




WRAITH



**A crossover story supplement for
Werewolf: The Wild West™ and
Wraith: The Oblivion™**



GHOST TOWNS™

By Nancy Amboy, Andrew Bates, Richard E. Dansky, Steve Miller, Derek Percy, Ethan Skemp, John Wick and Fred Yelk





Credits

Authors: Nancy Amboy, Andrew Bates, Richard E. Dansky, Steve Miller, Derek Percy, Ethan Skemp, John Wick and Fred Yelk

Developers: Justin Achilli and Richard E. Dansky

Editor: Aileen E. Miles

Art Director: Lawrence Snelly

Layout & Typesetting: Robby Poore

Interior Art: Ron Brown, Tom Fowler, Scott Fischer, Darren Frydendall, Jeff Parker, Shea Anton Pensa, Matt Roach

Front Cover Art: Andrew Robinson

Back Cover Art: Matt Roach

Front & Back Cover Design: Robby Poore



735 PARK NORTH BLVD.
SUITE 128
CLARKSTON, GA 30021
USA

© 1998 White Wolf Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden, except for the purposes of reviews, and for blank character sheets, which may be reproduced for personal use only. White Wolf, Vampire the Masquerade, Vampire the Dark Ages and Mage the Ascension are registered trademarks of White Wolf Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. Werewolf the Apocalypse, Wraith the Oblivion, Changeling the Dreaming, Werewolf the Wild West, Ghost Towns, Frontier Secrets, The Risen and Dark Reflections Spectres are trademarks of White Wolf Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters, names, places and text herein are copyrighted by White Wolf Publishing, Inc.

The mention of or reference to any company or product in these pages is not a challenge to the trademark or copyright concerned.

This book uses the supernatural for settings, characters and themes. All mystical and supernatural elements are fiction and intended for entertainment purposes only. Reader discretion is advised.

Check out White Wolf online at
<http://www.white-wolf.com>; alt.games.whitewolf
and rec.games.frp.storyteller

PRINTED IN USA.

Special Thanks To:

Katie "A Lot to Say" **MacCaskill**, for choosing Moz over Jane's.

Justin "Thank God for Shotguns" **Achilli**, for his opinion of Hemingway.

Fred "It's Free!" **Yelk**, for winning the worst party ever.

Dean "Social Chameleon" **Burnham**, for hitting all the bars and then some.

Shaggy "Drink This" **Dixon**, for taking his gin like a man.

Mike "Don't Make Me Go Home" **Tinney**, for staying in it for the long haul.

Aaron "This Place Sucks" **Voss**, for telling the truth about Bell Bottoms.

Rob "Smoother than Barry White" **Hatch**, for being the ladies' choice that evening.

Rebecca "Later" **Schaefer**, for getting out while the getting was good.

Chad "Prisoner" **Brown**, for his punitive dance-floor measures.

Allison "Cooties" **Sturms**, for unrequited love (ha ha!).

Phil "Disco Inferno" **Brucato**, for unveiling the mystery of disco: It really does blow.

Rich "Damn Straight" **Dansky**, for backing Phil up on that point.


Aileen "Scotland, Bastard" **Miles-Skemp**, for wisdom in spite of my omission.

and **Larry** "Damn Straights" **Snelly**, for shaking his booty on a dance floor full of breeders.

Authors' Special Thanks

John Wick extends grateful thanks to Marcelo Figueroa.

Nancy Amboy wishes to thank Jamie the Demonic Bobby Soxer, and Steven Patrick Morrissey because she's never seen a keener window cleaner.



GHOST TOWNS™

Table of Contents

Legends of the Garou: Sheol Valley	4
Introduction: How to Use This Book	8
Chapter One: Building a Better Ghost Town	12
Chapter Two: Notable Ghost Towns	22
Chapter Three: Storytelling	86
Appendix: Piercing the Shroud	98





LEGENDS OF THE GAROU

Sheol Valley

It was a bleak bastard of a valley, a barren slash through a rock mountain that left the few folks who'd seen it thinking of white bones and empty canteens. The least lucky of these were the worst off — they'd stayed. Too desperate, too weak or too stupid to move on to better land, those poor wretches settled in by the tiny trickle of a creek and started digging, hoping that there'd be gold or silver under the red-orange rocks. They'd never managed to leave.

Apart from the scattered, gray plank shacks that passed for houses, the only thing worth seeing in the valley was the church. It stood up on an outcropping above the other buildings, and the crimson light of sunset threw its steeple's shadow across the hollow like a knife wound. The white paint was covered with russet dust, and the clock — an odd feature for a church to have, with a barely visible spike preventing the minute hand from turning — was quiet as death. Almost. As for the rest of the valley, there wasn't a person stirring in the dry August afternoon.

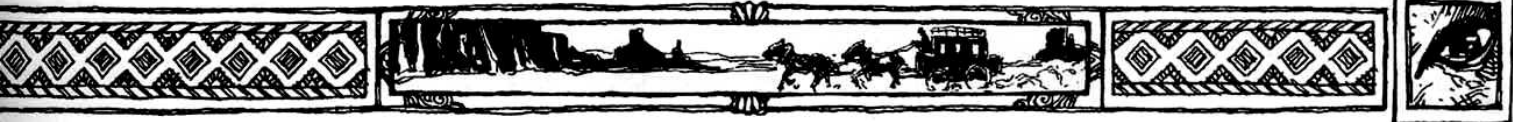
So when the broken-down miner looked out the window and saw a stranger watering his horse in the meager creek, he was more than a little startled. But he licked his dry lips and called out to the stranger, and the stranger called back, and soon enough the miner was welcoming the newcomer into his tiny shack.


"There ya are," he said, gesturing to one of the rickety chairs. "Fraid I can't offer you that much; if I had a drink, I'd share it with you, but there ain't been a salesman out this way in months."

The stranger, whose clothes might've been new a month back, smiled and nodded. "Here," he said, drawing forth a flask and a pair of tin cups from his rucksack. "This one'll be on me."

The miner's eyes shone. "Well, that's mighty Christian of you." He gladly accepted a cup, and gulped down half the contents almost immediately.

"Careful, now," the stranger warned. "You want to make it last."





"Oh, you don't got to tell me such things," the worn miner sighed. "Got to make *everything* last 'round here. By the by, I'm Seth — and thank you for the drink. What brings you round here...?" The sentence trailed into a question.

"Hosea." He touched the brim of his hat. "I heard back in Purview you folks were having troubles, and I thought I'd maybe have a looksee."

Seth shook his head. "Gun for hire, then?"

Hosea smiled. "I have been known to let folks describe me as such."

"No offense, friend." The battered miner spread his hands. "But I daresay you won't find nobody you could shoot here, and nobody who could pay you for it. We're a poor town, and our problems ain't so easy to deal with."

"The word 'town' is a little generous," replied Hosea. "And as to the nature of your problem — well, I'm more curious than anticipatory."

A minute went by before either spoke, a minute in which both men looked each other over carefully. Finally, Seth said, "You a superstitious man, then?"

"Not the right word. Just curious." The chair creaked as the gunman leaned back and casually looked out the window, across to the church. The fading light shone from the polished handle of a revolver, just barely revealed by his shifting coat. "So tell me about this valley, Seth. Sheol. It means Hell, right?"

"Sure does, in Jewish or somethin'. I guess if you know that, you heard tell how this place got its name, then."

Hosea shrugged. "Not from a local."

The miner sighed darkly. "You wouldn't. Ain't nobody been born here in the last thirty years that's managed to get out. Wolves, or something got a few that tried — all we found were their bones. Picked clean."

The lanky traveler poured a little more whiskey into the tin cup. "The story?"

A worn smile spread across the miner's features, and he nodded gratefully before downing half the liquor. "Well, t'ain't much to tell. The first folks to get here were about three or four families, who'd got lost over the winter. The valley seemed as good as any other at the time, I s'pose — couldn't tell the soil for the snow, and lots of places among the rocks to hide from the wind."

He sighed again, deep and slow. "T'weren't but a few who lived through to spring. And game's pretty scarce around here, so I wonder..." He trailed off, staring out the window. Then he shook his head quickly. "Well, never mind that. I heard that with more of the first folks here buried than living by spring, they were in no mood for callin' this place Pearly Gates or any sort. And with

no real resources for travelin', and not even any Injuns near to trade with, they had no chance of gettin' out. So they dug in, and haven't been able to get out since."

The gunman shifted in the chair, a thoughtful look on his face.

"Tell me about the church."

Seth's eyes darkened. "You *have* heard about this place."

Hosea's expression didn't change. "Humor me."


"Well, not too long ago, folks figured that we was just gonna up and die if nothin' were done about it. Didn't have merchants comin' round, nor enough money to buy drink even if they did. Needed *somethin'* to live for, and well — you don't see nothin' that inspires hope here, do you?"

"So they sent for a preacher. The one they got was a fiery fella, and had more than a little money from his daddy back East. He came ridin' at the head of a wagon train, all loaded down with wood and nails, and he set his men buildin' *that*." The old miner shook his head ruefully. "Set that big clock in the tower — was real insistent about that — and started a'preachin' almost 'fore the paint was dry. He was good, too — set you thinkin' thoughts of Heaven even though you was stuck here in Hell."

He paused, then, and shook his head. "The real trouble started up then, not too long after. Every night, 'round one in the morning, we started hearing things. First the clock'd strike, and then... I don't want to say." His gaze strayed out the window, then came back to settle on Hosea. "And seein' things... God strike me blind if I lie, but the church wall started *bleedin'* then. Every night. It was *real*, too. I know 'cause I took a light out once and got a good look." He shuddered. "We began shuttin' ourselves inside our shacks then. The preacher was the only one who'd dare to go outside at night, and we'd hear him a yellin' and hollerin' at the top of his lungs, tellin' them haints to go on back to Hell and leave us alone. Clancy even shimmied up the steeple once and spiked the clock so it wouldn't reach one. The preacher tore out the spike the next mornin', and chided us all for cowards."

