe, particularly one that seems to know more than they do. Fine! We don't have to live next to them, and if their Kin would just quit pestering ours, we could get along wonderfully.

In the times to come, they'll surely tear the Wyrms a new hole, but die to the last in the process. Berserkers that they are, they'll love every second of it.

## Glass Walkers

Very clever, very adaptable Garou. You have to respect their ability to keep pace with time. Human society has become an excellent resource for them, even if they have all but lost their wolf blood. I don't think I'd care to bind my freedom into the Pattern Web, but they're certainly entitled to their choice.

## Red Talons

We value the homids among us, and therefore we are unfit in the eyes of the Talons. Oh well. They're fierce and straightforward, which are good things. But they're so

impossibly short-sighted that there's really no point in explaining yourself to them.

## Shadow Lords

They've had their unblinking hungry gaze on the Silver Throne so long, their eyes are watering fit to blind them. If they'd take one quarter the effort they waste on their politicking and spend it on the crisis at hand, they'd actually be pulling their own weight. As is, they're pretty damn troublesome. Half as clever as they think and twice as thick-headed as we'd like — that's the Shadow Lords for you.

## Silver Fangs

Every wolf pack has an alpha, but is there a King Pack who rules all other packs? Has human government ever clearly benefited from the control of a group whose members are elite only by blood? Have the Silver Fangs reigned justly and well? Were they right in the War of Rage, in the Impergium, in the War of Tears?

You see? Some questions you just can't answer.

## Stargazers

Wise fellows, even if they do spend too much time contemplating the insides of their eyelids. They've a fine touch for gamecraft and they're creative thinkers, but they don't concern themselves enough with the here-and-now. And this from the lips of a Strider, no less!

If they focused on what *is* or what *will be* instead of what *may be*, we'd call them sibilings. However, they've had enough time to refine their philosophies. If they haven't yet settled on what they believe, they're not going to do anybody any good when the world catches fire.

## Uktena

I wish we'd grown alongside the Uktena. We can see much of ourselves in their curiosity and thirst for knowledge. However, we're definitely a tribe apart from our cousins. They're going down roads that they shouldn't be walking.

See, I wonder if our cousins (meaning the tribes that aren't native to the “Pure Lands”) didn't encourage them to become the way they are. When the colonists went tearing through their lands, kicking open all their buried secrets, I figure it changed the Uktena. Now they scramble among the magics of human, vampire and Garou alike, looking for some hex that'll swing things back their way. Poor fellows, I hope they can find it without sacrificing themselves in the process.

## Wendigo

Now here's a fine tribe. Proud as the Fangs, angry as the Get, righteous as the Furies and pure as the... well, the Croatan. You have to admire them, because they'll com-

promise nothing when they know they're in the right — and they're in the right a lot more than you might think. Funny thing is, they're almost in the same boat as we are. 'Course, there's still a chance for them to take their homeland back. I sincerely wish them luck. I just hope they'll be able to set aside their territorial concerns and join in the battle when the Wyrms make to swallow the sun.

## *The Others*

When you wander into as many shadowy corners as we do, you soon realize that you aren't alone. I think we're the tribe that's had the most dealings, bad or good, with what humans call "the supernatural." Our "relations" are another side effect of our meandering into other people's territories. It's just that every territory is usually claimed by multiple factions, some of which aren't Garou. Think about that before you next jump into a major city's culture centers.

## *The Changing Breeds*

You know that there are others who wear shifting skins. Many are still our enemies, but we are trying to make peace with a few. The Children of Crocodile, in particular, despise all Garou for the thoughtless rage of our cousins. Sometimes one will agree to speak with a lone werewolf, but I wouldn't bring your pack to its river.

There are many Tribes of Cat, of which only a fistful won't treat us as blood foes. In particular, the Bubasti sometimes offer to exchange lore and wisdom. Such trades usually fail, though; they're unwilling to offer their most prized secrets, as are we. Recently, there's been an odd scent to them and their dealings. If you ever converse with one of these Egyptian cat-shifters, be careful with your words.

## *Wraiths*

Our connection with the Restless Dead runs deep and true throughout our past. We were the openers of the ways since the first times, the guides of the dead. But when we were exiled, we were cut off from our duty. Necessity demanded that we look after ourselves first, and worry about the dead when we could.

Now you see, wraiths are those who die with something unresolved. It could be an unavenged murder, a need to look after an impoverished mother, or even a lasting hatred for all things human. In the old times, we helped people work things through both in life and death. There were fewer wraiths that way — at least where we lived. Now we're tied to an old duty, and we don't have time nor opportunity to do it proper justice these days. Not that the wraiths know that.

So watch out when you step sideways. If you get caught between worlds, the Restless may find you. When they do, they'll usually beseech you to act as their hands in the



physical world. Most of their requests are fairly harmless. But be careful what you agree to! Sometimes one'll want you to kill a blameless woman, just because he figures she wronged him. Sometimes their demands are even worse.

## Vampires

Hrrr. I'll avoid speaking of Set; by now you should know enough about him and his children. His bastard lineage of Leeches that build temples to him and flock to the foulest parts of man's cities — I hold them responsible for polluting the name of Iart the cobra to human ears. Never trust a Follower of Set — they're as ancient and dire an enemy as ever we'll have. But there are more breeds of undead than Set's whelps. Be careful, now, because you can find them wherever you find crowds of humans. Makes sense, doesn't it?

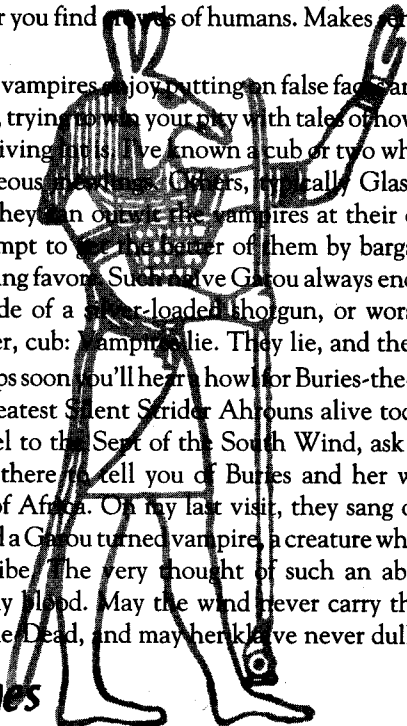
Many vampires enjoy putting on false faces and shows of emotion, trying to win your pity with tales of how wretched their unliving lives have been. I've known a cub or two who believed their piteous pleas. Others, the tall Glass Walkers, believe they can outwit the vampires at their own game, and attempt to be better off them by bargaining and exchanging favors. Such a Game you always end up on the wrong side of a shot-loaded shotgun, or worse. Always remember, cub: Vampire lie. They lie, and they hate us.

Perhaps soon you'll hear how for Buries-the-Dead, one of the greatest Silent Strider Ahrouns alive today. When you travel to the Sept of the South Wind, ask the Moon Dancers there to tell you of Buries and her war on the undead of Africa. On my last visit, they sang of how she destroyed a Game turned vampire, a creature who was once of our tribe. The very thought of such an abomination freezes my blood. May the wind never carry the scent of Buries-the-Dead, and may her knife never dull!

## Mages

Sometimes when you're running in the Umbra, you come across somebody who doesn't seem to belong. As often as not, it's a human that has mastered some form of magick. I tend to avoid the magi, since you never can tell how they'll react. Some of them gleefully embrace the Weaver and its choking technology; others seem born of the Wyld itself. Still others are loyal to the Wyrms. They choose their own paths; granting them any measure of mercy would be pointless and foolish.

Oh, and even be careful of the ones who seem to be on your side. Their Naming powers rely on nothing less than changing parts of Gaia's being, and that tends to make Her shift in Her sleep. The fallout gets nasty.





## Mummies

Be careful who you repeat this to, but there are a number of humans who have gained the secret of eternal life. We should know; it happened in our lands. These folk are called mummies, although they look nothing like the film versions. Some are our friends, others our enemies.

They say the only way to kill one for certain is to slay its physical body, then pursue its two-part soul in the Dark Umbra and kill the spirit there. This strikes me as optimism.

Know, too, that Set has created his own bestial versions of these creatures. We gave them the name Bane Mummies when we first saw them, and no better name has arisen since. They're corrupted without and within, like twisted, immortal fomori. We harry them when we find them and destroy their bodies when we can. We have yet to slay one in both the material world and the Dark Umbra, but we'll keep on trying.

## The Fae

Although there's truth in the Fianna tales of the fae, you shouldn't concern yourself much with currying the Old Folk's favor. They can smell the touch of death on us, and they avoid us for it. From what I've heard, all they own is built of the dreamstuff born from celebrating life. We would make sorry companions for them.

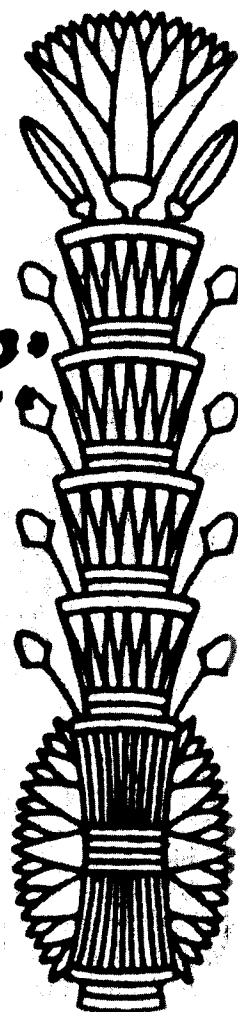
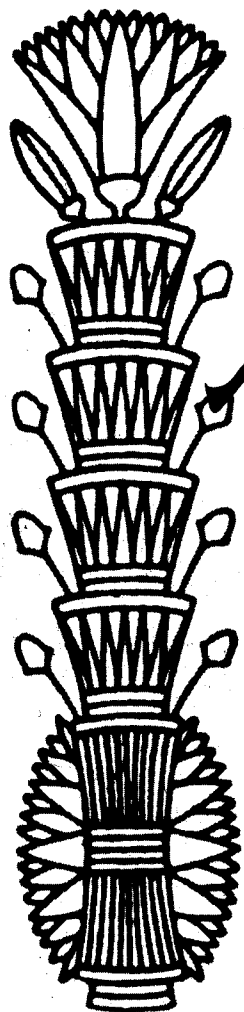
## The Forked Path

Well, looks like here's where you finally set out on your own. We've told you the barest of secrets; the rest is left to you. Just try to stay alive. You've the weight of our history on your shoulders, but it's not unbearable. Remember, and be strong and fleet.

