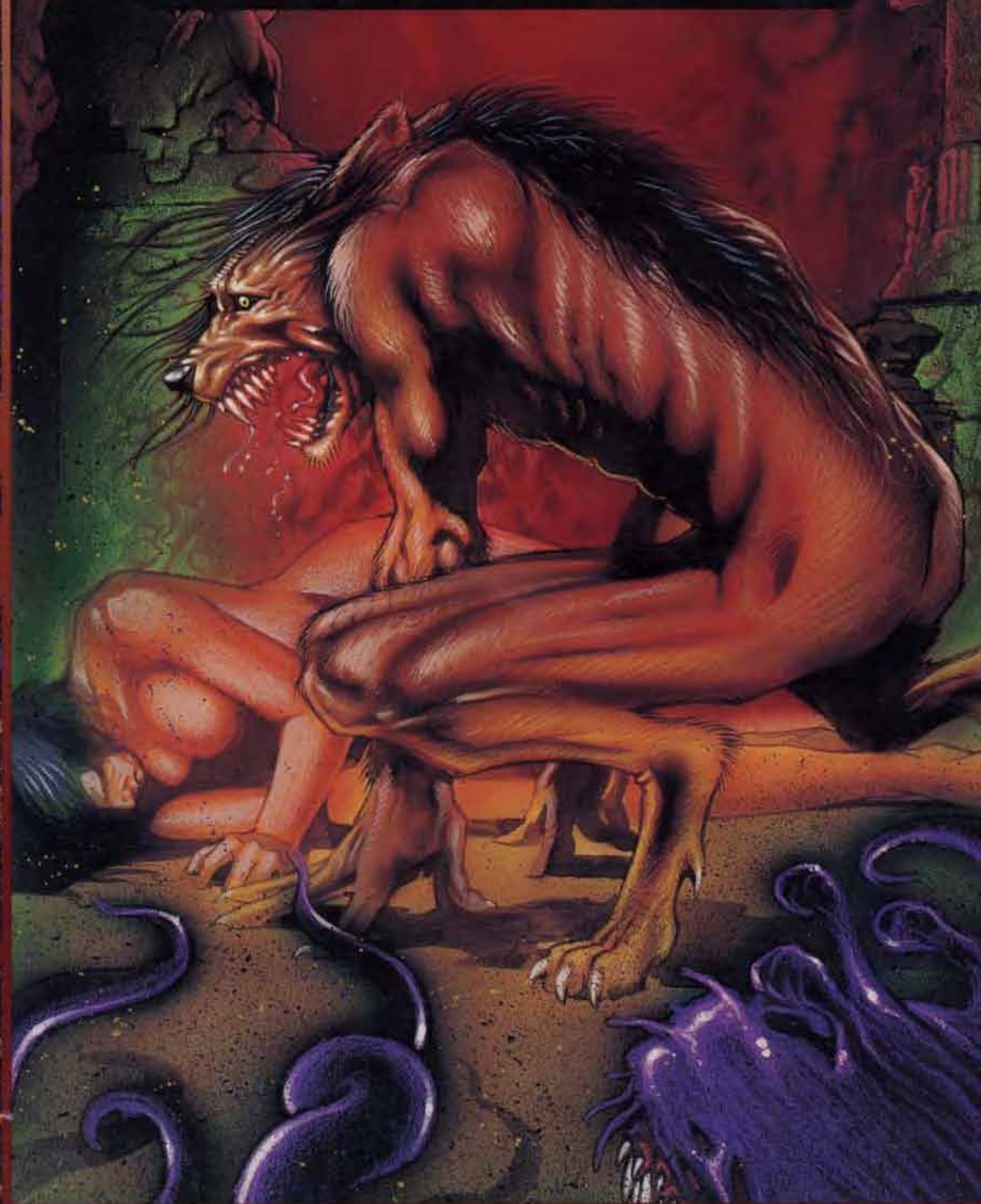


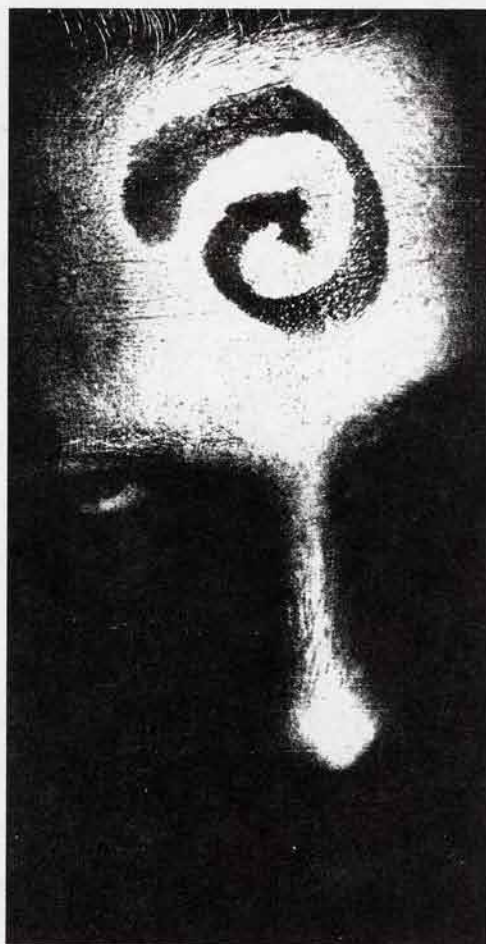
BOOK OF THE WYRM



*The Sourcebook of the Wyrms
for Werewolf: The Apocalypse™*



*By Bill Bridges, Steve Brown, William Spencer-Hale,
J. Morrison, and Richard Strong*





LEGENDS OF THE GAROU

The Balefires of Damnation

The fires of the great circle began to die, and the whispers of the night creatures echoed through the forest halls. An aura of ominous foreboding crept through the formerly joyous gathering. Guards were posted around the perimeters of the caern and all the inhabitants of this sacred place huddled closer for comfort from the secrets of the night.

The fires were rekindled to provide more light, but they did little to dispel the shroud upon the souls of those who huddled here. Tonight the Moon Dancers would spin the tale of an entire tribe's insidious ruin. This is a legend held close in the hearts of the Changing Breed, for it is a fate which may befall any.

After several moments of tense silence, all eyes looked to the myriad shadows of the forest. From the shadows this story is told, for the Garou believe that if evil cannot gaze upon you then it cannot steal you into the night. This tradition had been held dear since the White Howlers were stolen from Gaia and had seemed to provide protection since those dark times. It was a practice which would not be cast aside this night.

The disembodied voices of the Moon Dancers wafted into the night and the tale began:

It was a time like all times, when the societies of men were being torn asunder by the follies of greed and power. The minions of the Wyrms reveled in the suffering of mortals as the once-proud Roman Empire bled its last drops on the pages of history. It was a time of change, when evil tugged at the hearts of men and provided release from the

suffering of their brothers. This was the time when our brothers, the White Howlers, were taken from us by the seduction of the Wyrms and its minions. This is the tale of our greatest defeat.

The Romans were halted in their march by the tenacious White Howlers and their Pictish brethren, who built a great defense against the bloodthirsty legions. For many cycles of the moon the battles raged between these two great armies. The hills and valleys of Caledonia were soaked in blood and the sky was scarred by the smoke of a thousand funeral pyres. The screams of the dying were the symphonies to which these warriors danced.

As suddenly and violently as it had begun, all became quiet. For many long nights the two armies fell back to assess the damage and lick their wounds. The quiet toyed with the patience of the warriors; an anxiety which can only be understood by those who have bathed in death. The most horrible aspect of war is the frigid silence.

During this mock serenity, fomori used treachery and subterfuge to seduce the weary warriors and penetrate their defenses. They swiftly traveled the length of the land to ancient Wyrms strongholds which lay in the moors of Scotland. Harnessing all the rage which festered in their black souls, they began to reawaken those forgotten caerns of corruption. They set the many twisted Banes, so long imprisoned, loose on the world to harvest the dreams of men and extinguish them forever.

Once again, the silence was broken and war raged across the land. The rivers once more overflowed with the blood of desperate men. Unfortunately, war was not the only

atrocities these Banes brought to the Picts. They secretly began to possess them, and these newly created fomori seduced and bred with others, thus tainting the proud bloodline with the Wyrms' poison.

The years passed and the Picts were left unharmed by their former enemies, for their defeat was imminent. The fatal blow had been delivered, and the Picts could do naught but wait for their horrid, bestial children to be born, to carry their traditions into the darkness forever. Night closed on the Picts and all hope seemed lost.

Through the confusion and treachery of this abomination, the White Howlers came to the aid of their Pictish kinfolk and sought revenge upon the Wyrms for this outrage.

They traveled north to the Wyrms' pit where this horror had originated, carrying with them a great sorrow and rage for their tortured kinfolk. Once there, they did not hesitate in their endeavor, for they knew they would never again be able to find the courage for this task. With silent resignation, the White Howlers entered this pit of darkness.

Through the twisting tunnels they descended, basking in the glory of battle with all those who opposed them. It was not an easy trek to the center of this haven of madness. Brother after brother felt the caress of death as the fomori of Rome lunged from the darkness and trampled upon the lifeless bodies of those who fell to their blades. But the White Howlers, filled with rage and a courage bred through generations of warriors, drove back these minions of the

Wyrms until they finally reached the black well at the center of the caern. And so sealed their doom.

Only one White Howler escaped the horror and reached the surface untainted by the tentacles of the Wyrms. His name was Cororuc. He clawed his way to the outer earth; there, despite the horrors which clung to his heart, he fought his way across the lands of men until he reached the caern of the White Howlers. It was here that he told the tale of how the Wyrms had sent black tentacles from the pits of hell to grasp his companions and drag them into a pit of inky blackness, a pit filled with the screams and moans of a thousand unseen terrors.

Cororuc told of how he had helplessly watched as his brethren were stolen from him and taken into that den of screams. He raged, unable to help them — until they again rose from that pit. But the shattered minds and bodies which emerged from this black caern were no longer Garou. They were twisted and horrid and their eyes were ablaze with the balefires of damnation. A dark cunning echoed in their voices — for they spoke to him, their brother, and declared that they were no longer White Howlers, but were now Black Spiral Dancers.

Cororuc, last of his pack, fell into a merciful slumber after telling his tale.

That night, as Cororuc's tortured mind fiercely clung to fevered sleep, his tainted brethren reached the weakened Garou and sated their hunger on his weary flesh. It was



perhaps a fate far better than that of the perverted Garou. At least his soul would know peace.

It was his courage that enables us to tell this tale today. He fought his way alone against his former pack, so that he might pass this story to others of the Changing Breed, lest they suffer the same fate as the White Howlers. May Gaia cradle him gently and keep him warm.

The Black Spiral Dancers ravaged the land in search of the White Howlers. They ravaged the places they once called home and thus marked the end of the White Howlers as a tribe.

Night after night they stalked the forests of their former homes and preyed upon those whom they once claimed as kinfolk. No mercy was given to those who refused to follow the ways of the Wyrms and as such, the majority of the White Howler tribe were brutally murdered, their mangled corpses used as examples for all who did not choose to accept the macabre truth which the Black Spiral Dancers offered.

There were those, however, who chose to join with their former brethren and irrevocably betray Gaia, as the Black Spirals had done. These Garou freely gave themselves to the darkness for a number of reasons; some for the power which the Wyrms could grant them, others for the opportunity to crush their enemies and still others because they did not wish to see their tribe divided. It was a dark time for all of the Changing Breed.

Those who chose to follow the Black Spirals were led to the vile haven of the Wyrms and forced deep into the black pit. Their minds were lost to the madness and they took their places next to their comrades. In a matter of days, the proud lineage of the White Howlers had ceased to be.

Once this task had been accomplished, the Black Spirals burrowed into the safety of inner earth. There they dwell to this day, rarely emerging into the light except to spread their diseases onto the world and to deceive men with their treacherous ways. Still they lurk in the shadows of man's endeavors, bestowing their corruption upon all they encounter. Nothing is safe from them.

Remember this tale and keep it sacred. Pass it on to all future generations so that none of us will ever forget. It is a lesson which should not have to be repeated.

The fires had completely died. All that remained were the crimson glow of the embers and the ghostly trails of smoke softly rising into the night. The silence which gripped the hearts of those gathered would remain with each of them for some time, as it always did after the retelling of this tragedy.

One by one, they disappeared into the night, each bearing a wound in their hearts for their lost brethren. Into the darkness they went until at last they merged with the night's eternal secrets, each knowing that the Wyrms ever waits and watches.

All was silent once more.



Credits

Authors: Bill Bridges, Steve Brown, William Spencer-Hale, J. Morrison, Richard Strong

Additional Writing: Phil Brucato, Sam Chupp, Jim Comer, Sam Inabinet, Teeuwyn Woodruff

Development: Bill Bridges

Editing: Robert Hatch

Layout: Sam Chupp

Art Director: Richard Thomas

Art: Richard Thomas, Joshua Gabriel Timbrook, Lawrence Allen Williams, Sam Inabinet, Steve Carter and Antoinette Rydyr (SCAR Studios), John Cobb, Jeff Rebner

Cover: Tony Harris

Cover Design: Chris McDonough

Special Thanks

Sam "Culliford" **Chupp** for the dignified look, even after the tasty brains.

Travis "Stern" **Williams** for the Thurgood Marshall imitation.

Bill "Rushing" **Bridges**, for being a jolly Santa.

Josh "Kromrich" **Timbrook** for his wholesome good looks.

Andrew "Meiche" **Greenberg** for puttin' on the pounds.

Mark "Yamazaki" **Rein•Hagen** for turning Japanese.

Stewart "Zettler" **Wieck** for the grimace — or is that a smile?

Rob "Gauntley" **Hatch** for being the Wyrms within.

Richard "Kiker" **Thomas** for that Captain Picard look.

William "Allred" **Spencer-Hale** for being the wolf of a different stripe.

Chris "Newberry" **McDonough** for the happy look; business is good.

Benjamin "Wallflower" **Monk, Jr.** for providing us with a new office toy to write on.

Wes "We Shall Always Have Paris" **Harris** even if he doesn't.

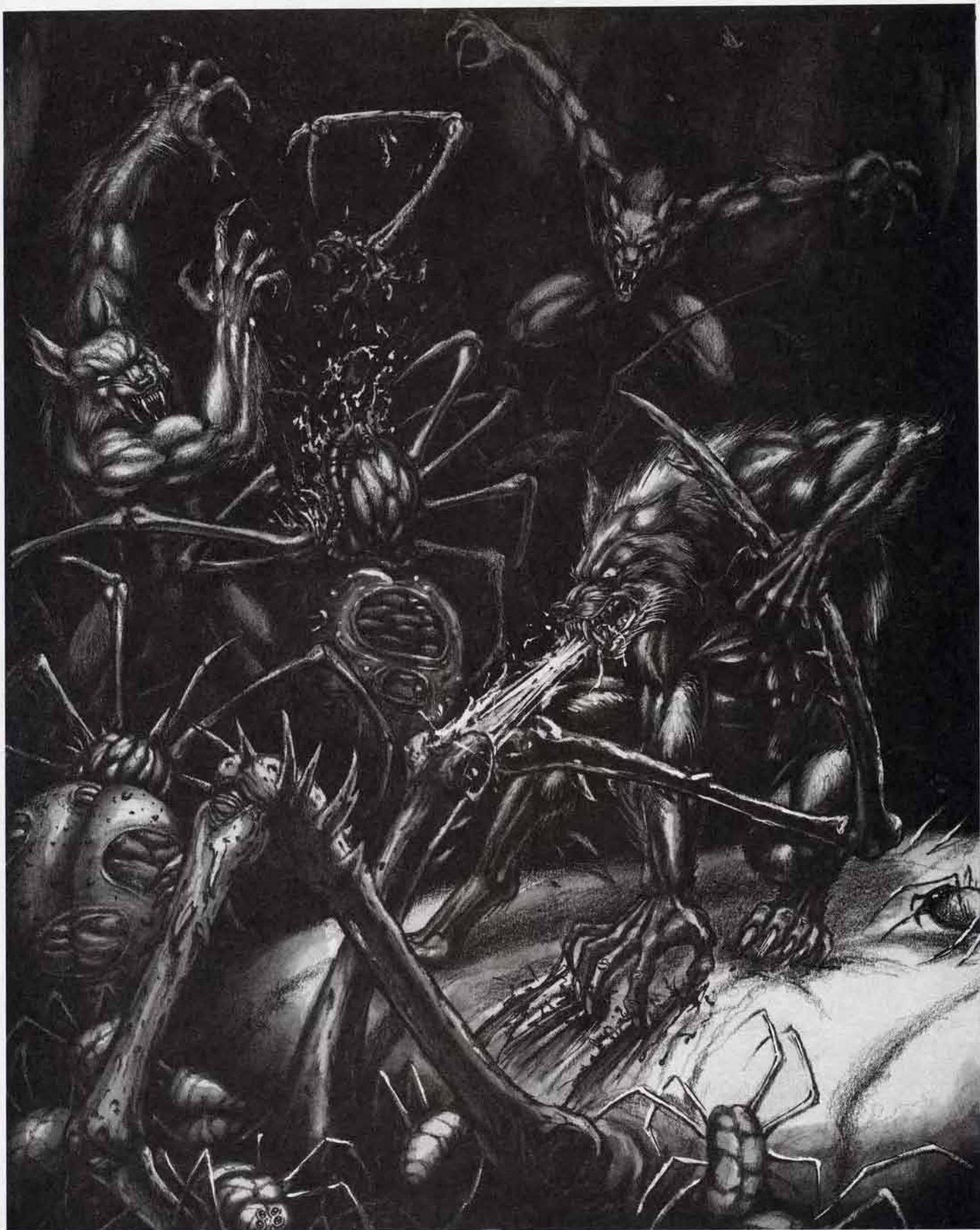
René "Dougie" **Lilly** for her Live-Action spousal betrayal.

Ken "Nuts" **Cliffe** for the unwanted guest and the midnight run in his underwear to get rid of it. The squirrel won.

Lyndi "The Mirror Darkly" **Hathaway** for always hitting the four-square ball right back atcha.



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Introduction

*Like a snake crawling up your spine
You got a feeling that you can't define
You got no ideas and you got no time
Cause there's a crack in the sidewalk
Come the rains and come the floods
Wash away our flesh and blood.*

— House of Freaks, "Crack in the Sidewalk"

The Wyrms writhes unseen, in the darkness and the light. Its coils encompass the world. Wrapped in its slick, scaly embrace, the world slowly suffocates and dies. Gaia gasps in pain as the disease eats away at Her. It is growing, and none know it.

None but the Garou, Gaia's last defense against the corruption and decay. They are Her warriors, Her defenders. Only they can hope to turn the tide of entropy, to combat the Wyrms. For this, they must rage.

The Primordial Beast

The Wyrms' anger and frustration are primal forces. Its coils reach out to ensnare all into its corrupting embrace. Those it touches feel its madness as if it were their own. All who are touched by the Wyrms know its rage through the frenzy.

The Beast, dreaded by vampire and werewolf alike, is a primal legacy of relationship to the Wyrms. The Beast is feeling without thought, naught but raw urge. The Beast is the Wyrms, but it manifests in many forms, as do the Wyrms' fractured personae.

Just as the Wyrms is bound by the Pattern Web, the Beast is bound by mortal consciousness. These chains cannot fully restrain it, but neither can it escape. When its rage becomes too great, it lets loose a roar, which is the frenzy. The Beast in the psyche reflects the Wyrms in the Web.

The Beast is awake in the Garou. Although their rage is a manifestation of Gaia's pain and anger, the Wyrms has corrupted even Gaia's anger, and the Beast rampages through the Garou. The plight of the werewolves is to remain pure even as the seed of the Wyrms sprouts within them.

The Lurker Within

The Wyrms is rarely seen, for it lurks beneath the surface of the things it corrupts. Very few have the ability to sense it, for this requires a deep relationship with it. The Garou have this link through their rage.

This dark seed inside allows them to discover the Wyrms in all its guises. It gives them the rapport they need to sense the manifestations of the Wyrms, to seek them out and combat them. It is their rage which strikes terror into the minions of the Wyrms. The Garou can turn the dark anger

seething inside them, anger stoked by the Wyrms, against the Wyrms themselves, thus fighting it with its own weapons.

However, they must never allow this seed to take root. They must not water it with false desires and evil thoughts, lest they become its servitors. Once freed, the urges of the Wyrms cannot be bound. They must be destroyed.

Theme

The theme of this book is corruption, the essence of the Wyrms. It is the common thread running through all of the Wyrms' minions. The Wyrms gain power through the corruption and contamination of lofty purposes and ideals. Philanthropy turned to greed, peace to violence, love to hate — all these feed the Wyrms. The Garou must guard their borders from without...and within.

Mood

Doom is the all-pervasive mood of the coming Apocalypse. It is the Garou's duty to prevent it. Unfortunately, too many succumb to Harano, weeping for what is not yet lost. Every creature in this book darkens the fate of all it comes across. It is up to every warrior of Gaia to fight the despair in their own hearts and turn it back upon the Wyrms.

How To Use This Book

The Book of the Wyrms is a sourcebook of the Wyrms and its plans for utter corruption. This book is intended for Storytellers, and included are many secrets to which players should not be privy. Face it, a mystery is no fun if you know the answer. All are welcome to read this book, but unless you are a Storyteller prepared to use the material, you may just ruin your fun later on when you play the game.

The Book of the Wyrms is a dark book, full of many evil and ominous things. The creatures and humans herein are the antagonists of the Garou, and they aren't pretty. If there is any wisdom here, it is hidden in madness. This book is a mirror of our dark side blown to fantastic proportions. At least, some things in this book are fantastic. Others are all too real. The danger to the environment through greed and exploitation is no fantasy.

What's in This Book

Legends of the Garou: The Balefires of Damnation — This is a tale rarely told by the Garou, but one they must tell lest they fall to the Wyrms' corruption as did the White Howlers, now the hideous Black Spiral Dancers.

Chapter One: The Black Spiral Dancers, Fangs of the Wyrms — This chapter details the "lost tribe" of the Garou:

its members' society, their bizarre rites, their own Litany and their madness.

Chapter Two: Pentex Incorporated, Coils of the Wyrms — Pentex is a multinational corporation whose economic and political power is truly frightening, for its source is the Wyrms. This chapter details Pentex's divisions and special projects, its perverse Board of Directors, its many subsidiaries and its tactics for world corruption.

Chapter Three: Malfestas, Lair of the Wyrms — In the Deep Umbra there is a dark realm of putrid corruption, Malfestas. It is the base of operations for many of the Wyrms' most powerful minions. From here, plots are hatched to invade Gaia's realm and destroy all resistance to the Wyrms' conquest.

Chapter Four: The Wyrms — The very beast itself. The Wyrms are all-encompassing, an evil that is nearly unimaginable in its true form. It is seen by others as many different things, from a serpent circling the world to a many-headed hydra of destruction and malicious passion.

Chapter Five: The Wyrms' Brood — Herein are detailed the gifts and totems of the Black Spiral Dancers, the fomori agents of Pentex, the Wyrms monsters crawling the earth, the things traveling the Umbra and many fetishes of corruption. Included are the rules necessary for using these dread things in your game.

Using the Wyrms in Your Chronicle

There are many different ways to use the Wyrms and its minions in your game. They are the main supernatural horrors that confront the Garou. In the Gothic-Punk world of *Werewolf*, the psycho who killed 30 schoolchildren in a shooting spree is more often than not possessed by an evil entity from the spirit world. However, this does not exonerate him from guilt, for he probably served the Wyrms of his own accord in return for promises of power. The beast was invited in.

Humans, however, can be quite cruel without the help of Banes or the Wyrms. Don't use Wyrms creatures as an excuse for all the evil in the world. Banes are best used as the final step in the process of corruption. A possession is the icing on the cake of an already contaminated existence.

Nonetheless, don't lose sight of the potential for tragedy. Unwilling possession, a fight for one's own soul, can be very dramatic, and only heightens themes of free will and purity.

Another thing that may occur when combating the Wyrms is death. Do not be afraid to let death be a vital and dramatic part of a game. Do not allow dead characters to pop up at the end of the adventure, alive once more. All the great

sagas and legends include tales of the death of the hero. *The Lord of the Rings* would have missed a vital element of supreme sacrifice if Boromir had not died fighting orcs and his own internal corruption (the Bane-possession theme above). Sacrifice is an important part of the mythic tales from which **Werewolf** draws its own stories. Death is what the Apocalypse is all about; indeed, the death of the world is what's at stake.

Werewolf provides a chance to enter a world of extremes, to step into the living myth of a people with a clear vision of their world. This vision is enviable to us, in our modern world of shady distinctions, as it represents a wholeness and insight we have lost.

The Tolling of the Bell

The end is nigh...for the Wyrms is ascendant in the world. Its minions are in high positions of power, commanding armies of silent destruction from tall skyscrapers, or dwelling in the low places of hellish darkness, ready to crawl into the world to wreak havoc.

Against these forces, the Garou must be strong. They must hold to the ancient ways, yet remain open to new wisdom. Only they know the truth behind the dying world; only they can see the signs of Apocalypse.

All the prophecies have come to pass. In the final war, as the bell tolls the coming destruction, only heroes can avert the doom of the world.



Chapter One: The Black Spiral Dancers, Fangs of the Wyrms

The Wyrms has many minions spread throughout the Tellurian. In the Realm there are many who are eager to sell their sanity in return for the powers granted by the Wyrms. The Wyrms has wrapped its coils tight around the world, using its minions as its soldiers of corruption and destruction. The Black Spiral Dancers are among the most fearsome of these dark servitors.

Many Garou fear to speak of the Dancers, lest their voices attract the Wyrms. The tale of their corruption, however, is still told. It is too important to be forgotten. Around the Grand Moors, when guards are set against the marauders of the night, the Moon Dancers begin their tale of the Dance of the Black Spiral which tore a tribe from Gaia's womb.

History of the Black Spiral Dancers

*How can I wear the harness of toil
And sweat at the daily round
While in my soul forever
The drums of Pictdom sound?*

— Robert E. Howard, "The Drums of Pictdom"

The story begins long ago, during the Roman occupation of Britain. The Romans were halted in their northward march by the fierce Picts. On the border of Caledonia

(modern Scotland), the Romans built a wall to defend their line. Hadrian's Wall. The border between the Weaver of Rome and the Wyld of the barbarian Picts.

Rome was slowly becoming corrupt, eaten away from inside by dissension, all in accordance with the plans of the Wyrms. Many of the Cainites (especially Malkavians) who controlled aspects of the burgeoning empire were tools of the Wyrms, and their actions furthered its goals of destroying the Wyld. The campaigns against Gaul and Britain were meant to pin the Wyld-aligned humans firmly under the Web of Rome.

There were many Garou among the Celtic tribes, however, especially the Fianna. The Get of Fenris were populous among the Goths. Nonetheless, the Roman army inexorably swept north. Even the struggles of the Garou did little to turn the tide, for many among the Roman legions were fomori.

Eventually, the march was halted by one Garou tribe, the White Howlers, and their Pictish Kinfolk. For years they held the hordes of Rome back, and a long cold war ensued. The Wyrms, however, had ancient strongholds among the heaths and moors of Scotland. A few fomori and vampires were able to sneak past the White Howlers' defenses and reawaken these caerns. Once the caerns were reactivated, Moon Bridges summoned creatures from Beyond to raze the countryside, harrying the White Howlers and their Pictish people.

But combat was not the only thing these monsters delivered unto the Picts. Banes slyly possessed the Kinfolk and began to breed with them. The next generation of Picts were stunted, bestial men, and the generation after that were even worse. While the rulers of the tribes were of the pure blood, and remained untainted, their race was dying. The White Howlers knew they had to act, or else their kin would perish.

A powerful pack went forth to raid the deep pit which was the most potent of the Wyrms' awakened caerns. The events that followed became known to the Garou through the last survivor of that pack, Cororuc. Cororuc was later brutally slain and devoured by his own packmates after their corruption in that caern — a corruption which transformed them into the Black Spiral Dancers.

Most Garou do not know how the pack was corrupted. They know that the White Howlers were yanked into a dark pit by the inky black tentacles of the Wyrms, only to emerge in their insane incarnations.

The Black Spirals themselves believe that their First Pack was dragged into a Moon Bridge by Beast-of-War itself. The pack was hurled into Malfeas, the dark realm of the Wyrms, and forced to walk the Black Spiral Labyrinth. When or how this Labyrinth came to be, none know. Some believe it was constructed so the Wyrms could lure Garou to it and force them to walk it, thus ensuring their corruption. Others say it was used for other purposes and only became

the special property of the Black Spiral Dancers after the White Howlers first danced it.

Regardless, the pack returned, but no longer were they White Howlers. They bore the marks of corruption on their skin and fur — now mottled and green, and glowing with balefire radiance. They wore the Brand of the Wyrms on their foreheads, and all the Wyrms creatures still alive in the caern bowed down before them. They soon killed most of their former tribe and forced the remnants to succumb to them.

The Black Spirals never returned to the surface world, although they occasionally emerged to attack the Fianna Garou, their former allies. Instead, they lurked below, building massive tunnels in the earth, knowing full well that they would need them in future service to the Wyrms.

Thus the Black Spiral Dancers came to be.

Black Spiral Society

The Black Spiral Dancers live very much like any other Garou. Despite the fact that most other Garou consider life among this tribe to be insane and brutal, it is not always so.

The Black Spiral Dancers maintain most of their caerns in or around underground lairs, which they call Pits. The term Pit is not only applied to the caern itself, but to the surface area around it as well.



The Black Spirals call their septs Hives. They also divide themselves into packs, as do other Garou. A Black Spiral pack is formed with some purpose in mind, as are all other Garou packs.

Mating and relationships between Black Spirals are common, although actual love is not. They accept their metis as equals, since a large percentage of Black Spiral population is made up of them. Metis from other tribes are often tempted to the Wyrms through Black Spiral promises of equality.

Because of this acceptance of "incestuous" birth, Black Spirals take considerable pride in their lineage, tracing their heritage back through many generations on both their mother's and father's sides of the family. Many metis thus have the Past Life Background, and can channel their direct ancestors through them. Occasionally, a strain of the pure-bred Pictish tribes is born into the Black Spirals, though always from a homid birth. Once in a very long while, a White Howler pup is born to Kinfolk. These Garou have no tribe to initiate them, and often wander the world alone in their shapechanging misery. Occasionally they find other Garou, and are adopted into another tribe, but for the most part they are tracked down by the Black Spiral Dancers and impressed into the tribe. These few, the only Pure Breeds they have, are revered, given the greatest of gifts and groomed to be elders.

All Black Spirals wear talismans made of various metals, colors, jewels and designs. These ornaments denote the Black Spiral's rank, family background, Hive and pack.

Some Black Spirals are ronin, but they are treated as equals to all other Black Spirals unless they have been proven guilty of turning away from the service of the Wyrms. Those that turn traitor are killed on sight.

The Black Spirals maintain close Hive-to-Hive relations. Since they are much smaller in number than their enemies, they find it necessary to stay united. Because the Black Spirals often rely upon the tunnels that lace the underworld, they must maintain good relations lest they destroy each other.

The rites used by the Black Spirals are, for the most part, the same as those used by all the other tribes. There are, however, two of their own which are of real importance. These are their rite of passage, called the Dance of the Black Spiral, and the Rite of Transmogrification (actually a later dance on the Black Spiral). These two rites are important because they maintain the link between the Black Spirals and the Wyrms.

The Black Spiral moots are always held underground. Usually any Wyrms-serving creatures that live below the earth are invited to the moot. Black Spiral moots are similar to the moots of other tribes, though they are dark and sinister in comparison because of the other strange creatures which often attend.

Black Spiral Beliefs

*Gods of heather, gods of lake,
Bestial fiends of swamp and brake;
White god riding on the moon,
Jackal-jawed, with voice of loon.
Serpent god whose scaly coils
Grasp the Universe in toils.*

— Robert E. Howard, "Men of the Shadows"

The Black Spirals' beliefs are quite different from those of the other tribes. The main difference between their beliefs and those of other Garou is the side from which they see things.

The Black Spirals accept the same basic spiritual dogma as all other Garou, that of the Triad. They believe in the Weaver, the Wyrms and the Wyld. However, they do not believe the Wyrms to be evil. They know better, for they have looked into the heart of the Wyrms and have seen its truth.

The Black Spirals see themselves as servants of the Wyrms. The Wyrms is a necessary force to contend with the growing strength of the jealous Mother, Gaia. They believe the Wyrms is their Father. According to Black Spiral doctrine, the Wyrms is still the force of Balance, and is merely trying to offset Gaia's own unbalancing of the cosmos. Toward this end, the Wyrms must destroy the Wyld, so the Weaver can spin a web of balance. To achieve this end, the Wyrms uses its many servants, such as Pentex.

Together with Pentex, the Black Spiral Dancers are trying to save Gaia by destroying some of the life on her. Only in this manner can Gaia survive. Her environment must be restored to balance through the destructive gifts of the Wyrms, and only through utter domination by the Wyrms can the balance be maintained.

Black Spiral Demographics

The Black Spirals are thought to be only one-fourteenth of the Garou population, but they are actually closer to one-tenth. The Black Spiral Dancers are the only Garou tribe that is growing in population rather than declining. Their numbers are increasing for a variety of reasons.

The main cause is that they constantly breed among themselves, though most of it is not done between members of the same Hive. The acceptance of metis as full members of the tribe makes it easier for the Black Spirals to grow.

The Black Spirals also increase their numbers by impressment. They kidnap the members of other tribes — usually their pups, but sometimes full-grown adults. They subject the abductees to the Dance of the Black Spiral (their rite of passage); if they survive, they become members of the Black Spiral Dancers and renounce their former tribes. They are even referred to as Black Spiral Dancers, not by their previous tribe's name.

Finally, the Black Spirals are growing in number rather than declining because they are supported by Pentex. The

tribe is able to call upon a variety of means of assistance from the company, especially in the form of weapons and fomori.

The Black Spiral Dancers have the lowest number of homid-born and lupus-born pups of any tribe. They rely heavily upon one another for new offspring. Of the ones that are not metis, almost 90% are homid-born. The Black Spirals usually do not have any success finding wolves that will breed with them, so they are reduced to occasional rape.

Unfortunately for the Black Spirals, few members of the tribe survive to old age. Most die through violent means before they are 50. The tribe also has a large number of insane members. Some are so completely uncontrollable that they have to be killed for the safety of their Hive.

The Pits of the Black Spirals

The Black Spiral Pits vary greatly. Many of them are hellholes filled with toxic waste, rotting carcasses and blazing pyres. Others are quiet, labyrinthine tunnel systems carved from solid rock. All tend to be tainted by the Wyrms, especially near their dens, the places within the Pits where the Black Spirals live.

The name Pit comes from the term used by the first Black Spirals of Scotland. Today, the name Pit is applied to all Black Spiral caerns, regardless of whether they are below ground or not. Many of the Pits are actually on the surface,

but even these usually have a number of tunnels in the surrounding area.

Most of the Pits of the Black Spirals have become huge tunnel complexes. Since they were outnumbered nearly 10 to one by the other Garou, the Black Spirals decided that the only safe way to travel was underground. Now the Black Spiral Pits form intricate webs of tunnels all across the globe. They are usually patrolled, but not overly so, since the tribe cannot spare many of its members. Usually this task falls to the oldest and youngest members of the Hive. The others are usually involved in working for Pentex or destroying the Garou on their own.

If an individual other than a Black Spiral attempts to use the tunnels, she has to understand the Pictish glyphs, because all the directions are written in this language. For this reason, almost all Black Spirals have learned the tongue and writing of their ancestors. The only modern-day language that is even related is Basque. In addition, it is an interesting fact that Black Spirals still mark the Hives and their own personal territories with urine.

One never knows what will be found within the tunnels of the Black Spiral Pits. Hideous, Wyrms-created things often lurk about, along with the occasional traveling Black Spiral and even a few Unseelie faeries. On the other hand, it is possible to travel the tunnels for days without meeting a soul.

The Pits serve as homes as well as means of transportation. The Black Spirals have their dens located near the entrances to their Pits, usually just far enough inside that they cannot be seen or heard, but close enough so they can get out in a hurry if they need to. Some Pits even have modern conveniences such as televisions and microwaves, which they power by tapping into underground power company conduits. They embrace what technology has to offer, unlike most other Garou.

One very important chamber within any Hive's Pit is the Wyrms-hole. This is not a powerful, gaping Wyrms-hole that is filled with Banes, but is instead a small glowing pit in an otherwise empty chamber. This pit is called the totem-hole. Within the totem-hole is a potent Bane. The Bane has been bound to the spot as the Hive's totem. The Bane is given enough power from the tribe to manifest itself on the proper occasions, such as during the Dance of the Black Spiral.

The Pit will contain many hidden chambers, secret doors, spy holes, traps, pits and other security devices. Some Pits even have locked doors which allow access to only the leaders of the Hive (with the exception of the occasional Ragabash).

The Pit is a sacred place to the Black Spirals. It is their sanctuary from the world above. They use it to provide safety, but also to provide privacy.

Few outsiders ever become aware of the Pit tunnel systems; those who do are usually killed. Even Pentex and the Sabbat do not realize what elaborate structures the Black Spirals have developed.



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The Uses of Banes

Because of the strong ties between the Wyrms and the tribe, Banes often serve the Black Spirals. Banes are used in a number of ways. The more powerful Banes, ones reaching the level of Incarna, are sometimes used as totems, for either packs or whole Hives. Banes provide their supporters with the same basic Gifts that other totem spirits provide to other Garou packs, septs and tribes. Black Spirals who serve a given Bane-totem are considered its "bastards."

There are three categories of Bane-totems: totems of Corruption, totems of Cunning, and totems of Strength.

The Bane-totems of Corruption are the Banes that have long served the Wyrms in spreading corruption as if it were a disease. They are insidious creatures, and are totally evil. Of all the Banes, these are the ones most likely to spread the taint of the Wyrms through homids. They warp the emotions of all thinking creatures. They are the Bane-totems that symbolize what the Black Spirals feel in their black hearts. The Bane-totems of Corruption give their bastards the abilities to understand and manipulate the emotions of their victims. They may also reward their bastards with points in Rage.

The Bane-totems of Cunning are potent Banes that use the power of the Wyrms in subtle ways to increase their own personal power. They are highly intelligent and tricky, but they rarely take any overt action. They award their bastards with understanding of the mind, knowledge of strategy, and Gnosis. However, these Bane-totems are not dependable. When they do aid their bastards, it is usually when least expected.

The Bane-totems of Strength are most likely to aid the Black Spirals in battle. Unlike the other totems, they are not afraid to commit their own personal power, which is usually great, to the service of the Wyrms. They gift their bastards with Rage, physical strength, and fighting ability; they may even manifest themselves to do battle in the physical world for them.

The Dance of the Black Spiral (Rite of Passage)

Black Spiral Dancers undergo a very unusual rite of passage. Until the age of adulthood the metis pups of the tribe live within the Pit. They are taught the ways of their ancestors, their language, their history, and their beliefs. They are considered useful, but they may be killed without reason by any member of the Hive. This seldom happens since the tribe needs as many members as it can get, but if it does, no one acts against the murderer.

Black Spirals who reach the age of adulthood, when they make the First Change, are brought before the Hive's totem-hole. Other Garou besides the metis are captured shortly after their first transformation. Even though they



were kidnapped only a few days earlier, they must stand as equals to the Black Spiral metis pups.

At the totem-hole, the pups witness the enactment of their tribe's story by the Hive's Galliards and whoever else is needed to play a role. Once they have been shown their history (some of which the metis pups may already know, but some of which has probably remained hidden from them), they are led before each member of the Hive for judgment. Any Hive member who wishes has the right to destroy them before they go any further in the ritual; if they are allowed to pass, however, they will not be harmed without good cause.

Those that survive the judgment of the Hive must then be accepted or denied by the Wyrms, by dancing through the Black Spiral Labyrinth. This is a spiraling circle on the floor of the cave, seemingly composed of shadowy tendrils that emanate from the totem-hole. It is a shadow of the true Black Spiral Labyrinth in Malfeas, summoned by the Black Spiral Theurges.

As they dance through the loops of the circle, the pups are tested by Enigmas, Banes and other entities. They are subjected to horrifying visions, and at some points they are actually transported to the Umbra.

If they survive and reach the center, they gaze upon the face of the Wyrms. If their hearts do not seize with terror, their minds shatter. They then wander back along the path they came. As they retrace their steps, the pups-no-more are indoctrinated by spirits and given the skills and Gifts

necessary to survive as Black Spiral Dancers. When they exit the spiral, they will have a semblance of sanity, although it is but a bulwark set against their lunacy.

Those who survive are welcomed into the tribe as full members. Many of the new members gain awesome insight into what they perceive as reality, but many more start to suffer from their insanity, and are unable to maintain their new identities as Black Spirals. A newly "created" Black Spiral Garou must roll her Willpower versus a difficulty equal to her Rage. If she succeeds, she does not gain any Derangements. If she fails, she suffers a horrible Derangement, perhaps even multiple Derangements. If she botches, she goes irrevocably insane. If she gains five or more successes, she gains special insight in the form of a free Gift (Level One).

The Naming

A Black Spiral receives her name as soon as the rite of passage is over. When she wanders off the twisted path, mad from her ordeal, the first syllables she utters are interpreted by the master of the rite as a name-form. Thus, Black Spiral names come in odd forms, mere syllables strung together, such as Gamush, Hang-gaal, Obobo, etc. A name is thus the first brand of the new Black Spiral's madness.

Choosing a Head of the Hydra

Upon completing the rite of passage, the young Black Spiral is tutored in the ways of his tribe and ordered to choose a Wyrms to follow. This is one of the many heads of the Hydra, the split and shattered thought-children of the Wyrms. The Black Spiral is shown all the Wyrms known to the tribe, and must choose one to follow to his dying days.

This form of allegiance is very important to the Black Spirals. Without it, a Black Spiral is considered weak and indecisive.

The different Wyrms often have different goals from each other, and sometimes fight among themselves. The Black Spiral is expected to follow his Wyrms blindly, even if it causes him to tear out the throat of a packmate who follows another Wyrms. Loyalty to the Wyrms comes before the pack or even tribe.

Following a Wyrms is not the same thing as following a totem. A totem is an alliance with a powerful spirit being, usually an Incarna. Following the Wyrms is an allegiance to a grand ruler, the eventual victor (the Black Spiral hopes) in the war for ownership of the universe.

The Rite of Transmogrification

The greatest award a Black Spiral Dancer can attain is to be chosen to reenter the mouth of the Wyrms. A Dancer who survives gains more understanding of the universe and her role as a servitor of the Wyrms. The Black Spiral Dancer may also be given supernatural powers, as well as debilitating insanity. This is called the Rite of Transmogrification, a Level Four rite.

The Black Spiral will instinctively know the proper time for the ceremony, and will then approach the Hive's elder Theurge and demand to be given the rite. If she successfully intimidates the elder, the rite will be arranged. Should she survive the rite, she moves up in Rank. It is a shortcut to power, but with harsh results for those who fail — as most do.

The Garou will partake of the rite in a lonesome, darkened chamber of the Pit. She will strip herself of all her worldly possessions and enter the Umbra through a mirror or other shiny object. Once in the Umbra, a Bane will approach her and lead her to a portal into Malfeas, the Lair of the Wyrms. There, she will walk the true Black Spiral Labyrinth, trying to pass through as many circles as she feels she can withstand, although she must pass at least as many as the Rank she is trying to attain.

The true Labyrinth is rumored to have nine circles. Even in Black Spiral legends, no one has passed them all to reach the center. For each circle successfully passed, the dancer moves up in Rank, but only to the Rank corresponding to the circle passed. In other words, Rank Five is only achieved by successfully dancing through Circle Five.

The Dancer is presented with a major challenge on each circle, and must overcome them all to walk away unscathed. The challenges can be of any type, but are somewhat different for every Dancer and even for each time the rite is undertaken. The challenges test the weaknesses, fears and beliefs of the Garou.

After surviving the test, the Dancer will notice that she is not in her own body, but in that of the Wyrms (no Garou has yet remembered what the Wyrms's form looks like after reemergence into the material world). The Dancer will then realize that she is the Wyrms. The Wyrms embodies not only her thoughts, but also her body and spirit. She will be met by the Bane that guided her to the tests and led back through the Umbra to the place where she entered. On emerging she realizes she is in her old form, but she may have gained many Gifts by surviving the test. She may also have lost her sanity.

Renown and Rank among the Black Spirals

The Black Spirals have Renown and Rank. However, theirs are not compatible with those of other Garou. The Black Spirals do not recognize the Rank and Renown of other Garou, nor is their own recognized by the other tribes.

Black Spirals gain Rank and Renown just as do all other Garou. However their Renown is of different types: Power, Cunning and Infamy. While the Black Spirals' Rank and Renown are not recognized by the other tribes, they are recognized by some Sabbat and all members of Pentex.

To rise in Rank, a Black Spiral Ahroun needs 50% of his Glory to be in Power, a Philodox needs 50% in Infamy, and a Theurge needs 50% in Cunning. A Galliard needs 30% in

both Power and Cunning. A Ragabash can have any combination.