He took a breath, and then his voice came out very low. "I ain't one to say for sure, and you'll probably laugh in my face for this, but the last we heard from that preacher, he was goin' on about walkin' bones. Swear it on my daddy's grave."

He screwed up his face mournfully. "But that was it for him, though. He took what little silver there was right out of the poorbox, melted it down and cast it into bullets." He chuckled miserably. "And he went up the side of the mountain jest past midnight, and we all heard him a'shootin' — and that was the last of him. Never



came back down." Seth screwed up his face in a feeble attempt at a smile. "We never even found his spent bullets, though we tried. Oh, we tried."

The miner swallowed the last of the whiskey and stared wistfully at the smeared cup. "Don't s'pose you've got much more silver yerself? Y'ain't gonna kill no haints with lead, I'll tell you that."

Hosea smiled. "Fraid not, friend. I don't have much luck holding on to silver myself."

The weather-beaten miner shook his head slowly, without taking his eyes off the empty tin cup, and the slope of his shoulders was just like that of a dead man. "I was afear'd of that."



Hosea Gunbreaker struck a match and held it close enough to read his expensive pocketwatch. Ten minutes till 1:00. He glanced up to the church's clock. It read the same, but the iron spike holding the minute hand in place wasn't about to let it get any farther.

Or... was it? There was a slight rattle from above, and although Hosea's human eyes weren't that good in the darkness, he thought he caught movement.

He struck another match. After a quick glance around him, he bent over his watch again — but this time looking at the play of light on the glass, the shifting of his reflection....

And like that, he was through.

That was too damn easy, he thought to himself. *Gauntlet's a lot thinner here than it has any damn right to be.* Shaking his head, he studied the surroundings. Luna's light picked out the Weaver-webs of the church, and tiny streaks of web below. There was a trace of something hollow on the wind, something that smelled of old dust and mold. Or was it brittle old bone?

I'll be damned, he thought. *Fool Strider was right. Something is shifting out here. The church's only a couple of years old — it shouldn't reflect here at all. But if that's so, then why doesn't it smell like the Wyrms? Or for that matter, anything else?*

He looked up at where the clock would be — and it was there, strangely enough. And there was something like a heat-shimmer around that minute hand, rhythmically ebbing and flowing.

Shit.

Hosea slid his knife free from its sheath, and focused on the moonlit reflections on its edge. The Penumbra caught at him, slid over him like a placenta — and he almost fell through into the physical world. He staggered a bit, then glanced up. The spike was visibly shaking, and the minute hand itself was trembling.

That clock shouldn't even be working anymore! He flexed his fingers, trying to relax just a little. *Shit. Shit. I should've paid more attention when that batty Strider was talking about the hungry dead.*

The spike thrashed once more, then spun free, spiraling down to land with a sharp clatter on the rock.

Hosea sucked in a breath, and as if the valley were echoing him, a sharp breeze whirled down off the mountains and across his back. Shadows pooled and ran at the base of the church, leaking out from under it like blood, as if something lay smashed under the building. The shadows swirled and somehow dropped downward, like a whirlpool of darkness reaching into the rock.

And then, faintly tittering, *something — multiple somethings —* clambered out.

The things limped like people, but only a blind drunk'd mistake them for anything alive. Their bones were human, but hardly clean. All the meat had been gnawed away except a few red shreds, but blood stained every last bone a deep brown. Jawbones dangled open or worked up and down almost mindlessly. Rags of clothing still hung off the apparitions, tatters that might once have been shirts and trousers and flannel dresses.

And in the eye sockets of every last one, even the tiny childlike phantoms stumbling over the others' feet, blazed a blend of hunger and hatred.

Hosea took a deep breath and released it. "Howdy there." He touched the brim of his hat. "Don't s'pose you folks would mind settling back and having a discourse about this?"

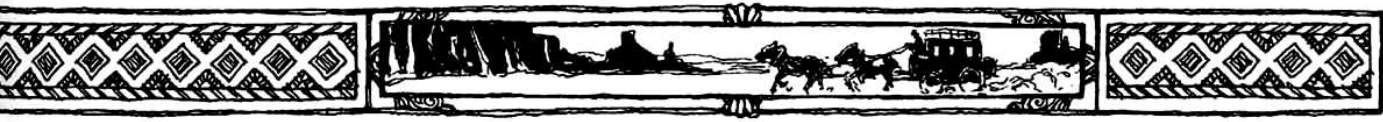
One of the creatures met his gaze. The smell wafting from it had that recognizable acrid reek of the Enemy — only somehow duller, washed-out. Bone flowed and stretched in an honest-to-God grin, and blood dribbled from between the teeth.

"All right then." Hosea tensed, and his flesh bulged, flooded outward. The all-too-familiar warmth of anger, like hot blood, washed over his senses. He rumbled, deep in his throat.

Sorry about this, folks, Hosea thought. *I wish to Gaia you hadn't had to go out like that, and that you hadn't had to stew in whatever hole you stewed in. Hope you're able to look on this as liberating when I'm done.*

The last thing Hosea remembered thinking was, *Never heard of anyone fighting ghosts before. Hope I'm around in the morning to enlighten the next sept how to go about it.*

Then human words left him, and Hosea howled and leapt forward.







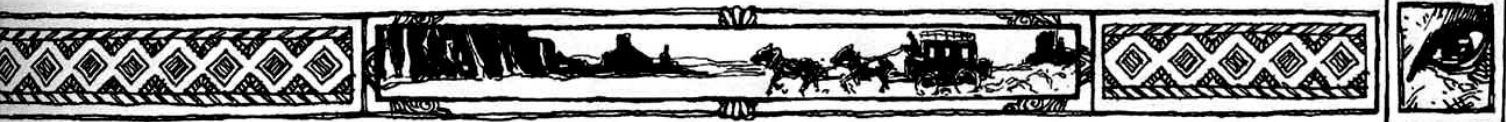
Go west, young man!
 — Horace Greeley

Towns pop up frequently in the Savage West. Miners, farmers, pioneers, snake-oil salesmen, pilgrims, outlaws, soldiers and many more individuals make their homes among the mesas and fields of the American frontier. As the Manifest Destiny pushes the boundary of the American frontier all the way to the coast of the Pacific Ocean, communities of all sizes surface in the wake of expansion.

Not every settlement grows to be a Salt Lake City or a Los Angeles, however. Many towns are hardly more than collections of shanties centered around local mines or groups of subsistence farms sharing the same creek. Pestilence, violence, loneliness and starvation threaten many of these small towns, and mere survival is often a daily struggle.

In some places, even these trials aren't enough. The Storm Eater's presence has weakened the Gauntlet in many parts of the Savage West, placing the physical world much closer to the spiritual realms. In fact, in an unprecedented series of phenomena, the Storm Eater is believed to have actually eroded the barrier between the Low Umbra and the physical world: the Shroud.

American Garou, both European and Native, are concerned about this never-before-seen curiosity. As most werewolves typically leave the Low Umbra to itself, its recent proximity has become an issue in the Savage West. More so than ever before, the ghostly denizens of that morbid realm have come into contact with beings on the living side of the Shroud.



Useful References

Ghost Towns is a crossover book, and it assumes some familiarity with *Wraith: The Oblivion* on the Storyteller's part. That familiarity is not necessary, however; Storytellers may successfully "fake it" with the information presented in *Frontier Secrets*, or they may wish to make it up whole cloth.

Some of the characters in this book are mean bastards — **Dark Reflections: Spectres** may come in handy (some characters' Traits are referenced in that volume). Likewise, there are a few walking dead poking around these pages, and I'm not talking vampires: You may wish to take a look at *The Risen* to get a handle on these folks.

A Quick and Dirty Cosmology

Ultimately, this is a book about Ghost Towns, not esoteric discussions relating to which Umbral layer overlaps what. Nonetheless, the inherent mystical nature of the supernatural creatures involved makes some outline of the spirit world necessary.

The *Penumbra* is the region just beyond the Gauntlet, distancing the physical world from the *Middle Umbra*. The *Penumbra* is the spiritual, emotional reflection of the physical world.

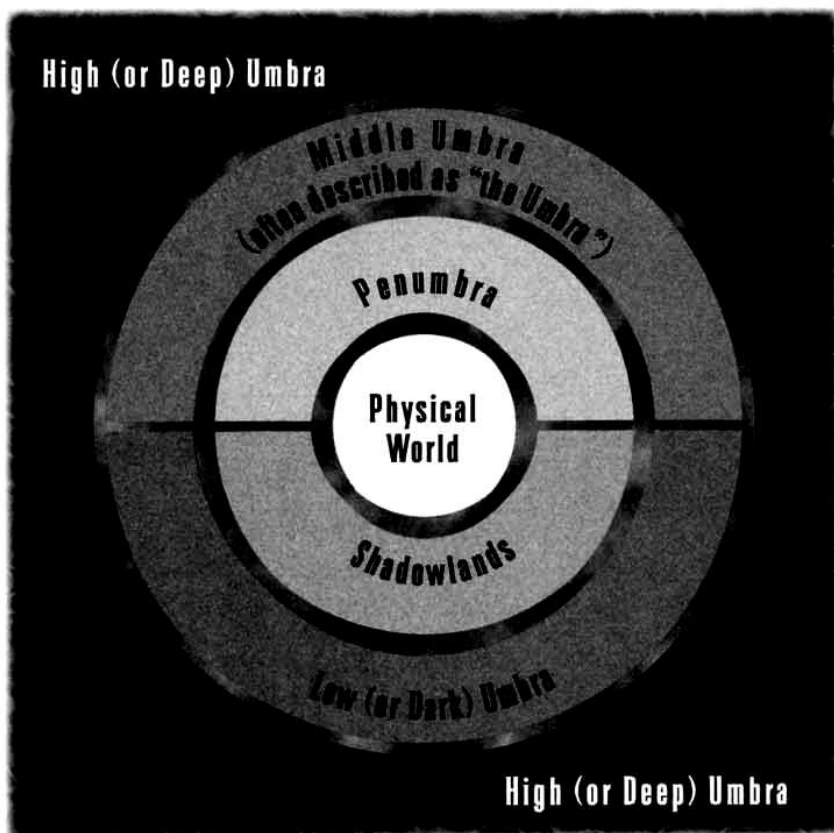
A similar region separates the *Low Umbra* from the physical world, as well — these are the *Shadowlands*. A grim, macabre place, the *Shadowlands* are the dark echoes of the physical world just beyond the Shroud.