Run swift and light over your roads, friend, and may we meet and share tales again before the final battle.







# Appendix One: Souvenirs

## Tribal Weaknesses (Optional)

An optional rule was introduced in the first Werewolf tribebook: tribal weaknesses. These are quirks that one member of a particular tribe possesses, usually due to the social or even genetic nature of the tribe. Weaknesses should not always be enforced. There are some rare situations where a Bone Gnawer may not suffer a higher difficulty on Social rolls. Exceptions to the weakness are rare, but depend on the situation. For instance, a Get of Fenris may despise Weaver-stuff, but may fall in love with a Glass Walker and feel affection toward the "Urrah."

It is up to the Storyteller to enforce these rules when an appropriate situation occurs in the game. After all, a player may be unwilling to remind the Storyteller that her Uktena's curiosity may get her into trouble.

### Silent Strider Weakness

#### Haunted

Because of the ancient curse laid upon them by Set, Striders are doomed to be haunted by the spirits of the dead,

in mockery of the role they played in Pharaonic Egypt. Accordingly, whenever a Strider botches a roll to enter or exit the Umbra, she gains a ghostly haunter while caught between the worlds. This wraith is not always malevolent (though it often is), but usually demands a service of the Strider before it leaves her in peace.

Clever Striders can actually bargain with these departed souls; this is one way in which Striders become privy to information not available to other Garou. Moreover, the spirit is unable to follow the Strider beyond a certain distance (usually the area of a state, county or similar political unit).

## Merits and Flaws

### Long-Distance Runner (3 pt. Aptitudes Merit)

You must have a minimum Stamina of 4 to purchase this Merit. When running, you may double your normal speed for one hour per point of Stamina. Gifts improving movement are calculated from the new speed. Thus, possession of this Merit and movement-improving Gifts allows you to travel at amazing velocity.



## *Noted Messenger (3 pt. Garou Ties Merit)*

Your reputation as a reliable and uncorruptible messenger precedes you. You can enter most septs unchallenged, as long as you have a message for someone residing there. In addition, few Garou will attempt to hinder you in your duties, and most will let you cross their territories unmolested. However, the mere word of your presence will sometimes stir up rumor and intrigue, as the locals wonder what message it is that you carry.

## *Freak Magnet (4 pt. Supernatural Flaw)*

You attract the very worst sorts of ghosts. Thus, when your "Haunted" weakness comes into play, the ghost attracted to you is always a Spectre (see *Wraith: The Oblivion*). For those of you without *Wraith: The Oblivion*, a Spectre is the absolute nastiest kind of ghost — for all practical purposes a powerful Bane — that will either seek to do you physical or psychological harm or corrupt you into ruin.

## *Strider Communication*

The Silent Striders have developed several alternate methods of communication through the years. The wisest and best-traveled among the tribe are familiar with many forms of trail markings, the Strider language of colors (derived from Ancient Egypt's symbolism, not that of Western culture) and the dance-tales of the *Pakiv Swatura*.

Silent Strider characters who devote one dot of Linguistics to "Strider Communication" should be considered fluent in all these means of speech without speech. Characters of other tribes should be allowed to learn these methods only with the Storyteller's explicit permission; secret speech becomes worthless if it is explained to every friend or ally a Strider may pick up.

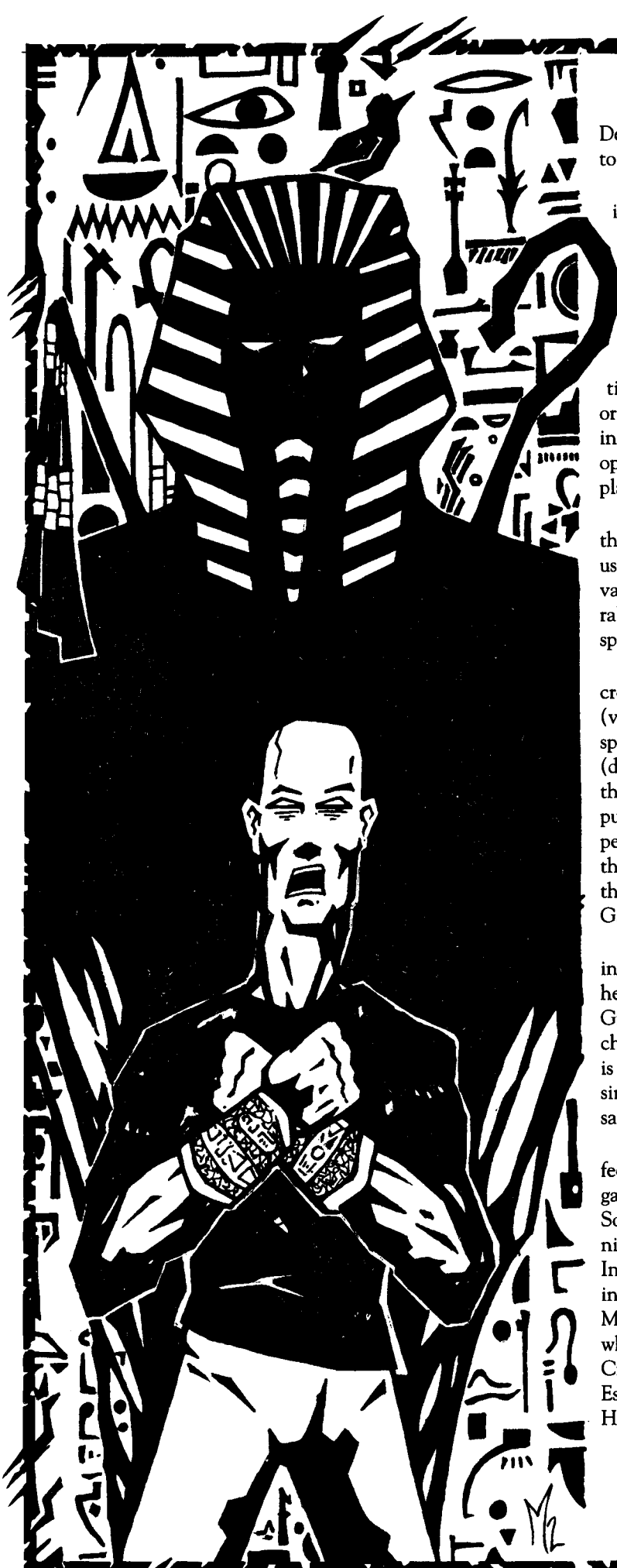
Even those who haven't learned these "languages" can occasionally glean some meaning from them. Any who watch a practiced dancer perform the *Pakiv Swatura* can roughly understand the story by successfully rolling Perception + Expression (difficulty 7). Similarly, a Garou can sometimes interpret Strider trail markings, although they will almost always miss the subtleties. (Roll Perception + Enigmas, difficulty 9, to read a trail marking.)

## *Gifts*

- **Tread Sebek's Back (Level Two)** — A Silent Strider may call on the river to support her steps. By activating this Gift, a Strider may walk or run across water or other liquids. However, her feet are not protected — running across a pit of Wurm-toxin is still a hazardous enterprise. Some Striders are rumored to have crossed seas by use of this Gift. It is taught by a Crocodile- or Basilisk-spirit.







**System:** The Strider spends a Gnosis point and rolls Dexterity + Survival (difficulty 7). Each success allows her to travel across water as if it were open ground for an hour.

- **Eyes of Ma'at (Level Three)** — When a Strider invokes the power of *ma'at* itself, she may discern levels of truth invisible to even the canniest investigators. With this Gift, she may perceive innocence and truth, should they reside in the breasts of those she encounters. This Gift is taught by an Ibis- or Baboon-spirit.

**System:** This Gift acts much as the Philodox Gift: Truth of Gaia. However, the Garou may make a Perception + Empathy roll to determine the nature of any truths or lies the target may speak. ("Please, no, I never set foot inside her house!") "That is true, but you forced the door open so that your companions could enter. The guilt is plain and written on your heart.")

- **Dam the Heartflood (Level Four)** — No tribe loathes the blight of vampires more than the Silent Striders. By using this Gift, a Strider may block the flow of blood in a vampire's veins, preventing him from using any supernatural powers tied to the blood. This Gift is taught by Cobra-spirits, who resent being viewed as a symbol of Set.

**System:** This Gift can only be used on a supernatural creature with a Blood Pool who gains power from that blood (vampires, ghouls, etc. — even Ananasi). The Garou spends a Gnosis point and rolls Manipulation + Medicine (difficulty of the target's Willpower). Each success prevents the target from spending any Blood Points, for whatever purpose, for a full turn. A Garou may only use this Gift once per scene against a given target, but multiple Garou may use this Gift on a target once each. Strider Packs armed with this Gift are among the fiercest Leech-slayers known to the Garou.

- **Invocation of the Pharaoh (Level Five)** — This awe-inspiring Gift is only available to the greatest Strider heroes. The Strider must be in Homid form, must spend a Gnosis and a Willpower point, and must enact a 10-minute chant to the greatest of ancient Egyptian spirits. Once this is done, the Garou expands and grows, becoming a giant similar to the depictions of pharaohs on mastabas and sarcophagi. This Gift is taught by Sphinx.