Power

The Black Spirals respect those who possess power. They see power as a necessary tool. It is not evil or good, it is a tool. Black Spirals respect a skilled master of power: one who is not afraid, one who tries to gain as much power as possible, and one who is effective in the service of his chosen cause, namely the Wyrn (though it could be the pack, Hive, or Pentex). Power is more than brute force, for it represents the limitations of the individual. Renown in Power is ultimately illusory. Power Renown is based more on others' perceptions of an individual's power than said individual's actual power. It must be noted, however, that it is very hard to gain Power Renown among the Black Spirals for long without being able to back it up.

Power Creed

I shall crush my enemies.
I shall improve myself at all expense.
I shall never refuse a challenge.
I shall use my power to the greater glory of the Wyrn.

Cunning

The Black Spirals greatly respect Cunning. It is a mark of understanding. It represents wisdom about Garou and homid nature. Those that are cunning are to be feared and respected. They may not be as powerful as some, but they effectively use what they have through surprise and trickery. The Black Spirals even apply this Renown when used against themselves, although the one seeking Renown had better succeed or he will instead be scorned (loss of Renown).

Creed of Cunning

I shall hold to my word only while it is to my benefit.
I shall know my enemies.
I shall know myself.
I shall turn everything, every situation, to my advantage.
I shall never give foreknowledge of my actions.

Infamy

The Black Spirals represent the force of Corruption and they respect it. They believe corruption goes hand in hand with strength. It is the tester and toughener of power. All who possess power, to whatever degree, are tested through



corruption. The weak fail, at the cost of their power. The degree to which a Black Spiral has managed to spread corruption and destruction is marked by her Infamy Reputation.

Infamy Creed

I shall serve the Wyrms and aid its minions.
I shall destroy the homids.
I shall destroy the Garou.
I shall rend Gaia to make way for the Wyrms.
I shall spread corruption.

The Black Spiral Litany

The Black Spirals no longer hold to the Litany of the Garou tribes, for the Black Spirals are no longer part of Garou society. They have thus developed their own "Litany." This is not the same as the Dark Litany of the Wyrms, although some Black Spirals know it as well. The Black Spiral Litany details the rules binding the Dancers' own separate culture. It is the Dark Litany that is observed when dealing with other forces of the Wyrms.

Serve the Wyrms in all its forms

This is the basis for Black Spiral unity and the tribe's alliances with the Sabbat and Pentex. The tribe will only support them as long as they are serving the Wyrms, not themselves. This has led to disputes over what is good and appropriate service, sometimes inciting inter-Hive feuds.

Beware the territory of another

This is a very important part of the Litany. It allows Hives to remain secure that no other Hives are moving into their area to live. This has yet to be a problem, since new Hives that have been formed have always taken over the caerns of other Garou. This part of the Litany is part of the etiquette used in traveling through the Pit tunnel systems. It allows a Black Spiral to travel through another Hive's tunnels so long as no harm is done to them. If harm is done, then the Hive may take full retribution.

Give safe passage to those of other Hives

This passage goes hand in hand with the previous part of the Litany. This prevents a Hive from taking any action against a member of another Hive who passes through its tunnels. To do so would breach the Litany, which is taken in deadly seriousness. If a Black Spiral is harmed in any way when he did nothing to deserve it, he may expect compensation.

Slay those who will not join you

The Black Spirals often try to impress their prisoners into taking their rite of passage, allowing them to be embraced by the Wyrms. Prisoners who balk are put to death. The Black Spirals can do nothing with prisoners, as they are so outnumbered; they must either permanently remove opponents or make them allies.

Respect all who serve the Wyrms

While the Black Spirals want revenge on all other Garou, they will accept all members of other tribes who turn their backs on their people and join the service of the Wyrms. This part of the Litany also allows them to work with Pentex, even though it is a homid-operated company.

The Veil shall not be lifted

The Black Spiral Dancers understand the need for the Veil as much as the other tribes do. In addition, it is also important for them to hide themselves from their enemies among the Garou. They prefer to remain unseen, allowing them the advantage of surprise.

Do not suffer thy people to tend thy sickness in death

This is as important to the Black Spirals as it is to other Garou. Unlike some of the other tribes, the Black Spirals uphold this one fully. If a Garou refuses to allow herself to be ripped apart by her fellow Garou, her Hive-mates can take it upon themselves to kill her anyway, even if she tries to resist.

The leader may be challenged at any time in peace

This is an important holdover from the Litany of all the tribes. This is because the system of pack and Hive governance is the same for the Black Spirals as pack and sept



governance for the other tribes. It has been an effective system for centuries.

The leader shall not be challenged in time of war

The Black Spirals have maintained this for the same reason they have maintained the previous part of the Litany. However, the circumstances which constitute "war" or "peace" are never very clear since the Black Spirals are almost always involved in some sort of conflict. Usually, challenges to leaders can be made any time there is not an actual battle being fought or getting ready to be fought.

Ye shall take no action that causes a Pit to be violated

This is a highly important part of the Black Spirals' Litany. The Pit is the only place where they are safe from their enemies. Because of this, they have managed to maintain the secrecy of their tunnel systems. If anyone other than a Black Spiral intrudes into a Pit, that one is hunted until dead. Not even prisoners of the Black Spirals are ever taken into their Pits, and no word is ever spoken about a Pit when outside the Pit itself.

Black Spiral Kinfolk

Despite what most think, the Black Spirals do maintain a connection to their Kinfolk. However, most Kinfolk help them only out of fear or lust for power. Black Spirals carefully search out Kinfolk, making sure to select only those they can carefully watch over many generations. For this reason, they tend to choose people from uneducated, backwater areas, places few residents ever leave.

They also choose people who have skeletons in their closets with which the Black Spirals can ultimately blackmail them, to gain their outright aid and services. They are very wary of their Kinfolk's free will, however, and try to keep their breeding limited, even within the family if possible. Thus, many of their homid breeds will be from incestuous relations, and are often born deformed.

The wolves with which they breed are usually scapegoats kicked out of their tribes. The Black Spirals capture them, keep them as breeding stock, and then slaughter them when their usefulness is ended. Many caged wolves become the victims of Black Spiral rapes, for they have nowhere to run.

The Pentex Connection

In the 1940s, the Black Spirals, on advice from their Wyrms, sought out the company called Pentex and offered to prove their worth to it. This they did. They brought with them the ears of 40 slain Garou that had been disrupting Pentex mining operations in Pennsylvania.

Pentex realized that Garou servants of the Wyrms were very desirable as team players, so the corporation offered a number of positions in the company to the Black Spiral

Dancers who were interested. Many Black Spirals accepted the offer, seeing it as a chance to further their own personal power and an opportunity for greater revenge against the other Garou.

Many Black Spiral Dancers fill the ranks of today's Pentex. Even those that are not on the company's payroll are usually willing to help the company if it is in the best interest of their Hive. However, there are a few Hives that will not aid the company for any reason, seeing all homids as lesser creatures unworthy of assistance.

The Black Spirals that work for the company are given many opportunities for combat in service to the Wyrms. They also receive sizable salaries, allowing them to enjoy all the conveniences of modern life, especially those products that are tainted by Pentex. These Garou often lack a strong cultural tie to a Hive. They tend to go and do whatever the company wishes, but many are also interested in the success of their tribe and work toward revenge against the other Garou through the company.

The Black Spirals are involved in almost all Pentex activities. The company has a strong need for them; it makes sure the Wyrms-warped Garou are well provided for.

The Black Spiral Dancers have proven their value through the creation of Wyrms-tainted and Wyrms-infested products. Without the Black Spirals, Pentex would not be able to produce them. The Garou provide the company with Tainters and Infesters, the machines that are used to place the touch of the Wyrms on the company's products. The Black Spiral Theurges have been especially helpful in this area.

The Black Spirals also provide Pentex with a large number of fetishes. Pentex provides the rare components needed for their creation, but it is the job of the Black Spirals to turn them into supernatural items. These fetishes have proven especially useful in dealing with supernatural threats, specifically the Garou and the other shapeshifters.

The Black Spirals also help Pentex understand the nature of the Garou spiritualism. They teach them of their beliefs concerning the Triat, the Umbra, the various spirits, and specifically the Wyrms. The Black Spirals do not reveal too much, however, and even outright lie concerning themselves and other things, fearing that such knowledge might one day be used against the tribe.

The relationship between the company and the tribe has been a good one so far. Both are striving to destroy the environment, and especially to destroy the Garou.

The Sabbat Connection

The Sabbat was first encountered by the Black Spiral Dancers in Europe in the early 1700s. The Sabbat managed to defeat several Hives of the Black Spirals, hoping to clear an area in Sweden of all potential threats so the Sabbat packs could have some sanctuary from the Camarilla. The Black Spirals realized that the vampires of the Sabbat, unlike many other Leeches, were in league with the Wyrms (even though the Sabbat did not realize this). The Black

Spirals were able to come to peace with the Leeches and since that time there has always been some connection to the Sabbat.

When the Black Spirals came to the New World, they maintained their contact with the sect through the Sabbat's Gangrel. The Gangrel *antitribu* were willing to travel with Black Spirals, especially through the territories of other Garou. This enabled the vampires to be protected during the day and it allowed the Black Spirals to have access to powers unlike any possessed by Garou.

The Sabbat never really broke its ties to the Black Spirals, but the relationship waxed and waned over the decades. Today, the Sabbat is beginning to strengthen its ties to these Garou, providing them with information, occasional combat support, and safe passage through their cities.

Other Allies of the Black Spirals

The Black Spirals have few other allies. However, they have made some pacts with certain groups that might prove useful in the future. They seldom call upon them for aid, but they can if there is a strong enough need to do so.

Circle of Red — This is a society of mages. Little is known about the society other than that it has been contracted by Pentex and by some Black Spirals to handle certain difficult assassinations.

Unseelie Faeries — While few faeries like the Wyrms, some Black Spirals can claim kinship with members of the fey. They have often set up alliances through their underground networks. The Black Spirals sometimes trade fetishes to the faeries in exchange for magic or information. It is doubtful the faeries would help these warped Garou in battle, but they might be willing to protect the tunnels.

Perceptions

The Black Spirals have certain preconceptions concerning their allies and enemies. Their allies and enemies have certain ideas concerning them as well. The following will provide the basis of what they believe to be the truth.

Pentex

The Black Spirals believe Pentex to be a useful servant of the Wyrms. However, they fear that the company may grow too strong and not need them any longer, or possibly even turn against them. Also, despite the fact that the company is manipulated by the Wyrms, it is still operated by homids, and homids are weak.

Pentex views the Black Spirals as useful tools, but ones that should be destroyed when the time comes. They can only end up getting in the way of the "new and better world" the company wishes to build.

Sabbat

The Black Spirals see the Sabbat as a servant of the Wyrms even though the sect does not see this itself. The Sabbat can be too manipulative and is not dependable or trustworthy. The Black Spirals realize the Sabbat is only willing to aid them if it is to the sect's advantage, and they wonder why the Sabbat has been so generous to them lately. It must want something.

The Sabbat sees the Black Spirals as stupid fanatics, but useful pawns. All it takes is a little gift here and another one there and they will do what you ask, especially if you tell them you need it done for "the good of the Wyrms."

Garou

The Black Spirals see the other Garou as morons tricked by Gaia and the Wyld into protecting its overabundant creation. The Garou do not see that they are causing even more pain by not allowing the Wyrms its just reign. The Garou must be killed.

The Garou see the Black Spirals as traitors. They gave in to the corruption of the Wyrms, finding pleasure through the impetus of destruction. They accept insanity as if it were some kind of gift. They are beyond redemption and are the shame of all Garou. They must be destroyed.

Kinfolk

The Black Spirals see their Kinfolk as useful connections to the surface world. While their Kinfolk do not like them, they at least meet the arrangements of their bargain with the Black Spirals. They are the only homids on whom the Black Spirals can truly trust and depend. The Kinfolk may not like their Garou cousins, but they still serve them.

The Kinfolk of the Black Spirals see them as savage murderers. The Black Spirals are dangerous. They are to be feared because they may one day turn against their kin. They have been known to turn on their own kind before. The Kinfolk meet the arrangements that were reached between themselves and the Black Spirals, but they do not do this out of loyalty or love.

The Warring of the Tribes

Thou thyself hast eaten wolves' meat and murdered thy brother. Thou hast often sucked wounds with cold mouth and slunk, loathsome to all men, into the dens of wild beasts.

— *Völsunga Saga*

Revenge has been long in coming for the Black Spiral Dancers. They have yet to destroy all the other Garou as they swore they would do, but they are still dedicated to this purpose. All the other tribes have likewise sworn to destroy the blasphemous tribe, but they too have yet to succeed. How long will the war rage before one side or the other is destroyed?

The Black Spiral Dancers have had many successes in the war. They have succeeded in impressing a number of Garou into the service of the Wyrms. They have succeeded in killing a great many more. The Black Spirals hate the other tribes. They do not follow the Litany of the other tribes. They do not accept the Garou beliefs of glory, honor and wisdom. There is only revenge.

Despite the growing power of the Black Spirals, the Garou of the other tribes have had some success in their battles against them. They have sealed off a number of Pits and destroyed entire Hives. They have sought out the Black Spirals' Kinfolk and turned them against the Wyrms. They have captured their young before they could be brought into the tribe of the Wyrms. Most importantly, they have forced the Black Spirals to live perpetually underground, where they are no longer a constant threat to the surface world.

Battle Tactics of the Black Spirals

The Black Spiral Dancers rely on a number of tactics to gain the advantage over their enemies. Because they serve the Wyrms they have no need for honorable reputations among the other tribes, so they will use whatever means are necessary to get the job done.

They rely upon surprise more than anything else. They always attack when they are least expected. They prefer ambushes, trapping their opponents where they cannot get away and then mowing them down with silver bullets.

They also prefer to use Banes when they face opponents of greater numbers or power. First they throw the Banes at them, usually at the weakest members of the enemy, to reduce the size of the threat. Then they move in themselves as soon as their foes have exhausted themselves against the Banes. While their opponents are fatigued, the Black Spirals are fresh and ready.

When necessary, especially in areas with which they are not familiar, they will call upon Pentex to send in a First Team to lay the area low with their powers and weapons. If these teams are not available, they can usually acquire weapons from Pentex to do the job themselves.

In the way of weapons, the Black Spirals prefer to use claws or Klaives. Many of them have taken a liking to mustard gas and high explosives. They will plant bombs near caerns, or fire in a few explosives if they cannot. When it comes to all-out fighting, the more modern-minded Black Spirals will use almost any type of small arms, though many prefer automatic shotguns with silver buckshot or slugs.

In all cases, the Black Spirals will try to put the Garou in the worst possible situation, and sometimes the battle will be half over before the Garou even see the Black Spirals coming over the hill.

Current Activities

The Black Spiral Dancers are involved in a number of schemes to destroy the environment by aiding Pentex. The Black Spirals see their role clearly. They believe that they must destroy all the Garou, not just for revenge, but so the Wyrms can achieve dominance over Gaia. When Gaia's defenders no longer hinder them, the world shall be theirs to play with.

The Black Spirals that are not involved with Pentex are always busy taking matters into their own hands. They use impressment to gain new members when the opportunity presents itself. They also try to gain the support of other shapeshifters to fight the Garou, though this sometimes backfires. The ones they cannot assimilate they murder. They delight in taking over the caerns of the other Garou and defiling them to such a degree that they prove unusable by others.

The Black Spirals are also hard at work building more tunnels, thus giving them access to more and more places all over the world. They keep this a secret, since it is a major strategic element of their war against the other tribes.

Dancers All Over the World

The Black Spiral Dancers were originally from Scotland, but when the European explorers set out across the seas, the Black Spirals soon followed. Desiring the chance to bring corruption to the entire planet, the tribe set out to put its Pits all over the world.

United States — The Black Spiral Dancers have firmly established themselves in America. They have built many Pits and intricate tunnel systems all over the land. They are especially numerous along the East Coast, and they are especially strong in West Virginia, Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas.

Canada — They have dug their Pits all over Canada, but they are especially involved in Newfoundland, Quebec and Ontario. Canada, however, has proven much harder to settle. The Wendigos are stronger in the far north, and are not easy to corrupt.

Mexico — This country is swarming with Black Spiral Dancers. The Wyrms-warped Garou account for almost a quarter of the Garou population in Mexico. They work very hard to destroy the caerns and places of power of all the shapeshifters in the country. They have also discovered that below the surface world of Mexico are some of the most powerful Wyrms-creatures they have ever encountered.

South America — A war rages along the Amazon between the forces of the Wyrms, composed of Black Spirals and Pentex, and the tribes of the Garou. A third force, the werejaguars, combats both sides, trying to throw all shapechangers and Wyrms infestation from their territories. Nonetheless, Black Spirals have burrowed their tunnels under the entire continent.

Europe — The Black Spirals have managed to maintain a number of Pits across Europe, especially in the Balkans. Europe is a hotbed of activity and here the Black Spirals can move about unhindered by their enemies. While the Black Spirals occasionally skirmish with the Black Forest Get of Fenris, they have mainly been engaged in a transcontinental fight against the Green Knights, the environmental terrorists who are trying to stop natural destruction.

Russia — The Black Spirals have been able to cement a tentative alliance with an immensely powerful Cainite, the dread Baba Yaga. Beyond this, little is known of their activities in this vast expanse of tundra.

Africa — While the Black Spirals have attempted to establish Pits in Africa, they have had little success. They have met with much resistance by the Red Talons, who seem to be numerous here. They have had many run-ins with Silent Striders in Egypt, although they have managed to maintain a Hive here. They have successfully created a number of Hives in South Africa, due to the interest of the Wyrms in this area.

Japan — Japan has become a major power base for Pentex. The Black Spirals trying to migrate here have had some run-ins with the Shadow Lords and Glass Walkers, but they have yet to meet with any organized resistance by any Japanese shapeshifters. They know some exist, but they have been unable to capture or kill any of them. The Black Spirals may join forces with the Sabbat to establish a power base, despite the wishes of the Gaki. It remains to be seen if this will happen. It is wondered what Pentex will do if this happens since all three parties involved are the company's allies.

Asia — The rest of Asia has been left unexplored by all the Black Spirals with the exception of those who work directly for Pentex. What is happening on the continent remains a mystery, but many important managers of Pentex have recently become interested in Asia.

Australia — The Black Spiral Dancers are strong in Australia, and are causing the other Garou tribes much trouble. Nonetheless, there are strange wails across the Outback night that even they fear.

Using Black Spiral Dancers in a Chronicle

Every hero needs an enemy. The Black Spirals make perfect enemies for the Garou. They are almost exactly like them — a view through the mirror darkly. Presenting the Black Spirals to the characters should be made very interesting. Point out the similarities as well as the differences between the characters and their opponents. Help them to realize that their enemies are Garou, not always mindless monsters.

The Black Spirals should always be unpredictable. Because they are mostly metis and they get their gifts from the Wyrms, they are very unusual. This means you can throw many surprises at your players' characters, and they will have to think fast. How about a Black Spiral who is immune to silver, one that can levitate, one with super-high-tech weapons and armor, or one that can force Banes to manifest themselves physically to fight and protect them? The only limits to the wildness and weirdness are the ones you impose. Feel free to make them as normal or as strange as you want them to be.

You can also tell stories involving Black Spiral Pits. Any Garou foolhardy enough to explore the tunnels of the Black Spirals will be in store for great peril and adventure. This can be an exciting way to put a little "dungeon-crawling" back into your game while making it have some purpose and sense of meaning, which many dungeon adventures lack.

You might consider story ideas in which the players' characters and their sept are under attack by Black Spirals seeking to turn their caern into a Pit for the Wyrms. Another idea would be to have a pack of Black Spirals become rivals or enemies of the pack. You could have Black Spirals involved in all kinds of schemes into which the pack stumble and become involved.

Black Spirals make wonderful enemies because whatever the Garou can do, they can (for the most part) do too. This makes it easy to match the characters with villains that are their equals in nearly every respect.

Black Spiral Weaknesses

*You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate
As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize
As the dead carcasses of unburied men
That do corrupt my air, — I banish you.*

— Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*

While the Black Spiral Dancers may appear to have certain advantages none of the other Garou possess — i.e., weaponry, financial backing and unusual allies — the Black Spiral Dancers have a number of weaknesses. They are in many ways the weakest of all the Garou tribes.

The Black Spirals are insane, for one thing. They have turned against what they once served and accepted a new master, one that gave them new powers but took away their sanity in return. While not all Black Spirals are completely insane, many of them do possess Derangements. Some are so insane that they try anything regardless of the danger involved, so they often end up getting killed doing something foolish.

The Black Spirals have become unaccustomed to life in the wilderness. Few members of the tribe are sufficiently

skilled to survive on the surface, other than in the cities. This is why they use underground tunnels to travel whenever possible.

The Black Spirals are easy to spot. Because they are the Garou of the Wyrms, they can be identified through the use of Sense Wyrms. This sometimes gives them away when they are trying to get by unnoticed.

Derangements: the Kiss of the Wyrms

Many Black Spirals return from their harrowing rites of passage with mental Derangements. Below are some examples of common Black Spiral Derangements. Feel free to create your own. Madness comes in many forms.

Amnesia: You remember nothing of your life before your first Dance of the Black Spiral. This is considered to be a blessing by Pseulak, the Urge Wyrms of Lies. Unfortunately, this affects you at random times. Sometimes you can't remember what you did yesterday.

Berserker: You are prone to just freaking out and losing it. Rage roll difficulties are -2. You are touched by Beast-of-War.

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

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

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

Hallucinations: You were so shocked by the weird reality of the Wyrms that your very perceptions now reverberate with its meaningless madness. You will often see and hear things which are not really there. If these things sometimes have actual significance, you will be hailed by fellow Black Spirals as blessed by the Primal Wyrms.

Homicidal: You want to kill, kill, kill and kill again. You are tainted by Beast-of-War, the Calamity Wyrms.

Insecure: You are never sure where you stand with your pack, Hive, tribe or even yourself. Insecure Black Spirals usually have very little Willpower.

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

Because the Black Spirals are only one-tenth of the total Garou in existence, which means they are greatly outnumbered, they would be in grave danger from a mass Garou attack. If the other Garou stood united against them, the Dancers would surely fall.

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

Masochism: You love it when pain is inflicted on you. You are the child of Karnala, the Urge Wyrms of Desire.

Misomania: You hate *everything*. You are especially touched by Abhorra, the Urge Wyrms of Hate.

Multiple Personalities: You have split personalities, many different "beings" inside you who seek expression. Sometimes you can control which one comes to the fore, but most times you cannot. Be creative — come up with names and backgrounds for each personality. It is common for a Black Spiral with this Derangement to have a personality for each Auspice.

Obsession: You fixated on something while Over There, and you cannot forget it. Every moment, it swims into your consciousness. You must pursue it until it ceases to haunt you...

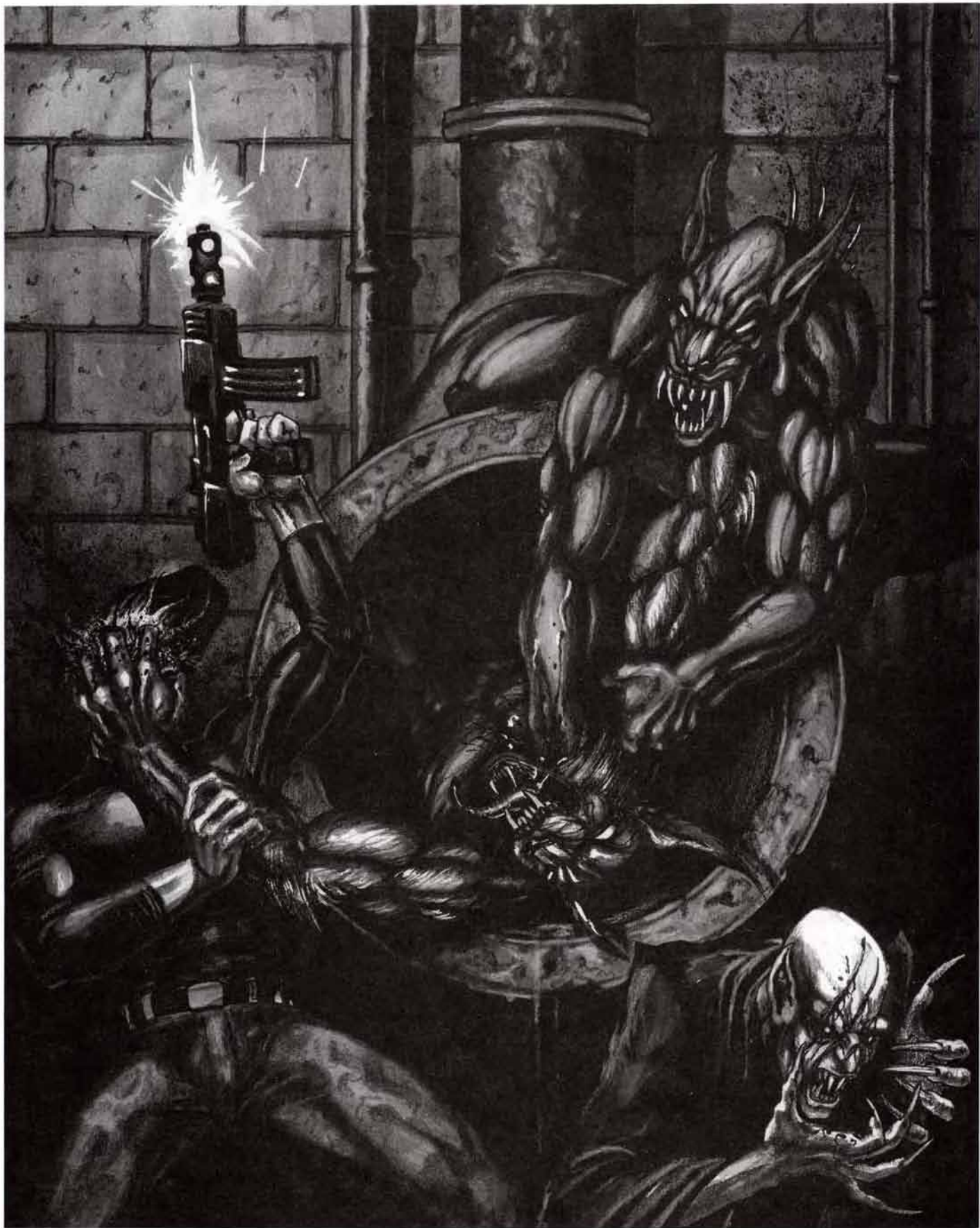
Overcompensation: You recognized a weakness during your rite and barely survived. You have to hide it — it is your Achilles' Heel. You thus distract others from noticing by drawing their attention to another characteristic of yours, such as bullying, cleverness or stupidity.

Paranoia: You know that something tried to get you Over There, and it will be back. You don't know what it was, and you know it has allies — but who? You are the puppet of Sykora, the Urge Wyrms of Paranoia.

Phagomania: You want food, all the time, even when you are not hungry. You have been touched by Eater-of-Souls, the Consuming Wyrms. All Wits rolls to avoid eating one's downed foes (see **Werewolf**, page 198) are at +2 difficulty, making botches more likely. Some Black Spirals have a further Derangement whereby they only eat rotten meat.

Phobias: You greatly fear one thing. But what? It could be: fear of daylight, fear of nature, fear of technology, fear of homids, fear of wolves, fear of snakes, fear of closed spaces (tunnels), fear of the dark, fear of shapeshifting, etc. Be creative. You are the plaything of Fæbok, the Urge Wyrms of Fear.

Sadism: You love to inflict pain onto others. This is your connection to Angü, the Urge Wyrms of Cruelty.



Chapter Two: Pentex Incorporated, Coils of the Wurm

It doesn't matter if they are really picking up a hell of a lot of oil...It makes a real bad impression with the public without any activity going on.

— Don Cornett, now Exxon's Chief of Public Relations, in a conversation with Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., concerning the Valdez oil spill cleanup efforts.

Can't they just fill it with water, drive around the block and dump it in the sewer?

— Alyeska official, debating the problem of a truck holding toxic dispersant residue left at Anchorage International Airport.

Among the earthly servitors of the Wurm, few are as pervasive, or as powerful, as the Pentex corporation. Pentex stands for the corruption of human ideals, the perversion of the once-lofty goals of freedom and enterprise. Pentex is a corporate nightmare, freely using "the system" to corrupt the world, and perfectly capable of manipulating whatever laws it can toward its own ends. If zoning laws prevent toxic dumping in certain neighborhoods...well, the laws simply must change, through highly paid lobbyists who can't be traced back to Pentex.

Pentex is a corporate octopus. Its tentacles spread in all directions and wrap around nearly every conceivable market share, while the bloated body remains hidden in a cloud of black ink and paperwork.

The History of Pentex

The company called Pentex originated from an oil refinery owned by a Mr. Jeremiah Lassater. In 1865, realizing there was a fortune to be made, Lassater purchased the refinery and broke into the oil business.

Following the example set by John D. Rockefeller, Jeremiah Lassater and his partners, incorporated the company into Premium Oil. The company was the chief rival to Standard Oil, and one of the few to withstand the forced buyouts by Standard Oil. Eventually Premium was forced to compete with Standard for control of the pipelines. Premium prevented a monopoly by Standard and instead shared in a joint stranglehold on the petroleum industry.

In 1892, while searching for a new drill site, workers for the company uncovered a servitor of the Wyrms that had been sealed off by the Uktena tribe many centuries before. A series of accidents took place at the site, eventually drawing Lassater, a hands-on businessman. He arrived to instill fear in his employees and to determine why they were wasting his money.

While there, he began to have nightmares which drove him to sleepwalking. He often awoke to find himself at the entrance to the newly bored tunnel. Lassater decided to find out what the hell was going on, and took a crew with him into the tunnel to see what was down there. The events which followed were later described as a cave-in which killed all but Lassater. Far from the truth.

Lassater and his crew came face to face with a Wym creature, awake but still trapped in the earth by powerful wards. The creature mentally assaulted Lassater, attempting possession. But Lassater was too strong-willed. The psychic combat was killing him, however, and he cried out to the Wym-thing, begging to make a deal, a bargain for his life. A pact was struck and Lassater was spared. The Wym-thing, however, would now direct the company.

The Wym controlled the company through Lassater for many years until Premium grew to such a size that the old man could no longer effectively oversee it. Lassater committed suicide after contracting syphilis a few months later. His son took over, but proved to be a poor businessman. He was killed in a freak boating accident and a new company president was chosen.

By 1913, the Wym was operating through the Board of Directors. As other facets of the Wym realized the power this company possessed, and its determination to serve the Wym, they attempted to gain power in the company. Some Wyrms were successful, but some were not. Four facets of the Wym formed an alliance to force the original Wym to accept them as equal partners. The first Wym was forced to accept the other Wyrms, since it could not stand against them by itself. Together the Wyrms controlled the company through their representatives on the Board of Directors. This first alliance of five Wyrms prompted the company to change its name, as a snake sheds its skin. Premium Oil was now Pentex Incorporated.

In 1917, Fulton D. Clark, president of Pentex at the time, was approached by the Black Spiral Dancer tribe. The Black Spirals offered a chance for increased riches if the company was willing to forge an alliance. The Wyrms of the company realized the Black Spiral Dancers had great power and could be useful tools. The Dancers' proposal was accepted and they were granted positions within the company.

In 1947, Pentex enlisted the aid of the Sabbat and made the sect somewhat of a partner by allowing Harold Zettler,

a Sabbat priscus (an important elder), to become one of the Pentex Board of Directors.

Since this time, the company has become a corporate giant. Its financial power, political influence, and supernatural strength all make it the most effective force of the Wym among the homids.

The Source of Power

And all across America

The poison fires glow

And in the blood of our procreation

Annihilation grows.

— Swans, "God Loves America"

Why does Pentex have it so easy? Where does it get the money and power to accomplish its goals? The answer is simple: the Wym. Unlike more mundane organizations, Pentex has the backing of several powerful manifestations of the force of corruption. They provide Pentex with all the raw materials, but it is up to the human servants to use them in service to the Wym, effectively creating for the sole purpose of destroying.

Pentex gets its income from the sale of its products. It has captured a high portion of the market share in many different markets by providing products at cheap enough prices to be had by all. Most choose the products, not only for the low prices, but also because they have been programmed to do so through subliminal messages. The money Pentex earns is only a tool, however, used to achieve what it truly desires. Destruction.

Pentex turns the money into a means of increasing the destruction by purchasing companies that are already servants (albeit unwitting ones) of the Wym. A great deal of money is used to create massive amounts of advertising and television programming featuring subliminal messages.

The money is also used to gain political power. Political power is very important to Pentex. Without the support and approval of the various governments with which the company must deal on a daily basis, all would be lost. That is why Pentex relies heavily on bribes, blackmail and assassination in order to get that support.

The third source is a power most companies do not have: supernatural power. The Wym provides Pentex with Banes, werewolves, vampires, strangely altered humans, and psychics in order to carry out its mission of destruction. This makes Pentex possibly the most diverse supernatural threat on earth.

Financial power. Political power. Supernatural power. Without each of these three sources of power Pentex would close its doors. It takes all three to make Pentex such a powerful tool of destruction.

The Goals of the Company

If the principle were to prevail of a common law being in force in the United States...it would become the most corrupt government on the earth.

— President Thomas Jefferson

The goal of Pentex is to create a “new and better world.” To achieve this, the end justifies the means. The key word here is “new.” Pentex believes that humans must continue on the road of evolution through technology. Today, humans are fleshy creatures bound to the earth, little more than the dirt farmers of centuries past; they are still subject to disease, uncontrollable weather, heat, cold, hunger and so on. Humankind is still essentially an animal.

Pentex believes that humans must take a step beyond nature and create a brave new world of their own design. But to do so, they must first destroy the world, murder the clinging, earthly Gaia, who keeps humans from their self-made destiny.

The new world would be one where humans, though still composed of flesh, would have mastery over it. They would be able to control their forms, remain ageless, end starvation, and be immune to disease. They would have all the technologies existing now, but would also live in a perfectly controlled environment in which they would dominate the planet, instead of being dominated by it.

The only way to make this dream come true is to make the world so unsalvageable, so unfit for life as humanity knows it, that the entire human race would have to accept the “new and better world.” The world Pentex has in store for humankind.

What’s in it for Pentex? Power. Pentex will be the driving and controlling force of change. Once the new world is established, Pentex will be its master. This New World Order will call for an end to countries, governments and even families. The flag of Pentex will be flown over the entire planet.

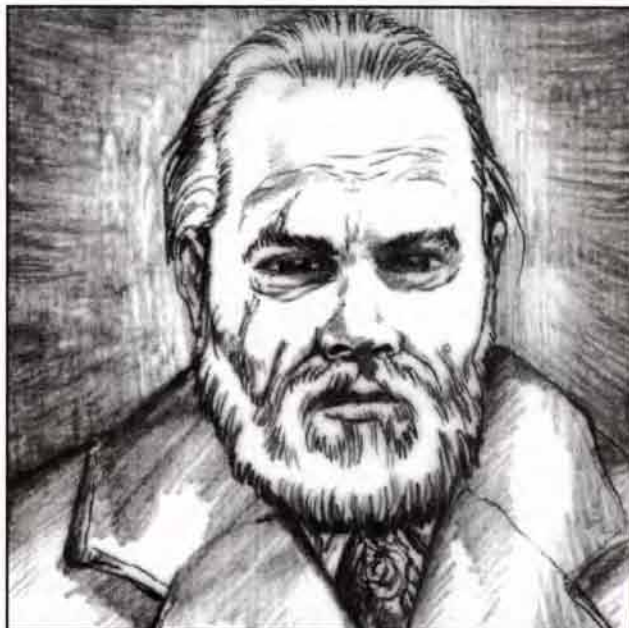
This basic goal is the central theme underlying the master plan of this sinister company. Aptly enough, the Pentex master plan is called the Omega Plan.

Stage One: Defilement Phase

This is the stage of the plan currently in effect. In carrying out this stage, Pentex is trying its best to bring about the total destruction of the environment. In this it has the aid of the Wyrms and its minions. The company is also trying to break the free will and independent thought of the common people. Only by doing so can they be receptive to Stage Two.

Stage Two: Reconstruction Phase

After Stage One has done so much irreversible damage to the planet that it cannot be saved, Pentex will initiate Stage Two. During this stage, Pentex will step to the front with its name in lights and on the tongues of every person



Peter Culliford

in the world. Pentex will offer a new way to survive on a swiftly dying planet. Of course, this will cost a great deal, but a savior from destruction will be badly needed.

Stage Three: Domination Phase

By this stage, Pentex will have grown to be the largest and richest organization in the world, and will control the lives of the majority of the planet’s population. Pentex will then begin to erode the power bases of the various countries it has helped. The countries will be unable to do much to stop this in a time of economic and social adversity. While revolution may be the primary means of uniting the people under Pentex’s rule, it is possible it could be achieved through more subtle means.

Despite how ridiculous the Omega Plan may seem, the leaders of Pentex believe that it can be completed. And, much to the chagrin of the Garou, they are succeeding in their first stage ahead of schedule. Perhaps the Apocalypse is not that far away after all?

The Board of Directors

They are corrupt, and become abominable in their doings: there is none that doeth good, no not one.

—Prayer Book

The Pentex holding company is operated differently from most businesses. The basic management structure of Pentex, however, is the same as it is for almost every corporation. The company is controlled by a Board of Directors.

Unlike the boards of directors of other companies, Pentex is controlled by humans who are in the direct service of the

Wyrms. While a vast number of other corporations serve the Wyrms, they do so unknowingly, out of human greed. Every action performed by Pentex's Board of Directors is taken only to strengthen the Wyrms.

Through the Pentex Board of Directors, the Wyrms initiates its black plan to ruin Gaia. Unfortunately for the Wyrms, more than one manifestation of itself is trying to direct the company; this often puts one facet of the Wyrms in conflict with another. Each human on the Board of Directors has his own idea of how and what to strive for in service to the dark power. While this makes for intense, drawn-out board meetings, it seldom interferes with the destruction of the environment. Even with personal interest and human grudges, each board member is willing to compromise as long as the ultimate end is achieved.

The Board of Directors holds its meetings in the Pentex central headquarters and in the various branch headquarters. Sitting in darkened, smoke-filled rooms, these powerful servants of darkness make decisions affecting countless fellow creatures. The meetings often include profit reports, marketing reports and other standard business activities, but they also include reports on environmental damage and reports from lesser spirits which serve the Wyrms. The Board looks at the overall effectiveness and efficiency of its policy in terms of the negative effects on humanity and the destruction of Gaia.

The Board constantly travels (being hands-on management), making sure as much damage is being done as the company can get away with (and it can get away with a great deal). The Board even holds some of its meetings on company jets traveling from one location to another. This is rare, however, for each board member fears being in such a vulnerable position with all the other board members around.

As with most major corporations, the Pentex Board of Directors is composed only of older men. Each of the board members shares a special relationship to the Wyrms. Each serves a particular facet of it and it rewards each man for his service; these rewards range from the subtle to the grotesque. One trait all the board members share is their inhumanity. They have become rich and powerful off the rape of the planet, and are traitors to the human race. The following are descriptions of each Pentex board member:

Peter Culliford

Peter Culliford is the Chairman of the Board. He appears to be a man in his 60s, but in reality he is over 400 years old. He was born the second surviving son of a poor knight, and entered the service of the medieval Church. He first encountered his master, the Defiler Wyrms, during an exorcism. The Wyrms felt his potential for corruption and quickly turned the young mortal into its hand in the material world. He is very much a child of the Wyrms, for his service is fanatical. In all his efforts he tries to bring misery and despair to the entire population of the planet. He has been very successful, but he has found it necessary to exist on a

diet of human brains in order to stay alive. It is a terrible price the Wyrms has imposed, but it is a price that has helped to harden this man to anything good in life.

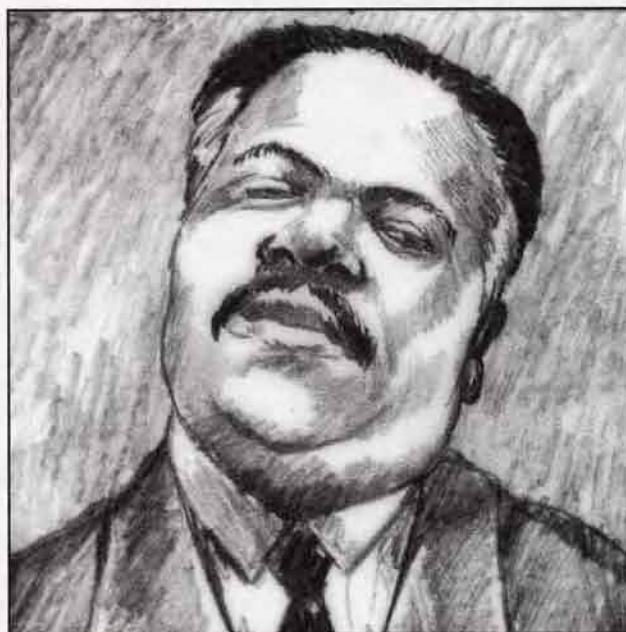
Danforth Stern

Stern is an average-looking man in his late 40s. He was chosen by the Wyrms during the 1970s. Stern was the owner of a small chemical manufacturing company. His callous disregard for the environment, his greed and ambition are what attracted the Wyrms to the young man. Stern believes he is in the service of a being from outer space. He believes that all spirits are lesser members of the same alien race which he now serves. Stern believes that Earth is being invaded and Pentex's goals are to weaken Earth's resistance to attack. He is confident his reward will be grand once the invasion has been completed.

Stern has demonstrated considerable pyrokinetic powers. He has taken a keen interest in video games, toys and music, and believes the next generation must be turned into unthinking drones. He has also recently become very private, showing himself only at company board meetings.

Benjamin Rushing

A former professor at a major university, Rushing is a very distinguished Englishman nearing age 60. His family has been in the service of the Wyrms for centuries. He was groomed at an early age for an extended life of working to achieve the Wyrms' goals. Rushing is possibly the most genial, shrewd and educated of all the board members. He takes particular interest in the overall coordination of Pentex's various holdings to form a unified spectrum of destruction. The Urge Wyrms of Lies has given him a number of special gifts; most center around his persuasive



Danforth Stern

ability, but it is rumored that he also has the ability to read minds. Rushing is known to be a pedophile by the other board members, who take little interest in such things. What they do not know is that Rushing seeks to be the Chairman of the Board.

Frederick Kromrich

A former mass murderer, this 60ish Swiss gentleman comes from one of the wealthiest families in the world. His family has been in the service of the Wyrms since the Middle Ages, helping to spread corruption and death. Frederick Kromrich fanatically serves Beast-of-War, the aspect of the Wyrms focused on destruction. He believes that he is a reincarnation of one of his ancestors and that to free himself from the chains of mortal existence, he must cause destruction on a heretofore unparalleled scale. He strongly supports all activities that endanger Garou, seeing the werewolves as the company's greatest threat. He is closely supported by the Black Spiral Dancers in these activities. Kromrich possesses moderate psychic abilities, which were activated by the Wyrms. Kromrich is often involved with the Pentex Acquisition branch and the Odyssey Project.

Elliot Meiche

Meiche is a disgusting man in his late 50s; he packs nearly 450 pounds on a 5'3" frame. He is crude but cunning. Meiche entered the service of the Wyrms in the 1960s. He was a co-owner of a paper mill. His lack of morals even stretched to ordering the deaths of people who got in the way of his profit margin. Meiche attracted Eater-of-Souls, the Consuming Wyrms, which promised him power beyond his comprehension if he would direct his cunning and energy to the goals of the Wyrms. Meiche is a strong supporter of deforestation since it was his original area of occupation. He has also taken an interest in Wyrms-tainted fast food and preservatives.

Kiro Yamazaki

Yamazaki was the first non-white man to be appointed to the Board of Directors. Discovered by the Urge Wyrms of Desire, Yamazaki was a prosperous businessman in his late 60s who dealt in black market exotics, such as specimens of endangered species, designer drugs, and military equipment, especially computers and software. Yamazaki was a major leader in the Yakuza, with connections to the Gaki (Oriental vampires), and he still holds much influence over all that goes on in Japan. Yamazaki is a practitioner of various styles of karate, and the Wyrms have awarded him a number of gifts, making him a formidable fighter few opponents could physically defeat.

Harold Zettler

Zettler is a fifth generation Malkavian *antitribu* vampire of the Sabbat, among other things. He has been a mercenary, a doctor, a Nazi officer, and a skilled Thaumaturgist during his long unlife. Zettler is over 300 years old. He has been in the direct service of the Wyrms for the last 60 years.

The Urge Wyrms of Cruelty found Zettler to be a capable assistant in the physical world. His vampiric nature only added to his value. Zettler has been tainted by the Wyrms since his creation. He had always placed little value on life, but as a vampire he derived a twisted pleasure from the sufferings of others. Now Zettler is focused on all aspects of corruption that affect mankind, and it should be noted that his favorite "hobby" is still medical experimentation. Zettler is a ruthless opponent, a cold killer, and a cunning mastermind. He is perhaps the most volatile and unpredictable of all the board members. He also has the support of his sect of fanatical vampires.