The *High Umbra* is beyond the scope of this particular book, but bears mention anyway. The most oblique and unattainable aspects of reality float within the *High (or Deep) Umbra*, including the *Far Shores*. Many *Celestines* and *Incarna* dwell in the *High Umbra*, as well.

Fitting the Pieces Together

If you look at the map of the *Umbr*a below, you learn that, for the most part, the *Middle* and *Low Umbras* do not intersect. "For the most part" is important, though, because the *Storm Eater's* malignant presence has blurred the boundaries between the different layers of the spirit world. In some regions of the *Savage West* (Storytellers take note! Use this little guideline at your convenience!), *Shroud* and *Gauntlet* ratings have dropped to 1.

These low ratings are a serious source of concern for *Garou* of the *Savage West*. While it would initially seem that a return to the halcyon days before the schism of the physical and spiritual worlds is preferable, the *Garou* are almost unanimous on the circumstances being wrong. The reason for these weak barriers is not because the world is returning to its material and spiritual unity. Rather, the barriers are weak because the *Storm Eater's* entropic force is destroying them. A thin *Gauntlet* in the *Savage West* is a double-edged sword: It allows easy access to the *Umbr*a, but at great cost to the well being of the velvet shadow.



In addition, though the Shroud is often as thin as the Gauntlet, most Garou do not know how to breach it. Specific details on getting your players' characters into the Dark Umbra (horrors!) may be found in the Appendix. On that note...

What's In Ghost Towns?

Thanks for asking.

Legends of the Garou/Ghost Story gives a bit of fiction. If you skipped it, go back and read it. The story's very good.

This **Introduction** gives an overview of the book's concepts, contents and basic ideas. Much of what you find mentioned in passing here is expounded upon later in **Ghost Towns**.

Chapter One details making your own ghost town. Whether you want to build a completely original town or bring one of your favorite historical curiosities to your **Werewolf: The Wild West** game, this chapter will help you turn your ideas into a consistent story setting.

Chapter Two highlights five specific ghost towns that exist in the Savage West. Some are taken from actual, real-world history while we made some others up. As always, we've taken a few liberties with the history (hey! There weren't any ghost or werewolves in the real world, so I don't want to hear about inaccuracy!) in the interests of making a better story, but the Golden Rule still applies. None of this is dogma, and you're not going to Hell if you change the details. Make the story your own — but these towns are here to help you if you want them.

Chapter Three is a collection of tips for Storytelling. **Wraith** isn't the easiest game to integrate into a cross-over chronicle, but its potential is tremendous, and this chapter can help you realize that potential in your games.

Finally, the **Appendix** includes several rituals and rules for bringing Garou into the Dark Umbra. Though it's not the most comfortable place, sometimes Garou business requires the warriors of Gaia to step into the realm of the dead. Don't say we didn't warn you...







Chapter One: Building a Better Ghost Town



If nothing else, the image of the western ghost town reminds us that there isn't anything that lasts forever. Standing like a forgotten testimony to a dream, ghost towns represent a true tragedy of the Manifest Destiny. Too often we think only of the horrific crimes the white man committed against the Native American tribes as he moved west, and too often we forget the crimes he committed against himself. The ghost town is a reminder of the broken promises and broken dreams of the westward migration, serving as an echo to those who know that America is the land of opportunity, not the land of promise.

Ghost towns are more than just abandoned houses, stables and saloons. They provide the setting for what

can be the most dramatic and horrifying encounters a troupe can ever experience. The intent of this chapter is to show you how to use ghost towns in your **Werewolf: The Wild West** campaign. There is always more than meets the eye in the Savage West, and ghost towns are a testimony to that fact.

A ghost town can serve many purposes in a **Wild West** campaign. It can be a single stopover, providing a creepy haunting one-night stay or it can be the base of a pack running raids against the local Wyrmtainted rail barons. It can be the haunt of a few local wraiths who guard a dark secret or it can also be a hideout for a band of renegade mages who have stumbled across a motherlode of Quintessence.





A Note on Terminology

The phrase “ghost town” is used outside its connotative meaning. For the purposes of this book, a ghost town is *any* town of any size plagued by some aberration of the Storm Eater’s passing and subsequent corruption of the Gauntlet and Shroud (see below). The line is a fine one, and many large cities Back East claim similar — if not greater — quantities of wraiths, but the point of distinction includes three identifying traits.

First, a ghost town is a plot device. Often central to the mood and theme of a particular story or chronicle, the town itself is often the *why* as well as the *where*.

Second, a ghost town is almost unanimously affected by its resident population of ghosts and spirits. While New York may have a collection of wraiths carrying out various agendas, none of those wraiths dramatically affects the city as a whole. On the other hand, one bad ghost in the town of North Pass, Utah (population 217) can have the entire town up in arms and afraid to fall asleep.

Third, a ghost town is a rare phenomenon caused by the presence of the Storm Eater. The malignant Umbral entity’s passing has blurred and blended the Gauntlet and Shroud (often significantly weakening them) in a ghost town, and normal Umbral laws are often tossed to the winds. Spirits may end up in the Underworld, wraiths may wander the Skinlands and Garou may find themselves torn between not only the physical world and the Storm Umbra, but the Low Umbra as well. This confusion is a cause of much consternation to the Garou — the Umbra is becoming less and less a place they can rely on as they move westward.

A ghost town isn’t necessarily a desolate, empty place. Remember, just because it’s a ghost town doesn’t mean it’s deserted.

It Weren’t Always Like This...

“It’s the little things that make the soup,” my grandmother used to tell me, and the same thing is true about stories. When you sit down to create a ghost town for your pack to encounter, consider what kind of town they’re going to be riding through. Populate the town with buildings before you start putting in the people. The more detail you add to the town’s streets and edifices, the more convincing your setting will be. There’s nothing more irritating than a cardboard setting, after all. If you don’t believe the walls can stand, how are you going to believe they’re holding up the roof? No town enters existence as a haunted metropolis — something had to be there before things got spooky.

The first thing to consider is the amount of detail you want to put into a town. If your pack is just going to be wandering through on their way to someplace else, you won’t need a lot of detail. If they’re staying overnight, you’ll need a little more. If they plan on making a home base there, you’ll have to do some homework. Towns don’t just “pop up” out of nowhere, after all. Unless, of course, you need them to...

A frontier town goes through three growth stages: foundation, evolution and perpetuation. Foundation involves the initial set-up of a small “tent-town,” with workers, tents and other primitive shelters. Evolution involves more permanent shelters, entertainment for the workers and other luxuries. Perpetuation involves streets, more permanent buildings and structured government. If a town is destined to become a ghost town, it seldom reaches perpetuation or the more advanced signs of evolution unless catastrophic circumstances (both natural and supernatural) occur.

Every town in the Savage West is settled for a reason. The vast majority of these towns are established for one of two reasons (and sometimes both): water and mining. Mining (for gold, silver, and copper) is why people arrive and water is why they stay. In the desert, especially around Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, temperatures get over 100° F on a regular basis during the summer months, then drop down to 30° F and lower at night. These extreme temperatures demand fresh water sources. No town can even get into foundation without water. While the desire for land ownership is a powerful motivation for the westward movement, the desire for instant riches often eclipses other motivations.

Once a foundation-stage settlement has been established, the "shanty town" or "tent town" proves to be either prosperous or disastrous. Many factors go into determining the success of a settlement, including the wealth of the mine and the organization of the workers and owners. Often, just the location of the town determines if it may be success-