**System:** The Garou grows to a height of nearly eight feet, but otherwise remains in Homid form. The Garou gains the Physical Attributes of a Crinos, but loses no Social Attributes; indeed, the Garou's Charisma and Manipulation are treated as 6 when making Leadership or Intimidation rolls. A Garou in Pharaoh form does not inflict aggravated damage, but adds one to all Brawl and Melee damage inflicted against Wyrms-foes (or adds two when facing Followers of Set). The Garou regenerates as a Crinos, but is invulnerable to silver and cannot frenzy. Essentially, the Pharaoh form combines the best of both Homid and Crinos forms. This form lasts for one scene.

## Eaters of the Dead Gift

• **Touch of Death (Level Four)** — The Garou can touch a target; the target will then receive a premonition of his own death, as if someone “walked on his grave.” The Garou must touch the target (normal combat action), spend two Gnosis points, and roll Manipulation + Occult (difficulty 8). The number of successes is the number of dice removed from the target’s physical Trait Dice Pool (allocated by the Storyteller); these lost dice are “healed” as if they were aggravated wounds. The Garou will not know what the target sees, and the target will not remember afterward, but the target’s mummy will be streaked with white thereafter. This may be used only once on a given target — even. This Gift is taught by a Death-spirit.

## Harbinger Gift

• **Troubleseeker (Level Two)** — The Harbingers are noted for their intuitive ability to find trouble or Wurm-corruption, no matter how well hidden. They sometimes appear from nowhere, just “happening across” some problem or threat. This Gift allows a Harbinger to discover trouble without really searching for it — he just starts down a road and sees where it takes him. Almost invariably, his path crosses some threat that needs seeing to.

**System:** The Harbinger rolls Perception + Enigmas (difficulty 8). Success indicates that his travels will indirectly but quickly take him to a “trouble spot” of some gravity. Multiple successes on the roll allow the Harbinger to discover more dangerous or subtly hidden threats, at the Storyteller’s discretion.

## Rites

### Descent into the Dark Umbra (Mystic)

Level Three

Most Umbra-traveling Garou journey through the spirit world: the area mages refer to as the Middle Umbra. This sinister rite enables Silent Striders to cross into the world of the Dead: the Dark Umbra.

The Strider must sacrifice a living creature (usually an animal, though there are rumors...) and make an Intelligence + Rituals roll (difficulty 7). She must then make a normal roll to enter the Umbra. If both rolls succeed, the Garou enters the Underworld (see *Wraith: The Oblivion* for details of this frightening place). If she botches the rite, she becomes stuck sideways between the physical world and the Dark Umbra.

### Rite of Dormant Wisdom (Mystic)

Level Four

This forbidden rite is known only to the Eaters of the Dead. The practitioner and his aides may gain the knowl-

edge and memories of a dead person by ritually devouring the deceased’s brain. The corpse can be long dead, as long as the brain hasn’t fully decomposed. Those participating in the rite must roll Intelligence + Occult (difficulty 9). The number of successes determines how complete the memory transference is: one indicates that the Eater gains the dead one’s most recent memories, while five confers total life memories. No special abilities (Disciplines, Gifts, or the like) can be learned from this rite, but the Eater may learn any number of passwords or occult knowledge.

However, the Wurm’s touch is on this rite. If the rite is practiced more times than the character has Gnosis, then the character will become wholly of the Wurm, servant of Fœbok, Urge Wurm of Fear. A botch will also destroy the character’s mind, making him an insane slave to the Wurm.

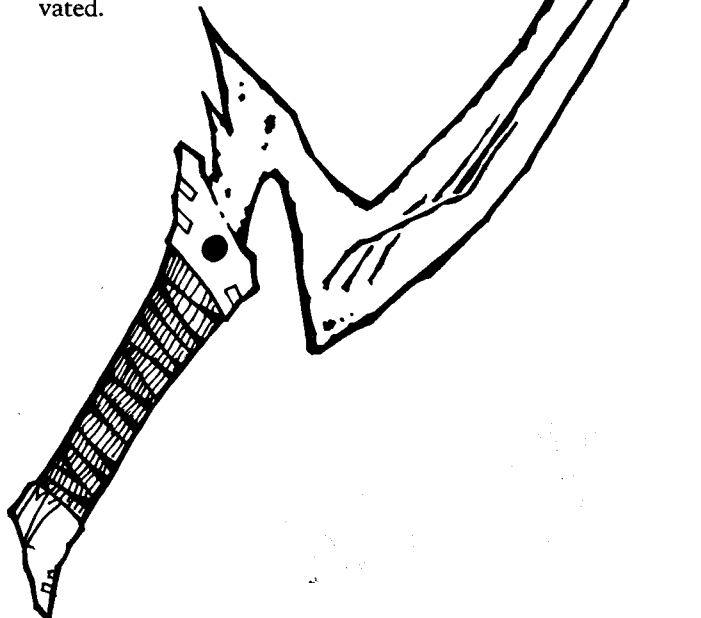
If the ritemaster and his aides each spend a permanent Gnosis point, they may perform this rite on a Garou or mummy. The rite also works on immobilized or torporous vampires, although cutting into a Leech’s cranium will certainly awaken it.

## Fetishes

### D’siah

Level 3, Gnosis 4

Certain Silent Strider Theurges carry *d’siah*, the “blades of the moon.” These ritual flint blades are carved into the shape of the crescent moon, and are used against Banes and other evil spirits. They inflict Strength + 1 damage (difficulty 5 to hit); against Wurm-tainted creatures, the wounds are aggravated. Each successful strike also drains one Gnosis point from the foe. The *d’siah* are particularly effective against serpentlike enemies or even the vampiric Followers of Set; when striking these foes, the *d’siah* inflicts Strength + 4 damage, all aggravated.



## Sarcophagus of Anpw

Level 3, Gnosis 4

This item is used by Striders who know they will be facing vampires, particularly Followers of Set. The user sleeps in the sarcophagus for eight hours and spends a Gnosis point. Upon rising, the Strider is effectively "dead" for the following 24 hours. She is unaffected by supernatural powers designed specifically to affect mortals (Eyes of the Serpent becomes much less useful when used against dead things). The Garou is unaffected by illnesses, heart seizures and the like (including Thaumaturgical spells designed to simulate such things). Because her pain receptors are dulled, wound penalties are reduced by one. Also, since she is partially dead, all difficulties to enter the Dark Umbra are reduced by one. Finally, the Strider's blood tastes clotted and foul, like the blood of the Risen; vampires seeking to drain the Strider must succeed in a Willpower roll (difficulty 9) or immediately gag up any blood imbibed.

Note that this "life-in-death" state is extremely unnatural; Garou only use this item in emergencies. Garou who make excessive use of the Sarcophagus may well cross permanently into the realms of the dead.

## Cheops' Brick

Level 4, Gnosis 5

This brick did not actually come from the pyramid of Cheops, but the name has stuck. In any event, Cheops' Brick, when placed in the center of a campsite which is then warded against evil by a competent Theurge (Rank 2+, Rituals Knowledge 3+, one hour's time to draw the warding glyphs), will manifest a mystical field warding against creatures of the Wyrms (including Followers of Set). Such creatures must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) to penetrate the ward and must subtract two from all Dice Pools if they do penetrate it.

## Mask of the Assanbonam

Level 4, Gnosis 5

This interesting fetish was brought back by Strider travelers to sub-Saharan Africa. It is an oblong ebony mask carved in the shape of a leering demonic visage. Its power may only be invoked on a moonless night. The mask allows the wearer to become an insubstantial, wraithlike creature seemingly made of smoke — except for the mask, which not only remains substantial, but becomes animated.

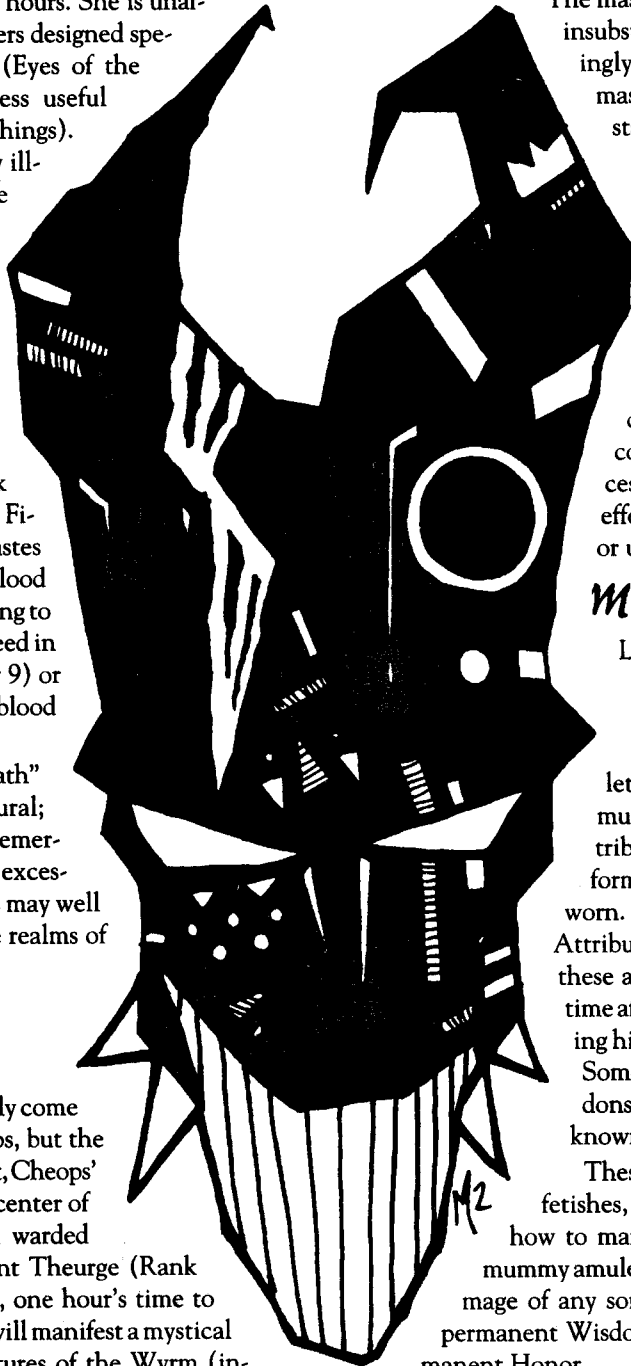
The wearer may fly at double ground speed. He may not manipulate objects, but may hold them in the mask's mouth. The wearer may use the mask to bite in combat, inflicting damage as a Hispo. Finally, because the wearer is mostly insubstantial, any dodge successes scored by the wearer count double (i.e., three dodge successes effectively act as six). These effects last until he removes the mask, or until daybreak.