Donald Gauntley

Gauntley is an average-looking man in his late 80s. However, all is not what it seems. Gauntley is not really human; he is a Wyrms in possession of a human's body. Gauntley, the man, died decades before. The Urge Wyrms of Despair now controls the body. The Wyrms had used Gauntley for decades, but as the man grew older, he seemed to be developing a conscience. Refusing to let its influence in the physical world slide, even for a short time, the Wyrms cast Gauntley out of his body and took control of it. Some of the board members know this, but none have spoken of it. Gauntley has numerous gifts, both physical and spiritual.

Due to the fact that Gauntley is a walking corpse, he is rarely seen in public. The Wyrms have to use energy to keep the body going and prevent putrefaction.

James Kiker

Kiker is a rich South African businessman in his late 70s. Kiker is a slightly overweight man, and completely bald. He was a long-time supporter of his government's efforts to suppress the people of his country. The Urge Wyrms of Hatred was drawn to him and it gave him even more wealth and power. Still, because of his lack of success, he eventually became disillusioned with crushing the human spirit in South Africa and turned his interests to the United States. He found the people more receptive to suggestion, since they lived in what they believed to be freedom. He founded a television network and began sending subliminal signals which reduced the free will of those who watched and made them less environmentally concerned. When the Pentex Board of Directors learned of his ingenuity and evil, they invited him to sit as a member.

Robert Allred

Allred was a Kinfolk of the Get of Fenris. He betrayed his tribe to gain power for himself by leading many Get into a Bane ambush. For turning traitor, Allred was given a high-level position in Pentex, and eventually was invited to join the Board. Allred now works to destroy the Garou. He was chosen by the Urge Wyrms of Power to become his servant in the physical world. The Wyrms have endowed him with unusual gifts; some are like those of the Black Spiral Dancers, but many remain unknown.



Benjamin Rushing

The Chief Executive Officer: Adrian Newberry

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the person who handles the day to day operations of the company. He receives his orders from the Board of Directors and it is his duty to see that they are carried out to the fullest.

Adrian Newberry is the current CEO of Pentex. He has been with the company for over 25 years. He is corrupted by the Wyrms, and has been for a very long time. He is a shrewd businessman with a heart of stone. He runs the company extremely efficiently, as he was groomed for the position by the previous CEO, who died of heart failure three years ago.

Newberry is a Harvard graduate. He worked with two other major corporations before coming to Pentex. In both companies he achieved the rank of vice-president. He is currently 53 years old, but due to therapy he receives through the Pentex Special Projects Division, his aging is beginning to slow down.

Pentex Special Divisions

While each separate company has its own marketing, accounting, research and development, human resources and public relations divisions, among others, the Pentex parent company has certain divisions of its own. These oversee the entire Pentex operation by coordinating the various companies and by looking for new ways through which to spread the corruption of the Wyrms.

Acquisitions Division (AD)

This branch of Pentex concerns itself with keeping a close watch on all other companies. When it finds one involved in activities beneficial to the Wyrms (and effective at them), this branch of Pentex moves in and purchases the company. Pentex ownership drastically improves the destructive capacity of the company purchased. It also spreads the shadow of the Wyrms further over the life of humankind.

The Acquisitions Division is composed of a wide range of professionals, including an army of slick Ivy League lawyers, creative and experienced accountants, smooth public relations people, and, of course, Black Spiral Dancers. This division has access to special combat groups called First Teams. The Acquisitions Department also has a contract with the Sabbath for additional services, but seldom uses it except in cases where no other option presents itself.

The Acquisitions Division is directed by the CEO. It handles the search for new companies through both supernatural and technological means. It handles the buyouts by making requests for funds to the Project Coordination Division. The Division also handles the transition period, making it as smooth as possible, cutting down on publicity and resistance to the change in ownership.

An important part of this division is the Pentex Information Collection System (ICS), which is a glorified name for spy ring. The professionals which it comprises are the best industrial spies in the business. The ICS operates a sophisticated computer system secretly tied into the systems of government agencies around the world, as well as the computer networks of innumerable companies. The ICS is also closely aligned to the Pentex Public Relations Division, but it is still under the control of the Acquisitions Division.

Most of the Black Spiral Dancers on the Pentex payroll work in the Acquisitions Division. This is because the Black Spirals are sometimes needed to silence those who would speak out against a hostile takeover. Also, some of the companies purchased are engaged in activities involving other facets of the Wyrms. The Black Spirals are the only ones with the spiritual expertise to bring that facet of the Wyrms into the fold, so to speak.

The Sabbath members that sometimes work with Pentex primarily assist in discovering any vampiric connections to a would-be subsidiary. Sabbath-owned companies, of which there are few, are not bought out. Camarilla companies, however, are often taken over. This aids not only Pentex, but the Sabbath too.

Public Relations Division (PRD)

This is the next-to-smallest division of Pentex. The PRD makes sure Pentex does not become a household name. It keeps a scrutinizing eye on the media and watches for spies and employees with overwhelming consciences. The divi-

sion is also in charge of overall marketing policy for Pentex, and the marketing divisions of all Pentex-owned companies are answerable to it.

This division also handles the sealing of potential leaks within the company and all subsidiaries. This is done through the use of the Pentex ICS, followed by the sanctioning of the accused, which is handled by Black Spiral Dancers or members of First Teams. Pentex does not tolerate potential traitors among its employees.

The Public Relations Division also handles and coordinates lobbying within all governments under which Pentex operates. The PRD gets its funds through the Project Coordination Division, and is answerable directly to the Board of Directors, though the CEO has a great deal of say in its activities.

The PRD has full access to the ICS, but does not control the system; this falls to the Acquisitions Division. The PRD also has full access to an advanced arsenal of technological and spiritual weaponry.

Project Coordination Division (PCD)

Synchronizing the activities of well over 200 various organizations is not an easy task. For this reason, the PCD is the largest division within Pentex. Employing over 75% of Pentex employees, this division maintains close contact with the upper-level management of all Pentex subsidiaries.

The PCD, more than any other division, demands strict adherence to the Omega Plan (even though no one in the PCD knows the full details of the Plan). This division allows all the various companies owned by Pentex to work together successfully without stepping on each other's profit margin or market share. Through the PCD Pentex is able to destroy the environment as fast as possible without the risk of direct exposure to the media.

This division has a number of liaisons within each subsidiary to make sure all operations are executed smoothly. The members of this branch spend much of their time troubleshooting problems from site to site, wherever there may be resistance to the company's goals.

This division also controls all of the company's finances. All the other branches are responsible to the PCD for their expenditures. This division also has a great deal of authority in directing the Special Projects Division.

Special Projects Division (SPD)

The Special Projects Division is responsible for all unusual research and development pertaining to the Omega Plan. This branch is the smallest of all the divisions.

The SPD has made numerous unnatural advancements in the creation of fomori, but it is also responsible for much more. It not only develops mundane technology, but also creates fetish technology: specially designed fetish machines that can Wyrms-infest or Wyrms-taint the various products of each Pentex subsidiary. It also collects data and

researches psychic phenomena, and attempts to apply the findings practically. In addition, it trains special Pentex employees, such as fomori, Black Spiral Dancers and vampires.

The Special Projects Division works closely with the ICS, providing new spies, and technologically and spiritually enhancing the Pentex computer network. It also works with the Public Relations Division, providing the division with employees of extraordinary talents in order to deal with "special" problems.

Within this division are a number of Black Spiral Dancers and vampires, along with a few mages, psychics and fomori who work only for this branch, acting as researchers and trainers for other members of their kind. However, the great majority of those employed in this branch are normal human beings.

Project Iliad

Project Iliad is a program within the Special Projects Division. This project is responsible for the creation and training of fomori. The fomori are used to fill various positions within Pentex, serving as bodyguards, spies for the ICS, members of First Teams in the Acquisitions Division, and assassins within the Public Relations Division.

Project Iliad has been in the works for the last 50 years. It has succeeded in producing a wide variety of fomori with diverse gifts and talents. Project Iliad has also had a great number of failures, producing creatures best left unseen and to the imagination. Several underground levels within the central headquarters, and some of the Pentex branch offices, are filled with hundreds of these pitiful failed experiments, living in cages like animals.

Project Iliad has recently initiated efforts to create reliable formulas for the manufacture of certain types of fomori. In the past, it has been nearly impossible to duplicate the same effect in every fomori created using the same means. It appears that adjustments must be made to compensate for differences in the personalities and chemical compositions of the subjects.

Members of Project Iliad are given special treatments which turn them into the best fomori that can be designed. The labs have come up with a variety of new powers and forms for the members of this program. For every success, however, there are at least eight failures. Fortunately, Pentex technology has advanced to a sufficient level to enable most surviving fomori to pass as normal humans, making it easier to use them in the field. Fomori are expected to serve for life, which is often not very long, especially if they end up on First Teams, which are often slaughtered by enraged Garou. The fomori gain great supernatural power, but the price is a normal life. Few of them are able to see their families again. Most live in company-owned dormitories.

Those who find it impossible to live normal lives dedicate all their time and energy to the company. Some have

begun to use code names for themselves, such as those used by characters in comic books. While some find it childish, the practice continues to spread. It has even begun among Project Iliad's sister program, Project Odyssey.

Project Odyssey

The Pentex Special Projects Division (SPD) is involved in the development of psychic abilities that can be used for the benefit of the company. The SPD has made great headway in this, under the program codenamed Project Odyssey. It is the sister program to Project Iliad, also headed by the SPD.

Project Odyssey seeks out potential psychics from all over the world through the Pentex ICS. Once a latent psychic is located, the SPD sends an employee or two to meet with that individual and offer her a job. The SPD usually allays the person's suspicions by telling her that her name was given to the department by a friend. The name of the "friend" will be one received through the ICS. If the person accepts, she will be asked to sign a contract. If she refuses, she is usually kidnapped, unless her potential benefit does not outweigh the risks involved in such an action.

The new "employee" is then brought to the Pentex research labs, where she undergoes medical, psychological and spiritual evaluation by trained professionals. If deemed worthy, she is enrolled in Project Odyssey. If not, she is usually released, kept on as a regular employee, or killed, depending upon her usefulness, temperament and the way she was brought to Pentex.

Those that are enrolled in Odyssey are first given what is called the "Awakening." This is a special spiritual and psychic ritual during which Black Spiral Dancers and other psychics attempt to free the new student's mind of all blocks inhibiting its special gifts. This is a very painful, overpowering and exhausting experience. Those who survive find their psychic talents much more accessible, though they still have to be tutored in the proper refinement and use of them.

Odyssey produces a number of skilled psychics that enter Pentex service just like the special employees that emerge from Project Iliad. However, some members of Project Odyssey also fill roles in management, since many of the psychic abilities these employees possess are not suitable for combat purposes, but are extremely useful in the day-to-day operations of the company.

Members of the Odyssey Project are a little better off than the members of Iliad. The members of Odyssey are given powers that are their own, not the Wyrms', though they often become Wurm-tainted. While Odyssey members with psychokinetic powers are often placed on First Teams, most members of Odyssey lead fairly normal lives. They hold regular positions at Pentex. They are able to have families, friends, homes of their own, and social lives outside the company.

Recently, just as with Project Iliad, members of Odyssey have begun to use code names for themselves, though this custom is only practiced by Odyssey members who work "in the field."

Employee Training

Working for Pentex requires certain skills. The company provides training in these areas, so the cost to the employee is minimal at best. While all workers are taught first aid, safety measures, and how to operate the machines in the workplace, the special agents are given special attention.

Special employees of Pentex such as Black Spiral Dancers, Sabbat, fomori, psychics and highly talented humans receive a complete course in the use of weaponry, survival, tactics, dealing with Garou, first aid, safety precautions (especially around toxic materials) and espionage. While training is specialized to help the employee meet his or her job responsibilities, all receive at least some training in each of these areas.

Employee Benefits

Working for Pentex is definitely a unique experience. The company provides all the normal benefits most corporations provide, i.e., health insurance, company discounts, vacation time, etc., but it also provides some more unusual benefits for its special employees.

Pentex has developed a special treatment for its field agents which makes them immune to the effects of the Delirium. This is very important because it allows them to work with Black Spiral Dancers. The chemical compound used in the treatment destroys the area of the brain that produces the Delirium effect. The effect of this anti-Delirium treatment often shocks Garou, who expect their human foes to run away in fear, or at least not see them for what they are. One side effect is that the person who has undergone this treatment will forevermore be tainted with the scent of the Wurm.

The members of First Teams receive special life insurance benefits. The First Team members are also given access to large amounts of cash, via a straight salary. On the other hand, they must still live in dormitories. Because of the nature of their work, many First Team members are given high-tech weaponry and Wurm-infested fetishes.

The Black Spiral Dancers are given special perks as well. They receive a fair amount of Pentex-created fetishes. They also have limited access to the Pentex ICS, allowing them to keep track of particular enemies, especially Garou they have it in for. The Black Spirals also receive large salaries, company cars, and whatever else the company can provide to make their job easier.

Sabbat often work part-time for Pentex. They usually are given nice salaries and sizable herds from which to drink. They may also be allowed access to high-tech weapons or

fetishes. They are occasionally able to call upon Banes to provide minor services.

Another wonderful "benefit" Pentex gives its employees is termination after their usefulness has ended. Many regular employees are simply fired, but special agents and common employees who know too much usually die in mysterious accidents. Pentex cannot afford to allow leaks.

The Standard Acquisition Operation

The Pentex Acquisitions Division is highly adept at moving rapidly and assuming control over any desired company or operation. Once Pentex has acquired a subsidiary, it is able to keep that company afloat, protecting it from the media and the law. By bringing it into the Pentex family of companies, it also increases the effectiveness of that company's efforts on the Wyrms' behalf by coordinating its efforts with those of other companies. Thus, a dominating market share is established, as has already been achieved in many categories of products.

The first stage of a Pentex acquisition operation involves the Pentex Information Collection System. The ICS computer network is linked to major computer networks around the world. Through the system, the employees of ICS are able to track the activities of companies big and small, their profits, and their detrimental effects on the environment. The system also keeps records of those who run the companies and all employed by it.

When a company ripe for the picking comes along, the information is sent to the Acquisitions Division, which gears up for action. The Acquisitions Division in turn makes a request to the Project Coordination Division for access to the necessary funds. The Project Coordination Division has a right to refuse if it feels the company to be purchased is not worth the investment, though this can be appealed directly to the CEO.

After acquiring the access to necessary funds, the Acquisitions Division initiates a standard buyout procedure. If this proves unsuccessful, members of the Odyssey and/or Iliad Projects are called in to ensure a smooth transition. They will coerce those in charge of the desired company to concede — by whatever means necessary.

After the operation is bought out, Pentex deploys its transition team. The transition team takes over the upper-level management functions of the company. It then decides what should be changed, including company policy, marketing strategies, product lines and the firing and hiring of employees.

During this time, the Public Relations Division remains ready to step in if necessary to keep word of the buyout quiet. It also remains prepared to move against any members of the purchased company who might pose threats to security, especially those disgruntled over being fired or angry at the changes in company policy.

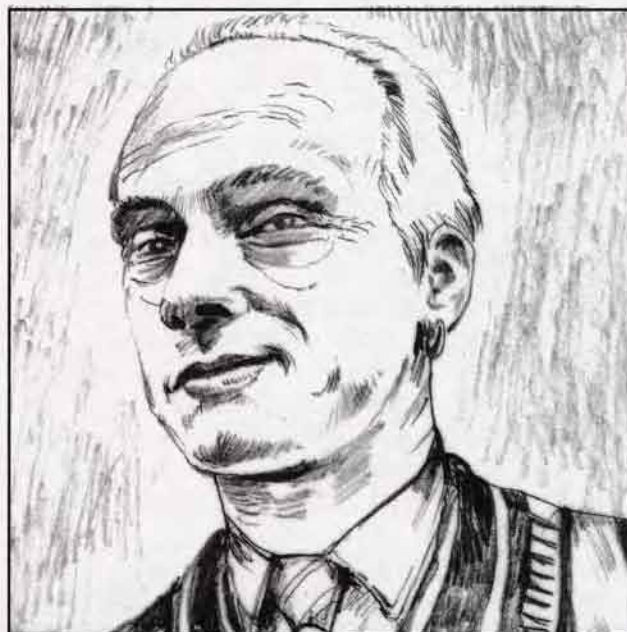
After the skilled lawyers of the Acquisitions Division have completed the legal transfer of the company and the necessary changes have been made, the company goes back into operation with "business-as-usual."

In cases where there is the possibility of conflict with the Garou or some other powerful threat, the Acquisitions Division sends in one or two of what are called the "First Teams." These are small elite units composed of Black Spiral Dancers, fomori from the Iliad Project, and possibly psychics from the Odyssey Project. The First Teams act as bodyguards for the other Pentex employees. A First Team usually goes in with the rest of the Acquisitions Division employees, but if there are Garou, vampires, or other threats the First Team moves in before the others. It is the responsibility of the First Teams to eliminate all danger.

The Pentex Information Collection System

Pentex knows everything about you. That is what the Pentex employees of the Information Collection System (ICS), the "Big Brother" of the Gothic-Punk world, would like to believe. For the most part it is true. Privacy is a rare enough commodity in our own world, but in the world of Pentex it is hard to hide anything from prying eyes.

The ICS is composed of two separate halves. One is the Pentex computer network; the other is the Pentex spy network. The ICS falls within the Acquisitions Division's jurisdiction, though it works with the other divisions as well. The ICS is one of the greatest resources Pentex owns, since it gives the company a keen insight into what is going on in the world.



Frederick Hromrich

The computer network of the ICS is a very elaborate system. It has a number of data nets laid out over the computer networks of government agencies, private industries, schools, hospitals and law enforcement organizations. The computer system is advanced enough to gather extremely detailed information on just about anyone or anything.

One special advantage the Pentex computer network has over other modern systems is supernatural enhancement. The system contains a number of spirits bound into it. The spirits are able to extract intuitive information and come to conclusions on their own without the need for human interaction. Thus, if the computer's data shows a company to be potentially valuable to Pentex, the spirits in the computer will realize this and present a recommendation for buyout, along with the information to back it up. This makes it possible for Pentex to utilize all the information it receives, unlike most human organizations, who simply do not have the time and resources to analyze all the data. While the computer spirits are not always right and they sometimes miss important data, they do provide an invaluable service. In addition, the spirits of the computer also provide excellent security. To discourage unwanted visitors to the system, one of the spirits will follow the path back to the hacker's computer and enter it, usually destroying it and all the data contained on it.

In the Umbra, the ICS computer network is breathtaking. Despite its size in the material world, in the spirit world it is as large as a city block, existing within the heart of Pentex headquarters. Even the mainframes within the various branch offices are huge and spectacular, though less so than the central computer. The computer looks like a huge spider web, extremely intricate and sinister, with a bluish glow. Within the Web are a number of Wyrms-corrupted net-spiders that once served the Weaver. Those who enter the computer system within the Umbra (possible through a number of doors along the walls of the webbed structure) will enter a state similar to that of virtual reality, but they are really there, physically as well as mentally. Inside the computer anything goes. It is like being inside a video game, but with no extra lives, no rules, and unpredictable environments. Also, once the system is entered, it is very hard to exit.

The ICS spy network is also extremely capable. It is used to investigate specific questions that arise from data collected via the computer network. A number of spies are full-time employees of Pentex's major competitors. These spies provide Pentex with information about the companies' plans and general attitudes. They also provide otherwise unattainable information concerning employees of the companies.

The ICS is not just used to watchdog those outside Pentex; it also keeps an eye on internal affairs. Information about traitors and inside leaks is passed to the Public Relations Division. Information about new discoveries and research is passed to the Special Projects Division. Infor-

mation on the activities, efficiency and effectiveness of the various subsidiaries is passed to the Project Coordination Division. This means ICS is a "Big Brother" for Pentex. This helps keep Pentex employees loyal. They may not know of the ICS, but most know of fellow employees who disappeared unexpectedly, never to be heard from again.

Wyrms Taints and Wyrms Infestations

I do my part behind the lines

Swabbing door handles of cop cars

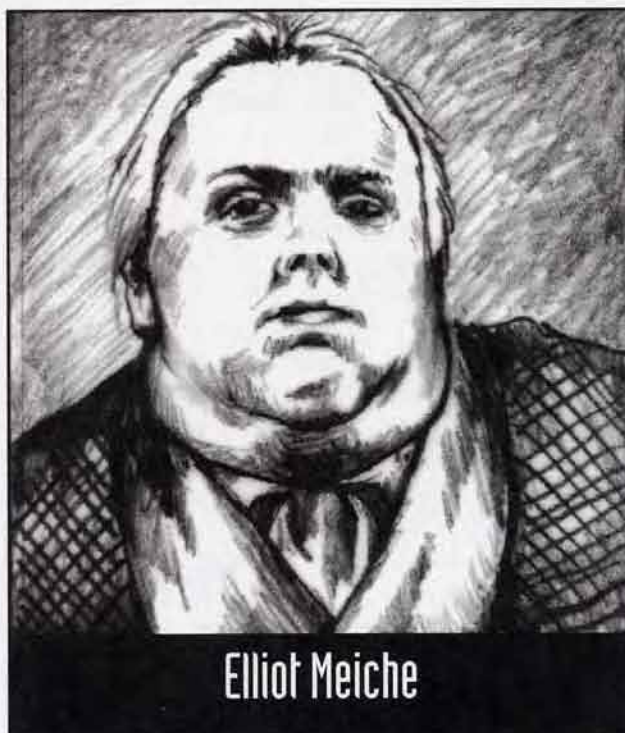
With DMSO mixed with LSD...

— Dead Kennedys, "DMSO"

One important distinction to keep track of is the difference between Wyrms-tainted and Wyrms-infested. These are two separate effects that are created in Pentex products.

Wyrms-tainting is the imbuing of an object with energy from the Wyrms for a specific purpose. In many ways it is like an enchantment. It has a particular effect, but it does not contain a spirit like a fetish. The object in question is usable over and over again, unless it is food or some other depletable product.

The Wyrms-tainted product must undergo a special process during its creation in order to be properly tainted; otherwise it is just a standard product with no special supernatural effect. Usually a certain machine is set up in the plant where the product is created. This machine is similar to a fetish in that it has the power to cast an enchantment. The machine is usually called the "Tainter." A Tainter may or may not require employees to operate it.



Elliot Meiche

In most cases they do not, but if they do, it is highly likely that Black Spiral Dancers or fomori operate it, because long-term exposure to the Tainter can kill normal humans.

It is not a simple process to create a Tainter, but the finished device is capable of tainting products indefinitely, for it draws its power from the Wyrms itself.

Wyrms-tainting usually gives the product a special detrimental effect that is undetectable through scientific means. This helps protect Pentex products from being caught below standards. Some taints are even designed to conceal natural problems with the product. For example, a rotten food product may be tainted to look, taste and smell fresh. When it is ingested, however, the consumer's stomach discovers otherwise.

Some taints are designed to affect personality. They do so by creating certain mental images that induce pleasure despite the fact that the product itself should cause revulsion. The taint thus creates pleasure to accompany bad emotions, which creates a conditioned response over time. The pleasure created is very subtle and is hard to consciously recognize.

The other major category is Wyrms-infestation. Wyrms-infestation turns a product into a fetish containing a Bane of the Wyrms. The creation of Wyrms-infested products is similar to that detailed above for Wyrms-tainted products. However, instead of using a Tainter, it requires an "Infestor." Infestors are much harder to create than Tainters. They can only be created through intricate rituals by Black Spiral Theurges, and only at nuclear power plants, where the raw power of the Wyrms flows freely. Infestors have limited lifespans, and can only create a certain number of Wyrms-infested products before they deplete their supplies of Banes.

The "Wyrms-infestation" is a Bane. A "charged" Infestor contains a certain number of Banes, usually around a thousand. While these Banes are extremely weak, they are able to influence the people using the products to which they are attached. An Infested object is not a fetish *per se*, for the Bane is linked to the object, but it has the power to free itself at any time if it considers its job unnecessary (the object is broken or lost) or impossible (the person is already insane or has an iron will).

The Bane will haunt the Umbra near the product to which it is tied. Thus, an individual who owns a number of Wyrms-infested products has a number of Banes hovering about her in the Umbra, watching her every move and continually seeking new ways to corrupt her.

If players ever learn of this it should have an unnerving effect on them. Children all over America are alone in their rooms at night with their "Commando Joe" action figures — and a dozen or so Banes watching over them. Maybe there are monsters under their beds after all?



Kiro Yamazaki

Pentex's Top 21 Corporations

The following is a list of Pentex's largest known companies. While Pentex owns many more companies than the ones listed here, these are the 21 most influential, in no specific order. They often work with one another since profit is not the most important goal — destruction of the planet and all life on it is. Each of these companies is owned by a holding corporation, which is itself owned by Pentex, making it difficult to trace the company to Pentex ownership.

OmniTV — A syndicated television network, this company constantly bombards couch potatoes with hour after hour of mind-numbing sitcoms, police shows and teen dramas. Worse than that, the network also constantly airs subliminal messages which sap the thinking ability, free will, and morals of unsuspecting people. This has helped to increase the rage, apathy and callousness of many Americans.

Nastrum Enterprises — A missile and aircraft manufacturer. It is one of the few military hardware producers that have been left untouched by military cutbacks and will probably remain so. It not only sells weapons to the United States, but to nearly every country interested in purchasing them. It has been known to provide them on credit to various radical factions. While a scandal may one day ensue, it is highly probable that all the important people in Washington were "left out of the loop" on this one.



Harold Zettler

Atlas International: "Providers for Our Future" —

A privately owned producer of "safe and efficient" nuclear energy. This company has grown in the past two decades, and now provides service in 17 states and various places across Europe. While none of its plants operate at current safety specifications, good lobbyists, sharp attorneys and good public relations people have kept the plants open. Despite effects on the local populations such as birth defects, cancer, brain damage and horrible sickness, the company intends to open at least three new plants by the end of the year.

Endron International — A sizable and diverse oil company. Endron produces a wide range of petroleum products, but primarily gasoline. Every product it produces is below current standards. The poorly refined gasoline is among the cheapest, and continually increases the pollution level. Endron is also responsible for some of the worst oil spills in history. These spills have become favored ways of decimating the environment, and the damage done is well worth the cost of the subsequent cleanups. Endron is the oldest Pentex company, having grown out of Premium Oil.

O'Tolley's: "The Family Place" — An international fast food franchise, this company leads the way in destroying the health of humankind. O'Tolley's represents itself as a wholesome family restaurant, thereby misleading the public about the health risks involved in consuming its Wyrmtainted products. A sizable chunk of its advertising dollar goes to publicized charity donations to spread this image. Despite its feigned interest in the welfare of the people, the franchise leads the way in expanding the beef market through the expansion of Brazilian rain forest as pasture land.

Circinus Brands, Inc. — A major cigarette company, Circinus is now aiming its marketing toward a younger generation. As its regular customers have been dying off, it needs to replace them with fresh nicotine addicts. All brands of Circinus cigarettes are special because they contain tobacco that has been grown under unusual conditions. This Wyrmtainted tobacco is much more harmful to the smokers' health and twice as addictive.

Magadon, Inc. — A major pharmaceutical company. This company is one of the largest drug manufacturers in the world. Most of its products are Wyrmtainted in some way. The company secretly prides itself on the fact that, in the long run, it has killed more people than it has saved. Magadon is involved in massive amounts of unneeded animal "research." It has produced a wide range of addictive drugs, drugs with numerous side effects, and ineffective drugs. It is also a leader in breast implant production, as well as other cosmetic surgery products. All are Wyrmtainted.

Good House International — A paper manufacturer, Good House is a world leader in deforestation. The company is the second oldest of all Pentex's companies. It has destroyed more forest in the last 10 years alone than has been regrown in the last 80 years. Good House is a leader in the destruction of the Brazilian rain forest, as well as a leader in deforestation in Canada and the United States. It is hard to pick up a paper product in the Gothic-Punk world that was not produced by Good House.

Rainbow, Inc. — A plastic and rubber manufacturer. This company has been a major corrupter of the world since its foundation in the 1950s. Rainbow produces plastic bags, basketballs, plastic packaging for other products, and almost every other plastic or rubber product imaginable. Rainbow's products are often Wyrmtainted and affect those who purchase them to be affected in a variety of horrible ways, destroying their health, their personalities and everything in between.

Avalon, Inc. — A toy manufacturer. This company produces an expansive line of toys, all with the express purpose of corrupting and destroying children. It produces an extremely large assortment of violent toys, hoping to foster natural aggression in the leaders of tomorrow. All of Avalon's toys are at least Wyrmtainted, influencing the psyches of the children playing with them. Many are even Wyrminfested.

Aesop Research Company (ARC) — A major company involved in the torture, mutilation and destruction of animals. The company performs research for cosmetics companies as well as for Magadon, the Pentex pharmaceutical company. The ARC gets away with the worst tortures and many Banes get a great deal of pleasure through service to this company. In fact, many Banes are rewarded with the essences of animal lives, given up through the worst means possible. While the company's atrocious activities were revealed to the public a few years ago, all involved disap-

peared or were bought off, sealing the leak. The public quickly forgot about ARC.

Vesuvius, Inc. — A magazine and book publisher. This company produces a wide range of periodicals: news, sports, children's magazines, adult magazines, and almost everything else. It also publishes a wide range of books and a line of comic books. All its products which speak of the environment claim that the damage being done is not that great or unusual, assuring their readers there is nothing to worry about, and that the hysteria is the work of unrealistic radicals and bleeding-heart liberals. Vesuvius magazines always feature ads for the products of other Pentex companies, as well as other environment-destroying companies.

King Breweries and Distillers — A beer and liquor company. This company aims almost all its advertising toward teenagers in an attempt to turn them into early drinkers. The old belief of "demon rum" is very true for the products of this company, because all of them are Wyrmtainted or even Wyrminfested, causing a much greater chance of alcoholism in the consumer.

Herculean Firearms, Inc. — A handgun manufacturer. This company supports the right to bear arms — all types of arms. Its lobbyists have been extremely effective in causing the federal and state legislatures of the United States to drag their feet in coming to terms with the gun problem. The proliferation of automatic and semi-automatic weapons, as well as "cop-killer" Teflon-coated ammunition, has been steadily growing, but has largely been ignored in the Gothic-Punk world.

Harold & Harold Mining, Inc. — This company is involved all around the world in various types of mining operations. Strip mining is its favored method, since it does the most damage to the environment. The company operates below government standards in nearly every country. It dominates the market in coal, uranium, zinc, lead, copper, silver and iron.

Tellus Enterprises — A video game producer. This company specializes in the corruption of youth. The company produces a video home entertainment system known as the Tellus System. An almost inexhaustible supply of games can be purchased and played on the system; all contain subliminal messages. These messages are designed to brainwash the players, turning them into lazy, ill-mannered kids who are prone to violence and care nothing about the world they live in, only about the games.

Young & Smith, Inc. — A major producer of various food and hygienic products. This company produces a wide range of environmentally detrimental goods. Most of its food products are below standards; indeed, they are some of the most unsanitary on the market. They also contain too many preservatives and health-damaging chemicals. The media has run many stories on the unsanitary nature of Young & Smith's products, but the public quickly forgot them shortly after they were released.

Hallahan Fishing Company — A fishing and whaling company. This company works hard to deplete the world's seafood supply. It also participates in illegal whaling. The company runs some of the best covert operations in the world. The company provides Wyrmtainted seafood not only to Pentex-owned seafood restaurants, but also to a number of non-Pentex companies.

Sunburst Enterprises International — A computer company. This company produces Wyrminfested computer hardware. Each of its computers is a Wyrmfetish. The computer user's personality will become corrupted through long-term use of the machine.

Ardus Enterprises — A waste management company. It handles radioactive and toxic chemical waste in addition to normal waste. It dumps massive amounts of hazardous waste where it will do the most damage, often pouring it into water supplies or burying it near suburban communities.

Black Dog Game Factory — A roleplaying game company. Under the aegis of Pentex, the Black Dog Game Factory has risen from its former cottage status to dominate the roleplaying game market. Black Dog's games are all based around the ultra-violent exploits of tragically hip antiheroes who kill and maim the uncool mortals in their paths, all the while moaning about their tortured souls. Needless to say, extended play of Black Dog's games often leads to violent behavior in the real world. As if this weren't enough, Black Dog boxed sets routinely include various disgusting Wyrmfetishes and tainted goods in the guise of "miniatures" and "story handouts."

Current Activities

Corrupt influence, which is itself the perennial spring of all prodigality, and of all disorder; which loads us, more than millions of debt; which takes away vigour from our arms, wisdom from our counsels, and every shadow of authority and credit from the most venerable parts of our constitution.

— Edmund Burke, *Speech on the Economic Reform*

Pentex is involved in a wide range of activities which promote the Defilement Phase, the first stage of the Omega Plan. Every aspect of the environment is being irreparably damaged by the subsidiaries of the company. The environment, however, is not its only concern. The human race is also being targeted for attack.

Acid Rain — Acid rain has dramatically increased within the last few years. This is because Pentex dumps chemicals into the atmosphere and water supply. Pentex continually measures acidity and constantly works to increase it. For the most part, the effort to produce acid rain has been felt over Canada and the northeastern portion of the United States, but Pentex is gradually increasing this so it will be felt all over North America.



Donald Gauntley

Animal Research — Pentex uses animals of all sorts to carry out bizarre and unnecessary testing of its products. This is done primarily to provide a warped form of compensation to the Banes that serve Pentex's interests. The animals are often mutilated, poisoned, etc., and given as sacrifices to the Banes, who consume their defiled essences. Pentex has been the leader in the purchase and destruction of everything from white field mice to monkeys to dogs. Some believe human sacrifice is also going on, but the Public Relations Division has kept a tight lid on the experiments.

Brainwashing — Pentex firmly believes in corrupting the minds of the common people. The masses must be dominated. They must accept the destruction of the environment and their world as natural change. Those that are not corrupted must be drained of their free will until they feel they can no longer stand up to the establishment and make a difference.

Pentex is trying to make the populace receptive to the "new and better world" the company has in store for them. Accordingly, Pentex uses a number of methods to corrupt people. The best medium has proven to be television. Pentex regularly broadcasts subliminal messages on a number of channels. All Pentex commercials and shows on the Pentex-owned OmniTV Network contain these messages. The truly insidious aspect of many of these commercials is that they tell people to watch more and more television, thus creating a snowball effect.

Censorship — Pentex favors censorship a great deal. It denounces all original thinkers as radical and dangerous. Free thought has no place in the world the company wishes to create. For this reason, a great amount of funds has been passed through lobbyists to keep censorship an important

issue to some political factions. Pentex tries to promote the image that censorship is only used against the obscene and dangerous, and the "politically correct" movement may be of their making.

Children — The children will be the adults during the Reconstruction Phase of the Omega Plan. Because of this, they must be prepared. Pentex is working hard to remove their consciences, independent thinking ability, and motivation. This dark task is being accomplished in a number of ways.

Children watch a lot of television, so they are bombarded by the subliminal messages. Pentex also produces video games that contain subliminal messages. In addition to this, Pentex manufactures several lines of toys, all of which are designed primarily for the corruption of the kids. Some of these toys are fetishes, while others are simply Wyrmtainted, but they all affect the developing personalities of the children who play with them.

Deforestation — The Garou pose a grave threat to Pentex's plans. Because of this, Pentex constantly tries to destroy the home of the Garou, the forest. Pentex regularly expands its pulpwood operations in attempts to destroy Garou caerns. A First Team will clear the area of the shapeshifters; then a crew will move in and turn the forest into a fallow field. If a caern is discovered, Pentex will attempt to turn it into a Black Spiral Pit or some similarly disgusting place.

Pentex thus makes a hefty profit as it simultaneously destroys the ability of the planet to synthesize oxygen. By destroying the forest to such a degree that there can be no hope of ever replenishing it, the world will be forced to accept the new way of life Pentex will offer to them. To avoid suspicion, Pentex is involved in reforestation, but to such a limited degree and in such an ineffective way that it will never work.

Economy — While the world is in a constant economic slump, Pentex is reaping much of the benefits. It provides the cheapest products to the frugal consumers. Unfortunately, these customers do not realize they are buying Wyrminfested or Wyrmtainted merchandise, nor would they believe it if they were told.

So, despite a time of economic adversity, Pentex continues to thrive, perhaps more than it would in a good economy. This is why Pentex is using lobbyists, threats, spies, impostors, and every other means possible to keep economies from becoming too strong.

Environmental Legislation — It is in the best interest of Pentex to have the government support its operations. This way the government will suffer most of the blame. This will add to the public disapproval of the world governments when the Reconstruction Phase of the Omega Plan sets in.

To keep government on the side of big business, the pockets of most politicians are lined with Pentex dollars. The Public Relations Division keeps the best lobbyists on

the company payroll, putting them to work all over the globe in almost every government.

Pentex often doctors research data on environmental impact collected by government-owned or licensed sources, making the damaging effects look less serious than they really are.

Food Products — Pentex subsidiaries are major producers of all types of food products. Pentex produces about 10% of all the food items sold in the supermarket, and it has a number of fast food restaurants that control over 30% of the market. Most of the food products sold by the Pentex companies are Wyrms-tainted.

There has been a growing interest in gaining even greater market shares in this area because it has proven to be a very effective way of reducing the health of humanity. After all, everyone has to eat.

Extended use of a number of Pentex products can adversely affect a person's personality and health. It can also mark that person with the scent of the Wyrms, making her identifiable to many Garou.

Fossil Fuels — Pentex tries very hard to maintain the dependence of modern society on fossil fuels — oil, coal and natural gas. This allows Pentex to rape the land in order to "meet the demands of the people." Pentex provides low-grade fossil fuel products and keeps its prices low enough to make its goods "preferred products." Pentex is trying to keep the public from realizing just how limited and expensive the fossil fuels are. Fossil fuel production also steadily increases the pollution level.

Pentex has fought long and hard to prevent solar power from becoming a valuable energy source. By fighting advances in solar technology, by removing individuals who make the advances, by promoting it as a weak and unrealistic energy source, and by lobbying politicians, Pentex has made solar power impossible as an option. This, of course, strengthens the modern addiction to the fossil fuels.

Gun Control — Pentex does not desire gun control. In order to keep the effects of increased aggression at their maximum, handguns must be readily available. This way anyone old enough can walk in off the street and purchase a gun, regardless of whether the individual in question has a criminal record or is mentally insane. Through this Pentex can keep society at war with itself so that it will not focus so much on the work of Pentex. Pentex has also fought for the right to bear automatic weapons, which are designed only for the purpose of killing other humans.

Health — It is in the best interest of the company to keep people unhealthy. By doing so, more will die and the old Darwinian idea of survival of the fittest will rear its head. When the Reconstruction Phase begins, people will look to Pentex as their savior, seeing it as their only means of survival in the harsh world they have made.

Keeping this in mind, Pentex has made sure health care has been extremely expensive in the United States, and that

it has remained inadequate in many other places in the world as well. Pentex has also put Wyrms-tainted medicines on the market, medicines which cause more problems than they relieve.

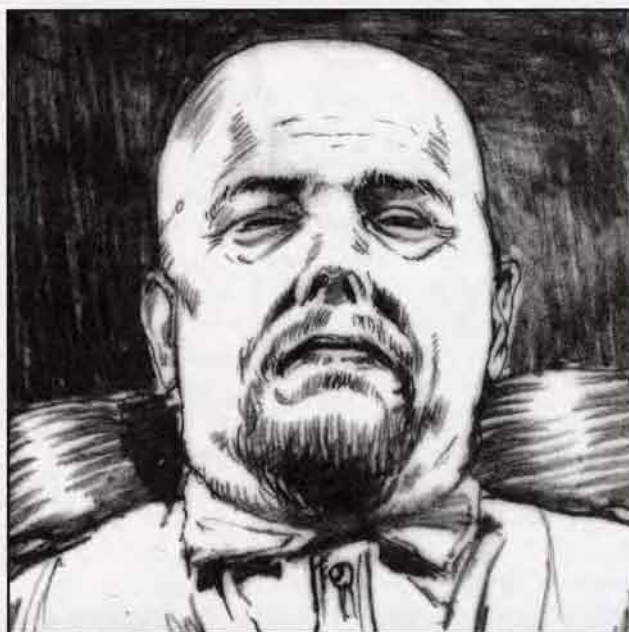
Nuclear Power — Nuclear power is a pure force of the Wyrms. It is the ultimate destructive force on the planet. It is also used as a means of replenishing Banes. In fact, many nuclear power plants are man-made Wyrmsholes.

Pentex uses nuclear power as the energy source for all its Tainters and Infestors. The nuclear energy that powers Wyrms-infested products is extremely potent and relatively cheap to produce compared to creating fetishes and talens one by one.

Pentex will try to locate these nuclear power plants where there is Garou activity. This makes its warrior Banes extremely powerful and easily replenished if harmed. It is also a constant reminder to the Garou, and one they can do little about removing once established.

Ozone Layer — Pentex, even without the help of other companies, has done tremendous damage to the ozone layer. Pentex produces massive amounts of aerosol-based products. It has fought to minimize restrictions against companies that sell these products; thus, the problem is many times worse in the Gothic-Punk world than it is in our own world.

Poaching — Poaching provides the company with great profit while simultaneously destroying what cannot be recreated by humans — endangered species. Bones, sinew, ivory, teeth, horns and hair of various nearly extinct animals have proven to be excellent receptacles in the creation of Wyrms-fetishes. Many of these fetishes are provided to Black Spiral Dancers and members of First Teams who



James Hiker

prove their worth. Unfit specimens or surpluses are usually sold on the black market, catching a fair price.

Pentex is also involved in the seal trade. Destroying seals has been a policy for ages. Seal furs provide the company with a sizable profit and it also gives the company a chance to make more species extinct. Despite efforts by various environmentalist groups, Pentex seal-killers kill every seal they can get their hands on, even the ones that have been spray-painted to prevent them from becoming part of the fur coat harvest.

Pollution — Pentex constantly tries to increase the pollution level. Every Pentex plant spills Wyrms-tainted air into the surrounding area. Much of this is a side effect of producing Wyrms-tainted goods, but some of it is done for its own sake.

Pentex pollution is exceptionally nasty and viscous. It causes headaches, depression and sickness. Every city in the Gothic-Punk world has much worse smog than it does in our world. This is largely because of Pentex's constant release of pollution.

Television — In addition to its barrage of subliminal messages, Pentex directly influences the content of shows on television. Today there are an ever-increasing number of situation comedies, police and detective shows, and teenage or young adult dramas. These shows promote short attention spans, paper-thin ethics, aggressiveness, and a belief that violence is glamorous.

It is rumored that Pentex was the first to make the television remote control available for every home. This was an attempt to shorten the attention spans of all television viewers. Many believe it worked.

Terrorism and Anti-Terrorism — Pentex supports various radical organizations throughout the world. In return, the terrorists often commit atrocities — allegedly for whatever cause they espouse, but actually in service to Pentex. Terrorists are used when publicity is desired. Pentex uses them to increase fighting between various factions, thus ensuring an increased sale in weapons.

Pentex also supports anti-terrorists who attack environmental terrorists. They sink the eco-warriors' ships, blow up their buildings, steal their records, assassinate spokespersons, etc. The anti-terrorists are used because it has proven nearly impossible to prevent eco-terrorism without bloodshed. The First Teams have proven extremely effective against the Green Knights and other groups.

Toxic Waste — Pentex places toxic waste where it will do the most damage to humans, animals and the rest of the environment. The toxic waste is often placed near Wyrms-holes, making them more potent sources of the Wyrms. Nearby Banes are able to gather sustenance from radioactive waste. Pentex also uses toxic waste to corrupt Garou caerns permanently. The company has even insidiously buried hazardous waste below new subdivisions, schools and hospitals.

Whaling — Pentex is one of the last surviving whaling companies. It owns most of the ships that currently ply that illegal trade. While primarily in the service of the Pentex Japan branch, the whaling ships operate wherever whales are found, following them as they migrate. Many Black Spiral Dancers have made highly effective fetishes from whale parts. Pentex plans to slaughter the whales as long as any still swim the seas.

The Pentex Effects

*The land we sold you's right atop our acid pits
We fill them by the truckload in the dead of night
There's a thousand more toxic tips of the iceberg
We pay a little bribe or we just don't report them —
And look what you get!*

— Dead Kennedys, "Cesspools in Eden"

In the Gothic-Punk world, virtually everyone is affected by Pentex. The megacorp is responsible for so many products that it is nearly impossible to go to a store anywhere in the world and not find Wyrms-tainted merchandise produced by a Pentex-owned company. Most people never know how their minds and bodies are violated by the company. Most Garou know, however, which is part of the reason the Apocalypse is so real and immediate to them.

Along with the effects of Pentex products, the giant corporation has other influences on humankind. First of all, those who have even an inkling of psychic talent will experience sickness from eating Wyrms-tainted food. Many of them will have nightmares if they have recently used a Pentex product.