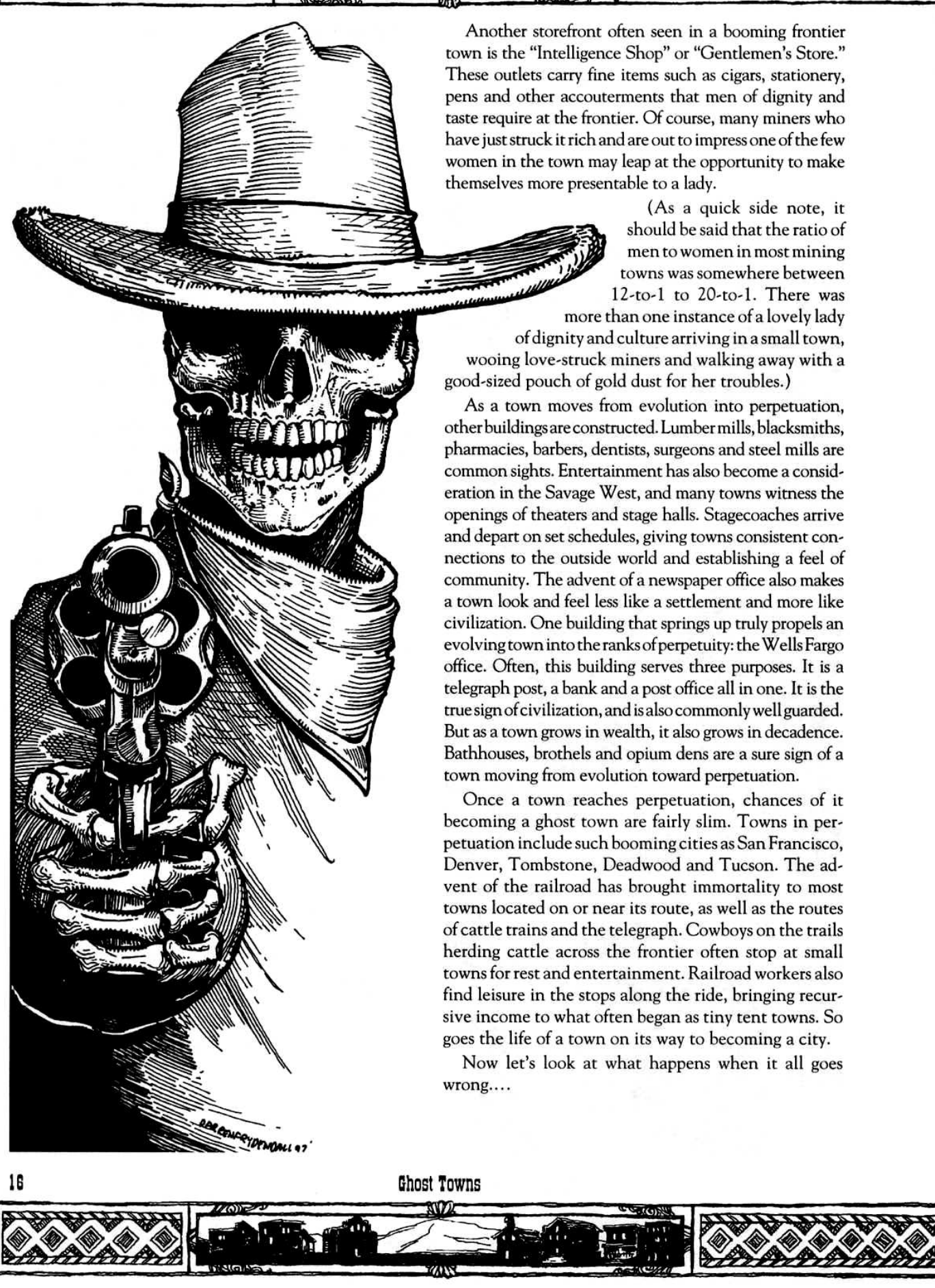
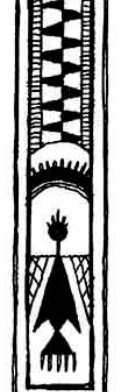
ful. If the town is on a published, famous or well-used route, it may become a layover point to destinations further west. This "tourist trade" brings additional resources to the settlement and also creates the need for service industries such as livery stables, saloons and hotels, thus providing enough income to import lumber for more permanent structures, propelling the small settlement into the evolution stage of development.

The two buildings that are most important to the development of a small town are the saloon and the livery stable. Saloons were not the "bed-and-brothel" hotbeds often portrayed in Hollywood westerns, but are frequently simply cantinas and gambling halls. However, they do provide workers (both native and transitory) a place to spend their money. Livery stables are the western equivalent of service stations, providing fresh horses, shoeing and food for the most popular method of transportation.

The hotel is another building of notable import to the western town, providing clean rooms for those stopping by as well as dwellings for the resident labor. The general store is often less important, depending on the circumstances. Often, supplies are shipped into small towns and residents order what they need from catalogues. However, many towns still have general stores with adjoining restaurants to supplement their income.

Another common myth about western town is the ever-present local sheriff. Not all towns have — or even need — a lawman. Often, justice is dealt swiftly by the witnesses of the crime without trial or jury. A case in point can be found in the death of "Wild Bill" Hickock. The man who shot Wild Bill in the back was quickly beaten into submission by the men who saw him pull the trigger. He was then taken to the town square and hung within minutes of committing his crime. Such is the justice many small towns practice. When towns *do* have a law office, it is usually the office of a local sheriff or marshal, hired by the town to keep the peace. County sheriffs commonly ride through towns within their jurisdiction on irregular intervals, or are summoned from the county seat when needed.

One of the most popular establishments in a Savage West town is the photographer: Almost every small town claims one. Cowboys and soldiers *love* having their pictures taken — it is the Savage West equivalent of being on television. Cowboys may drive cattle for months, get paid, and spend their money on liquor, women and gambling, but they always have their picture taken to remember the moment. Soldiers send photographs back home, to provide mothers, fathers and wives with mementos, just in case they never return.



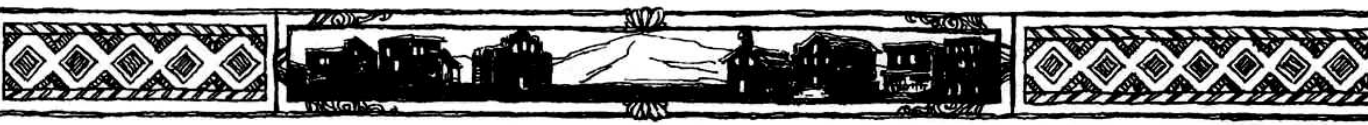
Another storefront often seen in a booming frontier town is the "Intelligence Shop" or "Gentlemen's Store." These outlets carry fine items such as cigars, stationery, pens and other accouterments that men of dignity and taste require at the frontier. Of course, many miners who have just struck it rich and are out to impress one of the few women in the town may leap at the opportunity to make themselves more presentable to a lady.

(As a quick side note, it should be said that the ratio of men to women in most mining towns was somewhere between 12-to-1 to 20-to-1. There was more than one instance of a lovely lady of dignity and culture arriving in a small town, wooing love-struck miners and walking away with a good-sized pouch of gold dust for her troubles.)

As a town moves from evolution into perpetuation, other buildings are constructed. Lumber mills, blacksmiths, pharmacies, barbers, dentists, surgeons and steel mills are common sights. Entertainment has also become a consideration in the Savage West, and many towns witness the openings of theaters and stage halls. Stagecoaches arrive and depart on set schedules, giving towns consistent connections to the outside world and establishing a feel of community. The advent of a newspaper office also makes a town look and feel less like a settlement and more like civilization. One building that springs up truly propels an evolving town into the ranks of perpetuity: the Wells Fargo office. Often, this building serves three purposes. It is a telegraph post, a bank and a post office all in one. It is the true sign of civilization, and is also commonly well guarded. But as a town grows in wealth, it also grows in decadence. Bathhouses, brothels and opium dens are a sure sign of a town moving from evolution toward perpetuation.

Once a town reaches perpetuation, chances of it becoming a ghost town are fairly slim. Towns in perpetuation include such booming cities as San Francisco, Denver, Tombstone, Deadwood and Tucson. The advent of the railroad has brought immortality to most towns located on or near its route, as well as the routes of cattle trains and the telegraph. Cowboys on the trails herding cattle across the frontier often stop at small towns for rest and entertainment. Railroad workers also find leisure in the stops along the ride, bringing recursive income to what often began as tiny tent towns. So goes the life of a town on its way to becoming a city.

Now let's look at what happens when it all goes wrong....



Trouble on the Horizon

While it is important to remember that towns don't just spring up out of nowhere, it is equally important to remember that they don't die without good reason. A frontier town can meet an untimely demise in many ways. When it is first established, a town is often little more than a few dozen men within walking distance of a fresh water source, mining for gold out of tents. The two reasons for settlement (mining and water) are both finite resources. Oftentimes, mines or wells run dry, and workers must move on to follow the promise of another strike.

Something as simple as natural predators can also be the cause of catastrophe. While wolves, bears and coyotes generally avoid men, they are also occasionally known to attack, especially if settlements lay too close to hunting grounds. "Natural predators" may also include Native American tribes looking to keep white men from spoiling their lands. A dozen cold, hungry, ill-equipped miners are no match for a dozen well-fed, well-trained warriors looking to protect their ancestral territory.

Disease can also be the cause of desertion. Raccoons carry the bubonic plague, and a feverish epidemic of influenza also caused the deaths of thousands of expansionists during the mid-nineteenth century.


When a town gains more permanent structures, it requires a much more serious disaster to cause desertion. Once permanent structures are in place, it is harder to convince people to move on and abandon their investment, so even flash fires and epidemics are often suffered graciously. The town of Tombstone faced desertion many times, but when the mine finally dried up, the residents transformed it into a luxurious gambling town, bringing in wealth from all over the Savage West.

One of the direst dangers to a large town is violence. Outlaws know which towns go without law enforcement and prey upon them mercilessly. Also, the promise of quick wealth often plays upon the greed and impatience of desperate men. When drifters discover they have given up everything on a get-rich-quick dream that is more work than they were promised, they sometimes turn to crime to fill their pockets rather than break an honest sweat. The heavy drinking that goes on in frontier towns doesn't help the situation. Vague claim laws coupled with greed and a bit too much whisky put many men on the wrong side of a gun.

Exacerbating the situation is the fact that many small towns do not maintain jails. Scofflaws are frequently forced into one of two punishments: banishment or death. If a town fears a convicted criminal, a quick hanging is the easiest option....

However, just because a town meets its death does not mean that it meets its end. The Savage West is a proto-Fitzgeraldian wasteland, littered with the remains of towns that once looked forward to futures of fortune and prosperity. Now, all that remains of many towns are their skeletons, reminders that Dame Fortune doesn't always keep her word.





Whenever a town meets its doom, it never goes quietly. There will always be those who cling to the dream of building a civilization out of the wilderness, despite the staggering circumstances against it. Often, when a boomtown dries up, those who stay behind die of malnutrition, exposure or violence. If the population atrophies, the town generally dies with it. But that's not always true, especially in the Savage West.

Historic and Mythic

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, ghost towns symbolize many of the more unsightly aspects of the Savage West. Clever Storytellers can use ghost towns in many ways. They can be simply symbols of decadence, broken dreams or dark fortune, or they can be the settings of dramatic stories with themes of redemption.

With the information above, you already have enough knowledge to build a believable historical frontier town. However, this is where we start adding the spice. **Werewolf: The Wild West** employs historical aspects to create the feel of a Western, but it also incorporates fantastic elements to counterpoint the history. H.P. Lovecraft was on to something when he wrote his horrific tales of mundane men and women stepping out of their common world and into the world of the terrible and the unknown. A ghost town can do the same for your players.

Almost everyone has seen or read a Western. Everybody knows how the frontier operates. When players walk in to a deserted town, covered with months of desert sand and cobwebs, however, they've stepped out of the comfortable world they know and into a dark enigma of the Savage West.