## Mummy Amulets

Level 5, Gnosis 8

Striders have long fostered alliances with mummies, and a few have been bequeathed mystic amulets by their mummy companions. A mummy amulet raises a particular Attribute to 6 (in Homid form; other forms adjust accordingly) while it is worn. Each amulet is dedicated to one Attribute, and one only. Wearing one of these amulets for more than a scene at a time affects a Garou adversely, often driving him into Harano for weeks at a time. Some also whisper that when a Garou dons an amulet, he makes his presence known to the Bane Mummies.

These are among the most prized of fetishes, especially since no Garou knows how to manufacture them. Those who let a mummy amulet fall into the hands of a vampire or mage of any sort immediately lose two points of permanent Wisdom Renown and one point of permanent Honor.



# Totems of the Eternal Wanderers

## Totem of Respect

### Scarab

**Background Cost:** 4

The quiet burrower, Scarab builds and destroys with relentless patience. Symbol of the ancient pharaohs, Scarab is equally honored by Striders for her tenacity and timelessness.

**Traits:** Scarab grants her followers *Enigmas 2* and decreases by one their difficulties to breach the Gauntlet. Additionally, Scarab can impart *Pharaoh's Majesty*: Once per story, a Strider may invoke Scarab and be treated as though he has *Pure Breed 5*. Finally, Scarab teaches victory through patience: Followers of Scarab who spend Willpower while making extended rolls may add two successes rather than one, but only if they spend the Willpower on the second or later turn of the roll in question.

**Ban:** Followers of Scarab must help defend a threatened caern, no matter what the odds. They must also seek to improve the reputation of the Silent Striders, usually by example.

## Totems of War

### Crocodile

**Background Cost:** 4

The patient lurker in the muck, Crocodile is placid in peace, yet terrible in war. Striders honor Crocodile for his balance and his perfect control over his frenzies.

**Traits:** Crocodile's brood gain *Stealth 2* and an extra soak die versus all attacks not involving fire or cold. His children also gain the ability to communicate in the Mokolé tongue (this is automatic and does not involve the expenditure of a Linguistics dot). Finally, Crocodile's brood add an extra damage die to all bite attacks.

**Ban:** Followers of Crocodile may not attack or seek to bring harm to Mokolé. Garou who assist the werealligators are more likely to earn Crocodile's favor, although other Garou may well regard them as traitors.

### Tsetse Fly

**Background Cost:** 5

Cruel and sinister, Tsetse Fly is the implacable mistress of vengeance. Once angered, she will not rest until her foe is slain. Her bite is virtually impossible to defend against, and she prefers to strike when a foe least suspects. Striders following Tsetse Fly are relentless foes, nurturing thou-

sands of years of frustration and anger into a simmering stew of Rage, then lashing out from the shadows.

**Traits:** Striders following Tsetse Fly gain *Medicine* at 2 and can put the "mojo" on their enemies. They must truly hate the enemy (i.e., must spend at least five Rage points against him), must have a piece of his body or a personal effect, and must make a *Manipulation + Intimidation* roll (difficulty of the opponent's Willpower). Success inflicts the mojo curse on the foe; all the foe's Dice Pools are halved for a duration of one night per success scored. A botch turns the mojo against the caster for a night. A mojo may only be cast on a given foe once per year (Tsetse Fly expects her followers to take advantage of a weakened enemy!).

**Ban:** Followers of Tsetse Fly must always gain revenge against their enemies. Additionally, because Tsetse Fly is seen as an unclean totem, followers of Tsetse Fly subtract one point from any temporary Honor rewards they gain.

## Totems of Wisdom

### Ibis

**Background Cost:** 5

The ancient bird of Thoth, Ibis imparts wisdom and aids recollection. Striders revere Ibis, for only through him may they regain even a fraction of their sundered memories.

**Traits:** Followers of Ibis gain the power of *Eidetic Memory* — they may make an *Intelligence* roll (difficulty variable) to remember anything seen, heard or smelled, however briefly. Also, the difficulties of all magic used against them (including mage magick, hedge magic and vampire Thaumaturgy, but not witch, werewolf or changing powers) are increased by one.

**Ban:** Followers of Ibis may never harm a bird (this applies to Corax as well). They must also seek out lost and forgotten lore.

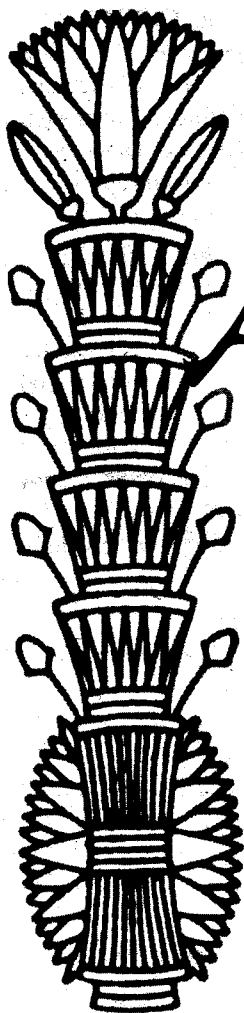
### Sphinx

**Background Cost:** 6

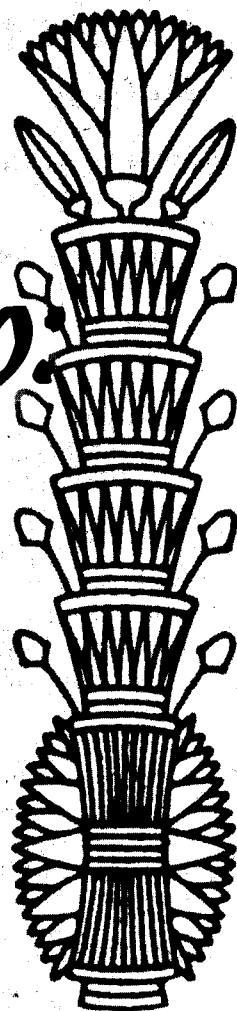
The eternally vigilant Sphinx is the guardian of the ages, and eternity is bound in its ancient riddle. For Striders, Sphinx serves as a reminder of all that they have lost and all they hope to regain one day. Strider Theurges often petition Sphinx, seeking portents of the impending Apocalypse, but many who delve too far into the unknowable sink into Harano and worse.

**Traits:** Followers of Sphinx gain an extra dot of *Wits*. Additionally, they may spend a Willpower point once per story and thereby gain any *Knowledge* at 6; this *Knowledge* lasts for a scene.

**Ban:** If a follower of Sphinx loses or refuses a riddle contest, she sinks into a deep Harano curable only by a successful Umbral quest for forgotten lore.



# Appendix Two Vagabonds

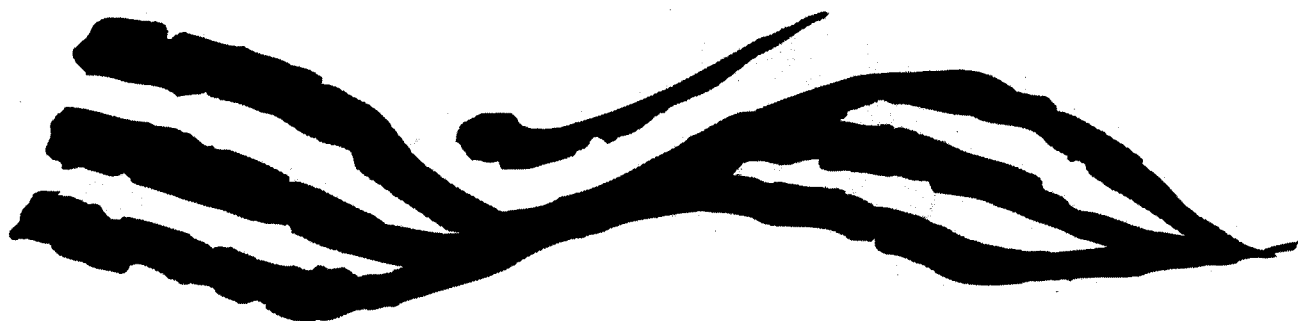


*If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.*

— Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

Other Garou often have difficulty understanding the reclusive and taciturn Silent Striders. This is only compounded by the individuality of the Striders, who vary greatly in temperament and beliefs. One Strider might be an embittered warrior seeking to avenge a fallen pack, while his current companion might be a gentle talesinger who shares her knowledge with those who simply ask. Since they both likely keep their feelings hidden, onlookers tend to become all the more confused.

Of course, all Striders share a common bond. They are all outcasts, and they are constantly haunted by the spirits of the human dead. This combination usually sets them apart, driving them to the solitude so familiar to the tribe. Those who reach out to a Strider often find that the haunted Garou doesn't extend friendship easily. However, when a Strider befriends someone, she does so for life, and often turns up at the most unexpected times to lend aid to her companion.