Living near a Pentex branch always has terrible effects on the people. Most will notice an eerie ambience about that plant down the road, but they will not be able to put their finger on what gives them the creeps. Children living in the area will usually develop very aggressive, heartless personalities. People will seldom be seen out at night in the area, though they will not be able to explain why. Pets brought to live in the area usually disappear, or try to run away.

An unusual odor circulates in the neighborhood, especially at night. This odor has a sweet yet disturbing scent to it, and smells like nothing else ever smelt. Inhaling it for prolonged periods of time causes nosebleeds, headaches and aggressive tendencies.

After a Pentex plant has been in the area awhile, crime will be reduced since few criminals will be willing to take their chances at night. There are also usually a greater than average number of suicides and missing persons reports. Within the local government, there will be very little motivation to do anything good for the community. Politicians with a sense of civic duty usually quit frustrated or find themselves subtly forced to leave office. While this may seem beneath Pentex interests, keep in mind that it does not want any local protests against pollution in the

neighborhoods. It does not want snoopers sticking their noses where they do not belong, nor does it want local ordinances passed that might interfere with the company's productivity.

Pentex Worldwide

Pentex is an international company. It has branches in 18 countries and operations in many others as well. Pentex seeks to destroy the entire biosphere, not just that of the United States.

United States — Pentex is strongest in the United States. Most of the company's subsidiaries have their main headquarters located in the country. The citizens of the United States have proven very easy to manipulate. They are very susceptible to the suggestions of television and other media. While the United States is not nearly as tainted by the Wurm as are Mexico, the Middle East, South America and Japan, the corruption is spreading much more quickly in the U.S. than it is in any of these other areas. The company has branches and subsidiaries in over 65 cities within the United States.

Canada — While Pentex has not had the overwhelming success it is having in the United States, it is steadily growing here. Pentex has branch offices in Toronto, Vancouver, Quebec and Montreal. The company has been working especially hard to reduce the environmental restrictions placed on companies by the Canadian government.

Mexico — Mexico has long been victimized by the Wurm; indeed, it has received much of the brunt of the New World invasions. The crippling poverty and lack of environmental effort by the country are only signs of its deeper

corruption. In addition, the Pentex central headquarters is located in Mexico City. Since the city is also the capital for the Sabbat sect, the company is well defended from Garou and other outside threats. The company has large branch offices in the cities of Villahermosa, Acapulco, Tampico and Veracruz.

Central America — Central America is much like Mexico. The region is wracked by poverty, dissatisfaction, filth and aggression. Pentex has two branches in the region: one in San Salvador, capital of El Salvador, and one in Panamá City, capital of Panama.

South America — Pentex has over 20 branches in nine of the countries within South America. Brazil is the hardest hit of all the countries, but Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina are also becoming Wurm-tainted at an alarming rate. Indeed, Pentex devotes more effort to destroying South America's environment than that of any other continent. Pentex has multiple First Teams in the Amazon, all of which are involved in an all-out guerrilla war with the Garou.

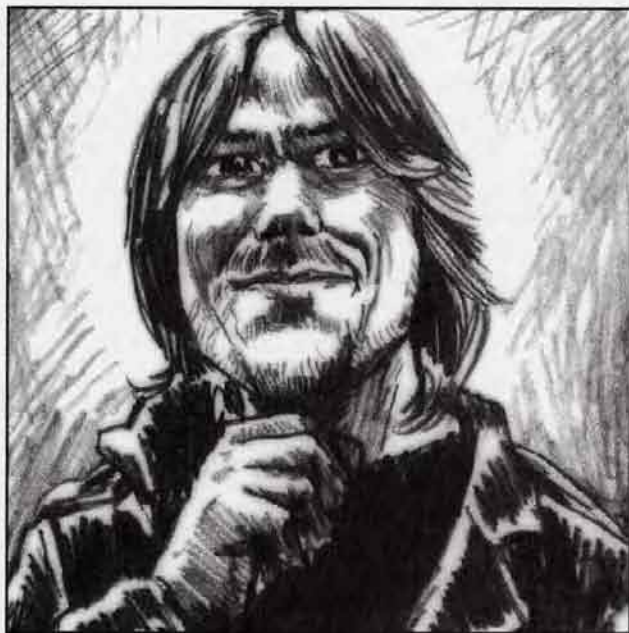
Western Europe — Pentex has gained considerable market shares in Europe, but it has taken its time. The Green Knights have fervently opposed Pentex efforts. Successful infiltration of Western Europe has taken longer than in any other part of the world. Still, the company has had a number of successes. It has established at least one branch in every country.

Australia — Pentex has managed to gain sizable market shares in Australia. The company is working hard to corrupt the continent, but the wild Garou of the Outback are making it hard. Pentex has managed to establish two branch offices on the continent, one in Sydney and the other in Wellington.

Africa — Africa has proven a difficult continent to affect. Other than sporadic poaching, Pentex does little here. This is mainly because of the Red Talons and the other shapeshifters. They keep a tight rein on the Wurm, making Africa one of the last few safe places in the world. Pentex has managed to establish branch offices in Johannesburg, South Africa, and Casablanca, Morocco.

Middle East and Near East — Pentex has made a number of deals with the oil producers of the region. There is also an uneasy peace between the Assamite clan of vampires and Pentex. Its supernatural allies keep crude prices high, enabling Pentex to sell its products cheaper than anyone else.

Japan — Pentex sees Japan as a source of great power. It must be completely controlled if the Omega Plan is to succeed. Because of this, Pentex has formed temporary alliances with the Gaki, the Oriental vampires — at least until it can figure out how to get rid of them. While the Gaki are tied to the Yakuza, the members of the Board of Directors believe that the Yakuza will ally with the company to rid itself of the Gaki once and for all. Currently Pentex only has one branch office in Japan, specifically in Tokyo.



Robert Allred

Asia — Pentex is very interested in Asia. It currently uses many Asian natives as sources of cheap labor for many of its products (though labels or packaging are left off; these functions are performed in the United States, thus allowing the product to bear a "Made In The U.S.A." sticker). Pentex believes that something strange is going on among the shapeshifters of the region. There is an unknown energy pervading the jungles; in addition, rumors abound of lost cities, strange-looking men, odd lights at night and many other strange occurrences.

Pentex Relations

Pentex is a major entity. It spans four continents and leaves its mark on everyone, not just humans. Because of this, it is important to know how Pentex is viewed, if viewed at all, by the powers that be.

Competition — Pentex considers itself first in the world. It treats other companies as beneath it. It can buy, sell, make or break any company. For this reason, most businesses are terrified of going head to head against Pentex. However, few realize which companies are owned by Pentex, meaning they often go against it despite their desire not to do so.

Media — Few in the media know about Pentex. Even fewer are willing to tell what they know, because they know just what the company is capable of doing to them. Pentex treats the media as a weapon. As long as it is in company hands, it is useful and the company is safe. If it falls into the hands of another, the company is threatened, so action must be taken to prevent "slanders and libels," even if they are true. Because of this attitude, the Pentex Public Relations Division keeps a close eye on the media and is always ready to step in and bribe or intimidate reporters, or go even further if necessary.

Legal Organizations — The FBI is believed to possess certain information regarding Pentex. Unfortunately, Pentex knows so much about the FBI that the organization is willing to keep the Pentex information confidential.

Politicians — Few political leaders realize they are pawns of Pentex. They believe that they are actually serving the best interests of their constituency. Pentex's lobbyists only feed this delusion.

Black Spiral Dancers — The Black Spiral Dancers believe they understand Pentex, though this is not always the case. Many Black Spirals have accepted Pentex leadership, believing it to be the only way they can achieve their own goals. Pentex considers the Dancers useful pawns. However, they are dangerous and if they should ever become a threat, they will be sanctioned.

Garou — The Garou know about Pentex, but they do not know just how powerful the company has grown. The Garou realize Pentex is trying to destroy the environment and corrupt the homids, but they do not know why. They do know that the company has Leeches, Black Spiral Dancers and Banes in its service. The Garou also know that virtually

all Pentex products are Wyrms-tainted or Wyrms-infested. Pentex sees the Garou as a threat to their plans because they are for the most part untouched by their products. That is why they enlist the aid of Wyrms-serving werewolves, fomori, vampires and psychics.

Lycanthropes — The other shapeshifters dislike Pentex as much as the Garou dislike the company. Unfortunately, some of them are even more affected by Pentex than the Garou, through the massive deforestation. Many of the lycanthropes know even less about Pentex than the Garou. Pentex has only recently begun to separate lycanthropes into categories of Garou and non-Garou (based on information from the Black Spiral Dancers). The other shapeshifters are not viewed as serious threats because there is almost no unity among them, making them easier to crush than the Garou. Besides, even the Black Spirals know very little about the other Changing Breeds.

Fomori — Most fomori serving Pentex know very little about what is going on. Many do not even realize their powers come from the Wyrms, or that Pentex is working to destroy the earth as they know it. Some might turn against Pentex if they were to find out, but Pentex believes the Black Spirals could handle a situation such as this if it were to arise. Pentex views the fomori as very useful tools because they can be used against the Black Spirals if necessary, and they are of great use against the Garou.

Sabbat — The Sabbat is involved in many Pentex activities. The vampire sect believes the company will be a valuable ally when Gehenna finally arrives. The vampires involved in the company believe they will be able to direct the various powers of Pentex against the Antediluvians, but they are being misled. Pentex would never go to war against such powerful creatures. The loss of the Sabbat as an ally would not outweigh the cost, since the Sabbat could do little against Pentex as they fought for their unives against their ancestors. Pentex realizes the need for a connection among the Damned within the Western world, and the Sabbat is more suitable to their tastes than the Camarilla.

Gaki — The Gaki serve Pentex in the Orient in the same way that the Sabbat serves Pentex in America. Pentex is quickly growing, not only in Japan, but in Thailand, China, the Philippines and Korea as well. The Gaki are not used to the Pentex way of business, which is very Western. The Gaki believe Pentex to be yet another Western company trying to intrude. They accept it for the time being, but if they learn how powerful it really is, they will try to remove it. Pentex does not like dealing with the Gaki and their rigid etiquette practices and uncompromising beliefs. However, it considers them a necessary evil until Pentex has established itself and learned the customs of their society.

Camarilla — Some within the Camarilla know of Pentex, though they care little about it. Few of them know of the company's connection to the Sabbat. Most Camarilla Kindred do not see the company as a threat. They really do not care as long as the company does not directly interfere with their own plans. Pentex cares little for the Camarilla. It

seldom has to oppose the sect, but when it does, it usually employs the Sabbat to do the job in order to keep its own involvement secret.

Giovanni — The Giovanni have been the hardest hit by Pentex of all the vampire clans. The Giovanni have lost controlling interest and complete influence over many of their companies, especially in the United States. While the Giovanni's power is still growing in the New World, it is happening much slower than it would if Pentex were not around to get in the way. Pentex sees the clan as a threat that might have to be eliminated if it keeps interfering with Pentex plans. The company hopes to avoid confrontation with any of the Damned, but it will crack down if necessary.

Mages — The mages pose a significant threat to Pentex plans. These arcane lords are starting to grow in number and they are beginning to assert themselves more in business matters. They have always been around, but now some of them are learning more and more about Pentex. Pentex fears they will discover the Omega Plan, or at least the scope of Pentex's efforts, and rise to oppose the company. The fact is, Pentex has lost some business to mage-owned companies, especially in the areas of food products and high-tech goods. It will be some time before Pentex can accurately assess the full measure of the threat the mages pose.

Secrets: Who Controls Whom?

Pentex is not all that it seems at first glance. It is not a completely unified company. Many of its members have their own hidden agendas. The Board of Directors, the CEO, the leaders of the Black Spiral Dancers, the leaders of the Sabbat, and even the Wyrms all have their secrets.

Each and every member of the Board of Directors has his own special interests which sometimes conflict with those of other members of the Board. This leads to occasional complications, but the Board is usually able to compromise and work through these disputes. The Board shares one secret known only to itself: the Omega Plan.

The plan has been carefully laid out, each phase designed down to the most minute detail. Only the members of the Board know the full ramifications of the plan. They will not share this with the CEO, the Black Spiral leaders or the Sabbat. Despite what the Wyrms they serve might believe, they do not know the scope of the plan either.

Three members of the Board have made contact with an entity even more powerful than the Wyrms that now direct the company. This entity and the three members of the Board reached an agreement. If Pentex follows its plan, which is scheduled to begin after the first phase of the Omega Plan reached fruition, the three will receive power that their Wyrms could not offer. The three accepted and are now conspiring with this unrevealed source against the Wyrms. This entity uses its great powers to protect its followers from discovery by the Wyrms.



Adrian Newberry

Pentex is using the Black Spirals and secretly plans to lead them to their doom. There will be no place for them in the "new and better world" Pentex is going to create. However, the company will use them to do their dirty work until the shapeshifters cease to pose a threat.

The Black Spirals also have their own secrets. While they, like everyone else, are unaware of the conspiracy among the Board of Directors, they do believe the Wyrms are duping the board members. They know the Omega Plan will never be accomplished. Stage One is the Apocalypse. Once that is accomplished it will be the end of the world as the Black Spirals know it. When the time comes, they will rise up to destroy Pentex.

The Sabbat has its own secret. Harold Zettler, the Sabbat board member, has achieved a great deal of personal control over the Pentex Special Projects Division. Many of the employees of the Iliad and Odyssey Projects have been Blood Bound to him. Zettler wishes to gain complete access to the Pentex ICS in order to use it against the Camarilla, but has thus far been unable to do so. The Board has secretly limited his access, fearing what he might do with that much power. They do not want the Sabbat to gain an upper hand on the Camarilla. Doing so would make the Sabbat much stronger when the time comes for Pentex to sever its ties to the sect.

The Wyrms also have their secrets. Each of the Wyrms has goals of its own. Other than destruction, the nature of these goals remains unfathomable.

Conflict with the Shapeshifters

Pentex has a major obstacle to its plans: the Garou. But recently, as Pentex has extended its deforestation efforts over the world, another threat has risen: other lycanthropes.

Pentex sent a powerful First Team to clear the Amazon Jungle; only one fomor returned, fearfully ranting about huge werecats.

The Garou constantly show up at special Pentex operations. They come in and wreck the setup, maim employees, destroy irreplaceable equipment, and focus media attention on Pentex.

To deal with this, the First Teams were created. The First Teams are composed of a variety of unusual creatures. A skilled mercenary is usually placed in charge of the First Team due to his experience. The mercenary is always highly equipped and will have taken the anti-Delirium treatment. Besides the team leader there are usually at least one or two Black Spiral Dancers, fomori and psychics. These agents are also well-armed and highly trained.

The First Teams go into an area before Pentex moves in its main operation. The First Teams search out Garou caerns or similar dens of shapeshifters. They pounce on them and attack without mercy, calling in enough support to outnumber their victims two to one. The caerns are desecrated using Banes, toxic chemicals and whatever else is necessary. After this, the Pentex main operation moves in.

The main operation is often built right over the former caern, not only adding insult to injury, but also providing more power since the corruption of the Wyrms flows easily through these places. Unless the shapeshifters act quickly, the area will become nearly irrevocably corrupted with the Wyrms.

Pentex also tries to discover Kinfolk of the shapeshifters and hire them as employees. Once hired, they will be corrupted through a variety of means: Wym-tainted gases in the plant, Wym-tainted food in the cafeteria, etc. By destroying the shapeshifters' link to human society, they reduce their power, turning them into complete outsiders.

Pentex has tried in the past to capture shapeshifters and turn them into traitors, but this has proven ineffective, resulting in a change of policy. Now the First Teams destroy them on sight.

The Black Spiral Dancers have the greatest success in tracking down their enemies and destroying them. They are able to gain information on them using the Pentex Information Collection System. They then pursue them to the ends of the earth if necessary. The Black Spirals' access to high-tech weapons, along with their powerful Pentex backup, makes them possibly the greatest threat with which the shapeshifters have to deal.

Pentex in Space

The company has a number of satellites, and has even sent up a space probe; however, Pentex has yet to launch a manned space flight. Pentex hopes to colonize the moon one day. Whether this is a totally ludicrous notion or an ingenious opportunity is open to question. Pentex already has plans for a 300-person permanent moon base. Since the

moon is already devoid of life, it can easily be colonized. Furthermore, once the Omega Plan reaches the Defilement Phase, Earth will be completely uninhabitable anyway. The moon will be the only relatively safe place left.

Pentex is also trying to discover all it can about UFOs. Believe it or not, Pentex has spent millions on its efforts to discover alien beings. The main reason is not to discover new life, but new technology. If Pentex is going to lead the way into the new world, then it has to be ready. The rumors about Hangar 18 may or not be true, but one thing is true: Pentex does have its own secret laboratories involved in research on UFOs. Whether or not it has actually discovered evidence of extraterrestrial life has yet to be revealed. Whatever the case, Pentex has been very hush-hush about the entire project, even more so than its taciturnity regarding the Iliad and Odyssey Projects.

Pentex is not yet aware of the Russian Black Spirals' temporary caern on the MIR space station. Still, it is only a matter of time before the ICS puts all the clues together.

Fatal Flaws of Pentex

Lay then the axe to the root, and teach governments humanity. It is their sanguinary punishments which corrupt mankind.

—Thomas Paine

While Pentex is a megalithic force, it does have its problems. It sometimes lacks focus, the bureaucratic red tape slows things down, and the various branches sometimes oppose one another.

The lack of focus is due to the fact that each member of the Board of Directors is directed by a different manifestation of the Wym, with its own goals, interests and desired methods. Instead of directing its resources toward one specific task, Pentex has spread its resources out to cover a wide range of interests. This is to meet the desires of the board members and the individual Wyrms they serve. The company might be more successful if it focused on two or three areas instead of so many.

This is the reason a major move against the shapeshifters has not been initiated. If the board members who wish to destroy them had their way, the company would direct its entire combat abilities to one area after another and use the ICS and the agents of the Public Relations Division to focus on tracking Garou activities. However, an arrangement of this nature is not possible in the foreseeable future.

The bureaucratic red tape slows down the company tremendously. While day-to-day operations go along fine, any reaction to a major crisis must often float down from Pentex to its subsidiaries, passing through several stages of management in the process. This often leads to miscommunication and slow reaction. In cases where expediency counts, Pentex often comes out on the losing end. This is especially true when dealing with environmental terrorists, the media and the Garou. The Garou take good advantage

of this, giving the werewolves a fair chance of winning in battle against the well-equipped company.

Another major problem of the company is that its various divisions often have different interests. Some of this comes from the fact that none of the divisions are completely sure of what is going on in the other divisions. This also carries over into the various subsidiaries. They often directly compete against one another, though they do not realize it. Most Pentex subsidiaries do not know about all the other companies Pentex owns (or even that they are owned by Pentex), so they often unknowingly act against other properties of Pentex.

Careful strategists are able to apply these weaknesses to attacks on the company. These problems have helped the Garou tremendously. Some Garou elders even consider the company predictable.

Using Pentex in a Chronicle

It is up to you, the Storyteller, to decide if Pentex should or should not be included in your chronicle, and if so, then to what degree. Pentex can be a shadowy, behind-the-scenes force that only comes to the forefront during rare occasions, or it can be a constant antagonist chasing after the Garou characters. The choice is yours.

Also, if there is anything you do not like about Pentex, feel free to make all the changes you deem necessary for it to be an enjoyable part of the stories you create. You could take away its supernatural agents, you could make it a smaller company, or you might just want to change the name — whatever you see fit to do.

Pentex can enhance your chronicle in several ways. First of all, look at the list of current activities. Find some in which you and your players are interested, and then integrate them into your story. This way you can have the characters come across the handiwork of Pentex. They will have to search to get to the bottom of things, uncovering more and more clues which will lead them to the company.

For example, if you and your players are interested in the poaching of wild animals, have the pack be sent to Africa on some mission for their sept. Once there, they will run across the carcasses of several elephants left to rot. It appears that only their tusks were removed. Following the path of death, the characters may well run across the Pentex poachers, who in turn might lead them back to the United States, specifically to a Pentex office that sent the employees to collect the tusks for some special purpose.

After you have found the proper way to introduce Pentex, let your players decide just how interested they are in taking on the company. While you may be interested in using it as a regular feature in the game, they may find it boring. Try to balance your own desires for what the chronicle should be with the type of chronicle the players wish to play.

If your players are interested in Pentex, provide them with the opportunity to learn more about it, possibly from an elder with an old grudge against the company, or even an ex-employee of Pentex that somehow survived “retirement.”

You should also make any changes you desire in order to make Pentex unpredictable. Remember, players will have just as much access to this material on Pentex as a Storyteller would. If you make unexpected changes here and there, however, players will never know what to expect.

PENTEX



Chapter Three: Malfeas, Lair of the Wyrms

Listen children. While the moon rides into the sky and we sit around this fire, I will tell you what I know of the ways our enemy warps the Umbra and the spirits who dwell there. I will tell you of some of the creatures and...things...that are the terrible soldiers of our hideous foe. And then I will tell you what I know of how to destroy them. For fang and claw are not enough; you must be strong of spirit and swift of thought, or you will lie dead at the feet of your enemies — or worse, rise and join them.

The Wyrms wrap their coils around and through the many realms near Gaia just as their coils wrap through the mundane cities and lands that it pollutes. Using Moon Bridges and magic, the servants of the Wyrms cross the Umbra from realm to realm on missions of hate and destruction, and it is our duty as Garou to destroy them and their workings of evil.

The Wyrms strive always to corrupt, and many of the wise and mighty have fallen prey to its lures of knowledge or power. You must be ever vigilant, and forever question yourself, lest a Bane enter through the doors of pride and hatred. But you must be strong and sure when you find evil, and use fury as a weapon to destroy the twisted mockeries that hunt us in the night — for we are the changing breed, and we also hunt.

— Ekes Sara, Uktena elder

In the Deep Umbra the Wyrms have made a home for itself, the realm called *Malfeas*. This realm is one of the centers

of the Wyrms' twisted activities, and many of its servants dwell there, leading existences of splendid horror.

Malfeas reflects the Wyrms' nature. It is a mysterious and frightening place of nearly incomprehensible depravity and pollution of the body and soul. The Wyrms cannot create, but it strives to corrupt all of the realms, and Malfeas is the base for these activities in the Umbra. Plots and plans are hatched, messengers are sent out with orders for the minions in other realms, and the reports of spies are studied in order to discover further ways to pour poison through cracks in Gaia's armor.

The Wyrms also have a great interest in corrupting other realms of the Tellurian, for it is often easier to reach Gaia through some poorly guarded "back door" on the spirit plane. Therefore much of the activity in Malfeas is not directed at Gaia, but at other, stranger realms. Servants of the Wyrms also use Malfeas as a base for their own depraved explorations of the Deep Umbra, seeking out new realms and charting pathways to them. Followers of the Wyrms gain great prestige for finding and corrupting previously unknown realms.

Malfeas is also where the most unfortunate of those captured by minions of the Wyrms end their lives. These pathetic playthings of the ruling elite are tortured body and soul, ridden by Banes and used as pawns in bizarre games. Some eventually become so twisted by what they undergo that they willingly join the Wyrms, turning against old friends and betraying all they have held dear. Fear of this is

one of the main reasons that Garou prefer death to capture at the hands of their enemies.

The Wyrms in the Umbra

The Wyrms writhes in the Umbra and touches almost every realm. Near to Gaia, in what the Garou call the Near Umbra, many of the minions of the Wyrms can be found, corrupting the Earth or the people in it.

Blights

Forests keep disappearing, rivers dry up, wildlife's become extinct, the climate's ruined and the land grows poorer and uglier every day.

— Anton Chekhov, *Uncle Vanya*

The poor areas of cities — slums, housing projects and the like — are Blight areas in the Umbra. The ground in such areas is spiritually asphyxiated beneath the buildings, and usually appears parched and lifeless. Most of the buildings of the slum do not appear in the Umbra, and many buildings that do appear will be relatively featureless.

The only buildings that can be seen are those that are strong focuses for energy, or those that have been built with magic (Freemasonry, etc.). Crack houses, brothels and shooting galleries (where junkies go to shoot up) often

appear because of the energies associated with them, and Banes are frequently drawn to feed off the foulness at these sites. Some buildings in truly horrific slums appear partially ruined or burned, and the screams of the tortured spirits inside can be heard from a great distance. Such buildings are also the places where Banes prefer to nest when they are not active.

Walking through a Blight is like walking through a semi-arid plain scattered with occasional featureless boxes. What few trees and shrubs exist in the area are Blight Children, their spirits corrupted and warped by the Wyrms. These spirits can frequently roam about within the Blight, and are dangerously malevolent.

Rarely, a building will be present in the Umbra but not in the mundane world, or will be very different in the Umbra than in the mundane world. This can occur when an old, spiritually awakened building is destroyed, leaving its spirit to pine away, or when a powerful group makes frequent use of an open-air meeting spot, thus erecting a spiritual building.

Hellholes

Hellholes are places such as waste dumps, nuclear testing ranges or "industrial accident sites." These appear in the Umbra as scorched deserts with harsh toxins boiling in pits; the air is choked with poisonous fumes rising from vents in the ground. The ground is frequently littered with



the bones of animals and the remnants of trees and other plants. The sky might appear to glow from the burning gases, or might appear black, completely shrouded by clouds of poison.

Any plant spirit still alive in a Hellhole is a twisted mockery of a Naturæ, and is a servant of the Wyrms. Animal spirits are also twisted, but the spirits of animals recently caught in the Hellhole may still be salvageable. Many Banes are present, basking in the putrid presence of the place. Some Banes manifest as clouds of toxic fumes that hover over the area, waiting to envelop and attack any foolish enough to enter; others manifest as horrible snake-like monstrosities with wings, legs and claws sprouting at random intervals along the body. Many other forms exist as well.

Calumns: Wyrms Domains

In the Near Umbra, the influence of Malfeas causes Wym-ridden domains called Calumns to form. These areas of evil influence are corrupted and sullen, and the normal muted colors of the Umbra are turned to shades of gray and dirty brown. The sky seems overcast and sometimes rain falls, a greasy drizzle that makes the skin crawl. The influence of the Wyrms is dominant in these areas. Enemies of the Wyrms feel uneasy, even if they are not attacked outright.

The appearance of Calumns varies greatly. Each domain has its own brand of despair and poison for the soul. Calumns are usually "ruled" by a Bane or more powerful Wym creature, such as a Nexus Crawler. They are often created from evil feelings or thoughts, around which physical existence congeals. The base emotion provides the underlying mood for all activity in the Calumn, and everything that happens in it will be tinged with that emotion or thought. There are Calumns of Angst, Anger, Betrayal, Cunning, Murder, Confusion and many more.

Banes frequent Calumns, and are in fact drawn to them. They often build "nests" in these domains, resting in quiescent form during the Umbral night. Night in the Realm, when the moon rides in the sky, is the time of activity for Banes, as they work to further their master's plans.

Far Calumns: Anchorheads to Malfeas

Some Calumns act as Anchorheads to Malfeas. The paths and portals found there can lead the evil (or the foolish) directly to the realm of Malfeas itself. A Far Calumn might appear in the Umbra where the Wyrms' corruption has been allowed to spread unchecked. The concentration of corruption allows the influence of Malfeas to manifest fully.



Anchorheads are always very close to the Deep Umbra; thus, Wyldlings and other spirits congregate there. The spirits that gather near a Far Calumn tend to be malevolent. Banes and other servants use the Anchorheads to travel, and sometimes Malfeas uses the places as Umbral "compost heaps" to dump the spiritual wreckage that it creates from captives.

Very few domains are Anchorheads; only those that are fully attuned to the energy of the place that created the domain will do. It generally takes at least a week of Umbral travel to reach a Far Calumn. Even if a Black Spiral were to "step sideways" in a waste dump, it would take a week of travel deep into the Umbra to reach a Far Calumn and travel to Malfeas. The sights and sounds of a Far Calumn are scaled-down versions of Malfeas, influenced by the character of the duchy into which the Anchorhead opens.

Wyrms Caerns

Wyrms caerns are places of great corruption in the mundane world, and as such are Blights or Hellholes in the Umbra. Wyrms caerns are rated in the same manner as Garou caerns (that is from one to five, with five being the most corrupt). The Gauntlet at a Wyrms caern is considered identical to that of a normal caern of equal rating. Contacting spirits and "stepping sideways" are not more difficult at Wyrms caerns, but Banes are the only spirits that will answer calls from such a place, and "stepping sideways" will likely bring one into the Umbra to face the Bane-totem of the caern.

Certain caerns of the Wyrms exist only in the Umbra, having no physical counterpart. Societies of shamans within the Black Spiral Dancers use these caerns as havens and fortresses to foster putrefaction and as temples to create evil fetishes.

The greatest Wyrms caerns are far beneath the surface of the earth, in the huge network of caverns never touched by the clean light of sun or moon. There, deep in the crust of the earth, the radioactive balefires glow and pulse with the sickly rhythms of the Wyrms' thoughts. The moots of the Black Spiral Dancers are held deep within these caverns, and these moots and revels attract terrible creatures from Wyrms-ridden realms deep within the Umbra.

The Temple of Our Father the Destroyer (in the Bronx)

This caern is located in the Umbra. In the mundane world the site is a tiny, triangular vacant lot owned by the city. There used to be a building here, which a serial killer used as a burial ground for his victims many years ago. The twisted psychopath was never caught, and the bodies and spirits of the tortured victims remain interred here. The building was later condemned and a small park built over it. Years after the psychopath was gone, Clarence "Snake Hand" Folger, an Uktena who betrayed his people to the Black Spiral Dancers, sensed the power waiting to be tapped at this place.

Although the site looks nondescript to mundane eyes, attuned persons feel uneasy (or overjoyed, if they are of the Wyrms) when they are near this place, and many locals avoid it out of instinct.

In the Umbra, this barren corner lot is the site of a grotesque cathedral. A huge central dome reaches 100 feet skyward; the dome is surrounded by a circle of flying buttresses. On the top of each flying buttress is a huge head. These heads are the spirits of the victims of the killer, and each is still undergoing the torture of his or her death. The skin peels from them in ragged fragments. Some bleed from the stumps of their tongues. Blood drips from the walls, watering vines that sprout hands, mouths, claws and suckers. These vines cover the lower third of the temple.

Above the layer of vines is a row of round windows. Facing northeast is an archway leading inside. The interior is lit with balefire, while the floor below and the dome above are inscribed with mad scribbles and insane drawings. There is no altar, only a seemingly bottomless pit at the center of the chamber.

As this area is protected by the Wyrms version of the Rite of the Shrouded Glen, the temple cannot normally be perceived by those in the Umbra. It is a Level 1 caern of Rage, but is still a secret to most Garou and even Black Spiral Dancers, as it is jealously guarded by Snake Hand.

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill

The Wyrms often attempts to create caerns through environmental disasters, even if the caerns will only be temporary. The Black Spirals know how to create caerns through the suffering and pain found at the sites. The Exxon Valdez oil spill provided a prime opportunity for them. They effectively channeled the deaths and misery of the animal life at the Prince William Sound, using it as Gnosis to fuel the caern. Soon, a Wyrms hole existed at that site.

The Wyrms influences many matters, and the slow cleanup efforts gave it the time necessary to finish the caern-building. It is now a Level 2 caern of Corruption. From here, the Black Spirals and Pentex have a spiritual base of operations to corrupt the pure land of Alaska, one of the few remaining areas with a large wolf population.

MIR (Soviet Space Station)

In low orbit over Earth, outside the realm of Gaia, drifts the abandoned Soviet space station MIR. In return for favors and help from Baba Yaga, a hideous Slavic vampire, the Black Spiral Dancers have been able to establish a caern of great power here.

Puppeteer Banes possessed the last cosmonauts and forced them to enact the necessary rite, while Banes willingly burned themselves up to provide the necessary Gnosis. The Black Spirals can now travel by Moon Bridge to its cold interior, there to dance many mad revels and rites to the Wyrms. These rites are of immense power because they are outside the grasp of Gaia, yet still within the earthly Realm.

The true power of the caern is that a Moon Bridge can be opened from here to the dread realm of Malfeas. This is unprecedented, as one must usually travel to an Anchorhead or Far Calumn domain for this purpose. The Black Spirals try to keep this a secret from Baba Yaga, for if she were to realize the potential power of this, she might try to shut it down...or take it over.

The Black Spirals had free reign while the station was deserted, but cosmonauts have recently returned. The Black Spirals, however, don't care — they dance uncaring as their new "guests" look on in horror, driven mad by the Delirium.

MIR is a Level 3 caern of Enigmas.

Malfeas

*I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule;
From a wild weird clime that lieth sublime
Out of Space — out of Time.*

— Edgar Allan Poe

Malfeas is a small realm within the Deep Umbra, a base of operations for the servitors of the Wyrms. It is more like a giant Calumn than a realm, but it was founded on a most powerful idea: corruption, the very essence of the Wyrms.

Malfeas looks like a madman's version of an industrial park, crossed with the worst aspects of a modern waste dump and the Dark Ages of Europe. It is a twisted maze of horrors, a haven for the vile creatures of the Wyrms and a nest for darkness not yet unleashed upon Gaia.

The specific appearance and activities in Malfeas change depending upon where in the realm one goes, but the general tone of corruption and depravity is the same everywhere. Malfeas is a place of dark mystery. Countless fomori and Banes work at strange tasks or hurry about on unknown missions. The air is full of screams, shouts and depraved laughter.

Malfeas has hidden passages and secret chambers, so many that even the lords of the realm do not know them all. It is rumored that there are long-neglected portals leading to entire realms the Wyrms has forgotten in its madness; the truth of such stories will never be known.

It is known that Malfeas has changed over the ages. New areas have manifested as new realms have been corrupted, and other areas have disappeared or become hidden. The pace of the change is normally slow, although Malfeas always seems to grow rather than shrink.

The Tale of Ekes Sara

*Heed well the words you are about to hear!
Heed the words of Ekes Sara!
He has been to the place of fear!
And Ekes Sara has returned!*

Fifteen winters past was a cold time, when the Arctic wind blew ice across the vast prairie. It was in that year that

I learned of the amazing fetish, the Light of Spirit's Wings, which could carry its owner to the far ends of the earth in but an instant. I spent nearly the entire next year of my life in the Umbra trying to find it.

I was near to despair and about to abandon my search when by chance I came upon a powerful Bane of dark knowledge. I attacked and bound the foul thing into my leather sack, and was about to destroy it when it began to beg for its miserable existence. I only listened to the words of the traitor-to-Gaia long enough to hear that which I needed to know. Then I destroyed it, mourning only the loss of my leather sack.

Now I knew where the Light of Spirit's Wings was, but was I brave enough to retrieve it? For an entire season I did nothing, but shame at my weakness began to gnaw me, and I knew that my fate was decided. I settled all debts and spoke of going on a long journey into the Deep Umbra, but more than that I could not say for fear the words would find the wrong ears. I gathered all the powerful tools I could and practiced with them until at last I was ready.

I girded myself with my Silver Sword, and about my neck I wore a fetish called the Baneskin. In my right hand I carried a powerful spirit whistle, and in my left, my Fang Dagger. Upon the night of the full moon, I shifted between realities into the Umbra, and embarked upon my journey.

Deeper and deeper I traveled. Almost 10 days it took me to reach the Far Calumn, and along the way many Banes and less wholesome spirits threatened me, but I hid from them, for I did not quest against such minor troubles. At last I arrived at the Far Calumn, where I used the knowledge gained from that evil Bane, and opened a Moon Bridge to Malfeas itself.

Aarrgh! The horror and terror of that place! It is foul and corrupt, so much so that I could not even move for a long time. I lay in helpless stupor, trying to comprehend some reason behind the mindless, random evil that surrounded me. I was at last able to draw upon some inner strength that I had not even known I possessed. I forced my fear aside and began to try to search for the Light of Spirit's Wings.

From what the Bane had told me a year ago, I knew that the denizens of Malfeas did not know what they held. The object of my quest was being used as an ornament near some place called the "Fount of Dark Possibilities." I began to search at random, for in a place of madness such as Malfeas, reason is not the best of tools.

I walked through an expanse of vast machines. Banes ran this way and that conducting unknowable acts of depredation. I could only shudder at some of the things I saw there. I could not interfere, for my disguise would have been revealed. As I wandered and searched through this evil, sordid place, I passed many things which made my heart quiver in anger. I saw Garou that had been twisted into Gaia-hating mockeries, dark and powerful Banes that led legions of Skrags through Moon Bridges to maim and kill

in other domains, and many things besides...things that I will not discuss.

At last, far ahead, I heard what sounded like falling water. When I reached the place, I saw a fountain of putrid fluid that fed dozens of Banes and Black Spiral Dancers, all of whom were drinking from the edge of the huge fountain pool. To one side of the pool was what looked to be an archway. I walked purposefully toward the arch so as not to draw attention to myself.

Inside the small chamber on the far side of the archway was the Light of Spirit's Wings. It looked like a set of feathers carved out of crystal, but it shone with an inner light. Between it and me was a guardian Skrag.

With a flurry of blows from my Silver Sword I cut the Skrag to ribbons, but not before it screeched an alert. I grabbed the fetish and ran for my life. The dozen or more Black Spirals that had been drinking by the pool howled in dismay and gave me chase, but the Banes were turned away by repeated notes from my spirit whistle.

I ran and ran, not knowing where to go; my foes closed in behind me, harrying me. Two or three times, one of the Black Spirals got close enough to enable me to strike at him with my Silver Sword or my Fang Dagger. But there were too many of them, and I feared that I was lost.

With the last of my strength and breath, I staggered through an archway into a bizarre garden — a garden decorated with acts of torture and the bodies of victims. The

skull-lined paths of this strange garden led me deeper and deeper into a fearsome forest, but those behind me seemed to drop away, until I was alone in a dark woods.

Or at first I was alone. Then I realized that something more fearsome than the Black Spirals had dragged me into an elaborate trap, and that I was doomed to be caught and used as a plaything in evil, mad Malfeas. Whatever it was that stalked me in that dark woods circled about me, playing a terrible game of cat and mouse. Slowly it came closer and closer.

I fled, breaking through the surrounding layers of twisted brambles. Something swatted at my back, tearing my flesh open. I turned then and looked, and saw my pursuer in full.

Oh, so many mad things, so many visions of terror there in Malfeas. I ran and ran, for I knew what it was that clawed at me, desperate for my flesh. It was the very beast which used to haunt my nightmares when I was a small human child. I knew that I could never defeat this thing, for to it I was still a child.

I broke through the sharp brush and fled straight into the building before me, a huge temple. My nightmare did not follow, for it was unable to leave the boundaries of the brambles.

I looked about. I stood in an immense chamber, the distant boundaries of which I could barely perceive, for a green haze obscured my view. Above, the ceiling ascended into pitch blackness, but I knew that...things crawled there.



Below, inlaid upon the floor, stretching out across the room, was a bizarre pattern, a twisted, black path that led in many swirls and whorls to some unknown center.

I heard a clamor outside the building and, thinking my pursuers had discovered me, I moved on, desperate for some exit.

Fool! Why did I not recognize the ground upon which I trod? Had I not heard the tales, the dark warnings by the fire, since I was a cub? I ruined much of my sanity with my first step, my first movement upon the Black Spiral Labyrinth. The very Labyrinth that had stolen an entire tribe from Gaia's embrace.

How can I begin to tell of what I experienced there? I remember little of it myself. Gaia has thankfully hidden much of it from me. But what I do remember, I shall carry in my nightmares forever.

I was tested by the Wyrms as I walked; my path was fraught with Enigma spirits and even darker Banes that showed me what I did not wish to know: the truth. They revealed to me the darkness in my own soul, the twisted brother-Bane which resided in me and grew with every thought of rage or jealousy or hate.

But I clung to the wisdom I had learned from our tribe, to the love of Gaia. Only by focusing on what was glorious in my life, the skillful deeds of my past, did I stand beneath the Wyrms' ominous scrutiny.

I came to a place that was a respite in the swirl of madness. The next step would start me on the second circle. I had passed the first, and only Gaia and the Wyrms know what taint now rests in my soul for it. I knew that I could not walk farther — I had to escape or perish.

I called upon the Light of Spirit's Wings to release its great spirit and waft me from there, to take me to a place far from the Labyrinth's corruption. And it did. My hard-won fetish proved itself worthy as I felt the winds pummel my fur. I was lifted up while the Banes beneath me howled in rage. I had to close my eyes against the harsh roar of the wind as I was roughly caressed and spun so hard I knew not which was ground and which was sky.

When next I opened my eyes, I stood by the Moon Bridge through which I had entered. I jumped onto the path and fled from that infernal realm. The rest of my journey was harsh, and I received many scars for it, but it was as nothing to the horrors of Malfeas.

I am told by my people that I wandered back to the caern with eyes that stared far away and a mind that would not respond to any prodding. It was a long time before I could speak again, and even longer before I could think properly. Only now can I speak of these things without shuddering.

My people say I am a hero for what I have done, but they are wrong. I am a fool.



The Duchies of Malfeas

Malfeas is divided into many areas, called duchies because they are ruled by the terrible dukes of the Wyrms. Many of these duchies are the reflections of other realms or domains. Others do not seem to relate to anything outside Malfeas and are used by the rulers to maintain their iron grip.

Central Duchy

Most Moon Bridges open into a large central area which is crowded with huge constructs. These constructs look like oil refineries with multistoried chunks of castles and cathedrals grafted onto them.

These girderwork constructions tower for almost a mile into the air, and huge, throbbing machines fill the air with vibrations, soot and fumes. Stone towers jut out at odd angles, with crenellated battlements, arrow loops, and stained-glass cathedral windows that depict horrors crawling from beneath the earth. Huge pipes and conduits run amok across the buildings, joining and branching to and from one another in clusters of valves. An occasional computer workstation can be seen almost buried amid the steaming, leaking pipes and dangling wires, and warped net-spiders and electricity elementals leap along the cables, trailing fractal patterns.

Banes and twisted spirits operate the huge machines and climb across the girders on unknown missions. Troops of Banes march in lockstep across the paved ground. Screams and moans fill the air as some spirits are "fed" to the machines and rent into twisted mockeries of themselves. The actual purpose of most of the machines is unknowable. Many of these dark creations produce and consume nothing; they seem to exist only as embodiments of the Wyrms' perversion.

The Cages

These are where captives are held and tortured for the pleasure of the rulers, and occasionally to obtain information. The prisoners are held in a rack of cages that hang beside the open girders at one side of the central area. The cages are heavy iron, with chains inside. Dread Banes stand guard here.

Dream/Nightmare

Toward one end of the central area there is what appears to be an arched stone gateway leading to a formal garden. The formal garden represents the first stage of sleep, where the logical, ordered mind has control and precedence. The garden is decorated at each turn and junction with victims undergoing torture, and fountains and streams that run red with blood or black with steaming poison.

Once one passes through the gate, the garden seems to extend more or less unchanged in every direction. The farther one moves, however, the less orderly the layout of the garden appears. The direction in which one travels is unimportant; the effect is the same.

There are no spirits or Banes here from whom to ask directions. Also, if any members of a group ever lose sight of one another, they will be unable to find one another again. No amount of searching or shouting will help, as those who seem to be missing have simply slipped into their own dreams. The "missing" characters will continue to perceive the garden as described; as far as they are concerned, it is the other characters who have disappeared. (Use common sense with this; persons standing back to back will not lose each other, but those who walk to the far side of a tree will never return.)

As one travels, the paths are not as well tended, and weeds begin to appear among the orderly flowerbeds. More and more trees appear, at first decoratively placed in the center of beds of skulls, or in small clearings where victims hang by the arms with fires underneath them. The farther one travels the more trees there are, until the paths wind through light woods. At this point, any groups that are still together begin to lose track of one another, one at a time, until each character is alone. Then the underbrush begins to thicken, and soon the paths become mere traces, difficult to follow through a dense forest. Then the paths disappear altogether.

Without the characters' intervention, the woods darken and blacken, becoming more and more horrific. Play off the individual characters' fears as they are tortured by their own subconscious minds.

If the characters try to regain control, have them each roll Wits + Enigmas (difficulty 8). If successful, they discover that they can control the nature of their surroundings somewhat. However, unless they get five successes on this roll they will not be able to control the overall flow of events, which lead them deeper and deeper into personal Nightmares. At some point they actually cross into the realm of Nightmare itself, and from there they may be able to travel to the nearby realm of Dream.

If the Garou know what they are doing from the beginning, they may be able to get straight to Dream without going through Nightmare. This will occur in the deep woods after the paths have been lost. (The deep forest with no paths represents deep, deep sleep.)

Rationality/Irrationality

The twin realms of Rationality and Irrationality are represented in a small corner of Malfeas. These miniature realms are accessed via a single large, rectangular room with a door at each end. One of these doors is the door to Rationality, the other is the door to Irrationality. If the room is entered through the door of Rationality, the room appears as a library-style reading room. The walls are lined with books about black magic, sadomasochism and other dark topics. There are tables and comfortable reading chairs scattered about. If the same room is entered through the door of Irrationality, the tables and chairs are suspended from the ceiling and the "books" lining the walls are full of illegible scribbling. Whichever door was entered, the ac-

tual realms can be reached from a Moon Bridge opened in this room.