Many of the ghost towns encountered in the Savage West are remnants of evolution-stage towns gone wrong. Foundation towns rarely get past temporary shelters. If a water source or mine dries up, the workers pack up and leave, taking the town with them. However, a town in evolution — built of permanent structures — provides an ideal backdrop for building a better ghost town.

What Happened Here?

Concept

Start at the end. What went wrong in your town? Figure out how far it got into development, then plague it with ghosts and look at what's left. There are dozens of ways to afflict a town, but don't just stop at the reason. Get colorful with your disasters. Here are some examples.

Drought

Saying the water dried up is boring. However, imagine your players' faces when their characters ride into a desiccated town and discover that the town's founders put their well a little too close to the graveyard. Better yet, if the characters choose to follow a river, have them come across the same town, only to discover that the townspeople died from the water *they've* been drinking from for a few days....

Plague

As the characters approach a town, they come across the burned corpses of cattle. The closer they get to the town, they begin to see *human* remains in the cattle pyres. Finally, when the characters reach the town, they find it totally deserted — until they open the doors of the church. As they do, swarms of flies and a horrific stink wash over them. Within the small church they find the remains of every last man, woman and child, looking for God's salvation from the accursed plague that has seized their cattle and families.

Of course, diseases aren't the only kind of plagues. Infestations of rats, locusts, spiders, snakes, wolves and other "varmints" can terrify a town's populace, especially if its backed by supernatural means and the residents are God-fearin' folk.

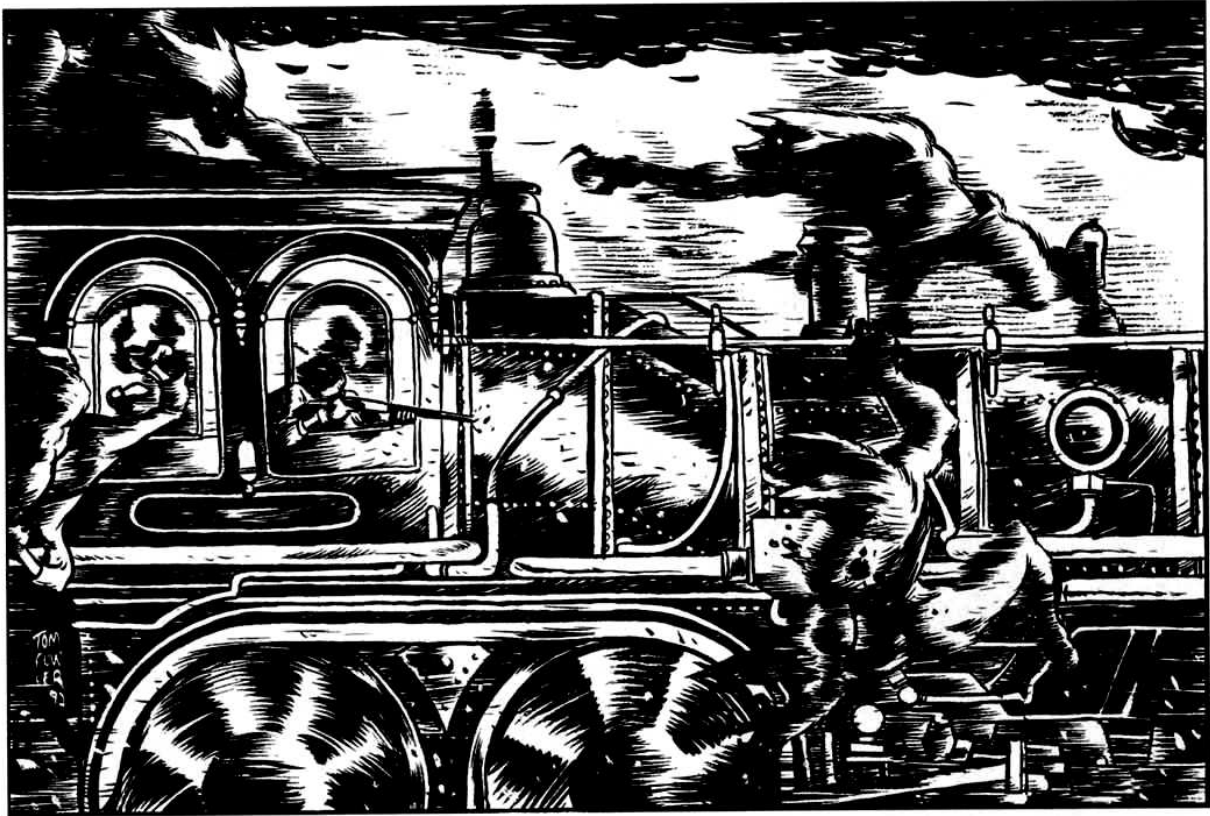
Mines

A mine going dry is a good reason to start packing, but it isn't the only reason. Cave-ins, explosions and poisonous gases are very real threats to miners, and with a few dozen men dying with utter fear and despair in their hearts within a few moments, you've got a real Haunt on your hands....

Trains

A good, old-fashioned train wreck can knock the life out of any town. Back in the early days of the rails, wrecks were not uncommon occurrences, due to lack of sleep and the influence of sleep repressing drugs. Imagine a fifty-thousand-ton train heading toward a town at 40 to 50 miles per hour. Under normal conditions, it would take approximately half a mile for that train to come to a safe stop. Under unsafe conditions... well, let's just say the engineer would pull the emergency brake, jump out and run for his life.

Train wrecks can cause the deaths of hundreds of people and wreak incredible amounts of destruction, especially if they are carrying explosives. However, the weight, speed and size of a runaway train are usually enough to wipe out at least three or four buildings as it careens out of control.



Violence

Don't stop at the scalp.

— Shadows' Envy, Renegade Red Talon

Saying that a gunfight caused the downfall of a town isn't enough. The showdown at the O.K. Corral is one of the most famous Savage Western gunfights because no one can agree on the chain of events. Over 50 witnesses saw the gunfight, and not a single cohesive story could be made from their testimonies. The event literally tore the town — and the country — in half, each side supporting or denouncing the actions of the Earps. Finally, Wyatt and his brothers solved the controversy by leaving Tombstone behind.

Of course, involving the creatures of the World of Darkness is also a sure-fire way to clean out an established town. All you need is a town that gets a little too close to a Red Talon caern and you've got the makings of a slaughter.

Gauntlet and Shroud

Hand in hand with the event that caused a ghost town's decline is the aftermath. The Storm Eater was likely attracted to the sorrowful event that decimated the town, and probably left a bit of its residue behind. As Storyteller, carefully consider the effects of this residue on the Gauntlet and Shroud. A low rating indicates that things are probably very weird in the

town — stuff from the spirit worlds easily bleeds through into the physical. Relatively high Gauntlet and Shroud ratings suggest that either the town avoided the Storm Eater's attention, weathered its presence or is simply too "sophisticated" to believe in such things as spooks and spirits.

Most ghost towns worthy of the title have Gauntlet and Shroud ratings of 4 or lower. Though this rating probably differs in various locales around the town, very few ratings rise above 6, otherwise wraiths and spirits will have too much difficulty interacting with the physical world.

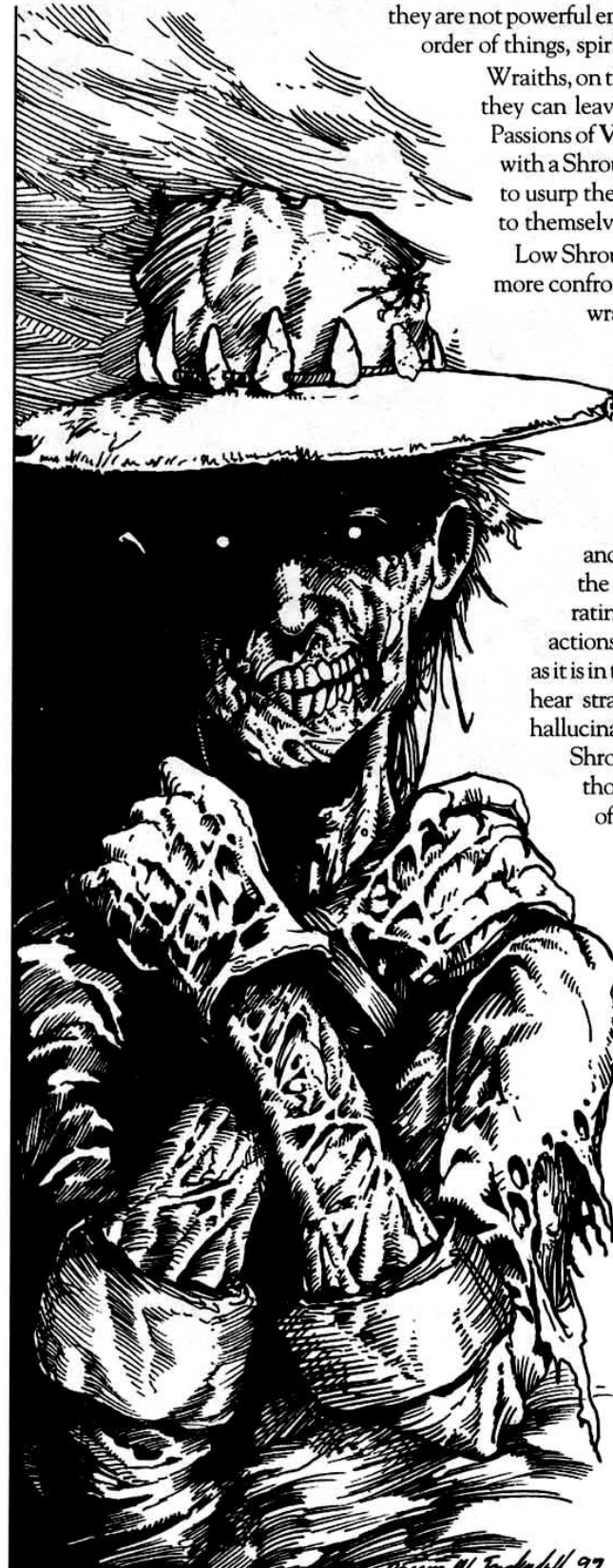
Some particularly far-gone ghost towns have ratings that hover around 1! In these nightmarish communities, spirits run rampant and vengeful ghosts may torment their victims "physically" as well as emotionally.