# Tricks-the-Dead

**Quote:** *One of us will dance in Hell tonight. Are you game?*

**Prelude:** You were born amid the Louisiana bayous. Mama died in childbirth, and Papa could be right mean when he had a mind to. Sometimes, if he wasn't too drunk or he hadn't lost too much money gambling, you found you could distract him. Hell, you could beat him at five-card stud with your eyes closed. But he was a mean drunk. You had to leave after your First Change — even the sheriffs in this parish weren't gonna take lightly the sight of Papa all strewn every which way and yonder, belt and guts all mixed up till you didn't rightly know which was which.

You were hitchhiking down the lonely roads one night when you heard the muffled pad of footsteps behind you, and felt a fetid breath on the nape of your neck. Without looking behind you, you greeted your visitant in as cheerfully nonchalant a voice as you could muster. It followed at your heels, forever trying to get you to look at it. Whenever it whistled, low and mad like a whippoorwill, you whistled back, mimicking its call and adding your own flourishes. It started mimicking your mimicry then, a grotesque parody of "Dueling Banjos," and the game was on. You matched it note for eerie note, whistling, walking, until the first cockcrow greeted the Mississippi sunrise and you heard it vanish with a mournful wail.

You now know that even Things from Outside like to gamble. And just like Papa, they can be made to lose. Now you travel from Wyrn-caern to Wyrn-caern, challenging the inhabitants to riddle games, fiddling contests and, above all else, a good game of five-card stud. The ante's your soul, sure, but you've always got a royal flush up your sleeve.

**Concept:** You prey on the Wyrn's own malevolent arrogance, tricking it at the very games it plays with others. You have become expert at riddles, conundrums and all manner of games of wits.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Self-assurance is your poker face, for without it you'll be damned for eternity in short order. You exude a light, breezy caprice, but deep down lurks an inner terror at all the monsters you've confronted. Still, you know your place in the scheme of things, and you wouldn't give up your avocation for Realm and Umbra alike.

**Equipment:** Knapsack, denim clothing, bus schedule, gris-gris bag.





# Haunted Soul

**Quote:** (Cackle) *Are you MAD, man? Can you not SEE? It comes — it's just over your left shoulder...!*

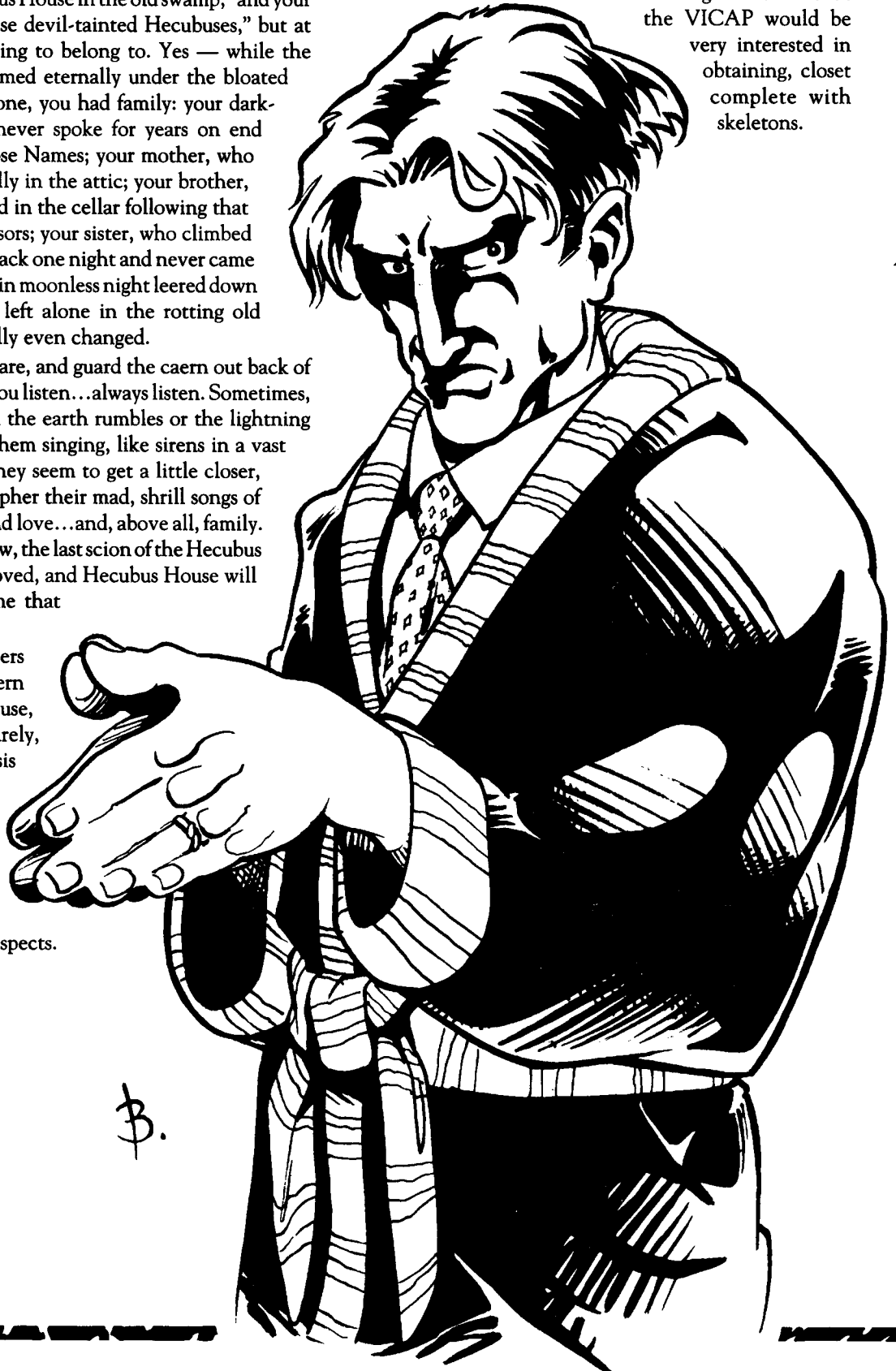
**Prelude:** You were comparatively lucky for a Silent Strider, for you always knew the security of home and the comforts of family. Oh, granted, your home was referred to as "the haunted Hecubus House in the old swamp," and your family reviled as "those devil-tainted Hecubuses," but at least you had something to belong to. Yes — while the other werewolves roamed eternally under the bloated moon, forlorn and alone, you had family: your dark-browed father, who never spoke for years on end except to mutter Those Names; your mother, who sat and rocked eternally in the attic; your brother, who had to be chained in the cellar following that incident with the scissors; your sister, who climbed down the well in the back one night and never came back up. When a certain moonless night leered down and you were finally left alone in the rotting old mansion, nothing really even changed.

Now you sit, and stare, and guard the caern out back of Hecubus House, and you listen...always listen. Sometimes, high and far off when the earth rumbles or the lightning blazes, you can hear them singing, like sirens in a vast tempest. Every year they seem to get a little closer, and now you can decipher their mad, shrill songs of blood and devotion and love...and, above all, family. Soon enough, you know, the last scion of the Hecubus line will go to his beloved, and Hecubus House will collapse into the slime that gave it birth.

**Concept:** The Striders tolerate you as the caern warder of Hecubus House, but even they come rarely, for they find the Gnosis received from it...distasteful. You are never lonely, however, for your family and their...friends...often come to pay their...respects.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Try desperately (and fail miserably) to come across as gracious and in control. Invite werewolves to sit and engage in civilized conversation that inevitably disintegrates into hysterical gibbering.

**Equipment:** Library with many a quaint and curious volume of forbidden lore, study with leering ancestral portraits, antique furniture (bloodstained), refrigerator containing...traces...that the VICAP would be very interested in obtaining, closet complete with skeletons.



# SILENT STRIDERS™

Name:  
 Player:  
 Chronicle:

Breed: Homid  
 Auspice: Theurge  
 Camp:

Pack Name:  
 Pack Totem:  
 Concept: Haunted Soul

## Attributes

### Physical

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

### Social

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

### Mental

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

## Abilities

### Talents

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

### Skills

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

### Knowledges

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

## Advantages

### Backgrounds

Allies ●●●●●  
 Fetish ●●●●●  
 Rites ●●●●●  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 00000  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 00000

### Gifts

Smell of Man \_\_\_\_\_  
 Spirit Speech \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sense Wyrms \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### Gifts

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### Renown

#### Glory

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

#### Honor

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

#### Wisdom

● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

### Rank

### Rage

● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

### Gnosis

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

### Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

### Health

Bruised   
 Hurt -1   
 Injured -1   
 Wounded -2   
 Mauled -2   
 Crippled -5   
 Incapacitated

### Weakness

HAUNTED:  
 STEPPING SIDWAYS  
 BOTCHES ATTRACT  
 GHOSTS

# Spirit of Vengeance

**Quote:** *Woe unto thee, transgressor! I have seen your face flickering in the mere-fires; I have heard your name borne on owls' wings. Tonight a great doom comes for you. There is no escape!*

**Prelude:** Sin. It surrounded you from the moment of your unhallowed spawning — slimy as the afterbirth of your Litany-breaking mother, indelible as the deed of the shiftless wretch with whom she whelped you.

You left the caern early, with little fanfare and even less goodwill. You slunk into the city late one night, hoping to erase your existence in the faceless throngs. But, far from being the Lethé you sought, the city took your sin and magnified it a thousandfold. Sin leered all around you: from tenements, from skyscrapers, from department-store windows and trashcan fires. This was the Blight, even more blighted than you — and nowhere near as remorseful. And yet your cousins spat on you, even as they allowed this abomination to exist!