Epiphs

Epiphs are domains of ideas. These domains are tangible representations of the ideas that they embody. They usually occur as reflections of great discussions and movements among humans on Gaia, but some epiphs are older than humanity, and some strange epiphs exist that humans cannot fathom. Few epiphs have reflections in Malfeas, although most epiphs have been touched by the Wyrms in some way or another.

Courage: The epiph of Courage has its reflection in Malfeas. Minions of the Wyrms come to this area to gather their strength for great trials. It is a small alcove containing a statue. The statue was stolen from the epiph of Courage by a great pack among the Black Spiral Dancers.

The alcove is about 20 feet square. The floor is black marble streaked with gray and white patterns. The walls of the alcove are decorated with bas-relief panels that depict the Black Spiral pack seizing the statue. The ceiling is a dome extending 20 feet in the air. It is made of undecorated black marble.

The statue's appearance depends upon the viewer, as it normally appears to be a statue of a person (or spirit) whom the viewer considers to be courageous. Normally the statue will appear to be about 15 feet tall, thus filling the dome and making the alcove seem much smaller than it is. Anyone sacrificing a Gnosis point while contemplating the statue will receive three Willpower points (lasts for one scene).

Logic: The epiph of Logic has its twisted counterpart in Malfeas. As the madness of the Wyrms is at the heart of much of the power of Malfeas, the connection with the epiph of Logic is not strong.

Once in Logic's duchy, characters may have difficulty functioning in any way and they will be lucky to escape. The Duchy of Logic is the heart of logical fallacies. The "logic" of cause and effect does not hold true here. Events will occur before their causes, after their causes, or not at all.

Mortal beings' perception of time (past, present, future) is not an effective tool in this place. Characters will have a great deal of trouble simply moving about, as "walking" might or might not cause "motion" to occur (Zeno's paradox is prevalent).

In order to realize what is going on around her, a character will need to make a roll of Intelligence + Science (difficulty 6); three successes are necessary. If she succeeds in this roll, the character may perform basic actions, albeit with difficulty. For example, she might be able to move around by wildly flapping her arms, but she will have very little control over where she goes. If a character ever accumulates six successes on Intelligence + Science rolls, she will be able to conceptualize her way out of the Duchy of Logic. This will cost one Gnosis point and will transport her directly to the true epiph of Logic (in the Near Umbra,

close to the Realm). There is no way to return to the rest of Malfeas from the Duchy of Logic.

Wyld

Placed high in the girder framework is a large crystalline sphere that randomly emits multicolored light. The sphere is around 60 yards in diameter, and appears to be made of crystal or glass. A large spiral staircase travels from the ground level, past the sphere, and on upwards. Although from a distance the sphere seems to be a solid milky white, close up it appears to be full of rapidly swirling bits of color, much like television "snow."

Bound inside this heavily enchanted sphere is a wylding vortex. This ancient and immensely powerful spirit has been in Malfeas since Malfeas was first created. Branching off from the staircase is a landing with an airlock-style doorway into the sphere.

Some victims of Malfeas are thrown into the vortex; occasionally, something is summoned forth from it. If some method could be found to open both doors of the airlock at once, great damage could be done to Malfeas as the vortex runs wild.

If the characters wander through the open girderwork nightmare of the central area, they will eventually discover a great river of foul liquid that runs through much of Malfeas. If they follow this river upstream, they will come to the Fount of Dark Possibilities. This fountain is one of the sources of Malfeas's power. It is a portal to the heart of the Wyld that has been tapped and then forced through the dark machinery of Malfeas until the only potentials that emerge from it are evil and corrupt.

Use of this Fount and others like it is as close as the Wyrms can ever come to the act of creation. Through use of the Fount, the Wyrms can "create" Banes and even other, more powerful minions. While the Wyld is the source of the actual creative energy, all that is created in this realm is turned to the Wyrms' control and power.

The Fount itself is a shallow pool about 100 yards in diameter. The foul liquid bursts upwards from the center, spewing hundreds of feet into the air before crashing back into the pool. Where the falling liquid hits the pool, Banes and other creatures coalesce out of the mist, drifting toward the edge of the pool where minions pull them from the liquid. The liquid runs out of the pool through a narrow trough, where a great deal of it is siphoned off into the vast machinery of Malfeas.

If the characters follow the river downstream, they will come to an area where the liquid is brewed into a powerful "Black Drink," a potent elixir widely used by minions of the Wyrms to facilitate corruption. "One of the fine products of our local industry..."

Earth

The reflection of Earth within Malfeas is one of pollution and corruption. A huge pit opens on one side of the central area, a dark reflection reeking of the tortured earth's

pain. This area is a sick parody of a Glade, full of the twisted reflections of Glade Children and Naturæ.

Like a strip mine, the area descends level by level into the stinking pit. Each level is littered with the stumps of huge trees and the twisted bodies of animals destroyed by pollution. Moon Bridges from Blights and Hellholes usually (though not always) open into this area.

At the lowest level of the pit is a foul lake of irradiated, oily water. The lake is a mile across at its widest point. The surface bubbles with sulfurous fumes. Huge deformed fish slowly drift in the shallow waters, hiding under patches of glowing algae.

On the shore of the lake is a truly horrific Blight, a shantytown full of corrupt spirits living in the shattered buildings of a slum. On the levels above the shantytown, Banes in the form of large earth-moving machines run amok across the landscape. These Banes are totally mindless, and they will crush whatever gets in their path.

On higher levels of the pit are areas reflecting different parts of Gaia's realm that have been overrun by the Wyrms. There are areas representing the nuclear testing ranges, clear-cut forests, and other areas of Earth that approach total destruction. In the lake at the bottom of the pit is an area representing the Great Barrier Reef off the coast of Australia. Banes resembling decaying great white sharks prowl this area, devouring anything they meet.

The Pollution of Other Realms

The Wyrms constantly seek to corrupt new realms and thereby spread its taint. Agents are always leaving Malfeas to explore the Umbra, searching for realms yet untouched by the Wyrms. Minions of the Wyrms who corrupt a new and untouched realm are greatly honored, and much effort is spent studying the Umbra for signs of realms that have remained hidden. Once a new realm is found, making the first Moon Bridge to it is a great challenge, and only the mightiest of the Wyrms' followers can even attempt such a task.

The coils of the Wyrms have touched almost all of the many realms spread throughout the Umbra, and Moon Bridge paths lead from Malfeas to the realms of Arcadia, Dream, Nightmare, Inferno and others. Even newly created domains (such as those a powerful circle of mages might create) frequently contain the taint of the Wyrms within the seeds of their creation.

The Black Spiral Labyrinth

One of the most closely guarded secrets of Malfeas is also the heart of the mystic teachings of the Black Spiral Dancers. The Black Spiral Labyrinth is a great inlaid spiral on the floor of a large Gothic building known as Temple Obscura, near the Duchy of Nightmare.

Inside the temple, the air is heavy with the stench of sulfur and monoxides, and the only light is a sickly green



glow. A rank mist hovers in the clammy air, hiding the ceiling. Faint crawling sounds and whispers can be heard from above. On the floor is an intricate, insane, interweaving pattern drawn in the black color of bloodstains on stone. This pattern is present throughout the Labyrinth.

This is the most sacred site of the Black Spiral Dancers; from it they draw not only their name, but all of their strength and madness. To walk the Labyrinth is a sacred journey into the very heart of the Wyrms. It is only attempted by Garou, as experience has proven that all others who try die horribly.

The Labyrinth is laid out into many circles, of which nine are known. There may be more, but no one has survived past the ninth to tell of it, and the center has never been reached. Perhaps it has no center.

It is rumored that those who reach the center regain their sanity and are able to view all the Triat in their proper and balanced roles — but these are rumors only.

Following is a list of the nine known challenges of the Labyrinth:

Circle One: Dance of Insight. The dancer is shown a dark truth about his inner self, something he has hidden from himself for his very sanity. Does he break, or dance on?

Circle Two: Dance of Rage. The dancer must overcome powerful obstacles, but only anger and frenzy will see him through.

Circle Three: Dance of Endurance. The dancer must endure tests of physical and mental anguish.

Circle Four: Dance of Cunning. The Bane guardian of this path must be convinced, in a test of wits, to let the dancer pass.

Circle Five: Dance of Combat. The dancer must fight terrible foes to prove his strength.

Circle Six: Dance of Corruption. The dancer must withstand overwhelming corruption, retaining his sense of self through vast physical mutations and mental schisms.

Circle Seven: Dance of Loyalty. The dancer's loyalty to the Wyrms undergoes the final test. *Drink this...*

Circle Eight: Dance of Paradox. A riddle contest with a very mysterious Bane of Enigmas. This incomprehensible being rarely loses. It is rumored to be an ancient manifestation of the dark side of the Wyrms, whose riddles abetted the Wyrms' coming madness and prompted it to succumb to chaos.

Circle Nine: Dance of Deceit. The dancer must prove that he is above even the Wyrms, by destroying the Wyrms when he confronts it. Only one Garou has ever passed this circle, and his or her name is forgotten. This Garou is rumored to be Number Two, the current ruler of Malfeas, now an Incarna. *If you meet the Wyrms on the road, kill it...*



Rulers of Malfeas

*For this is the true strength of guilty kings,
When they corrupt the souls of those they rule.*

— Matthew Arnold

Those who control Malfeas are dear to the Wyrms, for they are chief among its agents and are in charge of planning and leading the actual assault upon Gaia. Among the “royalty” who own duchies in Malfeas are the Maeljin, the “Dark Lords” of the Wyrms (see Chapter Four). These knights of the Corrupt Crusade use their duchies in Malfeas as their bases of operations.

The “king” of Malfeas is a mighty Incarna known simply as “Number Two.” Number Two is helped by a scheming group of minions called “The Committee.”

Number Two

Number Two was born a Black Spiral Dancer many, many years ago. Through personal effort and the rewards of the Wyrms, he (or was it she, back then?) has been raised to Incarna status. His name is unknown; he is always referred to as Number Two, or simply “sir” to his face. He normally manifests in a Glabro-like form, with blood running from the corners of his mouth and under his claws; he has longer arms than normal, and a rank smell emanates from him. He is known for his ability to take many forms. Among the forms known are a Skrag and a particularly vicious psychomachia with scythe blades in place of forearms and a round mouth with a blender-like blade for a tongue.

Number Two maintains his rule through terror and brute strength. He has mystically bound his personal bodyguards to him so that their fates are his. If he is injured or destroyed, they will be also.

Number Two has been known to conduct purges throughout the hierarchy of Malfeas, torturing and killing those who displease him. He interacts with the Maeljin as little as possible, keeping well away from their far duchies. Some say this is out of fear, but others believe he is jealous of their “blessings.”

Number Two is as mad as any Black Spiral. His personal paranoia centers around a belief that anyone who gains knowledge of his past will be able to influence his thoughts. Number Two has relentlessly tracked down and destroyed most beings who used to associate with him. The rest of his associates have long since died of old age, so Number Two rarely feels threatened by this anymore. Nonetheless, any who gain an understanding of his past might be able to use the information against him.

Number Two resides in Castle Cthonus, a bleak tower squatting on a mound within sight of the Central Duchy. It is rumored that there is a pit in the gaol which is the very maw of the Consuming Wyrms. Many heroes are rumored to have attempted the journey to its belly, to slay it from within, but none have returned from their quests.

The Committee

Unlimited power is apt to corrupt the minds of those who possess it.

— William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, in a speech to the House of Lords

Number Two’s entourage is called the Committee. There are no formal memberships or regular meetings of this committee, and members come and go as they are purged by Number Two, killed in infighting, die or retire. Different members of the Committee are responsible for different plots and plans. All of the members report to Number Two, and Number Two alone decides who is considered to be a member of the Committee. Each Committee member normally has many different forces working directly for him or her.

The few members who have been able to retain their positions are:

Flaggas: The Overseer of the Realm. He was once a member of a government intelligence organization on Earth. The Wyrms rewarded him for his service with an appointment to Malfeas, which Flaggas has since deeply regretted.

It is Flaggas’ duty to keep an eye on all activity in Malfeas and ensure that none attempt to betray Number Two or the status quo. He is unfailingly loyal to Number Two, for the Garou has, through strange means, snipped Flaggas’ soul from him, and now holds it as a small puppet in his pocket. He threatens to make it dance as he wills unless Flaggas proves himself beyond treachery.

Torthur: Torthur is a Black Spiral Dancer in charge of the Outer Affairs of Malfeas. It is his job to coordinate the pollution efforts into other realms and domains. He demands that his followers call him General. Torthur is considered to be quite loyal to Number Two, if for no other reason than because his interests lie outside of Malfeas.

His Derangement takes the form of a deep-seated fear which he hides from others. He suspects that all his work is in vain, that the Wyrms is not the chaotic entity it pretends to be. He believes the One Wyrms of Balance still exists and is playing him for a pawn. He now fears being on the “wrong side.”

Jiy-Uid: Jiy-Uid’s race is unknown. He is rumored to be one of the Denizens from Beyond, one of the races that come from realms far removed in the Deep Umbra. He does not answer any questions regarding his origin. He is also rumored to be an Incarna, allied in some totemic way to the Vhujunka, whom he slightly resembles. Only Number Two knows his secret.

Jiy-Uid’s role on the Committee is that of Grand Vizier. He is a master analyst, and can predict many events simply through his rigorous logic. His understanding of twisted Wyrms logic, with its enigmatic fallacies, makes him a valued advisor to Number Two.

Morgan: Warlord of the realm, Morgan is a fomor with many powers. He barely resembles a human anymore.

Tentacles branch from his back and barbs bristle from his limbs, all over a thick, armored carapace. He is a harsh opponent.

It is his duty to police the realm, and he does this with cruelty and gusto. He is supported by a "police force" of Banes, fomori and Black Spiral Dancers. He is also the gaoler, and ensures that prisoners are caged and unable to escape.

Weoena: Weoena was once a sadomasochistic serial killer. She performed her "work" in such a way that investigators never suspected she was female. She was never caught, for as the police were closing in on her, Black Spirals stepped from the Umbra and took her with them. The Wyrms were very pleased with the warped content of her mind, and granted her a position in Malfeas.

She is the Torturer, and as such is feared and hated by the prisoners and revered by the willing inhabitants of Malfeas, who come to her for "massages." It is her duty to extract information from prisoners or make them confess to their true love of perversion.

Some say that she is actually Lady Aife, the Maeljin of Pain, trying to infiltrate the Committee for some unknown purpose.

Slaves

Malfeas has a host of slaves, ready and willing to serve the lords with their sick perversions. These are mostly homids who have become trapped by their obsessions. They are all servitors of the Passion Wyrms. They made terrible deals with Wyrms and were transported to Malfeas, where they can live forever, soaking in their sick passions.

Story Ideas

Malfeas is a powerful realm, one which should not be used lightly. It is a center of power for the servitors of the Wyrms. Malfeas is a "royal" realm, which means that only high-ranking servitors have traffic with it. It should not come into a story often; it is a far-off realm, half legendary, a place only heroes go...and even they rarely return.

Malfeas should mainly be used as background, a place from which Wyrms come and to which they return. A pack would have to be mad to travel there themselves. However, if they rise high enough in Rank and power, they may be able to risk a trip to Malfeas for any number of reasons.

Reasons To Go

Here are some suggestions for stories involving Malfeas:

Recover Fetishes: A Garou may wish to emulate Ekes Sara by traveling to Malfeas to retrieve a powerful fetish. The fetish had better be worth it.

Free Prisoners: Perhaps a fellow pack member has been captured and taken here. It is the duty of the pack to try and free her...or at least put her to rest.

Foil Known Plots: The pack may overhear or discover a vile plot originating in Malfeas, and the only way to stop it before it succeeds is to go there personally.

Follow "Explorers" to Protect New Realms: Wyrms minions embark from Malfeas to pollute other realms and domains. If a Garou know about a pure domain, one still untouched by the Wyrms, they will want to do anything to ensure it stays that way. If they subsequently hear of a plot to invade it from Malfeas, they may well have to head it off in the Wyrms' realm.

Ways to Get In and Out

Malfeas is not easily entered by enemies of the Wyrms. It is a center of power for the Wyrms' minions. They crowd the place. Someone who does not bear the taint of the Wyrms will be easily noticed and immediately attacked. A Banekin or similar fetish is necessary to protect an intruder's true identity from the inhabitants.

To get to Malfeas, one must travel to a Far Calumn, a Wyrms domain that acts as an Anchorhead. From there, a Moon Bridge must be opened or a Rite of Becoming performed to travel into the Deep Umbra. A Moon Bridge is best opened through either a Gift or an allied Lune, for opening one at a Far Calumn caern can be deadly.

Travel into the Deep Umbra is always a tricky affair. It is a strange and mysterious place, and there is no guarantee that Malfeas can be found. A Bane bound by spirit rites can be forced to lead its master to the realm, for most Banes have internal magnets drawing them there.

Plots and Plans of Malfeas

The rulers of Malfeas are involved in many plots to further the Wyrms' power. Following are some plots in which characters can become involved. These should be such that most packs will not suspect or discover the connection to Malfeas unless they take the right actions.

- Torthur is always working to gain control of areas of land on Earth. One is in Alaska, near the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and another is in Siberia, where he has made a tenuous alliance with Baba Yaga.

- A powerful Jagglings is gaining power by eating other Jagglings and Gafflings. It is growing, and may soon be an Incarna. It has been sent to the Near Umbra to eat its fill, and it may try to devour the pack's totem. The pack will have to journey to their totem's domain to defend it, and may chase the Bane back to Malfeas.

- Garou uncover a plot to take over a small town and turn its inhabitants into slaves of the Passion Wyrms. The leaders of this plot hail from Malfeas. This is only the first stage of a plot to encircle a small city with such towns and then take over the city...and its army base.

- A mining company uncovers an ancient Wyrms caern that, if activated, will open a portal straight to Malfeas, allowing powerful hordes of Banes to enter Earth freely.



Chapter Four: The Wyrn

Its minions are spread throughout the realms of matter and spirit. Its influence stretches from executive boardrooms to the ancient lairs of dark spirits. It is feared in all these places. It is the Wyrn.

Many have wondered about the true nature of the Wyrn. It shows a different face to each of its followers and enemies. But its true nature is unknown, although many believe they know the truth. The Wyrn's true being was smothered long ago in the Pattern Web of the mad Weaver. It is bound and unable to move, but its dreams and nightmares roam free, manifesting in many forms.

All its images are but warped reflections, objects seen only through the swiftly flowing waters of time. None know the whole truth of its nature, for madness denies conscious perception.

Cosmology

Oh, so many stories of the Beginning are told. I will now tell one. There is Truth in this tale, but also Lies. You must decide which you follow, for this is the Test and the Mirror. Your reflection is the image of your choice and vision.

I have thought long on these tales. I have heard many and have chosen. Perhaps I chose wrongly. But only I can say.

Listen now, and Choose.

— Lao Two-Tongues, Stargazer elder

The Scales of Balance

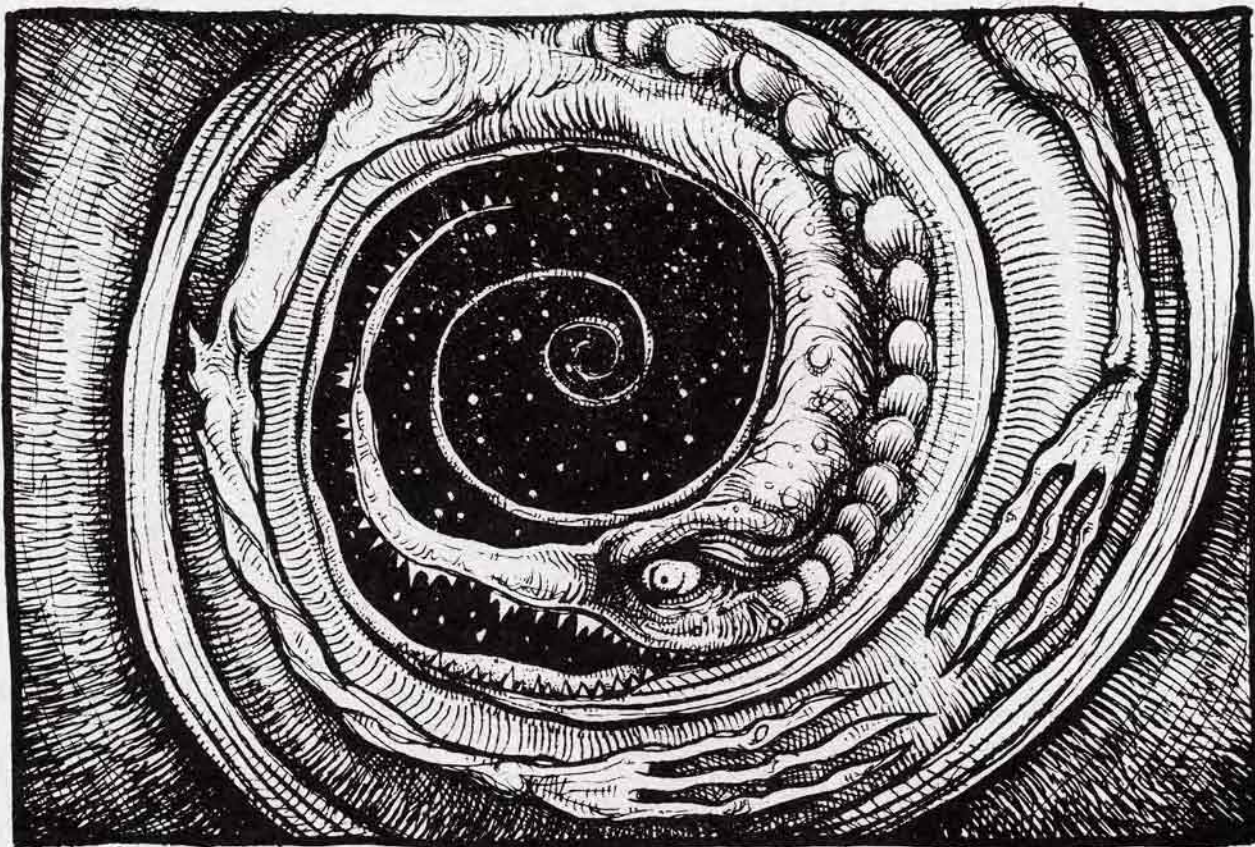
Long ago, when the Creation was newly wrought, there were Three. One ran to and fro, frantic and ecstatic, full of energy. This was the Wyld. Another sat still, undisturbed, and reached out for the ripples left by the Wyld, and stayed them in their path. This was the Weaver. The third saw what the others did, and liked it not. The Creation ran amok, and the Wyrn moved to restrain it.

The Wyrn reached out its tail and wrapped it around all the Creation, binding the Weaver and Wyld. It then opened wide its maw and swallowed its own tail, sealing the Creation and making it its own. All within the circle of the Wyrn became balanced as the Wyrn saw fit, with each receiving its due. Thus the Wyrn was the force of Balance.

The Wyld spewed its juices over the fields of the Creation. The Weaver took them and wove them into shapes and forms. Many things came into being then, energized by the Wyld, given form by the Weaver and watched over by the Wyrn. Among these were the first of the Celestines, including Gaia and the realms which sprang up around her.

The Garou perceive the Triat in recognizable forms. The Weaver is female, and is often called Aunt Spider. The Wyld is male, and was once called Uncle Change. The Wyrn is neither male nor female, and is also referred to as It.

The Wyrn originally had many methods by which it maintained the Balance. One was Growth. Whenever the



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Weaver spun too much, the Wurm goaded the Wyld into creative action of its own to match the Weaver's making. The other was Destruction. When the Weaver or the Wyld wrought too much, the Wurm lashed out its tail, destroying and returning balance. Out of these two methods came the cycles of birth and death and time.

As time marched on its cyclic process, something mysterious happened.

The Web of Madness

Through all this, the Weaver spun its Pattern Web across the universe. But something else was spun from this weaving, something unknown until then. The Weaver attained a form of consciousness.

How this happened is a mystery, though there are many speculations. The Glass Walkers say that the act of weaving the Pattern Web gave birth to consciousness, the child of Pattern. As the threads of Form were interwoven and contrasts became evident, the distinctions between one thing and another demanded a conscious mind to interpret them.

The Stargazers claim that this new form of being came about through the Wurm's intervention, its attempt to balance the growing web with the Wyld. They claim that the harmonious interaction of the Weaver's Pattern Web and the Wyld caused the consciousness of the Weaver. Only through the fluctuation of change and stasis does consciousness, or understanding, develop.

In any event, the Weaver became excited by her new understanding, and began to weave more and more, furiously trying to overtake the Wyld so that its creation could be complete. The Wurm was hard pressed to tear down what she had overbuilt. The Weaver became more and more upset that she could not complete her Web without the Wyld changing it or the Wurm destroying portions of it.

Then, the Weaver looked upon her web with her new eyes of awareness...and saw nothing. The marvelous, intricate patterns were meaningless. All she had been working toward, all she was...was nothing. Her newly conscious mind could not stand the enormity of her own useless work. She went mad.

On she spun, in ever-widening patterns, disconnected from the rest of the Triat, heedless of any intervention. But intervention from the Wyld is what the Web needed, a dynamism to enliven its static form. Only in this interplay can meaning exist.

The Entrapment of the Wurm

The Wurm tried to balance the growing Pattern Web through destruction. But the Web grew too fast. The Weaver now spun with manic energy, rushing onward toward the completion of its mad and meaningless goal.

Where once the Wurm balanced through growth and destruction, now it could only destroy, for nothing else could quickly rein in the Weaver. But the Wurm became exhausted in its task, and could fight no more. It was caught in the Web and woven into the mindless Pattern.

The force of Balance was no more. Now the Wyrms was Corruption, for stagnant Balance can be naught but decay and entropy. What once swallowed its own tail out of wholeness now swallowed its tail out of a terrible need for consumption.

The Corruption

The Wyrms is desperate. It tries to engulf the Wyld in the Web. It is desperate to consume the Wyld into its corrupt and static form. But the Wyld cannot succumb to the Weaver without being destroyed. The universe teeters on the brink as the Wyrms grasps for all to join it in its static cage.

There it sits, enmeshed in the Pattern Web, sending out its mad thoughts to the Tellurian. These thought-children manifest and take forms in the Gaia realms, forms of twisted mockery and depravity. They are the many faces of the Wyrms, the Hydra.

Faces of the Wyrms

The Wyrms is in one sense a schizophrenic entity. Its self has been shattered by the madness and grief of its imprisonment in the Pattern Web. It sends out its wrathful thoughts and feelings to take form and act where it cannot. These thoughts and feelings have taken on lives of their own.

The Triatic Wyrms

The Wyrms, as the Force of Balance, used the powers of the rest of the Triad. Since the Balance has been upset, anything can happen. The Wyrms now tries to take over the functions of the Weaver and the Wyld, although its goal is to destroy the Wyld and trap all into the mad pattern of the Weaver, to join in the Wyrms's misery. The Weaver and the Wyld follow their own goals to the extreme, and will only aid the Wyrms to further disrupt the Balance in their favor. Thus, the Wyrms has split itself into three sub-entities, two of which are mockeries of the Wyld and Weaver and parody their functions.

Together, these Wyrms are said to rival the Celestine Gaia in power, but divided as they are, their power is never fully utilized. If they were ever to unite into one purposeful entity, then the Apocalypse would soon be at hand. This is the major reason the Wyrms has been unable to complete its destruction: it has many manifestations which pursue their own goals, but no single mind with which to direct its tasks.

Corruption: The Defiler Wyrms

The Wyrms operates in the Realm through its minions, those beings it can corrupt for its purposes. Corruption is the reversed power of Balance. It leads the corrupt to extremes and draws them away from personal choice. Corruption is the essence of the mad Wyrms, and it manifests as the Defiler Wyrms.

Many stories in human mythology depict both the dilemma of the Wyrms and its powers over others. It is both the

fallen angel and the serpent in the garden. The Defiler Wyrms is the most powerful of the Wyrms's manifestations.

Consumption: Eater-of-Souls

The Wyrms must devour. Control of the universe is slipping from it, and it ingests what it can to convince itself of its hold over All. The Consuming power of the Wyrms is a factor of the Wyrms's Weaver self, that part of it that encompasses stasis. The Weaver, before the Balance, tried to form everything into her vision of order, just as the Wyrms now tries to consume all into its maw. That part of the Wyrms which is driven to devour all is called Eater-of-Souls, also known as That Which Eats Its Own Tail.

The power of this Wyrms manifests in the wasting away of victims through disease. The waning health of the diseased feeds the hungry Eater-of-Souls.

This Wyrms was once freed into the earthly realm, but was banished through the supreme sacrifice of an entire tribe of Garou, the Croatan. Lord Thurifuge of the Maeljin serves this entity, trying to forge a path through which it can again be brought into the Gaia realms.

Calamity: Beast-of-War

Destruction is another aspect of the Wyrms, part of the power gained from its Wyld self. The Wyld once ran uncontrolled through the universe. It was pure change, and nothing could stand in its way but the Wyrms. Before it, no form could remain fixed. So it is now with the Calamity Wyrms, also known as Beast-of-War.

This is the primal expression of the Wyrms's rage at entrapment. It possesses all as the Beast of frenzy, corrupting the humanity of vampires and the nobility of the Garou.

The Get of Fenris call this Wyrms the Midgard Serpent, or Jormungandr. The Maeljin Hellbringer serves this entity.

Urge Wyrms

*So he sighed and pined and ogled,
And his passion boiled and bubbled,
Till he blew his silly brains out
And no more by it was troubled.*

—William Makepeace Thackeray

Of the many thoughts of the Wyrms which split away and fled into the Tellurian, the Urges are the most prevalent and persistent. These are the primal, or base, emotions of the Wyrms. They have taken on autonomy, though of a limited form. They are not thinking, but feeling, creatures. They are naught but raw emotion. They have servants such as the Maeljin Incarna, however, which provide minds for them.

These Wyrms are powerful, raw entities, high unapproachable or understandable. The intercession of a Maeljin or Incarna Bane is usually necessary to communicate with them. However, some mortals, such as the Pentex Board of Directors, do have access to them.

The Black Spiral Dancers have given them names, although there is no sign that the Wyrms react to these names, or even recognize them. The Pentex Board of Directors simply refers to them either as Benefactors or by the emotions which they represent.

There are more Urge Wyrms than listed here. There is said to be an Urge Wym for every foul emotion.

Foebok, the Urge of Fear

A powerful and pervasive emotion, fear is found nearly everywhere. The Wym of fear has many slaves, all desperate to enact its primal power upon the world: the gut-wrenching grasp of fear. If you are afraid, you serve this Urge. Your fear is its food.

Hakaken is the Incarna servitor of this Urge, the totem by which such a powerful Wym can be approached by mortals.

Karnala, the Urge of Desire

Desire is feeling born of Gaia, one that pulls her children toward one another. But desire twisted and aimed at perverted things, desire unfulfilled, is the province of this Wym. It exults in the raw desire of others, turning it into lust, and works to keep this lust ongoing. The frustration built up by unfulfilled desire leads to violence, which this Wym heartily devours.

Empress Aliara of the Maeljin is the main servitor of this Wym. It is she who is approached by the Black Spirals and other minions to beg boons of lust.

Dorus, the Urge of Greed

This Urge manifests in human society in the forms of rampant materialism, environmental destruction and boorish talk-show hosts. Greed is what gives it sustenance. The more its victims grasp for unnecessary and selfish goals, the more powerful it becomes.

This Wym has worked to corrupt the ideals of most societies, ensuring that some want more than others and are willing to take it through violence. With the aid of Karnala, the Urge of Desire, it instills useless and unnecessary wants in victims. These take the form of fast food, fast cars and dizzying fashion fads. To keep these things in their lives, people are willing to sacrifice the environment and endangered species. These natural things stand in the way of their unnatural lusts.

Mahsstrac, the Urge of Power

This is one of the most powerful of the Urges, for it has attained a stronghold on the minds of many homids, so much so that it is attributed to human nature at times. A whole branch of psychology and philosophy is dedicated to the "will to power." The obsessive search for power is the will of this Wym. Whole castes in society follow this Urge, from politicians to businessmen to military dictators.

It has no particular Maeljin servant, for all Wym creatures serve it by their natures. It needs no advocate — all speak for it.

Abhorra, the Urge of Hatred

The sowing of bad blood is the province of this Urge. Hatred is the source of its power. The more hate in the world, the more alive this Urge becomes. This Wym builds empires and then loses them through the intercession of men of peace and understanding. It only gets angrier with every loss.

Vengeance is also the child of this Wym; thus, even the Garou succumb to its power. Every vendetta, every revenge pact gives power to the Urge of Hatred.

This Wym's goals are attended to by Lord Steel of the Maeljin.

Angu, the Urge of Cruelty

This complex Wym is even more abstract than the other Urges, but those who follow it know that it is more diverse and likely to assume multiple shapes. Cruelty comes in many forms, from mental abuse to physical torture. The true power of this Wym comes from cruelty enacted for "the common good," when ideals are put aside and perverted for cruel purposes. The Urge of Lies also shares in this feast.

Pain also feeds this Wym, and the more drawn out and intentional, the tastier it is. Lady Aife is the chief voice of this Urge.

Pseulak, the Urge of Lies

This Urge hides the truth and cloaks the universe in a veil of falsehood and illusion. Hypocrisy is its chief weapon, and many Native Americans came to know it through the "forked tongues" of the Europeans. When someone lies, he not only destroys a part of the world, he feeds this Wym.

The Maeljin Maine DuBois is the servant of this Urge. His council ensures that even the minions of the Wym lie and cheat among each other. Kirijama, the Incarna Bane totem of the Black Spirals, is the best intercessor for mortals who seek boons of Pseulak.

Sykora, the Urge of Paranoia

This Wym is allied with the Urges of Fear and Hatred. Together, they create an atmosphere of suspicion around their victims, and soon the victims live in a world of paranoia and mistrust, convinced that everyone is "out to get" them. This Urge has even subverted the Garou, and intertribal conflict usually arises from this Wym's machinations. The current distrust of the Uktena is perhaps the work of this entity.

Doge Klype of the Maeljin sometimes aids this Wym.

Gree, the Urge of Despair

This Urge has contaminated many hearts. Its touch evokes an overwhelming sadness and feeling of loss which prevents many from continuing their struggle for a better existence. To them, all is despair and sorrow. This Urge is believed to be the cause of Harano, the Garou name for the crippling despair that affects even the greatest of heroes.



The Nameless Angel of Despair is the Maeljin servitor of this Wyrms. Some believe the Nameless Angel is the Wyrms itself, cloaked in a guise perceptible to others, so strong is its sense of self. It is rumored that, of all the Urge Wyrms, only Despair has the semblance of a mind.

Lethargg, the Urge of Apathy

This Wyrms is thought to be a sub-thought or child of Despair. Instead of sorrow, it brings apathy, an uncaring attitude. It is apathy which has infected many of the homid masses of the suburbs and prevented them from acting against the growing corruption. By making its victims aware of the growing pestilence, and convincing them that nothing can be done, this Wyrms wins much power from their blasé despair.

Lord Thurifuge is the mastermind behind much of this Urge's success.

The Elemental Wyrms

Besides the Triatic Wyrms and the Urges, there are also Wyrms counterparts to each of the elements. It is said that they are made of the excretions of the Primal Wyrms. There are four of them, each a twisted mockery of one of the four primal elements.

These Wyrms have no mind; they are but physical substances. As such, they are used by servitors and minions of the other Wyrms for their own uses. They spawn Jagglings and Gafflings to act as elemental spirits. The Black Spirals have named them, but they do not heed these names when called.

Hoga (Smog)

This is the twisted representation of the element Air. The noxious fumes emitted by this entity are unbreathable by any. It manifests itself on earth through poisonous factory fumes, smog and the smoke of burning toxic materials.

Lord Choke is the Maeljin who has mastered the Smog Wyrms. Any wishing to partake of its powers must do so by arrangement with him.

Furmas (Balefire)

This is the dark flame, the twisted element of Fire. The toxic balefires which glow at the center of the earth are the body of this Wyrms. All balefire comes from it. Some powerful Black Spirals can summon it and shape it, but only Kerne of the Maeljin can truly master it.

H'rugg (Sludge)

This is the Wyrms counterpart to the element of Earth. H'rugg is said to be the worst part of the Wyrms's leavings. It manifests in toxic dump sites. It is a corrosive substance that turns anything it touches into further sludge. It is devoid of any nutrient. Rumor has it that Pentex, through the aid of a Black Spiral, has harnessed this Wyrms and is planning to hit the market with a cooking batter that, when properly mixed, will result in the manifestation of the Sludge Wyrms. Lord Collum serves this foul Wyrms.



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Wakshaa (Toxins)

The dark shadow of the element Water. Pure deadly poison, this toxic Wyrms flows in many different substances. No matter its form, it is poisonous to all. The worst of the dangerous street drugs are the very body of this Wyrms, its Eucharist. Lady Yul of the Maeljin has mastery over it, and the flood of poisoned over-the-counter drugs is her doing.

Beliefs About the Wyrms

"A dream to some...to others a nightmare!"

— Merlin, from the film *Excalibur*

The Garou

"Sit still and listen, fool. You think you are strong and can best all in your path. Ha! You know nothing yet of what confronts you...you have not smelled the Wyrms. Wait until its minions sink their talons into your tender flesh; then you will scream for your mother and curse yourself for the fool you are!"

"You must beware what others will tell you. They will lie. They will try to say that the Wyrms is many, and that not all are equally corrupt. Phaw! Listen not to these idiots! The Wyrms is the Wyrms, and all its manifestations are evil! They eat away at Gaia with many mouths, and she screams in slow agony.

Your mother is in pain, fool! Are you going to aid her, or sit there contemplating the Wyrms's enigmas? Get up! Fight!"

Gaia's defenders are well aware of the Wyrms and its horrible influence on the world. It is their duty to rage against its corruption. They are Gaia's last line of defense, and the perimeter has been breached.

To the Garou, the Wyrms is one being, although they recognize that it has many faces. But these faces are believed to be its method of subterfuge, a way of fooling its followers into acting as it wishes. They think they see beyond its disguises to the One Wyrms behind it all. To the Garou, the stench of the Wyrms means one thing: evil, no matter the shape in which it comes.

The Black Spiral Dancers

"Ahh...listen...listen to your beating heart. In the throbbing of your blood in your ears, you can hear It. Its undulations in the dark. It is our master, our father.

"Our mother was weak, and she would give us no boons. Us, her favored children! We suffered as all the rest of Her creatures did, we who were better than all. But the Wyrms showed us a truer path, a way to power that reflected our superiority. One look in the mirror and we knew...yes, we knew that only the mad survive.

"Know this, a secret that is ours; the Wyrms is Many. It is fractured just as we. Mad and wailing, It comes to us as many. Choose one and serve it well, and power will be

yours. Destroy any who doubt that your Wyrms are the True Wyrms! Yes, there are many, but the one that is yours is the only One...

"Does this confuse you? Good...a paradox is good for the mind. But one is not enough. No, there must be paradox upon paradox, until the mind cracks under their weight! Only a broken mind is free to roam! Only the shattered soul can encompass All!"

The Black Spiral Dancers long ago turned from Gaia and melded their fates with the Wyrms. All the Black Spirals are mad to a degree, insane from their first glance at the pure Corruption. Of course, they see themselves as the only truly enlightened Garou, scoffing at others such as the Stargazers, who pretend to seek mystic truths when the Black Spirals have discovered the truth.

The Black Spiral Dancers believe the Wyrms to be many creatures, a plurality they call the Hydra, the many faces of the Wyrms. The Wyrms' manifestations vie with each other for mastery of the Balance. The Black Spirals realize the most effective way to personal power is to ally with one of the Wyrms and pray for its eventual victory over the others.

Pentex, Inc.

"Greetings, gentlemen. Let's get right down to business. It has come to the attention of this CEO that not all of our employees have been equally briefed in need-to-know information concerning our Benefactors. This should be

rectified, as many of our upcoming interests will depend upon well-educated decisions from our key branch heads.

"Before you is a briefing folder, a copy of which is to be distributed throughout your divisions as you deem necessary. Let me sum up from the enclosed report:

"The entities which guide us are to be referred to in all documents as our Benefactors. Each member of the board in Pentex, Inc. is responsible for carrying out the purposes of one of these Benefactors.

"It is realized that this causes the company to work at cross-purposes at times, which is why interdivisional communication is stressed. All divisions must report to the CEO. The penalty for a division not reporting its activities, routinely and accurately, is covered in the Pentex Charter, Section 5b, para. 13. Needless to say, there is no second chance in the case of a misunderstanding, gentlemen, so please ensure that you stay on top of this matter at all times.

"Thank you. This meeting is hereby closed."

Pentex is a multinational corporate holding company whose purpose is to further the goal of the Wyrms in the Realm. Not all the employees of Pentex are aware of this sinister purpose. Only those in positions of power, or who "need to know," have been gifted with the knowledge of the Wyrms.

The Board of Directors is the group that heads Pentex's operations. As such, its members are privy to many of the Wyrms' secrets. Each member of the Board answers to one of the heads of the Hydra.

Pentex has a good grasp of what is really going on with the Wyrms. However, even it is unaware of how fractious the Wyrms has become. The various manifestations which guide the board members are working at cross-purposes, and the internal conflict is building. An outside agent who knew what was going on could probably cripple the company by correctly using this information.

Humans

Humans are the puppets of the Wyrms in its attempt to corrupt Gaia. Ignorance is the key to its control. The petty desires, such as wealth, power and lust, are the strings with which it controls the mass of humanity.

The Garou are partially to blame for this. During the Impergium, the fear engendered into humanity caused humans to grasp desperately at what little power they could, to allay their primal fears. Humanity's unbalanced quest for power, security and control is ultimately the doing of the Garou.

Humans are ignorant of the Wyrms and its devices upon them.

Mages

"It seems to me that the matter of the Wyrms can be resolved rather quickly. It is a cosmological concept of that dying race known as the Garou, popularly referred to as werewolves.





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"The Wyrmling is their image of corruption. It is their primitive psyche's personification of the abstract process of entropy. These animistic beings see all things as living entities with personalities. Reason, however, shows us a more holistic look.

"Entropy is a raw fact of the universe. There is no use denying it. The Garou, who are dying out through the natural course of evolution, seek to blame this process on a particular being; they seek windmills against which to tilt. But one cannot fight entropy, only hope to divert it by willfully creating new channels for life.

"It is true that, as the millennium approaches, entropy is increasing. The Garou have instinctively perceived this, and represent it as the growing power of the Wyrmling. Admittedly, this does give them some small power to fight against an otherwise confusing abstraction, by giving it a face..."

The mages, magicians of power and note, all have their own opinions about the Wyrmling. Mages are a varied and individualistic lot, and each mage may have his or her own secrets concerning the Wyrmling. However, some of the more "rational" among them subscribe to the above opinion.

Vampires

"Curse those furry beasts! How dare they speak to me so, as if I were a devil from the pit itself! I barely survived that one.

"You know, it is quite racist of them. I mean, believing that we are all, a priori, "corrupt." And this Wyrmling thing they speak of! Just what the hell is that anyway? If you ask me, it's all some sort of fear of sex sublimation.

"I mean, really! Running around in the woods on all fours when they could be sitting in a nice cafe like this sipping whatever the hell it is they like to drink, and talking to a beautiful young one like you..."

The Damned, as the younger vampires call themselves, suffer the brunt of much of the Garou's hatred. The majority of Kindred have never heard of the Wyrmling, and are mystified as to why the Lupines (Garou) hate them so much.

Of all the vampire clans, the Gangrel know the most about werewolf beliefs, and some of them have discovered why the Garou hate them. Most vampires scoff at the Garou belief that all Kindred are the Wyrmling's corrupt children, but others recognize a tragic truth in this.

Most vampires care little for Garou concerns, especially about a barbaric subject like the Wyrmling. Those who are interested in the idea are attracted to it, seeing it as a fascinating potential model for their "damned" personalities.