Note that no Gauntlet or Shroud rating ever drops to 0. The veil between worlds, while it may be thin and stretched, always exists to some degree.

Gauntlet/Shroud Rating 1-2

Towns with very low Gauntlet Shroud ratings are hotbeds of supernatural activity. Few people will go an entire day without seeing a ghost or spirit, and the denizens of the Umbras will have little problem exerting their will in the physical world.

Most lesser spirits, particularly those of the Middle Umbra, will not try to actively affect the physical world, though they are likely to come in contact with it. Whether



they are not powerful enough or just don't have the cognizance to try to change the order of things, spirits mainly continue their daily business as usual.

Wraiths, on the other hand, are advanced enough thinkers to realize that they can leave their marks on the physical world. Those wraiths with Passions of **Vengeance** may act them out at every opportunity in a town with a Shroud rating of 1. Controlling or powerful wraiths may even try to usurp the reins of leadership in a town, creating an unnatural fealty to themselves.

Low Shroud and Gauntlet ratings make for stories of less intrigue and more confrontation. As little separates the players' characters from the wraiths and spirits, much of the story's action will likely be out in the open. This is not to say that multiple layers of plotting and treachery don't exist in this sort of town, but rather that it is probably quite obvious as to the nature of what supernatural forces are pulling the citizenry's strings.

Gauntlet/Shroud Rating 3-4

While a rating of 3 or 4 may seem very low for the Gauntlet and Shroud, remember that the proximity of the spirit world to the physical is of dire import to a true ghost town. At these ratings, natural and supernatural spirits alike must choose their actions carefully, as their access to the physical world is not as free as it is in towns with lower ratings. Some folks about town may see and hear strange things at regular intervals, or experiences of "mass hallucination" may come about. In any event, the Gauntlet and Shroud are still weak enough for spirits to take advantage of, and those same spirits probably take a very active role in the affairs of the town, albeit more subtly.

Gauntlet/Shroud Rating 5-6

Ratings this high (relatively speaking, of course) tend to be the upper limits of what may truly be called "ghost towns". Most *normal* towns have ratings of this level in some parts, and interaction between the spiritual and physical worlds becomes difficult — almost too difficult to affect the other side with any reliability. The supernatural events in these ghost towns tend to be very subtle, well orchestrated and critical to the ghosts or spirits behind them. Towns like these are good for moods of suspense and horror, as the culprits behind the town's woes will be hard to find, and even harder to pin down.

The Major Players

A ghost town is just as believably populated — if not more so — than any other town in a Savage West story. When stocking the ranks of plot-sensitive or Storyteller characters, keep in mind the motivations of those behind the town's unique situation. If none of the characters, player or Storyteller, have interest in why things are as they are in a ghost town, the whole setting will be for naught.



This is especially true for wraiths. As creatures of intense passion, the Restless Dead must have good reason for blatantly violating Charon's laws and trafficking with the mortal world. It is difficult to breach the Shroud, as well, so some tangible reward in line with the character's motivation is required.

The Hierarchy

The Savage West belongs primarily to the Renegades and Heretics, though this is a matter of lawlessness rather than true politics. The Hierarchy is, of course, interested in making headway into the Shadowlands of the Savage West, however, and this Restless imperialism may be the reason for an infestation of ghosts in a given town. The Hierarchy may be trying to take a town by force, thereby creating a series of skirmishes on the other side of the Shroud. They may also be trying to establish a permanent fortification there, forging the souls of the town's recently dead into raw building materials. The wraiths of the Dark Kingdom of Iron usually fulfill roles of conquest in the Savage West, and their plots center around gaining ground and stemming the Renegade and Heretic tides.

The Renegades

The largest population of wraiths in the Shadowlands, Renegades are as diverse and disparate as their name suggests. Renegades may truly have any motives, and might well be involved in any ghost town, as spies, agents provocateur, Hierarchy deserters, etc. Renegades commonly resist the growing opposition of the Hierarchy's advances, and some sort of political conflict may affect the town. Because of their vast individuality, however, Renegades are much more suited to "personal" pursuits, ranging from the megalomaniac ("This is my town!") to the minute ("I will torment my cheatin' wife and everyone who comes in contact with her") and everything in between.

The Heretics

Stories involving Heretic elements have the capacity to be the most horrific of all. Any number of cults have arisen in the Shadowlands of the Savage West, and their highly individualistic outlooks on Transcendence may take on frightening aspects. A town under Heretic sway may be a horrifying community of death-cultists, as the Restless Dead build ghastly shrines to themselves. Or, it may be a town where all children are stillborn, their innocent souls stolen away by marauding wraiths for their own nefarious purposes.

It should also be noted that many of the Restless Dead hailing from indigenous cultures end up among the Heretics. With their own spiritual beliefs at odds with those of the encroaching Europeans, many Native Americans band together for protection in the afterlife.

Wrapping It Up

With careful preparation, a ghost town should be a truly memorable experience for players and Storytellers alike. No other setting provides the capacity for horror and excitement when one has literally no idea as to the nature or power of the invisible foe they face. Use ghost towns judiciously, or you risk turning the chronicle into a series of "seek and destroy" missions and losing the element of fear that make them so interesting.

DWF 97







Scum On the Water: Baton Rouge

"I suppose it would be too much to ask for the Wym to get uppity in someplace pretty now, wouldn't it?"

Alabaster gazed balefully at his traveling companion. The younger Garou, was a good scrapper (for a cub, Alabaster corrected himself mentally), a good drinker, and even a good singer for those nights when they'd been drifting downstream on Alabaster's raft in the dark. It was just that the boy had to provide running commentary on everything, and after three weeks of that sort of thing, Alabaster's nerves were rubbed raw. "Luther, if the Wym's someplace, that place just ain't pretty. So for the love of Gaia shut your hole 'fore I shut it for you." He shook his head and sniffed. "Don't know why your sept didn't name you 'Yammers-Too-Damn-Much,' I surely don't."

Luther turned mock-hurt eyes to the older Garou. The boy's face was smooth and unlined, and much to his despair Nature had made it plain he was never going to be able to grow much of a beard. His bright red hair straggled down his back, unfashionably long for a river-hand, and his pants and shirt were stained with the mud of the Mississippi. "Now Alabaster, don't get petty on me. You're the one who suggested we visit this," he gestured expansively, "shining light of civilization, while all I wanted to do was go downstream a little further and get myself some authentic chartreuse with which to render myself senseless."

Alabaster snorted. "Y'already ain't got no sense, Luther. Don't need chartreuse for that." The younger Garou laughed, and then was mercifully silent.

An hour later, the pair found themselves standing before the gates of a pure-white building done in a poor attempt at high Gothic style. Alabaster snorted in disgust and pulled his hat low over his eyes, while Luther gripped the bars and peered in at the monstrosity. Grinning like a fool, he turned





to his partner and said, "I hear Sam Clemens called this the ugliest building on the whole damn river. Can you believe that?"

Alabaster scratched his chin with a pale, thin finger. "I believe I can. Why the hell would anyone want to chop down a perfectly good tree t'build that pile is beyond me."

Luther snickered. "Maybe the Wym's gotten into all the architects down here. That'd be a new one, wouldn't it?"

"Mr. Tallafiero doesn't appreciate your using such talk 'round here, gentlemen." Both travelers turned in amazement to see who'd addressed them thus; the fact that the newcomer had managed to sneak up on a pair of Garou was worrisome to both.

The speaker was a small, wizened man in a gray suit and top hat. His hair was gray as well, and so were his eyes. The only thing about him that wasn't gray was the black cane he held in his wrinkled right hand; the top of the cane was tarnished silver.

"Allow me to introduce myself," the stranger said. "I'm Belton. I work for Mr. Tallafiero, whom you might know better as Watches-the-Waters. He has a polite request for y'all, which is that you come by his place this evening for dinner and cigars. If you're so gracious as to accept the invitation, I'm sure Mr. Tallafiero will be more than happy to help you with whatever you're looking for. He's good at helping people, he is."

Alabaster squinted suspiciously. "How'd you know to come find us?" he demanded of Belton. "We didn't tell no one we were coming, not up the river at Luther's sept nor anywhere along the way."

Belton shrugged apologetically and coughed once. "Mr. Tallafiero has certain...agents assigned to watch the river for people of interest, and you two are most certainly interesting, gentlemen. Now can I report to my employer that you will be joining us?"

"I guess," Alabaster was still wary. "When and where?"

Belton reached a white-gloved hand inside his gray suit and brought out a gray card. "Magnolia House, gentlemen, at 6:30 sharp. Dress..." and he looked them up and down, "...will be formal, and will be provided. Oh, and Mr. Tallafiero will appreciate it if you leave the ghosts who are trailing you behind." And with that, the little gray man turned and marched his little gray way off into the distance.


"Well, I will be damned," Luther said, after a while.

"Most 'certainly," Alabaster grunted back, still staring off at where Belton had vanished into the crowd.

There was another pause, then Luther said, "You think he was right? About the ghosts, I mean."

Alabaster shrugged, readjusted his hat. "Could be. Haven't felt quite right about things since that last little scrap in Mizzou; think we might have been a tetch overzealous there."





Neither moved, for a while. Neither spoke. Men and women, blacks and whites, Cajuns and Creoles and rivermen walked past, each intent on their own business. English and French calls and shouts filled the air. Far off on the river, paddleboats' whistles shrieked; the harsh sound made Luther and Alabaster cringe.