Then you knew what your penance was to be. Years of eluding your septmates' mockery had made you very good at hiding, and your cursed ruin of a body was more than capable of eradicating the sins that so mirrored your own. A high-powered executive was the first to die; his ingratiating

charm had won him a vice-presidency, but you saw the Defiler's grin leering from his All-American face. Garnering evidence of various sorts, you began leaving messages on his private voice mail. On the fifth night, when you could smell the terror leaking from him, you came for him. The satisfaction you felt at erasing his blandly beautiful features nearly erased your shame at your own wreckage of a face.

**Concept:** You are a metis through and through; even Nosferatu would blanch to look at you. You are obsessed with punishing the wicked, particularly those Wyrms-tainted individuals in positions of power and thus immune to the law's long arm. You have grown increasingly melodramatic in your dispensing of "justice" — though, of course, you are saving your most cinematic embellishments for your noblest deed — your own suicide.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Speak in doleful and lugubrious tones of the vengeance to come. Revel in the terror of your victims, rattling out litanies of their unpunished crimes and promising full-scale restitution. You often like to forewarn a target in Homid form by day, then come for him in Crinos by night.

You sometimes fixate on purity, such as that found in small children and beautiful, unattainable maidens. You will lurk outside your "charges" windows by night, guarding their sleep and gazing in on them with wistful longing.

**Metis Deformity:** Hideous

**Equipment:** Opera cloak, mask, broad-brimmed hat, dark suit, bandages, instruments of vengeance, sunglasses.





# SILENT SCRIDERS™

Name:  
Player:  
Chronicle:

Breed: Metis  
Auspice: Philodox  
Camp:

Pack Name:  
Pack Totem:  
Concept: Spirit of Vengeance

## 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 ●●●●●  
Leadership ●●●●●  
Melee ●●●●●  
Performance ●●●●●  
Repair ●●●●●  
Stealth ●●●●●  
Survival ●●●●●

### Knowledges

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

## Advantages

### Backgrounds

Contacts ●●●●●  
Fetish ●●●●●  
●●●●●  
●●●●●  
●●●●●

### Gifts

Sense Wurm  
Speed of Thought  
Truth of Gaia  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Gifts

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Renown

### Glory

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### Honor

● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### Wisdom

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### Rank

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Rage

● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Gnosis

● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Health

Bruised   
Hurt -1   
Injured -1   
Wounded -2   
Mauled -2   
Crippled -5   
Incapacitated

## Weakness

HAUNTED:  
STEPPING SIDWAYS  
BOTCHES ATTRACT  
GHOSTS

# Gypsy Chanteuse

**Quote:** *This one goes out to Meredith — wherever she may be.*

**Prelude:** The road was always your home. Your mother bounced you from trailer park to ramshackle apartment, city to city, boyfriend to boyfriend (hers, not yours — though several of the scumbags tried to get a two-for-one deal). You visited every state in the Union before your 16th birthday; you knew the sun-scorched promise of Route 66, the cacophony of the Jersey Turnpike and the pine-shrouded endlessness of I-75. When you ran away at 14, it seemed only natural.

You hitchhiked and hoboed from city to city, singing for food (but refusing to do anything else, no matter who tried to force you). You grew distant and guarded, wearing the same mask for officers and would-be pimps, social workers and shelter volunteers and drug dealers alike. A young girl like you had to — society had grown mobile and fluid, like a human ocean; but, like the ocean, there were sharks aplenty to surprise the unwary. You became adept at defending yourself, both emotionally and physically — bus stations and bars were no place for someone your age.

The Change happened at 16; in a way, you had known it was coming. You ran with the spirits and the Lunes under the gibbous moon, and for the first time in your life you felt as though you had a home. All the half-formed street-poet verse you'd scrawled coalesced into something greater and immaculately beautiful, and your first recitation of Shu Horus' *Legacy* moved even the eldest Ahroun to tears.

You quickly moved on after your Rite of Passage. When you performed at a nameless hole-in-the-wall Philly bar, you floored the locals, attracting a band in the process. Now you and your band travel from city to city, eternal vagabonds, singing songs of the endless, lonely road.

**Concept:** You sing of Gaia, but a different Gaia from that of your Fianna cousins. You sing of Her ancient mystery, of subtle longing and secrets never shared. Your songs are moody, wistful, driving your listeners nearly to Harano, but in the process purifying them and reassuring them that others understand what they feel.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are guarded and inscrutable with those you don't know; this translates into an aura of enchanting mystery when you perform. Offstage, you are demure and impeccably polite, though you always refuse interviews.

**Equipment:** Jewelry, quasi-Egyptian clothing.

*Silent Striders*

# SILENT SCRIDERS™

Name:  
 Player:  
 Chronicle:

Breed: Homid  
 Auspice: Galliard  
 Camp:

Pack Name:  
 Pack Totem:  
 Concept: Gypsy Chanteuse

## Attributes

### Physical

### Social

### Mental

Strength \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●  
 Dexterity \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●  
 Stamina \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●

Charisma \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●  
 Manipulation \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●  
 Appearance \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●

Perception \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●  
 Intelligence \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●  
 Wits \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●

## Abilities

### Talents

### Skills

### Knowledges

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

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

Computer \_\_\_\_\_ ●0000  
 Enigmas \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●  
 Investigation \_\_\_\_\_ 00000  
 Law \_\_\_\_\_ ●0000  
 Linguistics \_\_\_\_\_ 00000  
 Medicine \_\_\_\_\_ 00000  
 Occult \_\_\_\_\_ 00000  
 Politics \_\_\_\_\_ 00000  
 Rituals \_\_\_\_\_ ●0000  
 Science \_\_\_\_\_ 00000

## Advantages

### Backgrounds

### Gifts

### Gifts

Allies \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●  
 Contacts \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●●●  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 00000  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 00000  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 00000

Mindsight \_\_\_\_\_  
 Persuasion \_\_\_\_\_  
 Speed of Thought \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### Renown

### Rage

### Health

#### Glory

● ● 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

● ● ● ● 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Bruised

#### Honor

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

● ● ● 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Hurt -1

#### Wisdom

● 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

● ● ● 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Injured -1

#### Rank

### Willpower

● ● ● ● ● 0 0 0 0 0

Wounded -2

Mauled -2

Crippled -5

Incapacitated

### Weakness

HAUNTED:  
 STEPPING SIDWAYS  
 BOTCHES ATTRACT  
 GHOSTS

# Black Dog

**Quote:** (mournful, eerie howl reverberating over the moor like the scream of the damned)

**Prelude:** You remember little of your pre-Change life: scratches behind the ears, saucers of milk, children's laughter on the dales, the rustic comfort of a Midlands cottage. You remember the events leading up to the Change quite well: the slashes on the walls as the Wyrms forced their way in, the saucers of milk turned to rivers of blood, the children screaming on and on and on, the cottage and its inhabitants torn asunder and left in mangled ruin.

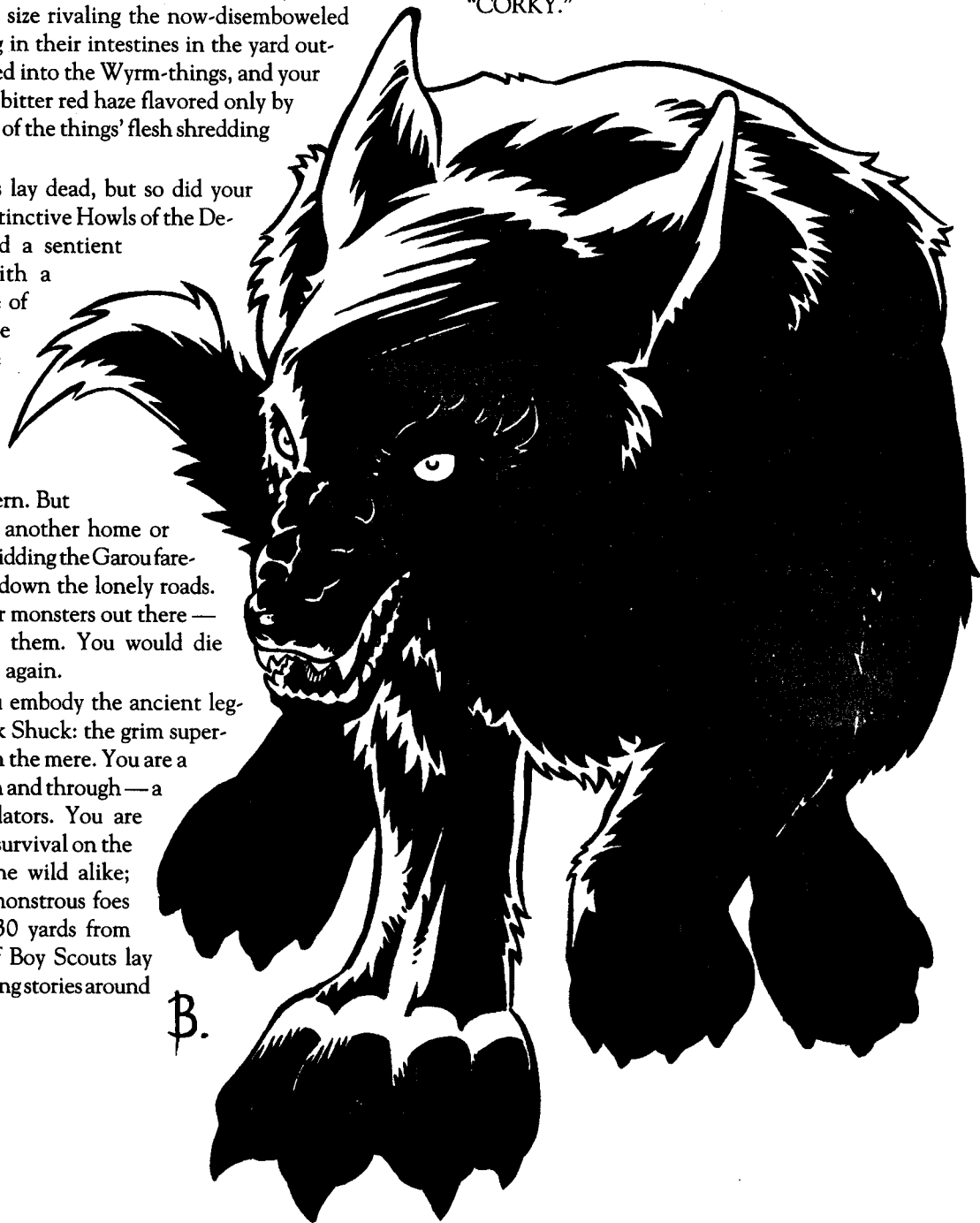
The smell of your owners' blood inflamed you, and you swelled to a size rivaling the now-disemboweled ponies twitching in their intestines in the yard outside. You pounced into the Wyrms, and your world faded to a bitter red haze flavored only by the sour foulness of the things' flesh shredding under your jaws.