Current Activities

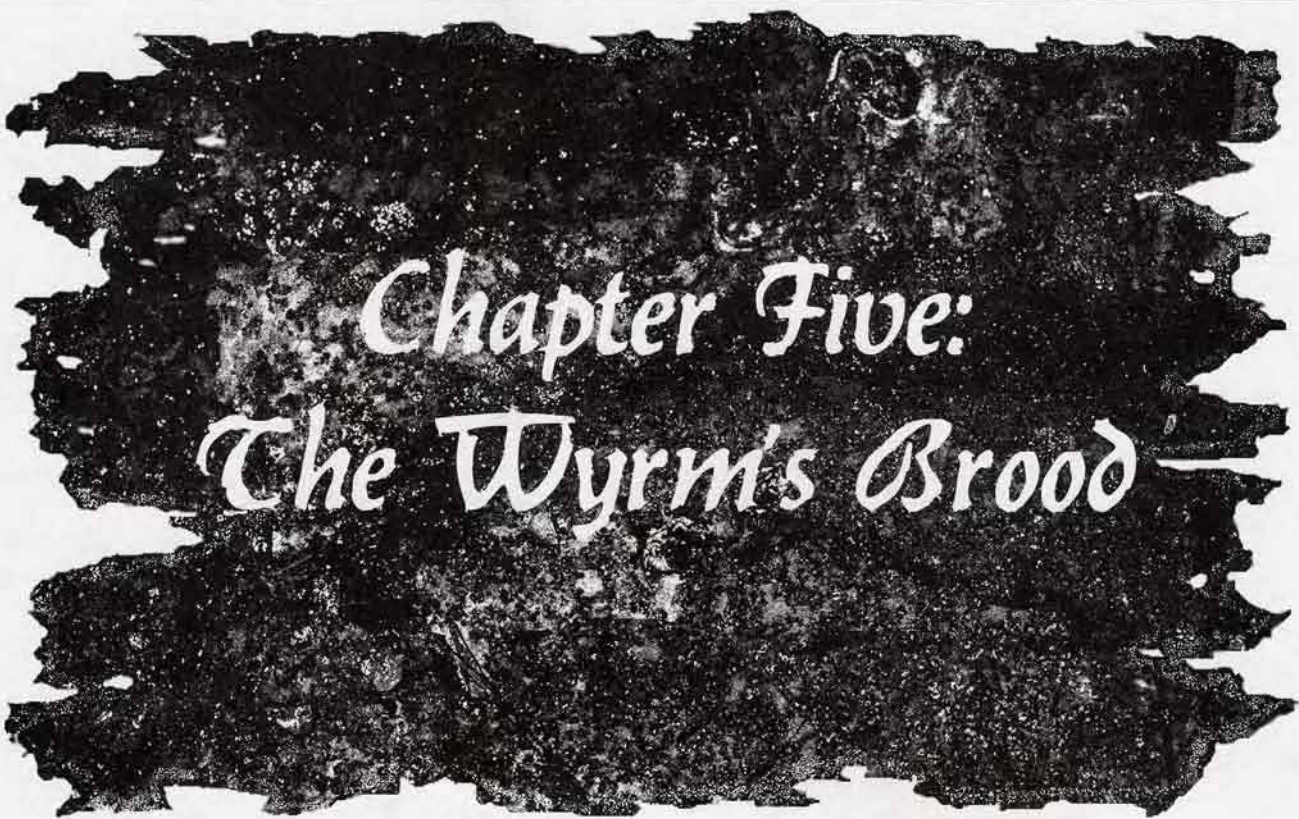
The various manifestations of the Wyrms are continuously involved in their own sinister plots to corrupt the Tellurian. They rarely work together, and even then their effectiveness is cut short by their own anger and infighting.

The Wyrms are most dangerous when their forces are rallied by their intelligent followers, such as the Maeljin Incarna, the Committee of Malfeas, or the Board of Directors of Pentex. The Garou always have a fight on their hands when these forces mobilize.

The Wyrms described in this chapter are meant to provide background for the dark Gothic-Punk environment of **Werewolf**. These things should not be encountered as creatures. The Wyrms are the forces which guide the hands of the plotters and backstabbers. They are in the shadows as the supreme archons making the world into a living hell. These forces cannot be met face to face; they are far too broad and powerful. Only through their servants can they be combated.

Nonetheless, the legends persist. It is said that the greatest of Garou heroes will finally battle the Wyrms themselves at the Edge of the Worlds on the day of Apocalypse.





Chapter Five: The Wyrms' Brood

Besides the Black Spiral Dancers, many other creatures lurk beneath the surface of Gaia. Most of these creatures are members of species created by the Wyrms centuries upon centuries ago. Occasionally one of these creatures oozes to the surface, eating and destroying everything in its path. Most remain in their lairs, however, content to await the day of the Wyrms' triumph, when they can cast their evil shadows upon the land once more.

The Black Spiral Dancers have learned to avoid or appease the appetites of these creatures. The Wym-serv-

ing Garou often capture unsuspecting humans and bring them below to feed the hunger of these dark denizens.

It is also rumored that ancient lost cities exist below the earth, and are home to many of these Wym-spawned monsters. These cities are said to be filled with strange races of Garou and homid-like creatures. They are also said to be overflowing with gold, diamonds, and other precious metals and stones of the earth. Who knows if any of these old tales are true?

Black Spiral Dancers

The Black Spiral Dancers are the descendants of the Garou tribe that turned to the Wyrms. They are among the meanest and nastiest of all the Garou, even compared to the Get of Fenris and the Red Talons.

The Black Spirals were once the White Howlers, a tribe of Garou living in Scotland. They fell to the Wyrms while trying to drive an infestation of corruption from their land. Over the centuries, they have grown vicious and frighteningly mad. To this day, they hunger for the night when all their enemies kneel before them so they can rip their hearts out.

As servants of the Wyrms, the Black Spirals are considered completely and unredeemably evil by all other Garou.

Bane Totem: Whippoorwill

Initial Willpower: 3

Backgrounds: They receive 4 Background points which can be applied to any Backgrounds except Pure Breed.

Beginning Gifts: Bane Protector, Sense Wyrms, Shroud

Wolf Form: They roughly resemble other Garou; however, the jaws and heads of their Crinos forms are huge and slavering, resembling those of hyenas, while their ears are hairless and pointed like those of bats. Their eyes are huge and round, glowing with a red or green luminescence, while their fur is patchy and usually either albino-white or grayish-green. Their human forms are usually twisted and deformed, but some are quite beautiful.

Organization: While they are organized along the lines of the other Garou tribes, there are major differences: they follow their own Litany, they call their septs Hives, and they allow Garou-to-Garou interbreeding. They have moots once a month, gathering as many as two or three Hives on occasion.

Habitat: Dwelling in underground caverns called Pits, the Black Spirals exist in a dark, dank world that no homid has ever seen and lived to describe. The Black Spirals travel the underworld, seldom seeing the light of day. Living among bizarre creatures of the Wyrms, the Black Spirals find sanctuary from their enemies, the other Garou.

Protectorate: The Black Spirals protect the underground labyrinths that riddle the earth. They are servants of

the Wyrms and as such protect Pentex and other useful destroyers of the environment.

Quote: "I shall see my enemies perish in agony, but before they expire I shall gnaw open their children's throats before their eyes. I am the warrior of the Wyrms!"

Tribal Gifts

These are the Gifts that the Wyrms bestows upon the members of the Black Spiral Dancers after they survive the Dance of the Black Spiral, the rite of passage for the tribe.

Bane Protector (Level One) — This Gift allows a Black Spiral to summon any nearby Banes to come and help her. The Banes may resist, but as long as the Black Spiral is acting in the best interest of the Wyrms, the Banes will be inclined to help her. They will even fight for her if possible, but they will never allow themselves to be destroyed. The use of this gift requires the expenditure of one Gnosis point and a roll of Manipulation + Leadership.

Sense Wyrms (Level One) — Same as the Metis Gift.

Shroud (Level One) — Same as the Uktena Gift.

Howl of the Banshee (Level Two) — Same as the Fianna Gift.

Ears of the Bat (Level Two) — This Gift enables the Black Spiral Dancer to use sonar like a bat, enabling him to sense objects and foes even in total darkness.

Wyrms Hide (Level Two) — This Gift allows the Black Spiral to transform her skin, in any form, into one that is orange, tough, leathery, smelly, and covered in lumps. The hide grants the Black Spiral three additional points of Stamina for soaking damage. Any attack that penetrates the skin causes a bluish pus to run from the lumps.

Unseelie Faerie Kin (Level Three) — The Black Spiral can call upon his faerie kinfolk, just as with the Fianna Gift, but the kin are all Unseelie faeries, those of the dark, mischievous and malicious Court of the Fey.

Patagia (Level Three) — The Dancer has flaps of skin under her arms like a pterodactyl or flying squirrel (even in human form), and may glide at 25 mph.

Foaming Fury (Level Three) — The Garou's mouth bubbles with a greenish fluid. Anyone bitten must roll Stamina + 4 (difficulty 8) or fly into a rabid frenzy.

Crawling Poison (Level Four) — This Gift coats the Black Spiral's fangs and claws with a viscous toxin that inhibits the Garou's regenerative powers when it is injected into them via claw or bite; the effects last one hour for each success the Black Spiral scores on a Gnosis roll against the victim's Stamina + 4.

Doppleganger (Level Four) — Same as the Glass Walker gift.

Balefire (Level Five) — The Black Spiral can hurl spheres of sickly green flame at her opponent. If she hits (by rolling Dexterity + Athletics and comparing the results to the Firearms chart), the victim must roll Stamina + 4 and match or exceed the Black Spiral's number of successes. If he fails, he will be mutated in some way as decided by the Storyteller. These mutations are always harmful, and each success on the Black Spiral's roll is treated as a level of aggravated damage for the purpose of determining the length of convalescence.

Totem-form (Level Five) —
This Gift allows a
Black



Spiral to take on the appearance of his pack's Bane-totem. The Garou has all the powers of the Bane-totem, and the Garou even changes in appearance to look exactly like the Bane. The powers and limitations placed on the Black Spiral vary greatly, so it is up to the Storyteller to specify the exact effects of this Gift. It costs one point of Willpower and it requires a transformation roll as if the Garou were changing into another Garou form (Stamina + Primal-Urge, difficulty 7). It takes six seconds to make the shift.

Gifts by Auspice

The Black Spirals have received many new and strange powers from the spiritual servants of the Wyrms. The following additional Gifts are only available to Black Spiral Dancers.

Ragabash:

Touch of the Eel (Level Three) — This Gift enables the Black Spiral to release a current of electricity through any conductive material. In addition, if the Black Spiral is touched in any way, the attacker receives a charge. It costs one point of Rage per use of this power. The electricity has an effective range of 30 yards if transmitted through a conductor. The current does three Health Levels (aggravated; difficulty 7).

Theurge:

Blood Omen (Level Two) — This allows the Black Spiral Theurge to utilize the age-old art of prophecy by "reading" the innards of freshly killed creatures. While a Garou or homid is an especially accurate medium, any warm-blooded creature will do. An Intelligence + Enigmas roll (difficulty 9) is required to discover some glimpse of the future. The difficulty is reduced to seven if a Garou, wolf or homid is used. The more successes, the more detailed and accurate the information. This Gift requires the expenditure of one Gnosis point.

Philodox:

Smell Fear (Level One) — This Gift allows the Black Spiral Philodox to know if anyone in the surrounding area feels threatened by her and the degree to which the target feels threatened. It also lets her know if anyone uses Sense Wyrms on her. Smell Fear requires a Perception + Empathy roll versus a difficulty equal to the target's Willpower.

A Thousand Voices (Level Two) — This Gift allows the Black Spiral Philodox to create illusory sounds to make it seem as though there are a multitude of Black Spirals in the area. This Gift evokes such things as howls, crackling leaves and even illusory scents of many other Black Spirals. The sounds are



always appropriate to the surroundings. One illusory Black Spiral is represented for every point of Willpower the Black Spiral currently possesses. The Black Spiral's opponent may roll Perception + Alertness versus a difficulty based on the surroundings (in a dense forest 9, on a city street 7, in the desert 2) to determine whether he believes the sounds and smells to be real.

Galliard:

Allies Below (Level Three) — The Black Spiral is able to give a howl that causes the very earth to tremble. The Wyrms creatures far below the surface can sense the use of this power and they will cause tremors of various sizes. The effects can vary. Individuals, including the Black Spiral, who have not adequately braced themselves will fall down. It is possible for buildings to collapse, underground tunnels to cave in, and large objects (such as trees, walls or sliding rocks) to fall on top of people. It costs two Gnosis points to release a howl of this nature.

Ahroun:

Horns of the Impaler (Level Two) — This Gift endows the Black Spiral with a pair of antlers or horns which may be used for goring. The antlers are usually black or green. They do damage as a bite and give the Garou an extra attack. Charging increases the number of Health Levels inflicted by two, but only one attack may be made.

Rend Reality (Level Five) — The Black Spiral Ahroun has the power to tear a rift in reality with her claws, causing a nexus of entropy. In the area of effect, Banes are considered to be Materialized, though it does not require any Power expenditure on their part. The area will appear as if the sky and landscape has been torn apart, revealing a swirling world of chaos beyond the ragged tatters. The area is charged with entropic force — any damage rolls gain a two-dice bonus while in the area of effect. Any attempt to "step sideways" can kill the Garou foolish enough to try it. The Garou trying to "step sideways" must make a Gnosis roll (difficulty 9) to avoid seven Health Levels of aggravated damage. The use of this power lasts for one scene. Evocation of this Gift costs three Gnosis points and requires a Gnosis roll; each success enables a 10-foot radius to be rent. Any attempt to physically enter or exit the affected area requires a roll of the individual's Intelligence + Enigmas (difficulty 8).

Totems of Cunning

The Whippoorwill

Background Cost: 6

The Whippoorwill Bane-totem is a Bane who formed itself into the image of the bird called the Whippoorwill. The bird itself is a nocturnal creature of North America. The Bane-totem which took its form is much larger in size, but appears very rarely. As a pack totem, its Background Cost is 6 and it is a Bane-totem of Cunning. The Whippoorwill grants its bastards the ability to imitate all birds. It also



allows them +2 to Perception for all attempts to see or move about at night.

Ban: The Whippoorwill bans its bastards from harming any bird. It also requires a moot in its honor twice per year.

Kirijama, "The Hidden Foe"

Background Cost: 7

Kirijama is the hidden enemy. It has no manifested form that can be perceived by human or Garou. Some believe that Kirijama does not even exist, but the powers it grants its bastards prove otherwise.

Bastards gain the Gift: Invisibility and also gain one die to their Stealth Dice Pool.

Ban: Bastards must never become famous, making it hard for them to rise in Rank. Many circumvent this by gaining Renown and then disappearing from view for a while until they are forgotten.

Totems of Strength

The Green Dragon

Background Cost: 9

The Green Dragon is a powerful Bane spirit, but only grants its alliance to those who have proven themselves. It is considered a totem of Strength.

The Green Dragon is a symbol of the Wyrms' power. It is the destroyer of life and the crusher of enemies. With its

green fiery breath it scorches the earth. It grants the same fiery breath to its bastards. The flame burst may be used up to three times per day. The flame is as hot as a chemical fire (difficulty 9), and inflicts two Health Levels of damage, as if it were a bonfire.

Bans: Bastards of the Green Dragon have no bans, but they must not be cowards.

The Bat

Background Cost: 4

The bat is the dark flyer of the night, the vermin who feeds unseen in the night hours. The bat instills terror in the hearts of the superstitious and cowardly. The Bat totem gives its bastards extra ability with both the Patagia and Ears of the Bat Gifts — subtract two from any flight or sonar difficulties. Bat bastards also receive one extra die to any Intimidation, Stealth and Survival rolls.

Ban: Bastards must not harm bats, and must sleep hanging upside down.

Hakaken, "The Heart of Fear"

Background Cost: 9

Hakaken is a Bane Incarna who appears as a Tyrannosaurus-crab hybrid. It has a huge, slavering mouth.

Hakaken was a great Ahroun of the Shadow Lords who became corrupted by his pride and is now an Incarna of the Wyrms. Hakaken's Gifts are those of fear and the madness

caused by it. Paranoia and phobias are tools that minions of Hakaken use against their foes.

Hakaken grants its bastards the Gifts: True Fear and Icy Chill of Despair. Its bastards gain one die to their Intimidation Dice Pools.

Ban: Bastards must instill fear in their foes before slaying them.

Totems of Corruption

The Dark Fungus

Background Cost: 3

The Dark Fungus is a plant spirit found in the Umbral counterpart to the underground tunnel systems of the Black Spirals. The Dark Fungus gives its bastards one extra die to Enigmas and Occult Dice Pools.

It hovers over growing mushrooms, manifesting in them and producing powerful psychoactive substances. Only its bastards may partake of these. They use them as sacraments, gaining incredible insight at the cost of their already fractured sanity. Eating the plant requires a Stamina roll against a difficulty of (15 - the ingestor's Gnosis; maximum 10). Failure means that a Derangement is gained, but success gives the ingestor the Gift: Pulse of the Invisible.

Ban: Bastards must tend growing mushrooms wherever they find them.

Relshab, "The Faceless Eater"

Background Cost: 10

Relshab is a Bane Incarna that manifests as a huge man-shaped form, covered in rolls of flesh which crawl and ripple in sickly waves. Where the face should be there is only a mass of fat. Its right arm is a tube which it uses to consume its prey. It can suck nearly anything in and digest it in its stomach furnace.

Relshab grants his children the gift of "eating" their opponents' Traits, through the Gift: Whelp Body.

Ban: Bastards must eat everything put before them.

G'louogh, "Dance of Corruption"

Background Cost: 15

Little is known of the origin of G'louogh, although its relation to the Nexus Crawler is self-evident. G'louogh manifests as an everchanging ball of horrors, continually forming and re-forming vile shapes, and will frequently spawn Jagglings and Gafflings by "budding" them off its manifested form. Some of the most powerful creatures that G'louogh spawns are Nexus Crawlers.

G'louogh grants its bastards the Gift: Fabric of the Mind.





Ban: Bastards must never support the status quo, and must be capricious in their behavior.

The Abyss Leapers

Provided here is a sample pack of Black Spiral Dancers, the Abyss Leapers, which operates out of New York City. Feel free to use the pack however you wish for any locale.

The pack is actually 10 strong; the four not covered here rarely leave the sewer burrow. The totem of the pack is the Bat.

Gamush the Hell Roarer

Breed: Metis

Auspice: Galliard

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Expression 3, Intimidation 5, Primal-Urge 5, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 2, Firearms 2, Melee 3, Leadership 4, Stealth 3, Survival 4, Enigmas 3, Linguistics (Pictish) 1, Occult 2, Rituals 1

Backgrounds: Allies 2 (Pentex)

Gifts: Shroud, Create Element, Mindspeak, Burrow, Howl of the Banshee, Ears of the Bat, Patagia, Foaming Fury, Allies Below (see above)

Rage 10, Gnosis 4, Willpower 8

Rank: 3

Renown: Power 25,000, Cunning 15,000, Infamy 18,000

Rites: Rite of Talisman Dedication

Fetishes: Banesword, Wyrms-wood, Wyrms-Gut Bonds

Image: A disgusting werewolf with oily black fur and eyes that spit fire. His patagia are torn in places, making them look like ragged sheets.

Roleplaying Notes: You hate everything. Anything you think about for more than a few seconds becomes the object of your ire. Your rage knows no bounds.

Background: Gamush was born angry. He ripped his way, wailing, out of his mother's womb. The rest of the tribe looked on in horror as he crawled to the underground lake, desperate for sustenance. But the brackish water was not mother's milk, and Gamush would have died were it not for Kleka the Vole, who took pity upon him. She allowed him to suck at her teat. Ever after, Gamush loved only Kleka, even after he tore her apart in one of his mad rages.

Gamush is the leader of the Abyss Leapers, a pack roaming the sewers under New York City. He is a mad and crazed Garou, and the others follow him out of fear, but also out of some respect for his "divine" madness. One of his particular madnesses manifests as klazomania, an obsessive need to shout.

Horlaq

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Ahroun

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 3, Intimidation 4, Primal-Urge 4, Firearms 2, Melee 4, Leadership 2, Stealth 3, Enigmas 1, Linguistics (Pictish) 1, Occult 1

Backgrounds: none

Gifts: Bane Protector (see above), Smell of Man, Razor Claws, Wyrms Hide (see above), True Fear, Silver Claws, Foaming Fury

Rage 9, Gnosis 4, Willpower 7

Rank: 3

Renown: Power 25,000, Cunning 6,000, Infamy 7,000

Rites: none

Fetishes: Wyrms Fang Dagger (real), Dragon's Ichor, revolver with silver bullets

Image: In wolf form, Horlaq is impressive. He is large, with a powerfully built and well-defined body. His jowls are very short and stubby, giving him an almost bulldog-like face. His coat is a dark charcoal-gray with a slightly greenish hue when light hits it. In homid form, Horlaq stands over 6'6" and weighs over 250 pounds. He prefers to wear leather and denim, dressing like a biker. He has battle scars all over his body, of which he is very proud.

Roleplaying Notes: You are the top dog of the pack, next to Gamush, and do not let anyone forget it. You are not really arrogant, you are just proud, and you have a right to be. You could throat anyone in the pack — except Gamush. You are the first to rush into battle to save a comrade and the first to criticize cowards.

Background: Horlaq is a survivor. He has seen many pack brothers born and die, yet he remains. He was trained to be a warrior by his father, a Kinfolk, who was trained by his father, and so has it always been. While he was not born under the full moon, it was the full moon that he chose. A little over five years ago, Horlaq tried to take the pack away from Gamush, but was soundly beaten. He has since been loyal to Gamush.

During his rite of passage, Horlaq realized that he should have been born female. He has feelings of a very feminine nature (to his mind at least). He knows this must not be discovered by others, so he overcompensates to hide it, acting the part of the bullying Ahroun to the hilt.

Phorx

Breed: Metis

Auspice: Theurge

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

Abilities: Alertness 2, Brawl 3, Empathy 4, Expression 2, Primal-Urge 3, Subterfuge 3, Etiquette 3, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Stealth 2, Computer 3, Enigmas 4, Investigation 1, Linguistics 3, Occult 4, Politics 2, Rituals 4, Science 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Resources 1

Gifts: Sense Wurm, Mother's Touch, Create Element, Command Spirit, Name the Spirit

Rage 5, Gnosis 8, Willpower 6

Rank: 2

Renown: Power 5,000, Cunning 11,000, Infamy 6,000

Rites: Rite of Talisman Dedication, Rite of Binding, Rite of Spirit Awakening, Rite of Summoning, Rite of the Fetish, Rite of the Opened Bridge

Fetishes: Bane Lantern, Deathrattler, Bean Bane, heavy pistol

Image: Phorx is a nasty-looking creature in wolf form. Her fur is a mottled coat of gray, green, rust-brown and black. This gives her an advantage of one extra die when trying to camouflage herself in the forest or the sewer waters of her home tunnel. She has huge ears that stand up high on her head. Her tail has no fur whatsoever. Her eyes glow a lambent green. In homid form she keeps her head shaved bald. She wears casual clothing of whatever style is currently popular among the homids. She has a number of tattoos on her arms; these can barely be seen below the fur on her forelegs in wolf form.

Roleplaying Notes: You look out for yourself first and foremost. You like homids, so unlike many Black Spirals, you walk among them in homid form whenever possible.

Background: Phorx was born to members of another Hive. She was traded in an exchange of goodwill and property. The other Hive received a couple of talens for her. Phorx did not like life among the new Hive at first, but she slowly came to accept them as her people. She has since become a very valuable member of the Hive (the Dank Well Sept of the Adirondacks). Phorx joined with the Abyss Leapers upon the pack's formation.

Phorx has an odd Derangement. She believes that tattoos are alive and can speak to her through their movements as the muscles beneath them flex and undulate. She spends long hours alone trying to glean wisdom from her own tattoos, and believes she has discovered some truths from them. If she encounters an enemy with many tattoos, she will try to capture him and interrogate his tattoos.

Crooked Tooth, "Doodledog"

Tribe: Fianna

Breed: Lupus

Auspice: Ragabash

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

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Expression 2, Intimidation 2, Primal-Urge 4, Animal Ken 3, Drive 1, Melee 2, Stealth 4, Survival 4, Enigmas 2, Linguistics (Gaelic) 1, Medicine 1, Occult 1

Backgrounds: Past Life 2, Pure Breed 2

Gifts: Heightened Senses, Blur of the Milky Eye, Resist Toxin, Leap of the Kangaroo

Rage 3, Gnosis 6, Willpower 4

Rank: 1

Renown: Power 2,500, Cunning 5,000, Infamy 3,000

Rites: none

Fetishes: Spirit Tracer, Klaive

Image: Doodledog was born to the Fianna, so his wolf form is very much like theirs. However, his ruddy brown hide bears splotches of black all over it. This only adds to the beauty of his appearance. In human form Doodledog is a slender, handsome young man. He has long reddish-black hair and he prefers to dress in jeans and T-shirts.

Roleplaying Notes: You like to sing as you do things, even if it is rather bad singing. The rest of the pack hates it, and would knock you around except for the strange fact that Gamush loves the out-of-tune songs.

Background: You are a Ragabash; at least that is what your first tribe, the Fianna, told you. You wanted to become a Moon Dancer, but would they let you? No. So you allowed yourself to listen to that Black Spiral as he promised you anything you wanted. Before you knew it, your tribe was trying to kill you as a traitor to Gaia. You had no choice but to join the Black Spirals. They haven't let you become a Moon Dancer either.

If you could, you would leave your new pack and tribe and make a new life, but this will never happen. You would

not make it 10 miles before they came to gut you for being a traitor.

Kabula

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Ahroun

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

Abilities: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 3, Expression 4, Primal-Urge 2, Animal Ken 3, Drive 2, Etiquette 2, Melee 2, Leadership 3, Repair 4, Computer 3, Enigmas 4, Investigation 2, Law 3, Politics 4, Science 3

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 4, Resources 3, Rites 2, Totem 2

Gifts: Persuasion, Razor Claws, Sense Wurm, Wurm Hide (see above), Stare-down

Rage 8, Gnosis 6, Willpower 7

Rank: 2

Renown: Power 13,000, Cunning 5,000, Infamy 5,000

Rites: none

Fetishes: Warshirt of the Wurm, Goblin Ale, Klaive, heavy pistol

Image: In lupus form, Kabula is a chalk-white wolf. She drools more than the other members of the pack, and she has a number of terrible scars across her chest. She is blind in one eye from a fight with a Get of Fenris. In homid form she has short blond hair. She generally wears black clothing and she could pass for a vampire, or at least a Blood Doll, because of her pallid skin. She wears lots of silver jewelry.

Roleplaying Notes: You are high-strung and zealously work toward whatever goals the pack has set for itself.

Background: Kabula was born homid. She lived in the suburbs of upstate New York with her mom and dad. She was a straight-A student throughout school. When she entered college she became active in the animal rights movement. While at a protest against the Aesop Research Company, she met Horlaq, who asked her to go with him to lunch. He kidnapped the young woman at gunpoint. They drove all day to the Hive. That night she underwent the Dance of the Black Spiral and survived. She readily accepted her new life. The rite of passage destroyed part of her sanity and made her a willing servant of the Wurm.

She is Gamush's chief rival for leadership of the pack, though she does not realize how little support she has in this endeavor. Nonetheless, her manic Derangement keeps her striving.

F'foeg S'sap

Breed: Metis

Auspice: Philodox

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

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Empathy 2, Primal-Urge 3, Streetwise 2, Drive 2, Etiquette 3, Firearms 3, Melee 2, Leadership 1, Performance 3, Stealth 3, Enigmas 1, Linguistics 2, Occult 2

Backgrounds: Past Life 2, Resources 3, Totem 3

Gifts: Sense Wurm, Resist Pain, Bane Protector (see above), Call to Duty

Rage 7, Gnosis 3, Willpower 4

Rank: 1

Renown: Power 2,000, Cunning 4,000, Infamy 6,000

Rites: none

Fetishes: Devilwhip, Wurm-wood

Image: In wolf form, F'foeg S'sap is dull gray, ranging from light gray at his front legs to near-black at his tail. He has an enormously oversized head and an overbite. His lower jaw sticks out beyond his upper jaw. His head is nearly hairless and his eyes glow a fiery red. In human form he has short brown hair. He dresses in plain clothing, usually jeans and T-shirts. He especially enjoys wearing animal leathers.

Roleplaying Notes: You are proud and noble in stature. You try to be a friend to all within the pack, and you put great emphasis on making your pack the greatest of all Black Spiral packs.

Background: F'foeg S'sap was born 13 winters ago to a female metis of the Hive. He grew up listening to the stories told by the Moon Dancers. He could recite the Black Spiral Litany by age four. He even learned all he could about the other Garou tribes and the Garou spiritual beliefs. He became the very model of the proper Philodox. At age 11, he was given the rite of passage and accepted into the tribe. Many speak of him as a potential pack leader, and some believe he will one day lead the Hive itself.

F'foeg S'sap believes he has been chosen as the avatar of the Defiler Wurm, but he will not rub this in the rest of the pack's faces — yet. Once he is strong enough, however, all will grovel before him.

Fomori

Most fomori are immune to the Delirium. The Wyrmtaint has erased the Veil. This is not the case with all of them, and their immunity seems to depend on the amount of Wyrmtaint within them. To ensure that its agents do not seize up in terror when combating Garou, Pentex injects them with a special serum which destroys the part of the brain susceptible to the Delirium. Assume that all fomori created by Pentex will not be affected.

Fomori Powers

The following is a brief list of some of the potential powers available to fomori of the Wyrmt. Most common fomori have only three powers; some, however, have less and some have many more. The fomori of Pentex usually have three to five, in addition to Immunity to the Delirium.

Body-barbs — The fomor has sharp, blade-like bone growths on its wrists, elbows, knees or feet. The size, shape, number and placement of the barbs vary from fomor to fomor. They allow the fomor to do two extra dice of damage on a successful Brawl attempt (if the barbs are in the appropriate location to be used). The damage caused by the barbs is aggravated.

Exoskeleton — The fomor has a hard carapace covering its body. Its texture usually resembles that of bone, with many ridges, vein-like tubes, and odd shapes upon it. Its coloration ranges from rust-red through dark-brown to oily black. The exoskeleton grants the fomori +3 Strength and +3 Stamina.

Extra Limbs — Fomori often have a number of extra limbs, usually in the form of tentacles or masses of tendrils.

The fomori with extra arms and legs often possess them in awkward places, such as an extra



arm on one of their thighs (see **Werewolf**, page 246).

Gaseous Form — The fomor is able to diffuse her body into a gaseous state; this takes only three seconds. However, the fomor must expend a point of Willpower to become gaseous and expend another point to become solid again. The gaseous form remains cohesive even in a strong wind. The fomor usually emits a horrible stench while in this form.

Hide of the Wyrn — The fomor has a tough hide that is very hard and leathery. The hide provides the fomor with +3 Stamina for the purpose of soaking attacks. Some have huge knots, scales, lumps and other disgusting features to accompany the protection.

Infectious Touch — The fomor is able to cause fever and sickness by her touch. The fomor must make flesh-to-flesh contact with the victim. She must also expend one point of Willpower and make a Willpower roll against the target's Stamina + 3. For each success, the victim takes one wound level of aggravated damage. This damage heals at the rate of one per week, during which time the victim feels miserable.

Lashing Tail — This is similar to an extra limb, but it cannot be used for precision work. It can be used as a whip doing Strength + 2 damage. Striking with the whip requires a Dexterity + Brawl roll (difficulty 8).

Mega-Strength — The fomor has five additional points of Strength.

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

Plasmic Form — This is similar to gaseous form, but it allows the fomor to turn into a thick reddish-brown liquid which can move about of its own free will. The liquid has the same resistance to harm as the solid form, but it is immune to kinetic attacks (knives, bullets, fists, claws, etc.) Changing forms requires the expenditure of one Willpower point and takes three seconds.

Roar of the Wyrn — The fomor is able to strike terror into the hearts of all near her by issuing this guttural scream. The fomor must make a Charisma + Intimidation roll (difficulty of opponents' Willpower); if she succeeds, the victim(s) must immediately flee, running as far and as fast as possible to escape the fomor.

Stomach Pumper — The fomor is able to vomit forth all she has recently eaten; furthermore, the regurgitated mass is covered in acidic, slimy stomach juices. These jets have an average range of 25 feet. A single blast (and a fomor seldom has enough for more than three such blasts) can cover a single foe. Treat hitting with the blast as if it were a light pistol. The attack does two dice of damage if



it hits, and the victim must expend a point of Willpower to keep from stopping whatever he is doing and starting to gag.

Umbral Passage — The fomor is able to “step sideways” in and out of the Umbra just like a Garou.

Webbing — The fomor has a special gland over his abdomen; the gland is about the size and shape of a football. The organ has an orifice above the navel. The organ can be used to create massive amounts of webbing similar to that of a spider. The webbing is thicker than a spider’s, almost one inch in diameter, but it is very sheer and hard to see from a distance without a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 7). The fomor must learn how to utilize the webbing (treat this as a new Skill, Web-Making). The fomor may use it to seal off things, capture opponents, or lower himself from high positions. The webbing has an Armor of six and three Health Levels. It is extremely strong and sticky, allowing the fomor to entrap his prey.

Enticers

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

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

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

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

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

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Charisma 6, Manipulation 6, Appearance 6, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3



Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 2 (bite; Str +1), Dodge 2, Expression 2, Empathy 4, Subterfuge 5, Drive 1, Etiquette 3, Firearms 1, Performance 5, Survival 1, Computers 1, Enigmas 1, Linguistics 2, Politics 1

Backgrounds: Enticers can have almost any of the Backgrounds available, but all Enticers have at least a 3 in Resources — their allowance from Pentex.

Powers: Enhancement: The Enticer can become any living creature's ideal mate by scanning the target's mind. The Enticer must make a Charisma + Empathy roll against a difficulty equal to the opponent's Rage. Success means that it has become that opponent's ideal mate in physical appearance. If the Enticer fails, it simply appears as an attractive individual. If the roll botches, the target will feel uncomfortable in the Enticer's presence, sensing that the Enticer desperately wants to be liked and needed.

Succubus Veil: this power requires a Manipulation + Subterfuge Roll against the target's Wits + Primal-Urge. If the Enticer is successful, the target is enthralled, wanting nothing but to be with the Enticer whenever possible. If the roll fails, the target still finds the Enticer attractive, but is not enchanted by the Enticer's beauty. If the roll botches, the target becomes aware that there is something decidedly wrong with the Enticer, something very dangerous about associating with the creature. For every scene in which the Enticer is around its targets, it can attempt another roll: if more than 10 cumulative successes are achieved, the target will be fanatically enchanted by the Enticer, and will desire to serve and protect the Enticer at any cost.

Rage 3, Gnosis 3, Willpower 5

Equipment: Enticers are always armed and have sharp, barbed teeth. Enticers will also always have very expensive clothes and cars.

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

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

The unique addictive qualities in the makeup will normally have the lucky contestants wearing makeup

throughout the day, and special facial creams and skin lotions to bed each night. By the time a month has passed, the transformation is so far along that the victims could stop wearing the products entirely and still become Enticers.

By the end of the metamorphosis, the winners of the yearly contest are completely different from what they used to be. They are physically addicted to the cosmetics. The transformation makes the Enticers dependent to a level that they will do anything at all to get more of the cosmetics — and that is where Pentex is happy to oblige them, for a cost. Enticers are constantly sent out on negotiation missions with smaller companies that have resisted being purchased. They are also used to lure enemies of the corporation into traps.

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

Enticers are more than capable of engaging in physical combat, and while they are not as strong as the Garou, many of the creatures have managed to gather a sizable following of loyal servants.

Storytelling Notes: You are wanted by all and you know it. Act accordingly.

Gorehounds

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

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

"Yours in Blood; Dr. Pain"

These dangerous Banes inhabit the products of Slaughterhouse Video (a several-times-removed subsidiary of Pentex). Disturbed viewers who watch these films risk possession by the Banes, who turn their victims' sick fantasies into sadistic lust for real blood. The possessed become Gorehounds, slasher maniac fomori.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 7, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Intimidation 5, Melee (knives, chainsaws) 5, Stealth 5

Powers: Regeneration, Mother's Touch, Immunity to Delirium, The Falling Touch (can be used at range) and usually a large gain in size also.

Rage 8, Gnosis 1, Willpower 10

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

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

Such a victim is usually a loner, picked on by other kids and possibly from an abusive or neglected home environment. The Bane taps into its host's rage, granting him dreams of slashing his tormentors into bits. A particularly gruesome possibility is the possession of a homid pup who has not yet reached his First Change. A Garou-to-be from a difficult home would make an ideal subject for Gorehound corruption.

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

Gorehounds often display a cunning that belies their youth. They usually conceal their homicidal actions fairly well in the beginning, but become more reckless as they continue. After 10 or so human deaths, the possessing Bane usually goads its host into a killing spree, gleefully riding the fomor into oblivion.

Storytelling Notes: You are capable of cunning action, but ultimately you desire only to kill. You emulate the fantasy slashers of the movies, and will often kill in bizarre and poetic ways, slowly stalk your prey, etc.

Ferectoi, the Larvae of the Wyrn

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

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

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

Macintyre jumped up and ran over to Johnson, intending to throw him to the ground before he could be hit again. But he stopped dead in his tracks, staring at Johnson. Johnson laughed, exulting in the sweet pain as the carapace grew from his chest. The bullets were ejected and fell



to the ground. His wrists twisted and bony knives slid from their fleshy sheaths, dripping with strange fluids.

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

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

These creatures are the unnatural offspring produced by the union of a Breeder Bane and a human. They are far more powerful than most fomori. They are superhuman beings with full understanding of humankind and an overwhelming passion for destruction.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1, Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Intimidation 5, Subterfuge 5, Etiquette 3, Leadership 4, Stealth 3, Computer 3, Enigmas 4, Occult 5, Science 2

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Contacts 5, Resources 4

Powers: At least five fomori powers. All Ferectoi are unique.

Rage 4, Gnosis 7, Willpower 9

Image: While the Larvae of the Wyrms appear mortal in nearly every respect, they are far from that state. Any fomori powers that betray their Wyrms-taint are concealable (extra limbs retract, etc.).

Background: These creatures are the spawn of Breeder Banes, hideous creatures that are little more than walking wombs. Breeder Banes Materialize and rape humans as they sleep, using potent charms to make them believe it was nothing more than a harmless dream. The Breeders then retreat to the Umbra, where their offspring gestate in transparent womb-sacs. The Breeders Materialize again to birth the Ferectoi in the physical realm.

Ferectoi look and act human, but they are not human. Most hold human-like interests and live like any other rich and powerful humans. However, they are constantly at odds with themselves. They wage an inner struggle between their humanity and their Wyrms-nature. Almost always, the Wyrms wins out. They slowly become inhuman in their thoughts and actions, though most of their deeds revolve around the destruction of the planet as well as those who oppose this destruction. A rare few, however, have turned against the Wyrms and fought hard against the forces of corruption.

Storytelling Notes: You are totally evil. You exude corruption and villainy. Few can match you in your inhumanity. You can be suave and debonair when necessary just as you can be savage and gross. Personal power is very important to you. You are served by any number of Wyrms-creatures and Banes, to which you are a harsh and uncompromising overlord.

Pentex First Team Number 28

The following is a sample First Team that operates for Pentex. You can use this group in your own chronicle or you can use it as a basis for creating your own First Team. This team is roughly average in power level, so it might be a bit too much for beginning characters, but it may be too weak for experienced Garou. Feel free to add or subtract members from the team or lower or boost its members' abilities and powers.

The members of the team all wear dark blue fatigues. They bear the team symbol, an eagle swooping down in front of an orange sunburst, on their uniforms.

Melvin Spivey

Position: Team Leader

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

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Intimidation 4, Drive 2, Firearms 5, Melee 4, Leadership 4, Stealth 2, Survival 4, Computer 2, Investigation 2, Law 2, Linguistics 3, Medicine 3, Occult 1, Politics 2

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Contacts 5, Resources 4

Powers: Immunity to Delirium

Rage 0, Gnosis 0, Willpower 10

Weapons: Two heavy pistols, one light pistol, an assault rifle, and a big fighting knife

Image: Spivey is in his late 40s. He is balding with a little gray hair. His skin is dark and wrinkled from a hard life. He wears Western-style clothing on his off-time. He is not very fancy and he hates to dress up.

Roleplaying Notes: You are tough as nails but you don't like to brag about it. You are a macho male chauvinist and a hardy beer drinker. You do not tolerate backtalk from those on your team and you stay on top of them. Make sound tactical judgments, but do not hesitate. Hesitation in battle can kill you. You are cold and merciless in combat. Remember, you are just doing your job.

Background: Spivey is over 40 years old but he still holds his own with those half his age. He is an ex-Marine and a former commander of contra forces. He has served part-time in many other combat units besides these. He joined Pentex four years ago. Since that time he has quickly risen through the ranks. He has found it quite enjoyable to pit his human limitations against supernatural threats. All it takes is good sense and guts. Spivey took over First Team 28 less than a year ago. He has found working with the members of this group a little nervewracking. They are just weird. The worst part is that they resent being told what to do by someone who is just an average human. However, Spivey has handled a worse crew than this before. If anyone can keep them in line, he can.

Leergo, "Cat-Swallow"

Position: Second-in-command

Tribe: Black Spiral Dancers

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Galliard

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

Abilities: Alertness 5, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Intimidation 3, Primal-Urge 2, Subterfuge 2, Drive 2, Firearms 4, Melee 4, Leadership 3, Stealth 3, Computer 1, Enigmas 3, Linguistics (Pictish) 1, Occult 2

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Contacts 3, Past Life 2, Resources 3

Gifts: Bane Protector (see above), Smell of Man, Beast Speech, Howl of the Banshee, Call of the Wyrms (see above), Allies From Below (see above), Eye of the Cobra Rage 6, Gnosis 5, Willpower 6

Rank: 3

Renown: Power 20,000, Cunning 10,000, Infamy 15,000

Rites: none

Fetishes: Bean Bane, Wyrms Fang Dagger (real)

Weapons: One heavy revolver, one small SMG, and one shotgun

Image: In wolf form, Leergo is a white wolf with specks of black, gray and orange all over his fur. In human form, he is an average-looking man in his late 20s. He wears his black hair in a crewcut. He is not overly muscular looking, but he is in good shape. He prefers to wear expensive clothing; his favorite color is, of course, black.

Roleplaying Notes: You love to fight, but you are loyal to your fellow team members first and foremost. If the chance to fight another Garou arises, you will seek hand-to-hand combat over the use of guns. You wish to avenge your fallen pack, and you wish to make up for being a coward by letting them fall alone.

Background: Cat-Swallower was kidnapped by his Hive over 10 years ago. Shocked that he was the only one to survive the Dance of the Black Spiral, he felt proud of his membership in the Hive and in the pack he soon joined. Life was wonderful for a while. Then the first battle occurred. Cat-Swallower saw his entire pack chewed to pieces by Get of Fenris. Choosing discretion as the better part of valor, he ran away.

With his pack destroyed, he could not face joining another. Instead he went to Pentex. Cat-Swallower found his new life even better than his previous existence. He reveled in the power the company gave him. Unfortunately they also gave him responsibility. He served as a personal bodyguard to a division chief of the company. There was an

attempted ambush of the man he was protecting and Cat-Swallower was forced to defend him from three Garou. Somehow, he and the man he was protecting survived the attack, though both were badly wounded. Cat-Swallower had killed one of the Garou and wounded the other two before they retreated. Realizing that his tastes had changed and that he had a deep lust for battle, he asked for a transfer to a First Team. He has served as an important member of First Team 28 for over three years.

Carlotta Stearns

Position: Team Psychic

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

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 5, Expression 3, Animal Ken 2, Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Melee 3, Performance (guitar) 2, Pilot (helicopter) 2, Stealth 2, Computer 3, Enigmas 4, Investigation 3, Law 2, Linguistics (French) 1, Occult 3

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Contacts 5, Mentor 2, Resources 4

Powers: Mindblock, Sense Magic, Hand of the Earth Lord

Rage 0, Gnosis 9, Willpower 8

Weapons: One heavy pistol and an assault rifle

Image: Stearns is an average-looking and average-dressing young lady. There is nothing particularly interesting about her, though she has a natural charisma that has been heightened by the awakening of her psychic powers. She has long brown hair and a slender build.

Roleplaying Notes: You are intrigued by all the mysteries of life. You believe yourself to be somewhat magical, and will do everything you can to learn about the Garou, fomori, the Umbra, etc. You like your role on the First Team since very little combat is required of you. Even though you are not afraid, you have no desire to kill.

Background: Carlotta Stearns lived a very stable and boring life until Pentex paid her a visit during her junior year of college. She was approached through one of her professors about a job opportunity with Pentex. She looked into it and was soon hired. Shortly after she began her role as laboratory assistant, however, she realized she was the subject. She finally agreed to the Awakening after seeing what others were capable of (though she was not told how many died or went insane from the experience). The experience stirred her latent powers of telekinesis. She was trained as a member of the Odyssey Project and soon sent out into the field. Last year she accepted a job with First Team 28 even though she realized the danger involved. She has a burning desire to learn as much about the world of magic as she can.

Elwood Nedervitch, "Slicer"

Position: Point man and fomor agent

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Intimidation 3, Drive 2, Firearms 4, Melee 4, Pilot (helicopter) 3, Security 3, Stealth 1, Investigation 2

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Contacts 2, Mentor 3, Resources 4

Powers: Immunity to Delirium, Claws and Fangs
Rage 0, Gnosis 0, Willpower 5

Weapons: Two heavy pistols and a large SMG

Image: Nedervitch can pass for human as long as he wears a shirt with long sleeves. The only unusual features he has are his arms. They are coated with a web of tough, vein-like structures under the skin. These run from the palms of his hands all the way up his arms and partially onto his chest. He is extremely muscular. He wears his hair in a crewcut. When off duty, he usually wears a lot of gold jewelry and expensive clothes.

Roleplaying Notes: You do what you are told, though you don't like taking orders from Spivey. You enjoy killing, though this disturbs you somewhat. You are not sure if it is you in your body sometimes, or if something else is in control. You suffer blackouts. You are also extremely impatient and you hate women who think they are better fighters than men.