No ghosts made their presence felt, though, and eventually the pair of Garou ambled off, wary eyes checking every shadow for imagined spectral pursuers. Eventually Luther thought to ask a passerby for directions to Magnolia House, and the "ugliest" building on the Mississippi was left far behind.

Mind you, the ghosts were still looking at it and commenting. They just figured they'd catch up to Alabaster and Luther later.

Oh, sure, everyone thinks N'Awlins is where all the action is. Damn town's just plumb crawling with blood-suckers, practitioners of good ol' fashioned voodoo, and mortal folks trying not to trip over the 'casional zumbie strolling 'round. But listen close, Baton Rouge is where the real action is. It's where the railroads meet the ocean shipping trade, and it's even the capital of the state, off and on. There's power here, and money, and a very fat man who sits with his fingers on the pulse of the river trade. He's worth making friends with, he is, or at least paying respect to. Then there's the ghosts, riding up and down the river without paying the poor captains whose ships they're a-haunting, and spooking the residents of the city when they have a little mood come over 'em. Good thing ol' Marie is here to keep the spooks and haints in line, yes it is, or no one would be getting no sleep around here.

So come down the river. Hitch a ride on a raft or a sidewheeler, or hobo it on the rail lines. There's plenty to see down here, plenty to do, and some very interesting folks to meet. Who knows, there could be some money in it for you — or maybe even something better.

History

The place they call Baton Rouge dates back to the heyday of French exploration in North America. When *voyageurs* first found themselves atop a certain bluff on the east bank of the Mississippi, they used sticks painted red — *batons rouge* — to mark the limits of their encampment. When a fort went up on the same site in 1719, the name of the place was taken from those red sticks, and it's been Baton Rouge ever since.

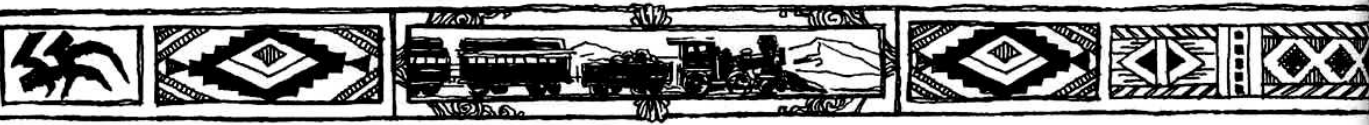
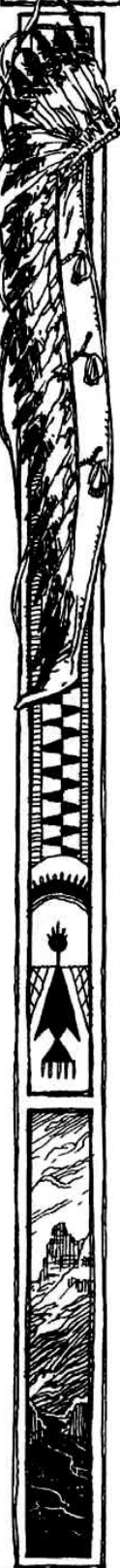
The early days of the settlement were under French rule, and remarkably free of supernatural influence. While the occasional refugee from New Orleans —

which burgeoned 70 miles to the south — passed through, none wanted to stay. On one hand, Baton Rouge was too close to New Orleans — and the unhappy Uktena living in the swamps outside the city. On the other, there wasn't much in the city that made it worth risking the danger of hanging 'round — and the extensive river traffic made it easy for transients or visitors with mischief on their minds to slip into town.

Mind you, all that changed in 1763. That was the year the French ceded all of their Louisiana holdings east of the Mississippi to the English (except New Orleans itself); and everything to the West had already gone to the Spanish. The change in hands brought in an influx of English administrators and settlers, and with them one or two Silver Fang kinfolk. The local Uktena population kept the city free of Wyrcomers until then, but the seeds of change had already been planted. On the other side of the Shroud, matters had gotten confusing. As there was no Hierarchy presence to speak of anywhere in the Louisiana territory, the souls of the dead kept on doing as they'd been doing when they were alive. So the freshly minted English ghosts ended up squabbling with the French ghosts, with the Spanish ghosts across the river aiding each side in turn depending upon who had the momentary advantage. The closest thing to an authority in place was a small band of Catholic Heretics who'd followed the original French explorers, but their decrees were honored more in the breach than anything else. The native Restless, meanwhile, had retreated upriver and west, following the decrees of the Five Nations of the Underworld. So what was left behind was, essentially, a mess.

By the time the 1770s rolled around, the situation had changed dramatically. The Silver Fang Kinfolk were a married couple by the name of Belton, business agents for a London shipper named Tallafiero, and in 1775, the Honorable Desmond A. Tallafiero himself arrived in the colonies in an effort to safeguard his holdings there against the incipient trouble brewing. The Uktena made two attempts to sabotage the Silver Fang's entrance into Baton Rouge, but he arrived unharmed and immediately set up shop

Needless to say, the following year things got even stickier. With the outbreak of shooting, Tallafiero found himself stranded in the barbaric colonies (Or so he claimed — in truth he figured the opportunities there were greater for him than they would be back home in stodgy, hidebound England). He settled down and formed a sort of sept out of the Kinfolk and Garou who came in and out of town on the river trade, all the while building up his shipping holdings. Trading for news with shelter,



talens and other gewgaws, he obtained a clear picture of what was going on elsewhere in the colonies, and decided to stay the hell out of it. It was a beautiful plan, and Lord knows it would have worked well, except for the fact that in 1779, the Spanish took advantage of England's distractions elsewhere and seized the city.

Tallafiero came through the battle and subsequent occupation with minimal damage, but the same could not be said for the town's ghostly population. The French Heretics who had been the nominal rulers of the site were swept aside by much more energetic Heretics who'd come to the New World during the time of the Flaying. Old and powerful, they quickly imposed a rigid order on the city, and soulforged many "blasphemers" into religious iconography. Other wraiths submitted, scattered or hid, but the sack of the city had destroyed any number of Fetters, and the rebels' position was weak.

But while ghostly resistance fighters fled or were cut down, one by one, things were a little different over on the living side. Quietly, efficiently, Tallafiero started laying the groundwork for the future. He worked with his unorthodox sept to run guns into town under the eyes of the Spanish sentries. He helped organize a budding resistance, and got news — from the fledgling United States and even overseas — smuggled into the city. Money to finance operations went out on his boats.

And he got married, to the faithful Beltons' only daughter, Rose. While the Beltons' remaining children continued to work in the Tallafiero business, Rose gave birth to a baby boy in 1809. Young Herman was to prove a disappointment, running away from home at an early age to serve on a sidewheeler, and never manifesting his Garou heritage. In a half-hearted attempt to hide his identity, he even changed his name to "Tolliver," and his mother died of the shame of it.

But that's neither here nor there, because in September of 1810 the revolt that Tallafiero had been planning for so long finally erupted. The West Floridian colonials had finally had enough, and expelled the Spanish in a bloody fight. By 1812 Louisiana was a state, with its capital at New Orleans and its independence assured. Changes were brewing on the other side of the Shroud as well. Even as the first steamboat to go the length of the Mississippi was making headlines, an influx of wraiths from New Orleans — strange wraiths of Caribbean descent who talked of "The Island Below the Sea" and called themselves *Les Invisibles*. At the same time, the very first Hierarchy advance troops came down the

river, and fortified with the emotion generated by the rebellion, the old-time dead of the city returned with a vengeance.

The Spanish Heretics didn't stand a chance against the confluence of forces arrayed against them. With their unifying influence gone, however, the remaining factions took a few days to deal with the Hierarchy advance forces, then returned the city to its old state of chaos.

It wasn't that long thereafter that first Clement Hazen, and then his sidekick Tilton came onto the scene. They straightened the place up a bit, knocked a few heads, and calmed the place down. They also set up a coexistence treaty with the ghosts from down the river, who were becoming more and more numerous as the years passed.

Meanwhile, things were relatively anticlimactic in the living world. Tallafiero's boy grew up, ran away and came home; the city became the state capitol in 1849, and the Tallafiero family got richer and richer — until the war broke out. Baton Rouge wasn't hit as hard by the Civil War as some towns were, at least not until 1862, when Farragut steamed up the river (some say with Tallafiero's help) and took the city, and then on August 5th when the Rebs tried to take it back. But with Beast Butler firmly ensconced as governor in New Orleans, control of Baton Rouge wasn't going anywhere. It was back in the Union for keeps (though its status as state capital was stripped away until 1882). The ghosts kept their head down through that whole mess and came through relatively unscathed, though Herman died in the fighting and his son Davis lost an awful lot of his ships in the bombardment. The truth was, the ghostly part of the population was so split on who to support (except *Les Invisibles*, who gave Farragut and his boys a serious hand) that everyone was paralyzed because no one was strong enough to do anything without getting countered. Besides, the ghosts figured, win or lose, they'd all have to deal with each other after the battle ended like neighbors again.

And that brings us to the present, or at least the present of folks like Clem Hazen and Davis Tallafiero. Be careful with their city, mind you. It's still recovering a touch from what's been done to it, and there's all sorts of undesirables coming in off the river trying to make some sort of ruckus. Mind you don't become one of those types, you hear? Oh, and if you're Garou, check in with Tallafiero. He'll be expecting you.



Clement Hazen

Background: A Renegade by default, Hazen is rapidly watching the Underworld of Baton Rouge crumble around him. A soldier who'd served under Ol' Hickory himself in the War of 1812, Hazen was killed at the Battle of New Orleans — days after the treaty ending the war was signed. Confused and terrified, he fled the battlefield and somehow stumbled safely through the swamps for months. Eventually, he ended up in Baton Rouge, which was a rough-and-tumble town for wraiths even by the standards of the time. The Hierarchy hadn't yet reached the town, there was no central authority, and Heretics, Renegades, and Les Invisibles were going at it in a three-way tug-of-war for power.