The intruders lay dead, but so did your owners. Your instinctive Howls of the Departed combined a sentient being's grief with a loyal dog's sense of failure. The mournful noise attracted the attention of a passing Silent Strider, who took you to a caern. But you didn't want another home or another family. Bidding the Garou farewell, you set off down the lonely roads. There were other monsters out there — you could smell them. You would die before you failed again.

**Concept:** You embody the ancient legends of the Black Shuck: the grim supernatural hound on the mere. You are a guardian through and through — a predator of predators. You are adept at solitary survival on the streets and in the wild alike; you have slain monstrous foes in silence, not 30 yards from where a party of Boy Scouts lay laughing and telling stories around the campfire.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are even lonelier than most Striders, and even less hopeful. (If only the humans knew what lurked just out of sight — why aren't they more careful?) Still, the dog within you is strong, and it is your function to be the humans' eyes, ears and — when necessary — teeth and talons. You have grown distant and detached from humans and Garou alike, but occasionally approach someone small and innocent, like a young lost child, play with him and gently shepherd him back to his anxious family. Your gentle demeanor sheds like your fur when facing Wyrms; for them you have neither patience nor mercy.

**Equipment:** Spiked collar, tag bearing the inscription "CORKY."



# SILENT STRIDERS™

Name:  
Player:  
Chronicle:

Breed: Lupus  
Auspice: Ahroun  
Camp:

Pack Name:  
Pack Totem:  
Concept: Black Dog

## 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 ○○○○○  
Leadership ○○○○○  
Melee ○○○○○  
Performance ○○○○○  
Repair ○○○○○  
Stealth ●●●●○  
Survival ●●●●○

### Knowledges

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

## Advantages

### Backgrounds

Allies ○○○○○  
Pure Breed ●●●●○  
Rites ●○○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○

### Gifts

Heightened Senses  
Razor Claws  
Sense Wurm  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Gifts

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Renown

### Glory

● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### Honor

● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### Wisdom

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### Rank

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Rage

● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Gnosis

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

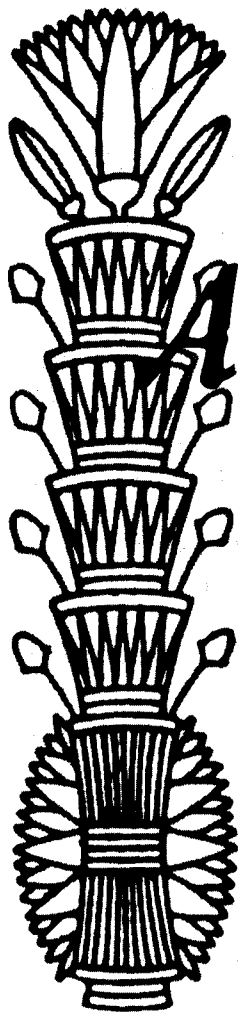
## Health

Bruised   
Hurt -1   
Injured -1   
Wounded -2   
Mauled -2   
Crippled -5   
Incapacitated

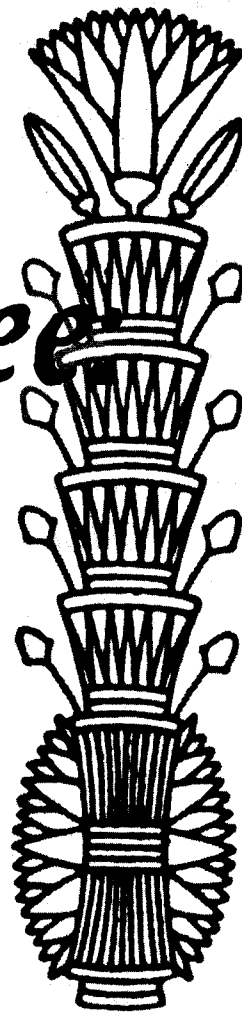
## Weakness

HAUNTED:  
STEPPING SIDWAYS  
BOTCHES ATTRACT  
GHOSTS





# Appendix Three Trailblazers



Although the Silent Striders rarely travel or congregate in numbers, they acknowledge their heroic and infamous just as the other tribes do theirs. A renowned Strider hero might have to wait a while to sing of her deeds at the next moot, but word has always traveled quickly among the Garou. Calliard has entered a moot (or even a concolation!) to sing of the deeds of his pack, only to find the Silent Striders present nod and smile helpfully reminding him of any details he has neglected to mention.

For the Silent Striders, to be truly silent is short-spoken, their names should become as legends, the champions of the Silver Fangs. When they travel freely from sept to sept, they certainly have opportunity to casually mention their tribemates' exploits to any number of Garou. But the Striders know that were they to play themselves up so, the other tribes' pride would begin to rankle — and soon every Garou would carefully watch the Striders, just to see if they were as truly impressive as the tales say.

As is, the Striders mention their noblest and wisest only when it is proper to do so. But word still travels, and although Strider heroes (and villains) seem no more numerous than those of any other tribe, their fame does seem to stretch a little farther. Therefore, it's not unusual that Captain Wendigo have heard the name of Buries-the-Dead, an African Strider who has killed numerous vampires and two Abominations (one of which was a member of the infamous Black Hand). Similarly, the Australian Garou have heard tales of Kuro, a Blackpaw who successfully crossed *Requiem* from end to end, and of Mushi Faster-than-Death, who has braved the darkest corners of the Dark Umbra.

Gaia recognizes her own, and her children follow suit. The following Striders have earned their place in legendry, whether for good or ill. No matter what else, they will be remembered long after they have vanished beyond the Paths of the Dead. Until Set's curse is lifted, it is as much as they could ask for.



## *Shu Heru — Shu Horus*

Striders all across the globe revere the ancient Egyptian Shu Heru, who led the tribe into its exile. Although his name is all-too-often remembered in the tongues of the conquerors, he is hailed as the mightiest Strider in peace and in war. He counseled his tribe to treat with the mummies when they were first born, and he was one of the few Garou leaders to establish a temporary truce with Bastet and Mokolé alike. He also was a proven slayer of the hot-blooded vampires of ancient times, and destroyed almost countless children of Set. Shu Horus even eventually did battle against the Antediluvian himself, Set the Ruler, Set the Usurper.

Alas, he and the tribe were cursed for their pains, and Set could hardly have put a greater doom on the defiant Striders. Yet Shu Heru's strength was so great that even in his tribe's darkest hour, he was able to lead them to their new lives. Although most tales of Shu Horus end with his tribe's exile, Strider Galliards know that his deeds of valor did not end when he forever left the land of Khem.

It is unrecorded where and when this legend among Garou died. And even today, his descendants and tribesfolk curse Set's name, for the ancient vampire's malison caused no greater ill than severing the Silent Striders from the guiding spirit of their greatest hero.

## Dic Stryker

If adventure had a name in the *fin de siecle* '30s, it was Vic Stryker. With his companions — the Son of Ether genius Professor Emil Zoltan and the merrily enigmatic eshu changeling Vesadda — Stryker wandered the globe in the service of Gaia, Garou and country. Whether smashing Setite skullduggery in Cairo, fighting ferocious fomori in Hong Kong, mangling the Machiavellian machinations of the Nazi Get of Fenris Blut-krieg in Amsterdam, or indulging in a simultaneous Parisian dalliance with the Lasombra *antitribu* Lucita and Marlene Dietrich, Vic Stryker was the red-blooded werewolf for the job. The apex of Stryker's career came during the notorious Malachite Scarab Incident, when he met True Love in the form of Samantha Westcott, a feisty Fianna Kinfolk with eyes you could fall into and a left hook that could rock a Crinos-shifted pug back into Homid (as Stryker found out when he called her "dame").

Then, in the '40s, the real world caught up. An impersonal barrage of Nazi shrapnel brought an explosive end to Stryker's uncanny luck, ruining both his mobility and his self-confidence. Professor Zoltan, returning to the Ukraine to assist in the Rodina's defense, made the mistake of being taken alive during a Sabbat attack; he spent his last nights as an agonized "experiment" in the torture-dungeons of the Fiend Sascha Vykos. Vesadda, now cynical and embittered, returned to India to protest British colonialism. He ended up with a heart so full of hate he was Undone — his faerie seeming vanished forevermore. As for Stryker's beloved Samantha, well, she took sick of polio and died in the postwar years — Gaia calling back one of Her own, but it was a hard thing nonetheless.

Worst of all, when the partially recovered Stryker returned to heroism in the early '50s, a McCarthy-dominated Congress declared him a "loose cannon" affiliated with "questionable elements" (particularly the Russian Zoltan) and called him to Washington for a hearing. Unable to reveal (or explain) his supernatural origin, Stryker was instead denounced as a Communist, arrested on trumped-up conspiracy charges and sentenced to a year in prison. Upon release, the embittered Stryker emigrated to Tangiers, there to lose himself in Harano and heroin. During one particularly bad smack binge, Stryker saw a ghostly Anubis jackal leave his body, and he knew that he had lost the wolf.