Background: Nedervitch was brought to a Pentex-owned hospital five years ago. He was a John Doe who had been in a terrible car wreck. Because of his build, he was packed in ice and flown to the Pentex SPD in Mexico City. He went into a coma, but the doctors of the Iliad Project were able to piece him together. The doctors felt that if they could turn him into a fomor, he might snap out of the coma, since it had worked in a previous experiment. It did work. Nedervitch soon discovered his condition, but rather than becoming upset, he seemed to love it. He enjoyed his new powers and he was happy to repay the company for giving him his life back. Unfortunately, Nedervitch is a name he had to make up. He had lost all his memories as a result of the car accident. He has not given up hopes of one day finding out who he really is.

Charlene Brell

Position: Grenadier and Iliad agent

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

Abilities: Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Streetwise 2, Firearms 5, Leadership 1, Melee 2, Stealth 1, Survival 2, Computer 2, Law 1

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Contacts 1, Mentor 2, Resources 4

Powers: Immunity to Delirium, Eyes of the Wyrms
Rage 3, Gnosis 0, Willpower 7

Weapons: She carries a heavy pistol and whatever else is appropriate for the situation, ranging from grenade launchers to flamethrowers to LAW missiles.

Image: Brell has an athletic build. She has medium-length black hair. She is very tall, about 6'2". She never wears dresses and prefers jeans and T-shirts when she is off duty.

Roleplaying Notes: You hate working for Pentex, but you like your work. While you have no real desire to kill, the action is exciting and your powers are remarkable. This may not be the life you would have chosen, but it is better than the one you had. Because of this, you try to stay on the good side of all your teammates. You are trying hard to make a family of sorts, because you've never had one before."

Background: Brell was a bad girl all her life, not just since she came to Pentex. She quit school at 16 and joined up with her boyfriend and his biker gang to tour the country. He dumped her in Los Angeles with no money and no place to go. Before long she became a prostitute and a drug addict. One night a man approached her and asked her if she would like to make a lot more money than she could normally make in one night. She got into his car, whereupon he knocked her out with chloroform. She awoke in a brightly lit hospital room; a bunch of people in masks and lab coats stood over her. They told her she had been chosen to receive a special gift. They described her powers and her new role in the company. At first she was ready to leave, but she was warned that she would never be permitted to do so. Since that time she has found herself enjoying her work, though she still cannot stand Pentex.

Monsters

Vhujunka

Famúl crawled through the dirt tunnels as if he were born to them. Famúl had just attained adulthood in the eyes of his Hive, the Dank Well Sept. He knew that he would make the greatest Black Spiral Dancer ever. He would bring terror to those fool Garou who knew not the power of the Wyrms. But for now, Famúl had to do his duty, to reopen the old tunnels to the north which hadn't been used in any of the elders' lifetimes.

The dirt moved aside easily, for these tunnels had only been blocked with loose mud and clay. But what was that? Noise ahead. Famúl moved forward quietly and came to where the tunnel opened onto a huge cavern. He stared in awe at the strange structures built there, structures not natural but...well, not homid-made either. Famúl knew not what this was.

He saw figures moving, homid-like beings in robes. At once, they turned toward him, their teeth clacking in insane cacophony. Those teeth! Rows and rows of dagger fangs. And where were the eyes? These were not homids, but something else.

Famúl spun around in the tight tunnel and ran, scuttling along his burrowed path like a snake through the grass. But no use — he was wracked by purple lightning. He collapsed unconscious. Hooks spiraled on thin threads, latching onto him, dragging him back to the cavern.

The Vhujunka pulled their find out of the tunnel and examined him, putting aside their crystalline rods, still smoking and crackling with purplish electricity. They picked him up and carried him off into the cavern to a destination and purpose only they could fathom.

The Vhujunka are a race of humanoid creatures who live far below the surface of the Earth. Their goals are unknown, but they apparently serve the interests of the Wyrms. They are a strange race and even the Black Spiral Dancers know almost nothing about them. The Vhujunka have many Banes in their service and no Bane has ever revealed the secrets of this race to outsiders.

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0, Perception 4, Intelligence 6, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Dodge 2, Firearms (rod-like devices) 4, Repair 2, Stealth 2, Torture 3, Enigmas 5, Investigation 4, Linguistics 2, Medicine 5, Occult 4, Science 5

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Resources 5

Gifts: Mindspeak, Mindblock

Rage 0, Gnosis 9, Willpower 10

Attacks: Pseudopods (variable, based upon the shape taken; damage is not aggravated), bite (sharp, dagger-like teeth; Str +2). Many carry lasers or electrically charged rod-like devices.

Fetishes: Some carry the most bizarre fetishes, combinations of weird science and magic. These include strange medical devices and bizarre, organic-looking armor.

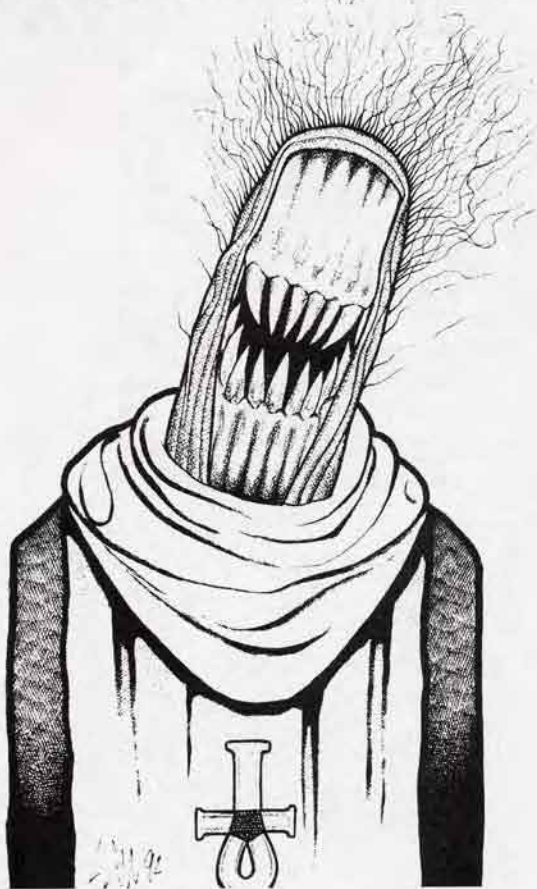




Image: These are humanoid-looking creatures who normally dwell far below the surface of the earth. They are similar to humans in physique except they are extremely thin and tall and have no eyes. They “see” through a means not understood by outsiders — a sort of psychic awareness. It allows them to operate when in their underground lairs as if they had sight, but this ability sometimes fails them on the surface, so they take “seeing-eye” Banes with them when they travel “above.”

Their faces are nearly bisected by their huge mouths, full of huge rows of teeth. They have a slight purplish tinge to their coloration. Their abdomens have three large orifices: one on the back, and two that reach from the sides to the front. These orifices can be opened to reveal a large yellowish, viscous blob of protoplasm. This is a substance which their body excretes to be used as an energy source far below the earth. It gives off light, it may be reingested, and it may be shaped into tools or weapons. The Vhujunka are able to control the substance as if it were ectoplasm, using it to create pseudopods which can be altered into any number of shapes and sizes.

Vhujunka wear long thick robes which hide their orifices from the view of others.

Ecology: The Vhujunka live far below the surface world in elaborate cities constructed by unknown means. These cities are unknown to the Garou save in nightmares and firelight tales. The Vhujunka have no understandable morals and their thoughts are alien to all but the most insane (or

enlightened?) homids. The Vhujunka have complex technologies, some superior and some inferior to that of the surface world. The Vhujunka are aware of the surface world through special sources.

Storytelling Notes: The Vhujunka are quiet, and usually ignore humans and Garou unless they are provoked, in which case they act quickly and efficiently. If faced with overwhelming odds, they will try to escape. They do not speak, communicating only through telepathy. They have never been known to work with Pentex or the Black Spiral Dancers, but they do exercise considerable power over certain Banes. They also have the power to create unusual fomori through bizarre medical and chemical treatments. Vhujunka never show emotion, methodically performing their tasks.

Thunderwyrms

Leaper was only a pup, but understood well enough the ways of the different tribes. He understood that his tribe, the Get of Fenris, were the bravest warriors, and he understood that the Uktena were suspected of going toward the Wurm. Like all his pack he doubted the tales of monsters in the earth and suspected that if such existed, it was because the Uktena had managed to summon them.

The Uktena elders smiled knowingly as the ground started to shake below the Garou. Leaper felt his own smile showing, the smile of satisfaction that always split his face when combat would soon be his once more. The trees

around them started to vibrate as if in a powerful wind, yet his fur was untouched by whatever breeze shook the foliage. Leaper's teeth rattled in their sockets as the ground began to buckle.

Where his friend Swift Talons had been a second before, there now towered a bloated column of mottled flesh. Looking up to see where this oddity began, Leaper watched in shock as the corpse of Swift Talons disappeared into a mouth as large as a house. The foul odor struck his nostrils at the same time the leader of his pack disappeared, and Leaper howled his fear into the air. The fang-filled mouth towered 25 feet in the air, and Leaper knew in his heart that the Wurm had made its presence known.

But he was a Get of Fenris; there could be no running. If he must die let it be in the slaying of the Wurm itself.

The Wurm has its own ways, unknown and unknowable to the Garou. So too its Thunderwyrms. The Thunderwyrms are newer than many of the Wurm's creatures, having only just begun to show themselves. These beasts were apparently mutated from leeches or perhaps even simple earthworms. Today they are a serious threat to Gaia and her protectors.

Attributes: The following statistics delineate a Thunderwurm of average — 25-foot — length: Strength 6, Dexterity 2, Stamina 6, Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 0, Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Abilities: Brawling 5, Athletics 3

Rage 6, Gnosis 0, Willpower 5

Health Levels: OK/OK/OK/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-3/-3/-4/-4/-5/-5/Incapacitated.

Armor: Four Health Levels of any attack are simply ignored (the blow slides off the segments of slimy tissue that compose the creature's epidermis)

Attacks: Thunderwyrms will defend themselves by rolling over their opponents (using a Body Slam Maneuver: if the Thunderwurm rolls more than three successes over an opponent, that opponent should be considered Immobilized as per the Immobilize Maneuver), striking their enemies with a coil of their bodies (using the Punch Maneuver), or just biting them (Bite Maneuver, causing aggravated damage).

Image: Thunderwyrms are enormous wormlike monsters that can range in length from five feet all the way to 50 feet, and range in width from only a few inches to a few yards. They look like giant mutated leeches or earthworms with huge teeth.

Ecology: Thunderwyrms are born in the worst Wurm-tainted places: toxic dumpsites and areas that have been contaminated by radioactivity. Like the worms from which they evolved, the Thunderwyrms exist only to breed and to eat, growing more numerous as they do so. These creatures can consume 70 times their own weight in food, and they metabolize over half of what they eat, adding it to their own mass.



Thunderwyrms travel under the ground, moving only at night and sleeping during the day. These mindless behemoths give off a stench of decay whenever they roam above the ground to feed, and have been known to feed only on trees and other plants that have remained uncorrupted.

The Uktena tribe believes these creatures first showed themselves at the Trinity nuclear test site. The Uktena claim the incubation period for the Thunderwurm's eggs could be as much as 18 months. If the Uktena are correct, these creatures feed quickly, lay their eggs as they burrow, and then die in less than a two-week cycle.

The Uktena, along with the Get of Fenris (who watch the Uktena with suspicion), have been diligent in their efforts to locate all of the Thunderwyrms' holes and destroy the eggs that rest there. While the attempts to locate the tunnels have been successful, no one has actually found any eggs. The Uktena of New Mexico have a dread suspicion that the eggs of these creatures are simply too small to see with the naked eye, or are so well camouflaged that they have been overlooked as particles of dirt.

Fearing for Gaia's safety, the Uktena have recently taken to scorching the soil of these tunnels, certain that the death of the eggs is far more important than the roots of the few surviving trees in the area. The Get of Fenris have called to others, warning of a beast that is nearly unstoppable. They also whisper about the Uktena, who know so much about these new creatures, and wonder how they came by such knowledge.

The First Ronin

Fangs-To-The-Wind heard the howl tear through the trees around him and was confused. This was not a normal howl, nor was it a Howl of Mockery. Whatever the meaning of this unearthly sound, it was lost to him. Curiosity soon surpassed the wariness he felt, and Fangs-To-The-Wind trotted toward the distant sound as it was repeated.

The clearing from which the howl had come was empty; nothing moved through the trees and no living sounds came from the animals in the woods. From behind him, apparently

from the same direction from which he had just come, he heard a deep growl of challenge. He turned to face the hairless beast and grinned in anticipation; here was an upstart, a metis of all things, ready to challenge him.

The metis stepped forward, shifting easily into wolf form. Something was wrong; the markings the challenger wore on his body were faded with time, and yet they were also quite obviously tattoos. Fangs-To-The-Wind felt his fur rise, the meaning of the odd symbols suddenly becoming clearer. Inscribed on the metis' flesh was his own name, and the other symbols told of how Fangs-To-The-Wind had died valiantly. Fangs-To-The-Wind understood the homids' way of marking days and years; he understood that the on this metis declared that this was the of his final battle.

It was impossible; the markings were so old, as was the metis before him. The old legends came back to him, the stories told by his grandfather. "You, you're just a myth," he cried. "A thing to frighten the pups at night. You can't be real."



The First Ronin grinned then, blackened gums showing the very real threat of silver teeth...

Ronin is a sadly common word among the Garou. But legends tell of the First Ronin, a metis who turned from the tribe and pack that had scorned him and went to make his own way in the world. To most he is simply a fantasy, a story told to deter cubs from their foolish attractions to one another and to remind all Garou that the price of incestuous relations is disaster and shame.

Auspice: Ahroun

Tribe: Unknown

Attributes: Strength 7, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5, Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 0, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Abilities: Alertness 5, Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Dodge 5, Intimidation 5, Primal-Urge 5, Subterfuge 5, Animal Ken 5, Melee 5, Stealth 5, Survival 5, Enigmas 5, Linguistics 5, Occult 5, Rituals 5

Backgrounds: Mentor 10 (if the legends are true, the First Ronin's Mentor is the Wyrms), Personal Totem 10 (the Wyrms)

Gifts: All Gifts of the Garou tribes, including those of the Black Spiral Dancers, up to and including the 4th level (be afraid, be very afraid), Fearful Flight (for one Gnosis point, the Ronin can make all Garou present flee with a resisted Strength + Intimidation roll against the opponents' Rage)

Image: A furless Garou with skin as pale as the full moon and covered in tattoos that shift and change as he approaches. The symbols clearly state the full name of any Garou that looks at them, as well as denoting that Garou's death date: the very night he encounters the First Ronin. The First Ronin stinks of the Wyrms' corruption, even to those who cannot sense the Wyrms. There is absolutely nothing about the First Ronin that could be considered a redeeming quality; there is no sense of compassion or love, only undying, unrelenting hatred.

Background: Some of the legends say that the First Ronin was the very first metis, and that the overall response to his hideous form was revulsion and contempt. Some of the legends say that he did not choose to leave the Garou, but was forced to leave. Most metis can sympathize with his plight, if that version of the story is accurate.

The legends tell how the First Ronin was corrupted by the Wyrms through the promise of love and a caring family, in the days when the Wyrms came easily to Gaia's realm and walked among the homids as their friend. The legends go on to explain that the Wyrms themselves were not as mad then as they are now. The legends claim that the First Ronin was the very first Garou to turn to the Wyrms, the first great betrayer of Gaia.

And the legends all tell of the Wyrms' markings on the First Ronin; the hideous tattoos that have driven Garou into Fox frenzies on sight. It is claimed that the First Ronin, like the vampires who follow the Wyrms, is immortal.

The only certainty is that the creature called the First Ronin is Garou, but a Garou that reeks of the Wyrms' corruption and revels in the destruction of all its kind. The First Ronin is said to have claws and teeth of silver, but to take no harm from these natural weapons. It is said to hunt down solitary Garou and those in smaller packs and devour them, leaving only the mingled scent of its corruption and the blood of Gaia's children to mark its passage. Best perhaps to leave to the imagination what the First Ronin is said to do to females of the species. Some things are too horrid for sane Garou to contemplate.

Storytelling Notes: Unless you really want your pack dead, always give them fair warning of the Ronin's approach; the smell alone should do it. Never directly state just who or what this creature is; no one should ever find out for certain. Along this theme, always let the creature attack from the darkness. If the pack gets lucky enough to hurt it severely, the First Ronin will literally fade from existence in a cloud of noxious black smoke. The First Ronin is truly immortal and cannot be captured or killed any more than the bogeyman can be captured or killed.

Skull Pigs

Me an' Turkeys Fly was goin' for some deer in Smoky Mountain National Park, an' we come on this ol' ape graveyard. Turkeys Fly, he's from 'round there an' he says it's guys that were huntin' the Cherokee when they cleaned 'em outta the Smokies, or tried to. Fulla Wyrms-taint, but the deer can't smell it, so what the hell.

We'd stopped to look at the Moon cause she was real pretty that night, then we heard a noise like a pig big as a truck and mad as hell. One 'a' these things came outta the ground and was all over us an' smelled 'bout like a million run-over possums. Roarin' to beat sixty, too. Well, I gave it a bite or two, then felt my fangs startin' to burn. It was like snortin' laundry bleach.

Turkeys Fly was on its other side an' got a few licks in, but it got him pretty bad with them tusks — musta been a foot long, ape feet that is. He went to the Grounds that night. Lot later old Vlad Furstenburg from the Silver Fangs told me they look through graves for the Wyrms taint, then eat what's tainted worst, an' that's why lotsa old graves don't even have bones in 'em or nothin'.

—Lop-Ear (Joe Two Feathers), Uktena People, Oconaluftee Indian Village

These things were originally natural animals, large Ice Age relatives of the tapirs and peccaries of prehuman North America. When the Wyrms tainted the peoples and animals of the Americas as it took over the Mesoamerican plateau, wild packs of these creatures became transformed into the Skull Pigs, awful minions of the Wyrms.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 8, Charisma 0, Manipulation 0, Appearance 0, Perception 2, Intelligence 0, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Dodge 3, Intimidation 4, Primal-Urge 3, Stealth 2, Survival 4

Gifts: Regeneration (as Garou)

Rage 5, Gnosis 2, Willpower 3,

Health Levels: OK/OK/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-5/Incapacitated

Attacks: Tusks (Strength + 3), Body Slam

Image: A tapir-like creature that smells of grave rot. The flesh of its skull is so thin, and its bone structure so prominent, that many Garou believe it has no skin, but only a bare skull. The ghastly pale coloring of the Skull Pig only helps confirm this belief.

Ecology: The Pigs roam in packs of three to seven or as single elderly males who have been displaced; packs are either families or groups of young males. They are believed to litter like pigs, though no one has witnessed this process.

They dig through graveyards seeking Wyrmtainted bones, devouring them to regain their power. When they eat human bones, they gain Gnosis equal to the score the human possessed in life. For more material sustenance, they will eat flesh or garbage, though they prefer toxic waste.

They attack with their tusks. In addition, their flesh is poisonous. A Garou biting one must roll Stamina (difficulty 6) or take an aggravated wound level (Resist Toxin defends against this).

The Pigs will almost always attack Garou, but humans often ignore them or think that they saw a normal animal of some kind (this is handled like the Delirium, and many Native Americans can see them).

Most Pigs are unintelligent, but the few who have any sentience are sinister enemies indeed, rather like Orwell's villains from *Animal Farm*. These are called Voodoo Pigs. For every point of Intelligence they have, they gain one level of magical Gifts (or use Thaumaturgy if you have **Vampire**). Voodoo Pigs appear as pigs rather than tapirs.





Banes

The Maeljin Incarna (The Dark Lords)

The Dark Lords are dread spirit warriors in service to the Wyrn. They are samurai-like royal Banes. There are 13, and each is further defined by its affiliations.

Each Incarna serves until its dissipation or consumption by its patron Wyrn, at which time the Wyrn chooses a human spirit suitable to take over the position, sends Banes to capture it, and "elevates" the human to the office, whether said human cooperates or not.

Of course, if the spirit in question is alive, the Wyrn certainly does not mind sucking it out of a living body, effectively slaying the living host.

The Maeljin are:

The Caliph of Pain, Lady Aife

She is the Maeljin of Pain, and rides a steed made of struts of dull rusted steel. She carries twin glass whips that crack and break, shredding and tearing whatever they strike. Tangled in her fiery tresses are thousands of glass caltrops; these she can scatter with a toss of her head, sending hundreds of glass barbs to rend soft flesh.

She is pale, with flaming red hair, and she smiles as if she knows a secret. She is clad in a leather domme's costume.

The Duke of Hate, Lord Steel

Clad all in gunmetal steel, his face covered in a hate-twisted black steel mask, Lord Steel pursues his foes with unrelenting tenacity. His eyes are twin sores of festering hate. His voice is high and shrill, and vengeance-Banes swirl around him awaiting his next mood. His huge, serrated war-blade glows with balefires and has ignited many an ill-omened fire. The smell of burnt flesh constantly surrounds him.

He rides a steed made of metal, a steed with iron wings forged in cruel jest to resemble those of Pegasus, one of Lord Steel's greatest enemies.

The Archbishop of Madness, Doge Klypse

Clad in black robes that are shot through with queasy purple threads, the Doge forces all who meet him to kiss his slimy purple ring. The ring is infected with madness, which spreads to his victims. The Doge is quite insane. He likes to torture for fun, and will go out of his way to maim or kill. Klypse is tired of existence but is too lazy to kill himself. He allows his insanity to care for him, often going for weeks and weeks without a conscious thought. It is a rare morning that he awakens without a pile of twisted bodies around him.

The Countess Desire, Empress Aliara

Aliara knows everyone's inner desires, lusts and weaknesses. She forces her victims to take chances and stirs their dormant desires into seething obsessions. She often does this by making false promises. Aliara works quite closely with Counselor du Bois to help him implement further corruption. Aliara looks very androgynous.

Corruption's Advocate, Chamberlain of Lies, The Honorable Maine duBois, Esq.

Wearing an ancient tattered suit covered in putrescent slime, the Advocate of the Wyrms never prepares for a case but is always 100% ready to do battle in the courtroom. He recruits innocent politicians, petty bureaucrats and the like. As Maeljin of Corruption, he is also in charge of deception, and has the power to make any untruth, no matter how ridiculous, sound true.

The Nameless Angel of Despair

Gray and dark, surrounded by a cloudy nimbus, the Nameless Angel of Despair descends upon its victims unawares. It feeds upon the sadness and despair of the near-suicidal, and will often urge a merely depressed person into taking that extra step. It is thought that the Angel can exist in many places at the same time. Unlike the other Maeljin, the Angel does not speak, but instead communicates through waves of emotion, usually negative.

Knight Entropy, the Wyrms's Spawn

With blood-streaked hair and feral eyes, the Knight Entropy rides a black fanged horse. The mark of the Wyrms is upon it, and its shield bears the Black Dragon, many-coiled, encircling the world and crushing the life out of it. As Maeljin of Entropy and Chaos, it is also responsible for Decay, and can rot people and things with a glance. This Incarna cannot be controlled, but only attracted from one place to another. It is attracted by pure, honorable, perfect things awaiting its kiss of destruction.





Chieftain of Rage, the Hellbringer

General of the Armies of the Wyrms, the Chieftain of Rage is also the Patron of Abuse, and often seeks to promote violence in the mortal Realm. Riots, child abuse, spouse abuse and rape are his bread and drink. The Hellbringer is always seen with a cavalry troop of fell Banes astride foul beasts of the Wyrms. He possesses a crossbow which fires Quarrels, bolts of spiritual power that cause those hit to be filled with rage and attack the nearest targets. He often uses these to spur normally peaceful people into blatant aggression. The Hellbringer is so named because he evokes Hell on Earth for those over whom he reigns.

The Master of Stagnation, Lord of Disease, Thurifuge

Thurifuge is also the Maeljin of Apathy, and is responsible for plagues, stagnation and procrastination. His talons are firmly clenched in the news media and through that organ he promotes isolationism and spreads despair. He is also in charge of water pollution and the like. When Saddam Hussein caused an environmental disaster by dumping crude oil into the seas of the Persian Gulf, Thurifuge summoned many Banes and bathed in the unholy muck, glorying in the kiss of the foul water.

He appears as a tall, thin man with an oily grin and striated, corpse-colored skin. In the Umbra he transports through a materialized pool of slime.

The Master of Hellfire, Kerne

Lord of Hellfire, the Maeljin of Fire is also responsible for the balefires of radiation. Atomic spirits often cluster near him, and he has been on-site at every single atomic test or attack in the past century. It is said that his greed during the consumption of the balefires of Chernobyl caused the imbalance which started the chain reaction there. He looks like a thin, weak man with boiling lava in place of skin. He travels through the Umbra on a hellfire chariot that leaves a trail of sulfurous black smoke in its wake.

The Master of Smog, Lord Choke

As Maeljin of Smog, Lord Choke is also a master of oppression. His pawns in the tobacco industry and the chemicals industry help spread his power, but his real strength lies in organizations such as the Moral Majority and other organizations which seek to limit the freedom of the individual. His sickly sweet smoke can delude and befuddle, and he asserts himself to keep the weak and the misrepresented in their place.

He appears as a large, bulbous man surrounded by a cloud of bluish-gray smoke...and he appears out of a mist of smoke when traveling in the Umbra.



Collum, Lord of Sludge

As Maeljin of Sludge, Collum is in charge of all solid waste, including sewage. His influence extends to sewers in all places, so he is a keeper of many secrets. Many of the Nosferatu Kindred pay secret homage to him, and he gifts them with forgotten objects and special creatures which have been "given" to him, flushed down into the sewers. He takes particular delight in sending sewage-spirits to infiltrate drinking water pipes. He is very close to Lady Yul. He often fertilizes her noisome eggs and occasionally accepts her more disgusting children as wards.

His form is nauseating: a roughly humanoid sculpture of pure sewage. It is perhaps only surpassed by the dreadful stench that surrounds him wherever he goes, leaving a relatively obvious trail through the Umbra. His voice is a liquid, congested gurgle.

The Mistress of Toxins, Lady Yul

As Maeljin of Toxins, Yul is also in charge of drugs and other chemicals. She has extensive knowledge of genetics and biochemistry and often uses designer-gene bioforms for various tasks. Given sufficient time, she can perform dramatic alterations to any living thing, such as converting a creature's breathing system from oxygen to carbon monoxide. Yul regularly grows pregnant with her toxic creations, gives birth to them, and starts anew. Her fell duchy in Malfeas is filled with her twisted children. She works with Aliara and Thurifuge to spread the Wurm's power.

Love Canal was Yul's suggestion.

Wurm Elementals

The following elementals are the Gafflings of the Elemental Wurms (see Chapter Four).

Hoglings (Smog)

These appear as thick clouds of noxious fumes, ominously rolling toward their targets.

Rage 8, Willpower 3, Gnosis 7, Power 40

Charms: Shroud (Cost 1), Reform, Updraft (as Air Elemental), Airt Sense

Furmlings (Balefire)

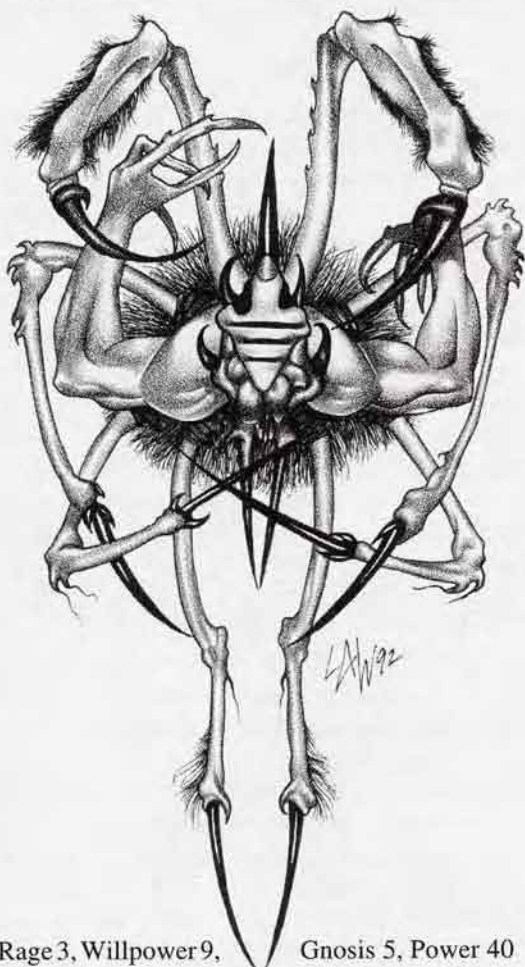
These appear as luminous blobs of napalm-like plasma. They glow with an irradiated phosphorescence.

Rage 10, Willpower 5, Gnosis 5, Power 30

Charms: Balefire (as the Black Spiral Gift, Cost 2), Airt Sense

H'rugglings (Sludge)

These appear as rolling piles of waste. They ooze toward their victims, leaving slimy trails in their wakes.



Rage 3, Willpower 9, Gnosis 5, Power 40
 Charms: Burrow (Cost 1), Odious Aroma (Cost 2), Gaia's Vengeance (Cost 3), Avalanche (Cost 3)

Wakshaani (Toxins)

These appear as constantly shifting sheets of purplish fluid covered with blotches, veins and bubbling warts.

Rage 7, Willpower 3, Gnosis 7, Power 40

Charms: Visceral Agony (Cost 1), Body Wrack (Cost 3)

Drattosi

Stone-Thunder crossed the blighted Umbral plain. He hadn't seen anything for some time. He was beginning to wonder why. Then, across the plain, he saw Rabbit's Tooth. But what was she doing here? He called to her and began to run to greet her.

She looked relieved and ran to him. She embraced him — and Stone-Thunder felt a sharp pain in his leg. He looked down and there, with a pincer through his leg, was a crab-thing crawling from the sands beneath him. Rabbit's Tooth was gone, a mere illusion.

He moved to strike the thing when he felt a deep and growing emptiness inside him. This thing was doing more than hurting him — it was sucking away his essence. He quickly clawed the pincer, shearing it off and breaking the connection. But as he did so, another punctured his left arm, and he felt more vital spirit-matter drain from him. He

had to do something. The Umbra was not a wise place to be when depleted of spiritual essence.

Before he could act again, another pincer impaled him and more energy was gone. Stone-Thunder felt his rage grow...

These creatures live in huge radioactive pits within the Umbra. Like ant lions, they prey on all who fall into their traps. Their Umbral pits are always full of toxic fumes and blazing red pyres. The Drattosi are rarely seen, only crawling from their lairs to feed.

Rage 7, Willpower 5, Gnosis 8, Power 30 + whatever it has absorbed lately

Charms: Airt Sense, Illusory Desire (The Drattosi must make a Gnosis roll versus its target's Willpower to pluck an image from the victim's mind. Two Power points must then be spent to create the illusion. This power may be used on more than one victim, but only one victim's mind can be read at a time.), Consume Essence (This Charm allows the Drattosi to eat another spirit and absorb its Power or Gnosis into itself. A spirit consumed in this manner will not reform at normal speed. The Drattosi transfers whatever Power or Gnosis the spirit prey possessed into Power for itself. It accomplishes this by attacking with its Rage rating; one point is sucked per success. The stolen Power fades at a rate of five points per 24-hour period if it is not used up beforehand.)

Image: The Drattosi slightly resemble crabs, but they are gigantic. They have reddish-black carapaces, covered in thorny protrusions, all over their bodies. They have multiple limbs with sharp piercers which they use to skewer their prey. Their bodies often emit steam.

Background: The Drattosi live in pits within the Umbra. While few would normally enter the pits, the Drattosi attract the unwary through the use of bait. They create illusory creatures or objects pulled from the minds of potential victims. The victims will be allowed to approach the image before the Drattosi emerge to attack.

The Drattosi are predators. They are intelligent and they can even communicate with Garou and spirits, but their primary goal is to consume the energies of others. They are often very knowledgeable about all events near their lairs, even events in the Realm. Drattosi seldom venture forth from their dens.

Ooralath

Fur-Rises-Up heard the strange, guttural barking in the distance and did not know what it was. It was no Garou, that was for sure. The Umbra was a strange and dangerous place, and Fur-Rises-Up wished he was back home in the den. Curse that Theurge! Why did he have to run around digging up fetishes for him?

But there it was again, that barking — this time closer. Fur-Rises-Up stood up and moved to the nearby ridge to get a better look. There were shapes moving in the ghostly woods. Fur-Rises-Up began to worry. Lasso-the-Beast had

gone off in another direction, and Fur-Rises-Up hadn't seen him for a while.

Then the shapes advanced, streaming from the woods in a pack, their claws and carapaces clacking loudly and their reptilian barks exploding though the air. Fur-Rises-Up knew what they were — the Ooralath, the armored lizard-hounds of the Wyrms.

There were too many of them; Fur-Rises-Up didn't stand a chance. He tried to run but they flooded over him, their teeth sinking deep into his hide. His claws scratched off their thick carapaces — to no avail. He went down, buried under a swarming pile of Ooralath.

The Ooralath are a race of Banes that were once servants of the Weaver. They have been fully corrupted. Now they roam the wastelands of the Umbra destroying all they find (except for fellow servants of the Wyrms). Because of their Weaver natures, they have permanent physical forms in the Umbra, but they also have the abilities of Banes. They often take over deserted areas or areas that are in bad shape. They tend to cluster in packs.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 1

Abilities: Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Primal-Urge 4 Rage 5, Gnosis 3, Willpower 7, Power 50

Charms: Airt Sense, Burrowing (Power Cost 1/turn; the Ooralath can move about below the surface of the Umbra as if they were fish in the ocean), Embody (Power Cost: none; this Charm is permanent for the Ooralath)

Image: The Ooralath appear to be huge, dinosaur-like hounds with bodies made of thick carapace armor. They run hunched over, clacking their huge claws.

Background: The Ooralath are mindless Banes for the most part, but they are adept hunters. They will almost always attack from a tactical advantage, especially by outnumbering and surprising their prey. The Ooralath are especially fond of preying on the lone traveler. They also have a taste for Net-Spiders. They will remain hidden within the ground until the appropriate time; three or more will then simultaneously converge on their prey and rip the victim to shreds.

Seeders

Theodore stumbled down the street, bearing his burden of books from the library. He relished getting home and poring through them. He enjoyed historical dissertations.

But what was that? There, in the air, floating. A hand? Theodore walked cautiously toward it. It was a hand beckoning him — but to where? It floated in the air, leading nowhere.

Theodore put down his books, reached out and gave the hand a tug. It tugged back, yanking Theodore into a place of mist and fog and swirling lights. Before him was a horrid creature wielding instruments of surgery and torture. The thing looked like a spider and a bat all at once.

"Wha....What is this?" Theodore was able to babble before his voice was drowned out by the whirling bone saw...





The Seeders are extremely vicious Banes who travel alone. Their purpose is to forcibly create fomori.

Rage 8, Gnosis 7, Willpower 8, Power 60

Charms: Airt Sense, Materialize, Reform, Stasis (The Seeder can exhale a cloud of gas which is always Materialized, even if the Seeder itself does not Materialize. A successful Gnosis roll versus a difficulty equal to a victim's Stamina + Athletics [maximum 10] puts the victim into a state of stasis; she is completely sedated and incapable of action for 30 minutes per success. Once a victim is in this state, the Seeder pulls her into the Umbra and operates on her, turning her into a fomor. It costs seven Power points to produce this cloud), Fomor Creation (A Seeder is able to grant a subject one special power of the Wyrms by expending five Power points and making a successful Willpower roll versus a difficulty of the subject's Gnosis; the power the Seeder grants is its own choice), Hand from Beyond (The Seeder can grab any unresisting [or surprised] creature of human size or smaller and pull it into the Umbra; this costs five Power points)

Image: They appear as 15-foot-tall hybrids of lizards, bats and spiders. They have six lashing tails. They often carry hypodermic needles filled with glowing green goop, or serrated, swirling bone saws. They do not speak, but emit great shrieks and roars.

Background: Seeders travel about in search of homids who are corrupted by the Wyrms. They seldom stay in one place for long. They have a language of their own and they have little to do with other Banes. All fomori are unable to attack Seeders, and it appears that the fomori created by a given Seeder are unable to resist performing any services the Seeder requests of them.

Storytelling Notes: Seeders constantly send fomori against Garou they especially dislike. They take great pleasure in corrupting the loved ones of their enemies.

Phantasmi

Raking-Death-To-The-Wyrm looked at the ground that was once Gaia's and bared her teeth. In all her years she had never seen an area so completely fallen to the Wyrms. Piles of homid refuse spread across the ground where only the toughest blades of grass managed to struggle through the debris. Though necessity made her walk on two feet, she would never understand the ways of the homids.

The very air stank of the Wyrms, a foul mixture of the death scent and something far worse. Raking-Death-To-The-Wyrm felt the hair on her neck rising, and knew that the stench of the Wyrms in this area was not simply the smell of homid refuse. Eyes narrowed and lips pulled back; she scanned the area around her for any signs of the enemy. Nothing showed itself amidst the rotting remains.

It was the rattling sound, much like the sound of a serpent's scales rubbing across each other, that let her know where to look. Behind her, metal cans and broken glass danced across the muddied earth, converging in a nexus of violent motion. Raking-Death-To-The-Wyrm felt

herself stepping back, felt shame at her own fear and forced herself into the mightiest of her forms, the Crinos. Even as she changed, so too did the spinning writhing mass of homid debris. The garbage slowly took a hauntingly familiar shape. In this very spot the pack had destroyed three fomori — the fomori whose restless spirits now animated the oncoming debris.

Glittering palely in Luna's light, the ghosts stepped toward her on feet made of paper and glass. The glint of silver could be seen where eyes would have been had the creatures still been alive. Raking-Death-To-The-Wyrm knew fear, and before it was over, she knew pain and death.

The Phantasmi are the remnants of fomori unfortunate enough to run across the Garou during their lives. The Wyrm, ever insidious and ever determined to destroy all that Gaia has created, uses the Phantasmi to continue its plans, even after the fomori's deaths.

Rage 10, Willpower 5, Gnosis 6, Power 50

Charms: Materialize (Cost 26, Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6, Brawl 4, Athletics 3, Dodge 3, Melee 3), Airt Sense

Attacks: A Phantasmus' tactics depend on the nature of the substance through which the creature manifests. For example, one made entirely of newspapers will do its best to suffocate the Garou it attacks (a resisted roll of Dexterity + Brawl versus the victim's Stamina + Dodge roll is needed to hit; damage is equivalent to the Phantasmus' Strength and works as suffocation or drowning in the **Werewolf** rulebook. While this damage is not aggravated, the Garou cannot heal the damage until she has successfully escaped the Phantasmus). One made from toxic waste will do its best to force itself down the unfortunate Garou's throat (attacks as per normal hand-to-hand combat rules, with half of its Strength roll as damage. If the Phantasmus gains at least three successes, it will successfully force the toxic fluids into the Garou's throat. This is aggravated damage. In any case where the fluids reach the mouth or throat, the damage cannot be soaked).

Image: In the Umbra, Phantasmi appear much as they did when their deaths occurred; gaping wounds cover the twisted bodies of these spirits, and they continually scream in pain. These creatures can possess no living form, only the scattered remnants dropped by homids on the streets — the garbage that lies around the places where they died. As a result, each Phantasmus will look different. One may appear as a collection of discarded soda cans that warp and twist into a mockery of homid shape, while another may take a similar form made of scattered newspapers and candy bar wrappers. Some few have even materialized in forms made from broken glass and automobile parts. In one case, the creature actually took the form of a homid made entirely from the bent and mutilated remains of a caseload

of silver-plated flatware it found in a junkyard. Whenever possible, these Banes will use hard and/or jagged debris from metal and plastic to create their forms.

Background: Phantasmi are created only from those fomori that have died at the hands of Garou. They are driven by pain and the need to destroy Garou in an attempt to alleviate their agony. Each Phantasmus retains all of its memories of life after the time it was corrupted by the Wyrm. Each Phantasmus is given a semblance of life in the Umbra, and given a certain amount of control in the physical world. No Phantasmus has any control over its location, and can normally materialize only in the place where its first life ended. Occasionally, Black Spiral Dancers or other agents of the Wyrm can summon these creatures to their aid. The Phantasmi will always answer the call, looking forward to being freed from their places of death. Once summoned, a Phantasmus will attack any enemy that the Wyrm agents point out, but it will only attack one enemy and when it has finished defeating its foe, the Phantasmus will do as it pleases. Most Phantasmi enjoy killing as many Garou as possible, even Black Spiral Dancers.

The Phantasmi have very limited mental capacities, and as often as not will use all of their Gnosis until they have faded from the material world, never worrying about gaining more Gnosis until they once again find themselves locked in the Umbra.

Phantasmi are in perpetual pain, and thus have phenomenal Rage scores, but think so slowly that they seldom manage to use their Rage to serious advantage.

Storytelling Notes: There is no reasoning with these Banes; the Phantasmi are all but mindless in their desire to destroy all Garou.

Bitter Rages

The Garou called Dancer, better known by his homid name of Stan Tyler, lapped at the waters of the Colorado River and noticed with some disgust that even the sweet waters would not take the sour taste from his mouth. The light that made its way through the trees was bright enough to scald his eyes, and this too was annoying. Three times today, different members of the sept had asked him if he felt well, and he promised himself that the next one to ask him that question would die.

Stan Tyler shook his head, puzzled that such a thought should cross his mind. The Children Of Gaia were supposed to be peacemakers, not savages. Savagery was best left to the Get of Fenris and the Black Furies; between those two tribes the Garou had enough killing machines. Just thinking of how those two tribes got along was enough to make him snarl; why couldn't they put aside their stupid disputes and just get along like the other tribes?

Over his shoulder he saw Thunder Song, a truly beautiful Garou if one had ever existed. Again he felt the shame of his desire for her and again the shame filled him with a burning fury. His vision swam in the fiery light of the setting sun, and his ears throbbed with pain as she asked her question: "Leaper, are you well? You look feverish. Leaper, why are you staring at me that way? Was it something I said?" He could stomach her patronizing questions no longer. He felt the foam fall from his lips even as he approached her startled form; this too made him angry.

The Bitter Rages are Banes created by the Wyrms in an attempt to turn all Garou into Lunatics. These Banes exist to drive Garou and homids alike into uncontrollable frenzies. On rare occasions, Bitter Rages have been known to infest other creatures of Gaia, normally those that have ventured too close to a lair of the Wyrms. To those homids who study medicine and science, the effects of the Bitter Rage appear to be a non-virulent form of rabies.

Rage 8, Willpower 8, Gnosis 6, Power 60

Charms: Airt Sense, Reform, Possession, Raging (Raging allows a Bitter Rage to increase its victim's Rage by one for every point of Power spent. The Bitter Rage will also use the victim's own Gnosis to fuel this Rage, pulling the victim further and further away from Gaia.)

Image: In the Umbra, these Banes appear as red clouds slashed by black bolts of lightning and constantly moving in patterns. In the Realm, the Bitter Rages are only seen after they have infested a hapless Garou or homid.

Background: These Banes have hounded Gaia's children from the dawn of time. The sole purpose of the Banes is to drive the Garou into killing rages until they collapse. Bitter Rages have been known to appear throughout Gaia.

The occasional outbreak of Bitter Rages is rare, but a Garou infested with one of these Banes must be cured within a short time or be lost forever to Gaia. Some few suspect that the Bitter Rages are responsible for the loss of the Black Spiral Dancer tribe to the Wyrms, but the older and wiser Garou scoff at the notion, pointing out that the Black Spiral Dancers are capable of rational thought, whereas one who suffers from possession by a Bitter Rage can do nothing but kill all that it sees.

Once possessed by a Bitter Rage, a homid or Garou will start to act less rational every day, until the Bitter Rage has complete control. Possession by a Bitter Rage is a slow and painful process that flawlessly mimics an onslaught of rabies, all the way down to frothing at the mouth and seeping moisture at the eyes. The possessed Garou or homid will act irrationally, lose control of his or her temper more quickly than normal, and finally fly into an uncontrollable and perpetual rage.

After gaining control of a victim, the Bitter Rage will constantly feed Rage to its host body, keeping the victim in a frenzy that lasts until the victim is at the edge of death and has collapsed in exhaustion. If the victim is then given a chance to rest, the Bane will again start feeding its host with

Rage, sending the feverish Garou or homid into a frenzy again and again until death is a blessing.

The best way to fight a Bitter Rage is to go into the Umbra, where the Bane can be seen for what it is: a cloud of pain and suffering that enshrouds its victim, hounding and prodding the possessed unto death. A Bitter Rage will avoid actual physical combat for as long as possible, only engaging in battle if its host is already dead. A Bitter Rage who is presented with an opportunity for escape will do so, fleeing into another part of the Umbra.

Storytelling Notes: Bitter Rages can only be defeated on the Umbra, where they are particularly vulnerable. Normally these Banes will do their best to avoid being noticed until it is too late to save the Garou they possess. A Bitter Rage will drive its victim away from its pack as soon as it has gained possession.