Unable to face his former Garou companions, Vic eventually returned to the streets of New York as a derelict. It was there, late one Friday night, that his bleary eyes lit on a mugger, eyes glazed with PCP and bloodlust, holding a pistol to a terrified nun. Wolf or no, Vic Stryker couldn't just stand by. With no Gifts or Delirium to aid him, and all too vulnerable to the mugger's Saturday Night Special, he hurled himself at the salacious villain. The satisfaction he felt at laying out the crook with one punch exceeded any of



his pride at rediscovering artifacts, rescuing princesses, trekking through Horizon Realms or fearlessly slaying vampires. And, though his ears weren't so good anymore (and he refused to use a damn Weaver-spawned hearing aid), he could have sworn he heard an approving howl in the distance.

And so Stryker spent part of his golden twilight as a private investigator, setting up a small office near the Central Park Caern. Oh, he never met another Samantha (though he tried). But even without Methuselaha to be put down, Wyrmspawn to slay or Nephandi dictators to overthrow, Vic could still hold his own against the garden-variety human scum which, when it came down to it, really caused most of the world's problems.

Stryker, a feisty nonagenarian, now patrols the quaint rural Maine township of Pleasant Port as vigilantly as he ever did a Strider bawn. Despite everything, he has the constitution of a man half his age (as no few of Pleasant Port's dames — er, ladies — will attest). Should evil rear its head, should Wyrmspawned terror threaten the innocent, Vic Stryker'll show those minions of darkness that a good right cross is a match for Bane fetishes and Black Spiral talons any day.



## *Bennu*

Though barely 18, the young Philodox Bennu bears a weighty responsibility, for she embodies the hopes of Striders everywhere. Indeed, the word “Bennu” is Ancient Egyptian for “hope,” and the mere mention of her name is often enough to lift the worst Harano from the old, tired wolves loitering around the caern fires.

Few of the cynical Strider elders suspected that the fragile, wide-eyed girl brought before them would survive her Rite of Passage, much less come to occupy a place of honor at their moots. However, during the climax of her rite — a pitched battle with a Setite coterie — Bennu shocked her packmates by crying out in Ancient Egyptian, intoning a chant that sent the eldest Setite priestess howling back into the darkness of her temple. Continuing to chant, Bennu led the pack into the ranks of the now-demoralized Setites, slaying them all.

Bennu, it turned out, had channeled the spirit of the great Shu Horus himself — a miracle among the Striders, whose lack of ability to contact their ancestors had plagued them since the onset of their diaspora. Amazed Strider Theurges determined that Bennu alone among the tribe had the power to invoke Strider Past Lives. Why she, of all Striders, had escaped Great Set’s curse was unknown, nor did the tribe leaders care — here was a living link to their past and a possibility to claim their future.

Now Bennu possesses a station far outweighing her tender years and unworldliness. She has made her share of enemies in the process — jealous pack rivals would relish her fall almost as much as the tribe’s enemies would. In particular, Sarrasine and Ghede, two powerful Setites, have vowed her destruction. Still, she is guarded night and day by a cadre of vigilant Ahroun, who would willingly give their lives and souls for what Bennu represents — the possibility, for the first time in millennia, that the Silent Striders can reclaim their Sundered heritage and finally find a place to rest.

## Abnatha the Laughing One

Silent Striders grow silent indeed when the name of Abnatha the Laughing One is voiced in their presence. Indeed, Abnatha's name is among the closest thing the normally placid Striders have to "fightin' words." Once a respected Theurge, the disgraced Abnatha walks so close to the Wurm as to be almost indistinguishable from it.

Formerly, Abnatha was viewed by the tribal elders as an up-and-coming hero; he displayed a sagacity well beyond his years and became renowned for his insight into matters of the spirit world. Abnatha carried a dark and terrible secret, though. A devout follower of the Eaters of the Dead camp, Abnatha supplemented his prodigious wisdom with necrophagous knowledge gleaned from the devoured brains of the dead. In his hubris he grew addicted to the secret knowledge buried deep amid juicy gray matter. He began to steal into Garou gravesites late at night, eating the brains of dead heroes for no reason save to benefit from their accumulated lore. He dug up human gravesites as well, voyeuristically sifting through the lives of complete strangers. And, worst of all, he began to eat the increasingly tasty cerebra of slain Wurm-foes, reveling in the charnel knowledge taken so intimately into himself.

Such behavior left Abnatha open to psychic assault, and one enterprising Bane-minion of the Defiler invaded Abnatha's body in the form of a disease. This Bane-spawned illness manifested as a virulent strain of *kuru* — the exceedingly rare ailment previously manifested only in the Foré tribe of New Guinea. Contracted by the ingestion of parasites found exclusively in rotting human brain tissue, *kuru* normally induces a painful and lethal neurological deterioration. The symptoms of *kuru* are some of the most grotesque known — the victim begins to laugh neurotically and uncontrollably, in a fashion similar to Tourette's Syndrome. This laughter intensifies during *kuru*'s middle stages, when the victim's mind and reason deteriorate, and continues until the disease has run its inevitably fatal course.

Abnatha, however, was Garou, not human. The *kuru* infection coursed through his nervous system like an acid, but failed to kill him outright. Indeed, Abnatha managed to retain some shreds of health and sentience. Moreover, while the Bane-*kuru* certainly drove him into fits of lunacy worthy of a Black Spiral Dancer, Abnatha's intelligence *per se* was not affected — he remained as cunning as he had ever been. The disease's preliminary symptoms did afflict him, however — he began to laugh, convulsively and uncontrollably, shaking epileptically as spasm after spasm of hysterical mirth wrenched itself from his throat. He has not stopped laughing since — not even in his occasional bouts of nightmare-plagued sleep. Worse, the Bane-spirit riding him has dampened his judgment regarding just how "dormant" a brain "donor" has to be. Indeed, Abnatha has come to prefer the bouquet of brains extracted from living craniums.



Such practices could not be concealed forever, and the cannibal was declared outcast in short order. Now Abnatha wanders Realm and Umbra alike, often accompanied by a pack of rabid hyenas. His tittering, ululating call precedes him, while in his wake he often leaves entire villages of massacred humans, skulls cracked open, marrow sucked out and brain pans licked clean. He is technically Ronin and worse, and many sept wardens have placed him under sentence of death. But the fact that most of his carnage is directed toward Pentex employees, the performance of several acts of gruesome heroism in defense of Strider caerns, the fact that even Black Spiral Dancers hold him in dread, and pressure from hard-line Red Talons and Get of Fenris have kept Garou leaders from enforcing the death-hunt.



# SILENT SCRIDERS™

Name:  
Player:  
Chronicle:

Breed:  
Auspice:  
Camp:

Pack Name:  
Pack Totem:  
Concept:

## 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 ○○○○  
Leadership ○○○○  
Melee ○○○○  
Performance ○○○○  
Repair ○○○○  
Stealth ○○○○  
Survival ○○○○

### Knowledges

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

## Advantages

### Backgrounds

\_\_\_\_ ○○○○  
\_\_\_\_ ○○○○  
\_\_\_\_ ○○○○  
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### Gifts

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### Gifts

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## Renown

### Glory

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### Honor

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
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### Wisdom

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### Rank

□

## Rage

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Gnosis

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□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Willpower

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Health

Bruised   
Hurt -1   
Injured -1   
Wounded -2   
Mauled -2   
Crippled -5   
Incapacitated

## Weakness

HAUNTED:  
STEPPING SIDWAYS  
BOTCHES ATTRACT  
GHOSTS



# SILENT SCRIDERS™

Nature:

Demeanor:

## Merits & Flaws

| Merit | Type | Cost | Flaw | Type | Bonus |
|-------|------|------|------|------|-------|
|       |      |      |      |      |       |
|       |      |      |      |      |       |
|       |      |      |      |      |       |
|       |      |      |      |      |       |
|       |      |      |      |      |       |
|       |      |      |      |      |       |

## Expanded Background

Allies

Mentor

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Contacts

Pack Totem

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Kinfolk

Pure Breed

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## Possessions

## Experience

Gear (Carried) \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL:

Equipment (Owned) \_\_\_\_\_

Gained From: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sept

Name \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL SPENT: \_\_\_\_\_

Caern Location \_\_\_\_\_

Spent On: \_\_\_\_\_

Level \_\_\_\_\_ Type \_\_\_\_\_

Totem \_\_\_\_\_

Leader \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# SILENT STRIDERS™

## History

*Prelude*

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## Description

Age \_\_\_\_\_  
Hair \_\_\_\_\_  
Eyes \_\_\_\_\_  
Race \_\_\_\_\_  
Nationality \_\_\_\_\_  
Sex \_\_\_\_\_

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|        | Height | Weight |
|--------|--------|--------|
| Homid  | _____  | _____  |
| Glabro | _____  | _____  |
| Crinos | _____  | _____  |
| Hispo  | _____  | _____  |
| Lupus  | _____  | _____  |

*Battle Scars* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Metis Deformity* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Visuals

*Back Chart*

*Character Sketch*





# SILENT STRIDERS™

## TRIBEBOOK



*They say unto me, "Who art thou?"  
And I reply,  
"Nebt n Sheshmet is my name.  
I am one of those who walk alone.  
My heart has been purified by the sun  
My mind has been washed in the moon  
My breast burns with the flame of Ma'at.*

*"I have walked among the shadows of the forests.  
I have run across the dunes of red sand.  
I have danced on the snowy mountains.  
I have stepped upon the Paths of the Dead.*

*"Therefore, let the doors be opened before me,  
Let no lock nor seal restrain my progress,  
For I am Nebt of the Silent Striders,  
And I would pass."  
— Nebt Runs-over-Dead-Sands*

### Silent Striders Tribebook includes:

- The history and culture of the Silent Striders
- A "Legends of the Garou" comic book
- Five ready-to-play character templates



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