Oases

Bites-At-Leeches was tired and thirsty. The day had been spent in the city, seeking out the hiding places of the Blood-Suckers and trying to kill as many as possible. Today she had been lucky; two of the Leech's servants, and the Leech itself, had been in the house. The servants had died fighting, and the Leech had shrieked away its miserable existence as the Sun boiled the illusion of life from its stinking, maggot-ridden corpse. It had been a good day.

The City was filled with the Wyrms' presence, and Bites-At-Leeches wanted nothing but safety and sleep. Her nose to the air, she sought a place to rest, a place where she could hide from the Leeches that would soon hunt for her. After several blocks she came to a small wooded area. The Wyrms had not yet corrupted the small trickle of water that ran across the ground in the Park, and no amount of checking showed her even the slightest hint of litter or homid filth. Truly she had found an oasis. Gaia was kind to her warriors.

Bites-At-Leeches hid herself well, losing her scent in the clean water and finding the shelter she sought in the bushes near the stream. Even in the suburbs of the city it paid to be cautious. As she started to close her eyes, the first spasms of pain racked her body. Hot fever danced through her stomach and limbs, and she knew that she had been fooled; no oasis here, simply a deadly trap.

Bites-At-Leeches forced herself to her feet and stared at the Wyrms-riddled ground on which she lay. A blighted garden stared back. The shrubs in which she rested were black and lifeless. The waters she had bathed in oozed with the rainbow colors of oil slick, almost concealing the brackish sludge beneath them. Bites-At-Leeches tried to howl, to warn any other Garou from coming near this place, this ghost of Gaia's life. Only a weak blood-soaked cough fell from her lips. The poisons in her body thrust against her heart; the world started fading away.

Oases are the remains of caerns that have long been destroyed by the Wyrms, tiny seeds of life that have been twisted into foul and poisonous wastelands. To the average

person they appear to be parks or even junkyards, but the Banes that inhabit these areas thrive on tricking Garou into thinking they have found a safe haven.

Rage 4, Willpower 8, Gnosis 5, Power 150

Charms: Mimicry (For one Power point a day, the Oasis can simulate a glen or stream in order to seduce Garou and other to rest within its embrace. The Oasis itself is powerless to actually harm a Garou or homid, but it can seduce other Banes into action by freely giving them points of its own Power to attack the Garou. Simply having an enemy of the Wurm attacked while in its perimeters is enough to restore lost Power to a Oasis), Moon Bridge (The Oasis can act as a Moon Bridge for those Garou that have been corrupted by the Wurm, leading to other areas of corruption (as a Level One caern). Any Garou can attempt to use these Moon Bridges, but they are likely to be unhappy with the results of success; most Garou take poorly to stepping from a Moon Bridge into a large dump site for illegal toxic waste)

Image: In the Umbra an Oasis appears in its true form: a wasteland of Wurm-blasted trees and waters, surrounded by numerous Banes of almost any type. In the Realm, it appears as a lovely spot, untouched by the Wurm and its servants.

Background: The Oasis exists only to lure unwary Garou to their deaths or corruption. Its tactics are to look pretty and to provide a means for other Banes to destroy or seduce an unwary pack.

The Garou who enter an Oasis do not always die immediately, but they do suffer from the exposure. An Oasis as often as not contains Banes that willingly possess the foolish Garou.

The Oasis itself is a larger Bane, capable of concealing both its presence and the presence of other Banes in the area. It cannot actively attack, but simply conceals those that can. More often than not, several Blight Children will be found in the same area as an Oasis, as will other Naturae that have fallen to the Wurm. It is alleged by some that Oases are byproducts of larger groups of such blighted spirits.

Storytelling Notes: These Banes are exceedingly rare and should be used sparingly.

Nocturnae

Great Lore could not figure out what was wrong with the cub. Only two days before his rite of passage and he was surly and angry at everything. His fellow cubs claimed he was tossing and turning in his sleep, moaning about nightmares. But this cub was important. The omens pointed out that he was to be the one to lead the sept years from now. Was he not Silver Fang?

Great Lore then realized what the problem was. The cub was to be great, an important one. Thus his dreams were important, and had a reality of their own. A reality open to harm on the Umbra.



Great Lore waited until the cub again showed signs of the nightmare. Then he leaned over him and shifted to the spirit plane. He was right — the cub was indeed powerful, for a Chimare had formed around his dreams. And there she was, the Nocturna that has caused the cub's pain.

She screamed in rage when she saw Great Lore. The Nighthag would have to fight now to keep her lair, for such a powerful lair it was...

The Nocturna, or Nighthag, is the warper of hopes and dreams. This spirit wanders the Umbra in search of sleeping humans. When it finds a sleeper whose dreaming mind appeals to the Nocturna, the spirit will attempt to twist the dream down a more sinister course. If the sleeper dreams of prosperity and wealth, the Nocturna may corrupt the dream into a fantasy where the dreamer gains wealth only to lose it from the betrayal of a loved one. Dreams of love may turn into terrifying nightmares in which the dreamer's lover spurns and mocks him. No matter what the fantasy, a Nocturna will cause the dream to devolve into a depressing, hopeless situation.

Rage 7, Willpower 7, Gnosis 6, Power 35

Charms: Dream Warp (Power Cost 1; to pervert dreams, roll the Nocturna's Gnosis versus the victim's Willpower; one success is required. For every five dreams warped, the Nighthag receives five Power points), Materialize (Power Cost 11; Str 4, Dex 2, Sta 2, Brawl 3)

Image: In her physical form, the Nocturna appears as a terrifyingly beautiful woman with long tangled hair, sharp claws, and a mouth filled with pus.

Background: Nocturnae are the warped and twisted dreams of the Wyrms. They exist only to pervert the dreams of others. A Nocturna will often physically manifest to a dreamer who has refused to give in to the self-loathing it encourages. It will then attack the human, attempting to rip apart the unfortunate victim, limb from limb.

Nocturnae especially prefer to find Chimares where they may build their lairs, lurking in the dreams of mortals and slowly corrupting them into nightmares. Once a Nocturna has built her nest in a dream realm, it is very hard to drive her from it. From there, she will haunt the dreams of the mortal. Psychoanalysis will not drive her away, for she physically resides in the dream, and the words and chants of the analyst will not harm her. Only by physically confronting her in the Umbral dream realm can she be destroyed or driven away.

Meat Puppets

Linda walked around the park. It was a nice day. The sun was just right; it fell on the autumn leaves and ignited their colors. She always loved autumn.

She heard something in the bushes, a small, delicate noise. And there, a kitten came out, ready to play. Linda loved kittens. She put her hands out and gently called the kitten over. It came right away, obviously not afraid of people like some cats.



But what was that smell? What had the kitten been playing in? Linda screamed in pain as the cute thing scratched her with its claws. Claws too sharp for its age. Her skin was laid open. And Linda realized what the smell was when she got a closer look at the kitten. Its ribs were showing where its rotten flesh had been eaten away by vermin. Maggots crawled on the edges of the skin, feasting while the kitten jumped about.

This couldn't be — the kitten was dead! Linda tried to back away, but tripped on something and fell to the ground. It was another kitten, just as putrid as the other one, and wet also. Remains of a burlap sack could be seen between its claws as it began to scratch Linda's face...

These spirits embody innocence defiled. Meat Puppets wander the Umbra in search of those young beings (both human and animal) who have suffered wrongful deaths. A Meat Puppet will possess anything from a drowned kitten to a young child beaten to death by her father.

Rage 9, Willpower 5, Gnosis 4, Power 15

Charms: Airt Sense, Shroud of Flesh (Power Cost 1; if a Meat Puppet is present within a minute of the time of death the spirit can enter and possess the newly vacated body. There is no resistance to the possession. Once in control of the body the Meat Puppet will attempt to cause pain and suffering to the living.)

Image: A freshly killed corpse.

Background: Meat Puppets hunger for the feel of young flesh. They wish only to possess a body and wreak vengeance on those with "natural" bodies. However, they are not strong enough to take a living body, so they prey upon the dead. They possess the recently dead cadavers of young children or animals.

Although individual Meat Puppets are not very strong, they often appear in groups. Since their bodies have already died, Meat Puppets attack unrelentingly and can only be stopped by utterly destroying the host body. Thus even a group of Meat Puppet "kittens" can be very dangerous.

Legends say that when Gaia chose which spirits would live in flesh and which would be immaterial, these ones were given immaterial existence. But they rebelled, and sought aid from the Wyrms to get the bodies they sought. They are immature spirits and only seek the dead bodies of young children or animals.

Storytelling Notes: Meat Puppets can be very eerie and plaintive dead children and cute animals, luring characters in for the kill; conversely, they can be gross, disgusting zombies.

Shade Spiders

Popping Tree and her packmates followed the lead of the undead creature. The leather-clad vampire had promised her pack much meat and many hunts if they would fight on its behalf, and they'd been poor enough to agree. They shifted to Crinos to climb the stairs of the warehouse where Rip had told them the mage had his laboratory.

Rip led them, a lone chalky man-shape amidst the five wolf-people. He tried the lock with the stolen key. The door opened on darkness — then he was gone. Suddenly an alarm sounded and a great pottery jug crashed to the floor, pushed by unseen hands.

Myriad tiny shapes swarmed over the Brujah and his werewolf helpers. He swore and slashed at them with his knives, his gun tumbling forgotten to the floor. The things scabbled on five legs, clawing at Poppy's eyes and mouth. She shifted to lupus, tore at them as her thick fur protected her.

She bumped into Eats Mice as he rolled to dislodge the white attackers. He barked magic words to invoke an amulet he bore; soon spirit power burned along his fur. The things died easily but there were many of them.

Poppy shook more from her fur and opened her eyes as Rip smashed the last of the things with his boots. He grabbed a torch lying on a workbench, fumbled to light it. Damn Leeches, Poppy thought, sure are handy with tools. The flame licked along the floor, igniting the awful spiders and burning the vampire's hands. "By Caine!" he shouted. "Everybody okay?"

"Yeah, fine," called Ten Bulls, his Glabro form towering over the undead creature. "Now where's the treasure you promised?" They set to ransacking the room as the others healed themselves of cuts and bruises from the spider-things. With horror, Popping Trees saw that they were severed human hands, made to walk by magic. No Garou ever did that, she thought. Then she saw the torch lying on the floor where Rip had dropped it. Seizing it in her mouth, she thought that there were other things fire could hurt, and she was taking orders from one...

These awful monsters are quite small, from 10 to 30 centimeters in diameter. They have five or 10 limbs apiece, fewer if they lose them in combat. Shade spiders are actually severed human hands or pairs of hands. They reproduce by attacking humans and amputating more of their own kind. The humans usually resist.

Attributes: Strength 1, Stamina 1

Rage 0, Gnosis 0, Willpower 1

Attacks: When shade spiders attack, first determine how many there are. They attack in swarms: treat their attack as one attack, rolling as many dice as there are spiders.

Image: Shade spiders begin life rather awkwardly, as the human hand was not designed for independent motion, but they alter as time goes by. Slowly the fingers slip toward a radial or symmetrical position, becoming like the legs of a starfish or brittle star. The stump grows feelers for smell and taste, while the translucent nails become five ocelli.

Background: The spiders often attack in hordes, and can be incredibly scary. Emphasize what the things used to be when you narrate the episode. The spiders made from Garou paws are scarier still, resembling tarantulas.

Rumors circulate that a human hand soaked in mummy-elixir was the progenitor of these creatures. If so, the original hand may yet be around. It is certain that its progeny, unlike those of Caine, neither know nor care.

The shade spiders are magic things created by a Level Three Thaumaturgical ritual known as Necromachy. The necromacher needs to obtain a small amount of blood from a vampire, usually one guilty of diablerie. If this is not available, blood wept as tears may be substituted, but the spiders will not be good fighters. The mage needs to perform a long ritual to endow the severed hands with vigor, but they do tend to last awhile, and can procreate. Often a necromacher simply throws severed hands into a jug where the spiders live and lets "nature" take its course.

They are unintelligent and ignorant of tactics. Health Levels are meaningless for such small creatures; any hit will kill them, and area-effect weapons will kill more than one, if possible.

The spiders are able to see and sense in darkness and can even function underwater. They do not visit the spirit world, or even know of it.

Mall Walkers

"Jackie's such a zoner! Like, all she wants to do anymore is hang around the mall! She asks me today, right, like, when the trig test is, and I'm like, be for real, it was last week!"

Victims of Mall Walker Bane possession listlessly shamle through suburban shopping centers, consumed by greed for things they can't afford and wasting their lives away under fluorescent lights. Mall Walker fomori often shoplift and neglect normal responsibilities, spending all available time hanging around the mall. You know the type.

Rage 2, Willpower 3, Gnosis 4, Power 10

Charms: Possession, Drain Mental Attributes (Power Cost 5/week; drains one level of a Mental Attribute from the host per week, converting it into 10 Power points for the Bane. Attribute loss lasts one week per point lost), Airt Sense

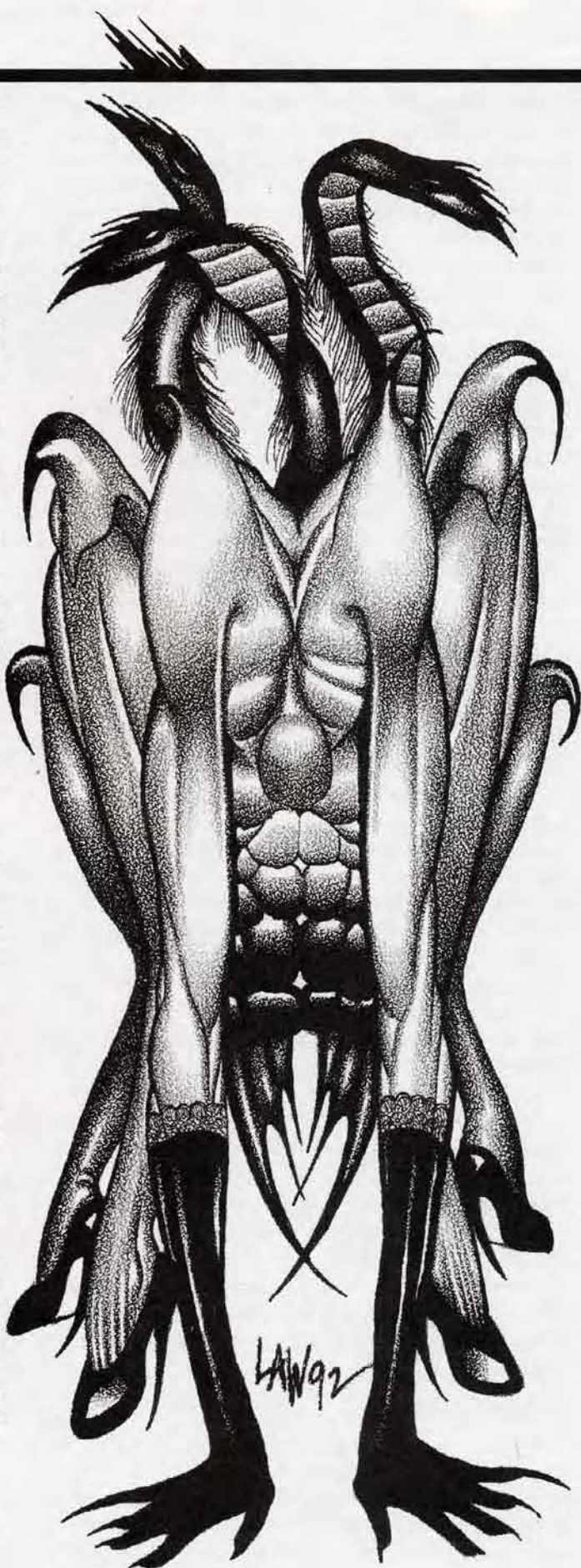
Image: A slow, amorphous sponge floating in the Umbra near its victim.

Background: This Bane drains Intelligence from its victim at a rate of one point per week, followed by Wits and finally Perception. The Bane then converts the Attributes into Power for itself. When the Bane gets bored with guiding a mindless husk around (usually within a month or two), it leaves. By this time, however, the host's life is pretty well screwed up. Young Garou are not immune to this kind of possession. Mall Walkers have no effective means of fighting, and flee if confronted in the Umbra.

Raptors

Just like a car crash, just like a knife, my favorite weapon is the look in your eyes.

— Ministry, "Stigmata"



This Bane may provide an answer to those players who wonder how that obnoxious sleaze in the corner always seems to have a partner. The Raptor feeds off sexual lust, not for normal attraction and affection but for desperation and conquest. It gravitates toward humans whose sexual frustrations have, for whatever reason, turned into bitterness, then possesses them and leads them into greater and greater perversions.

Rage 5, Willpower 6, Gnosis 5, Power 20 (+ 3 to 10 per conquest)

Charms: Possess, Airt Sense, Enhance (Cost 3; the Bane grants its fomori three points of Subterfuge for three Power per week. It may increase its host's Appearance at a cost of an additional two Power per point per week, to a maximum of four extra points.)

Image: The Raptor resembles a strange flower with legs. Its legs are usually adorned with S & M gear.

Backgrounds: This Bane feeds threefold from its fomori: from the energy generated by intercourse, from the pain of the lovers the host uses and then discards, and from the burning lust of the host himself. Unless the Bane is somehow overcome, the host spirals down into rape, degradation and even murder.

A Raptor gains at least three points of Power for every "lover" the human host takes, and is always greedy for more. The Bane may gain up to 10 Power per fling depending on the amount of abuse the host inflicts on his partners. Hosts possessed for over a year manifest sexual mutations out of Freud's worst nightmares.

Raptors despise the Pentex-created Enticers, and will try to use their fomori against them. Pentex originally tried linking Raptors to its cosmetics, but the Banes would not cooperate. It should also be noted that Raptors have nothing to do with sexuality or desire, heterosexual or otherwise. Their province is pain.

Scryers

I watch you eat, I see you sleep, I see you in between your sheets, oh, no, there I am...

—Concrete Blonde, "Over Your Shoulder"

Scryers are a weak type of Bane whose only apparent purpose is reconnoitering for stronger Banes. The more powerful Banes then reward or punish Scryers with the Power upon which the Scryers feed.

Rage 2, Willpower 4, Gnosis 7, Power 30

Charms: Airt Sense, Reform, Report (A mental link to its master; Power Cost 1/turn), Scry (Power Cost 1/scene; allows the Bane to "peek" into the material world and use the Gift: Scent of the True Form)

Image: In the Umbra they appear as lumbering, thin, fleshy creatures with beady eyes.

Background: Subjects in the physical realm may not see a Scryer while it peeks at them without using either Pulse of the Invisible or Umbral Sight, but certain Garou (those with Gnosis of 7 or higher) may feel uneasy beneath the Scryer's gaze.

This unease may become extreme after long periods of time. Garou without the Gifts necessary to find their tormentors may even be slowly driven mad by constant observation. The gaze of a Scryer may tickle, tingle or even burn one who can feel it, though it does no physical damage.

A Scryer usually bonds to a particular Bane or other master (a Black Spiral Dancer, perhaps), exchanging a period of observation for Power. Usually the patron grants the Scryer between five to 10 Power for a given task, or



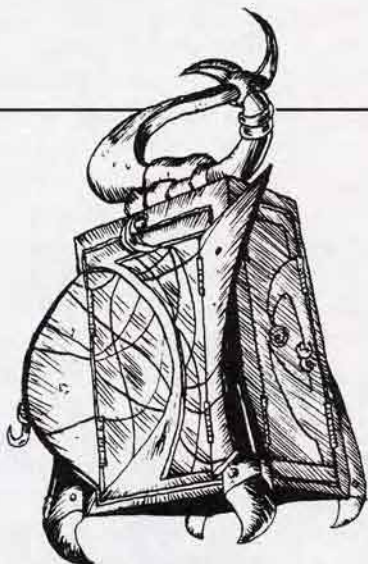
more if the observation takes place over an extended period of time. If the Scryer fails its master in some way, however, the master may remove five to 10 Power from the Scryer's being, possibly destroying it for a time.

These cowardly Banes have no means of attack, and use their Reform Charm to escape when detected.

Fetishes

The following fetishes are often found in the hands of Black Spiral Dancers and even some fomori. They are often created by painfully grafting spirits into the binding objects. Banes, however, often volunteer to enter into objects on the promise that they will be used to inflict misery on others.

Black Spiral Fetishes



Bane Lantern

Bane Lantern

Level 2, Gnosis 5

The Bane Lantern is a steel lantern painted with special markings. It casts a light of an unnatural purplish hue when commanded to ignite (the command must be spoken in Gaelic or Pictish). The Bane Lantern's light allows all spirits hit by the beam to be seen. The beam draws all spirits in the vicinity to it, like moths to a flame, whether through some sort of power or the curiosity of the spirits.

Banesword

Level 6, Gnosis 7

The Banesword is a beautifully crafted sword used by the Black Spiral Dancers. It is almost exactly like the Silver Sword, except for the powers it grants. While it does provide one extra die in melee, it also allows its wielder to siphon Gnosis from its targets; the wielder may then use it himself. Roll the sword's Gnosis versus the target's (only

after a successful hit that does at least one Health Level after soaking). The number of successes is the amount of Gnosis drained. The sword is usable only once per opponent per scene.



Churjuroc's Tusk

Brush of the Ancients

Level 1, Gnosis 8

Also called the Omen Brush, this small paintbrush allows the Black Spiral to paint intricate and accurate scenes, guided by the hands of an ancestor. These paintings often depict scenes of things past and things yet to come. An Intelligence + Enigmas roll (difficulty 7) is required to understand the meaning of the painting.

Churjuroc's Tusk

Level 5, Gnosis 9

This blackish-purple tusk belonged to a creature of the Wyrms. It was destroyed by the Black Spirals because it attempted to eat members of the tribe. There are said to be seven of these tusks (the creature had four mouths) still in existence. Each tusk is about two feet long. It is capped with a platinum ball on one end and there are detailed carvings all the way up the tusk itself. The tusk may be used to summon a Nexus Crawler once per full moon. The Bane must be appeased with the sacrifice of a Garou (even if it is the summoner). The Bane will then perform a mission of 24 hours' duration or less for the summoner.

Deathrattler

Level 3, Gnosis 6

This fetish is made from the tail rattle of a creature similar to a rattlesnake; this rattle is attached to a walnut handle. The rattler has the power to frighten away all animals within hearing range. All Garou (other than the wielder) who hear the rattle may run away: roll the rattler's Gnosis vs. the Willpower of the victim(s). The number of successes is the number of turns the target(s) will flee.



Devilwhip

Delirium Mask

Level 2, Gnosis 7

This is a stone helmet which entirely covers the face. Anyone wearing the mask, even a non-Garou, can induce the Delirium effect in specific people. The chosen victim will react to the wearer as if she were actually a werewolf in Crinos form, even if she is not a werewolf. The face of the mask is usually carved to resemble some horrible demonic visage.

Devilwhip

Level 2, Gnosis 6

This is a Bane's tentacle enchanted to exist permanently in the material world. The devilwhip has a handle sewn over the end (where it was ripped from a Bane). It is solid black, slick in texture and nearly 15 feet long.

A lesser Bane now resides in the devilwhip, endowing the whip with the power to animate on command. In combat, the whip swirls and cracks with a life of its own. The whip has the same effect as if the Black Spiral were actually wielding it as a normal whip, but it gives the wielder two extra dice in melee. When cracked at an individual (one action), the whip causes her to fall prostrate to the floor unless she successfully rolls Willpower against a difficulty equal to the whip's Gnosis.

It is said that some of these whips, upon striking a foe, make a noise resembling homid laughter.

Magic Spewer

Level 4, Gnosis 5

The Magic Spewer is a device made from a homid skull. It has a handle on top allowing it to be easily carried. The lower jaw is hinged to the rest of the skull by leather bands. The Magic Spewer's eyes glow red when it is active and the lower jaw moves on its own. On command, the skull vomits forth a stream of viscous, foul-smelling toxic waste. Anyone hit by the slime of the Spewer takes damage as if it were biochemical. It does three Health Levels (difficulty 7).

A side effect that will not show up until weeks later is that anyone hit by the slime will become diseased. The target must heal this illness with Mother's Touch or Resist Toxin or suffer some type of detrimental effect (Storyteller's discretion; be as nasty as possible).

Soul Ruby

Level 5, Gnosis 7

The Soul Ruby is an extremely large ruby. The stone's innate value is nearly incalculable, but its main benefit is that it contains the essence of a Black Spiral Dancer. The ruby gives telepathic advice to the possessor; furthermore, it usually has a number of Knowledge Abilities (determined by the Storyteller) which it can impart to the possessor. The dead Garou may also visit the fetish holder in his dreams, possibly offering glimpses of the future.

Spirit Net

Level 3, Gnosis 5

The Spirit Net is similar to a fisherman's net. It can be spread out over an area of several hundred yards. It is invisible in the Umbra, and may be used to capture nearby spirits. The spirits must make Rage rolls (difficulty 9) to escape the net. If more than three successes are made, the spirit tears a hole in the net at that spot and the difficulties of any future escape attempts by spirits are reduced by one. The hole appears in the physical world, as do the outlines of any spirits caught in the net.

Tambertail's Heart

Level 2, Gnosis 7

This is the mummified heart of a Fianna Theurge. The heart now contains a Bane. The heart has the power to pump whenever danger threatens. The heart can also be commanded to drive off unfriendly spirits; as it does this, it casts a reddish glow and makes a noise that sounds like feedback.



Magic Spewer



Delirium Mask

Umbraphone

Level 1, Gnosis 3

This is a common fetish among the Black Spiral Dancers who work for Pentex. It is a cellular phone that can be used to make calls to and from the Umbra. The phone has no other purpose. Some say there are a few Rolodexes floating around in the Umbra with the numbers of several hundred Banes, Weaver spirits, Glass Walkers and Black Spiral Dancers.

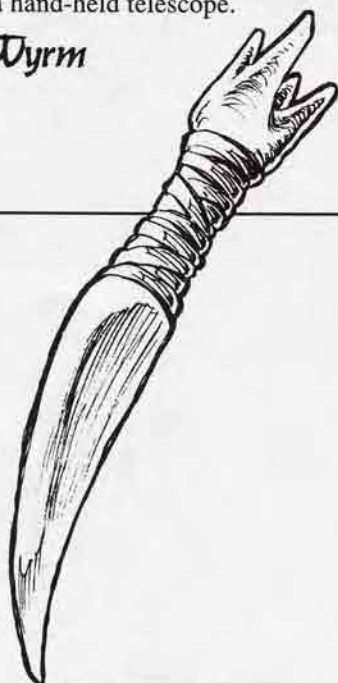
Umbrascope

Level 2, Gnosis 4

The Umbrascope allows a Garou to look into the Umbra without entering it. The Umbrascope is usually housed in a pair of binoculars or a hand-held telescope.

Warshirt of the Wyrms

Level 3, Gnosis 6



Wyrms Fang Dagger

This is a leather tunic with a number of mystic designs drawn upon it. The shirt grants the wearer three additional dice of Stamina for the purpose of soaking damage. It changes shape as the wearer changes forms and is just as effective in the Umbra. If a wound ever does get through the Warshirt, the shirt lets out a deafening wail from the pain and red blood runs down the outside of the shirt.

Wyrms Fang Dagger

Level 3, Gnosis 6

These knives are said to be the rotten teeth of the Wyrms, fallen or pulled from it and made into combat weapons. Were they indeed the actual teeth, they would be very rare, but these "relics" are actually quite common. The daggers are found in many gatherings of Black Spiral Dancers. Elders sell them to impressionable young cubs, telling them what a "great and rare item it is, won by harsh and bold means. You are young, and need it more than I do. But such a thing cannot merely be given, so I will accept a token payment, to avoid insulting the beast which gave its tooth. Perhaps a mere (insert very valuable object here)?" The



Tambertail's Heart

cubs often get savage when they realize they have been taken.

However, the strange thing about these knives is that some of them actually possess power. These knives inflict aggravated damage to any wounded by them, causing festering wounds. The wounds will blacken and spread pestilence through the whole body unless the victim can be magically healed (Mother's Touch, Resist Toxin). Only about one in 10 daggers possesses this ability.

Wyrms-Cut Bonds

Level 2, Gnosis 5

These are strands of especially strong gut that cannot be cut or burned (except with appropriate magic). Struggling against the bonds causes nausea unless a Stamina roll can

against the bonds causes nausea unless a Stamina roll can be made against the Gnosis of the bonds. The only way to escape is by twisting in certain ways while changing forms in a certain order: Crinos form to stretch the bindings; Hispo or Lupus to slip the loops over the head; Glabro or Homid to slip the lower body through; back to Lupus to slip the paws through. All these maneuvers require Dexterity + Athletics rolls (difficulty 7) in addition to the normal rolls to transform. Five successes are required by the end. If not enough successes are achieved, the character is free but takes one aggravated Health Level for every success less than five (broken bones inflicted by the tight bonds).

Clothing By Mister Lucian

Smart, stylish, sexy. The best clothing money can buy, crafted to your specifications by the tailors of the world-famous Mr. Lucian. For those of lesser means, Mr. Lucian has an economy line of quality limited-edition suits and gowns. And Mr. Lucian's exclusive line of dress and walking shoes is said to be the best in the world. Comfortable, functional, yet stylish. Each Mr. Lucian creation is a mark of status and distinction.

Each Mr. Lucian creation also bears the mark of the Wyrms. Though not fetishes in the classic sense, the clothing of Mr. Lucian is interwoven with spell threads that accent the most negative aspects of the wearer's personality. As Mr. Lucian's usual clients tend to be the aggressively style-conscious rich, this enchanted clothing tends to increase the owner's ruthlessness, greed, vanity and selfishness.

Mr. Lucian is actually a Black Spiral Dancer gifted with unusual good looks, impeccable style, and a talent for self-promotion. His rare public appearances and refusal to grant interviews have led the fashion world to christen him a reclusive genius, ensuring a long line to his door.

The process of creating the garments is difficult, and not entirely undetectable. The Sense Wyrms or Sense Magic Gifts can spot bespelled clothing for what it is. Garou with a Gnosis of 7 or higher will be uncomfortable in the presence of someone wearing clothing by Mr. Lucian.

A full suit of this clothing possesses a Gnosis of 7. A single item possesses a rating of 5. If a Garou wishes to wear an item of bespelled clothing, roll the clothing's Gnosis verses the character's Willpower. Success brings out the character's worst traits. The more successes, the worse the character behaves.

Mr. Lucian's clothing carries no special defenses. Anything that would damage normal high-quality clothing will destroy the enchantments. Spell-bound clothing does not protect the wearer in any way. Special suits woven with additional protection are possible, but these items are generally meant to corrupt.

Some exceedingly exclusive clothiers carry items crafted by Mr. Lucian, starting at over \$1,000 a suit. Most of the time, however, Mr. Lucian's clients buy directly from him. In addition to allowing the Black Spiral to tailor the spell to

the victim's own personality, this arrangement ensures a steady market from the super-rich, for whom the most unattainable things hold the most value. Clothing bought this way costs no less than \$5,000 per outfit, and there is a long waiting list.

Locating Mr. Lucian requires at least 10 successes on an Intelligence + Resources roll (difficulty 8); this is an extended action. Only a select few are allowed an appointment. Garou who discover the true purpose of Mr. Lucian's clothing could spend an entire story locating and stopping the Black Spiral Dancer.

Talens Bean Bane

Gnosis 7

A Bean Bane is a small dried bean of any type. The bean has a Bane placed within it. If the bean is ever planted in the dirt, the Bane will be freed from the bean. For the first few turns (one per Gnosis success; difficulty 6) after it "sprouts" it will be able to Materialize itself without having to expend any of its own Power. These Banes are usually inclined to help Black Spiral Dancers.

This bean's effects on the gastro-intestinal system of a creature who consumes it are best left to the Storyteller's fiendish imagination.

Dragon's Ichor

Gnosis 5

Usually found in small jars or vials, Dragon's Ichor is black blood taken from a powerful Wyrms creature. If the ichor is rubbed all over the body it will cause the Black Spiral Dancer to become temporarily immune to all attacks from spirits. This effect lasts for only five turns. Usually there is only enough blood contained in one of these jars for two uses.

Goblin Ale

Gnosis 4

This is an alcoholic beverage which is normally obtained from faeries. Goblin Ale contains spirits which enter the drinker. The spirits cause the individual to suffer hallucinations; the drinker might even accidentally enter the Umbra. Despite these negative effects, Goblin Ale is more intoxicating than any homid-brewed ales. Goblin Ale is used at many Black Spiral Moots.

Storm in a Bottle

Gnosis 6

This is a bottle which contains a Wyrms-tainted storm. The storm is terrible on both the physical world and the Umbra. It strikes any exposed enemy of the Wyrms with a lightning bolt unless the victim makes a Dexterity + Athletics roll (difficulty 6). The lightning does four Health Levels of damage. The lightning will only strike an individual once.

Voidstone

Gnosis 5

This powerful object is a small, smoothly polished black stone. If it is thrown at any one target, and makes a

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successful Gnosis roll vs. the target's Gnosis, that target is forever banished from the material world, though it may still exist on the Umbra. Voidstones may only be used once each, and they are exceedingly rare.

Wyrm-wood

Gnosis 3

Wyrm-wood is a blackened vine growing unnaturally deep within the earth. When enough of this wood is collected and burned, it has the power to protect all within the range of its horrible smell from attacks by spirits of all sorts, regardless of the spirits' power.

Dangerous Toys

The Wyrm's corruption knows no special age group, and Pentex is pleased to release toys from its subsidiary companies to any and all children, ages two and up. These toys can range from cute little teddy bears and jack-in-the-boxes all the way to computer games with subliminal messages.

These fetishes often work very well, as most children have Willpower ratings of 1 or 2.

Mister Mystic

Tommy and Jason looked at the sinister figure centered on the table; Tommy was smiling, Jason looked cynical. "There's no way it can tell the future, it ain't possible," Jason declared. At the ripe old age of 12, Jason was certain that he understood the ways of the world.

Tommy looked at Jason and sneered. "I already tol'ja, it don't tell the future, it gives you the answers to secrets." He held the heavy plastic figure of Mister Mystic in his hands, adoration on his face. "It tells you the future of things you want to know about."

Jason stared at the eyes of the statue, wondering how they made the eyes glow that way. "Okay, let me try it," he demanded, reaching for the toy. Tommy let him take it, smiling to himself as he watched. Jason stared into the figure's eyes, concentrating on what it was he wanted to know. "Will I ever get a copy of X-Frenzy #1?" The question was simple, only a small test to see if the stupid statue worked. Jason almost dropped the toy when he heard the answer in his mind:

"You can't afford a copy of X-Frenzy #1, Jason. But there is a way...Tommy has two copies all to himself. Mint condition and just waiting to be read. They're in his closet, top shelf and off to the left. Do you want them? Then here's what you have to do..."

Level 1, Gnosis 5

Mister Mystic, and its counterpart Sister Mystic, are simple dolls dressed in the sinister clothing of a stage magician and a fortune teller respectively. Their appeal to children is the fact that these toys actually speak to them, telling them secrets and how to get what they want for nothing. Their appeal to parents is that the little lumps of plastic only cost \$3.95 retail and seem to keep children



enthralled for hours. These dolls only activate for children or teenagers, and only when the parents are not around. The dolls make suggestions that can only be heard by the person touching them, and only the desire to listen is necessary to start them talking.

The Banes that are trapped in these dolls are Corruptive, and attempt to drain the Willpower of the children whenever they are held (Gnosis vs. Willpower in a resisted roll; each success drains one Willpower point). Should the child ever be brought down to zero Willpower, the Banes are released into the child's body with full mental recollection of how the child acts. The child that has been corrupted is imprisoned within the doll and must in turn corrupt another body before being freed. These dolls are brand-new to the market, but stores have already been selling out within a day of them being placed on the shelves.

Doctor Chuckles Surgery Kit

Amy kissed her father goodnight, allowed herself to be tucked into bed, and tolerated a goodnight kiss from her mother, content in the knowledge that this would be the last goodnight kiss ever.

Almost two hours passed before she heard the television switch off and the sound of her parents' footsteps as they went into their own bedroom. Still she waited, patiently examining the plastic scalpel and stethoscope. The clock on her wall moved slowly, but that just gave her time to decide which of her family to operate on first. Amy lifted the

plastic syringe from its spot in the Doctor Chuckles Surgery Kit and felt the fluids sloshing around inside; she watched as the thick plastic nub of a needle became a thin, stainless steel tube leading to the venom inside the main body; she watched as the white plastic body of the syringe became clear heavy glass revealing the oily black liquid inside.

Amy slipped out of bed and pulled on her Doctor Chuckles Surgery Mask, breathing in the sweet odor that was only present when the sun had set and her folks were somewhere else...at least that's the way it had always been until tonight. She'd given it a great deal of thought, and she had decided that she would work on Mommy and Daddy first. Toby, her little baby brother, would wait for last; he was the one that had stopped her last night with his nasty crying, and this time she wanted to make certain she would be undisturbed when she got to work on him.

The light from the bathroom was on, as always, and the yellow light glinted off the razor-keen scalpel in her tiny fist. "Daddy first, daddy said he had a headache." Under the surgical mask, Amy felt a smile break on her face. "Doctor Chuckles says we have to operate...No more head, no more ache..."

Level 1, Gnosis: 10

Want to see a proud parent? Give a kid a Doctor Chuckles Surgery Kit and watch the kid's parents smile, content in the knowledge that their child wants to be a doctor someday. This adorable little fetish all but guarantees it!



Soon Junior will have all the necessary skills to remove arms and legs and even those annoying hearts and lungs. Just say where it hurts and go to sleep! Junior'll fix that pain once and for all.

With a successful Gnosis vs. Willpower roll, the Doctor Chuckles Surgery Kit will endow your child with all the surgical skills of the very best Grand Inquisitor, and at no extra charge to you, your child gets a syringe full of muscle-paralyzing venom (successful Gnosis vs. the victim's Stamina), good for as many as seven full-grown Garou! The bad news is that only one child can ever use the kit; the good news is that at \$3.99 apiece, they're practically a steal!

By the time your child is done, you'll be dead, or you too will be a fomor.

New Glow-In-The-Dark Gooshy Gooze

Dan pulled his Gooshy Gooze from its adorable little plastic container, the one with the DANGER: RADIOACTIVE WASTE sign painted on the side in non-toxic labels. The cold, snot-like mass immediately began slobbering between his fingers and oozing to the floor. Dan quickly looked around, making absolutely certain that his parents hadn't come into the house; if they saw him playing on the carpet with the Gooshy Gooze, he'd have a blistered butt for a week.

In the kitchen the phone rang, demanding Dan's attention. Dan slopped the Gooshy Gooze back into its container

and ran to the phone as it rang for the third time. He answered all his father's questions honestly, except for the one about behaving, and said that he could take care of dinner — no, he didn't mind that his folks were going to be late; would they bring him home something? Of course they would.

Dan only wanted to get back to playing with his Gooshy Gooze, not knowing that his Gooshy Gooze wanted the same thing. Out from the can it slurped, rolling eagerly towards Dan's legs. It waited impatiently for him to get off of the phone, knowing that any early warnings would have the parents returning to its new lair. Dan hung up the receiver and turned back toward the living room. He never had a chance to scream.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 0 (in host body 4), Charisma 0 (in host body 3), Manipulation 0 (in host body 3), Appearance 0 (in host body 2), Perception 2, Intelligence 1, Wits 1

Abilities: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Survival 2

Powers: Gooshy Goozes force themselves down their victims' throats (Strength + Athletics vs. Dexterity + Dodge; three successes required). Gooshy Goozes are capable of changing their victims into the same substance they are made of, and while the process is occurring, are capable of anything that the child is physically capable of: knifing Grandma, burning down the house, the usual stuff. The transformation is extremely slow, depleting one Health Level a day from the host until the victim is Incapacitated,

at which time the change is complete. This transformation costs one of its host's Gnosis points per day. While in this "breeding stage" the effective Health Levels of the Gooze are the same as those of its host (three to four for a small child).

Age 2 (in host body 6), Gnosis 5, Willpower 5

Health Levels: 2, but Gooshy Goozes can only be hurt by fire, electricity or freezing.

Image: This snot-like substance comes in seven different colors, all glow-in-the-dark and all neon-bright.

Background: Gooshy Gooze is guaranteed to be a million laughs. It swishes, it sloshes, it oozes and it goozes. It also forces itself down the throats of unsuspecting children when they're left alone at night.

Gooshy Gooze is another wonderful "non-toxic" creation of the Pentex family of companies. Like most of the dangerous toys from Pentex, Gooshy Gooze doesn't kill, it corrupts. Unlike most of the dangerous toys, this is not a simple fetish; it is a creature with a mind of its own and needs no child to do its work.

Gooshy Gooze devours its prey from the inside, destroying innocence and sanity as it goes. By the time Gooshy Gooze has finished its consumption, it has transmogrified the hapless child into an equivalent volume of Gooshy Gooze. Most of the Gooshy Gooze then oozes its way back to any of 200 factories nationwide; it is subsequently redistributed to any of Pentex's countless "bubble gum machines" where it can again be picked up for a measly 25 cents. Many children learn from their friends that these particular machines will sometime even dispense the Gooshy Gooze without a quarter; you just have to turn the knob, and as often as not, the Gooshy Gooze is yours.

Storytelling Notes: As they have only rudimentary brains, Gooshy Goozes will attack any individual that is under three feet in height and alone. You too can corrupt a poodle!

Action Bill Special Police Badge

Pete fondled the Action Bill Special Police Badge in his pocket. What would Action Bill do in this situation? Wasn't Action Bill one of the good guys? Pete shook his head, puzzled by what the badge kept telling him to do. It wouldn't have bothered him as much if the badge didn't talk in Action Bill's voice.

"It's okay, Pete. I wouldn't tell you it was okay if it wasn't, would I? You can trust me, Action Bill never lies." Action Bill had explained everything. All he had to do was take what he wanted from the toy store, but he had to do it carefully and avoid being caught. "It's all part of the Action Bill's Danger Squad training; if you get away with it, the Danger Squad sends the money to pay for everything you took. But if you get caught, you have to take the rap, because Action Bill's Danger Squad is a Top Secret Organization...."

Pete knew that was true. He watched Action Bill's Danger Squad every day when he got home from school. He

even had all of the Action Bill action figures at home. He hadn't been able to get the Action Bill Weapons Set for his birthday; somehow it had been overlooked by his parents. Pete looked around the store, noticing that the two clerks were talking about some little kid that had been in here the other day, and what they would have liked to have done to that little kid when they caught him.

Pete pinned the Action Bill Badge to his Action Bill T-Shirt, and reached into his pocket again. There it was, Dad's Swiss Army knife. He'd watched Daddy sharpen the blade just the other day, and he knew it would be a good substitute for the Action Bill Weapons Set he was here to pick up. He looked at the price tag on the package: \$27.95. He understood why his parents hadn't picked it up for him already; that was kind of expensive, even for Action Bill stuff. Maybe if he ran really fast, he could get past the clerks; even if he couldn't, he still had the knife. The weapons set was meant to be his, Action Bill had even told him so...

Level 1, Gnosis 6

Action Bill's Badge can only be ordered through the mail, free of charge with any two proofs of purchase from other Action Bill products. Like all of the Action Bill products, the Badge is based on the popular weekday cartoon and the monthly comic book. Unlike all the other Action Bill products, the Badge helps your children learn how to get what they want at any cost — preferably through



stealth, but if violence is necessary, Action Bill understands.

Action Bill's Badge is one of the more blatant fetishes created by the Pentex conglomerate, for it lacks the conniving subtlety of most others. Rather than confuse or possess the child's mind, Action Bill's Badge uses outright enticement, explaining to the child that he or she is now an agent-in-training, and has to keep quiet about the training or be fired before even having a chance to fight the evil minions of W.O.L.F. Name a kid who doesn't want to save the world from Wolf-Commander and his evil troops and Action Bill will show you a coward who loves evil. What kid would want that hanging over his or her head? Action Bill is a hero. Wouldn't you want to train with him too?

The Badge and the child make a resisted Gnosis vs. Willpower roll. If the Badge scores more successes than the child, the child will literally lose all moral inhibitions; he will be convinced that Action Bill wants him to join the

Danger Squad, and equally convinced that even deaths will be fixed by the Danger Squad. If the only way to get that bottle of rum, the one that Action Bill says is needed to win the next test, is to beat Mommy's head in with a shovel, Action Bill will fix the troubles; after all, not even the bad guys get hurt on the Action Bill and The Danger Squad show...

The Badge prefers that its bearer not get into too much trouble, simply enough to ensure a definite corruption by the Wurm. As a result, most of these badges don't goad their owners into acts more felonious than simple shoplifting, at least not until they're old enough to handle a gun. After that, it's time for Action Bill's Advanced Training, where you too can learn how to rob a bank, or pass along that secret antidote to W.O.L.F.'s mind-controlling gasses (in the form of heroin or crack cocaine). Once the Badge has corrupted a child to the Danger Squad, the child will secretly carry the Badge until the day he dies, convinced that the training will soon be over.

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