Enter Clement Hazen, an *Enfant* with no clue as to what he'd stumbled into. However, Hazen had two advantages to work with: An utter disregard for what he was "supposed" to be doing, and the Artifact of his rifle. He kicked a few tails, forged a few compromises, learned a few things from some of the Creole wraiths that the other whites didn't know, and emerged as the consensus compromise candidate to hold the town together while everyone else sorted out their business.

That was decades ago, though, and the Hierarchy is stomping closer every day. Hazen's still serving as mayor-cum-head butt-kicker, but he's having to deal with a



flood of refugees from Heretic and Renegade haunts further east, an increased feistiness on the part of the Creole wraiths, and his own aggressively uppity Shadow.

Image: Hazen is over six feet tall and whip-thin, with a long hatchet face and a sad, sad expression. He's still in uniform, and his hair blows wild in a wind that no one else seems to be able to feel. Hazen's most distinguishing feature, though, is the bullet hole in his chest, which still contains the relic of the bullet that killed him. At times of stress or great contemplation, Hazen will absentmindedly reach in and take out the bullet to play with, completely unaware of the effect this has on bystanders.

Roleplaying Hints: You're in charge, primarily because there's no one else who could handle it. The wraith population of this town is transient as all hell, so you're friendly to everyone and close to no one. You're doing your best to handle all of the problems of Baton Rouge on your own, but it's too much and you're drowning in it, because you're too proud to ask for help.

Destiny: Hazen's pride will be his undoing. Hierarchy agent Dameyune Wilson converts or destroys his allies, tricks Tilton into becoming a Spectre, and then uses that as an excuse to bring in the Legions. Hazen tries to stop him, predictably fails, and is forged as a Renegade in 1882.

Nature: Mediator

Demeanor: Leader

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 1, Intimidation 4

Skills: Firearms 4, Leadership 3, Melee 2, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Investigation 2, Law 2, Occult 1, Politics 1

Backgrounds: Allies 1 (Tilton), Artifact 3, Haunt 2, Memoriam 1, Status 3

Passions: Keep Order (Duty) 3, Protect Baton Rouge (Pride) 4

Arcanoi: Argos, Castigate, Flux 2, Outrage 4, Pandemonium 2

Fetters: Gravestone 1, New Orleans Battlefield 2

Willpower: 8

Permanent Corpus: 8

Shadow: The Monster

Angst: 5

Thorns: Bad Luck, Wrack

Shadow Passions: Gun down rivals (Hate) 5, Show Tilton his place (Fear) 4



Pierre Toussaint

Background: For Pierre, death has been an infinitely preferable experience to life. Born into slavery, he was never intended for anything more than work in the cane fields. “Fortunately,” the owner of the plantation where Pierre was put to work considered himself to be a kind and enlightened man. He endowed a church to see to the spiritual needs of his slaves, and the pastor of that church took a special interest in Pierre.

Taught to read and write by Fr. Beaulac, Pierre displayed his knowledge before the master of the plantation in hopes of achieving a promotion to the manor house. He achieved this, but at a price — the church was closed down, for fear that it was spreading “subversive” ideas. Pierre went to the big house, and Fr. Beaulac went on his way.

It was too late for Pierre, though. The house slaves looked down on him, seeing him as an interloper who belonged back in the field. The field hands resented him, understanding the tie between his ascent to the house and the departure of the local priest. And the good Father’s teachings had already started Pierre wondering a bit too loudly about the morality of slavery.

So he took the first steps down the road to revolt — and was caught. The master of the house sorrowfully had him flogged to death in front of the rest of his “property,” as a lesson.

Crossing over, Pierre took his first tottering steps as a wraith — a free wraith — on his own. He tore through his Caul on his own. And standing in the Shadowlands, looking over the wreck of his corpse, he swore he’d never be bound to anyone or anything, ever again.

So when Pierre descended to the Island Below the Sea to meet with the Loa, he did so to bargain and not to pledge allegiance. And when he returned to the Mirrorlands, he did so on his own agenda, not that of the Loa. And when he hitched a ride to the mainland on a trading vessel to see what he could find and achieve there, he did so of his own initiative.

Pierre’s been in Baton Rouge for over two years now, and maintains a courteous but distant relationship with Hazen. Toussaint has taken hold of the reins of power in the community of *Les Invisibles* in Baton Rouge, and is working steadily to expand his influence. He has far more Chevaux at his disposal than Hazen has mortals and mediums at his, and a result has been steadily eroding the authority — and Fetters — of Hazen and his occasional allies.

Image: Pierre is a short, powerfully built man whose back still bears the marks of the lash. His hands are callused and strong, and his head is clean shaven. Toussaint’s time Below the Sea has marked him, and while his Corpus is still as dark as his skin was in life, he occasionally has a wave of unsettling translucence wash across him.

Roleplaying Hints: You are in charge. You have your goals, and will not be thwarted from them. While you don’t particularly dislike anyone else, you don’t particularly like anyone, either. Interact with others as little as possible, unless they’re potential allies or potential threats. Whatever you learned on the Island Below the Sea has focused your abilities to match your desire, and you’re not hesitant about moving to take what you want.

Destiny: When the Ivory Queen takes New Orleans, Baton Rouge becomes the most important city in Louisiana for *Les Invisibles*. Maintaining an uneasy truce with the Hierarchy, Toussaint is the leading voice of the Loa in the city for at least another century.

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Bravo

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Expression 2, Intimidation 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Crafts 2, Leadership 5, Meditation 2, Melee 1, Stealth 3

Knowledge: Enigmas 3, Linguistics 3, Medicine 1, Occult 2

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 3, Status 3

Passions: Be free (Defiance) 5, Help others to freedom (Rage) 4

Arcanoi: Argos 4, Connaisance 5, Moliate 1, Puppetry 4, Usury 3

Fetters: Govi 5

Willpower: 10

Permanent Corpus: 10

Mait' Tete: Ogon

Angst: 4

Thorns: Devil's Dare, Shadowplay, Wrack x3

Shadow Passions: Burn down Baton Rouge (Hatred) 3, Destroy Hazen (Envy) 4

Marie Thibodeux

Background: Marie doesn't do *voudoun*, exactly. Nor does she take clients as a medium, at least not exactly. Instead, she just sits, and listens, and lets the ghosts talk to her.



The ghosts, when they come, they tell Marie things. They tell her secrets from their lives — where they hid their money, or their baubles and trinkets, so that the bandits and doctors wouldn't steal it after they died. They also tell her things they've seen in the afterlife — stories of deeds done on earth.

And so when the ghosts come to talk to Marie, telling her these stories, she writes them down and puts the stories in a safe place, trusting one of her nephews or grandsons or daughters with it. Then she wraps herself up to go traveling and makes her way through the streets to the door of someone a ghost's told her a story about. She'll walk up the steps and knock on the door, and whoever answers, rich or poor, always lets her in. They know what's going to happen if they don't.

No one knows what happens once the door swings shut behind Marie. Maybe she helps people. Maybe she tells 'em that she knows their secrets. In any case, she always walks out with a handful of money, which she takes home and hides someplace her ghostly friends can watch over it.

Then she sits and waits for the next visitor.

Image: A big-boned woman in her 60s, Marie is still alert and energetic. She wears white cotton, island-style, and never goes out without her head being covered. Her face was beautiful once, and you can still see the traces of that beauty that time hasn't eroded away.

Roleplaying Hints: Sit and wait for the ghosts to tell you what you need to know. Never renege on the bargains you make with them; you know better than to do that. Honor their requests, though the ghosts from the Islands are generally more polite about asking you than the white ghosts are. If someone comes to you for help, make sure they're sincere and respectful before offering any — and double-check with the ghosts.

Destiny: Marie lives to the age of 103, still passing on tidbits from the other side until the day she dies. The respect the town has for her wanes, though, and her last years are not happy ones. On the bright side, she is warmly greeted by many of her former informants when she crosses over, and eventually becomes an Anacreon for the Iron Legion.

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Survivor

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 5, Awareness 4, Empathy 4, Expression 2, Spiritual Awareness 5, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Body Reading 4, Crafts 2, Etiquette 2, Survival 3

Knowledges: Enigmas 3, Linguistics 3, Medicine 2, Occult 4

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 5

Merits and Flaws: Easy Consort, Speaker with the Dead

Watches-the-Waters

Background: Herman Tallafiero inherited his money from the river trade, moving anything that people wanted moved. He worked fast, cheap and without any questions, and before long improved for himself an empire of paddleboats and river rats that dwarfed the one his father had created. Satisfied, he set himself up in imperial style, getting fat and sassy on his riverboat profits while watching the river trade expand.

Three years later, there was a knock on his door. Outside was a young man, already showing signs of going to fat, who claimed to be Tallafiero's illegitimate son. Now Herman was a lot of things, but he wasn't a liar, and he could see his features in the boy's face. 'Sides, he hadn't married and was looking for someone to be ready to take over the business from him when he passed on, and here was fate, dropping an heir in his lap. He took the young man, who called himself Davis Tolliver, in, made him change his name back to Tallafiero, and "adopted" him. Then he set about turning young Davis into the spitting image of a young Herman, and did as good a job as might be expected.

That was a dozen years ago. Herman is dead now, and Davis — whose mother Herman had dallied with so long ago — now sits on top of the machine that his father built. He controls a good chunk of the river trade, and a ton of the peripheral businesses — suppliers, brothels, saloons, wagon teamsters — as well. That allows him to keep a gimlet eye on what comes into and what goes out of town, and more importantly, who comes in and out as well.

Image: Davis is hugely fat, and in Homid form needs to walk with the aid of a gold-handled cane. His complexion is a florid red, as is what's left of his hair, and he wears the finest suits that the river trade can send to him. In wolf form, Tallafiero is still roly-poly, but he moves with reasonable effectiveness. He's actually quite burly in addition to being fat, and in Crinos form he's positively enormous.

Roleplaying Hints: You keep track of all the Garou who come into and go out of town, and can move things — or people — for other Garou without any questions asked. You're possessive of both your city and your property, and will act swiftly to crush any threat to either. Do folks favors — it doesn't cost you anything



you can't afford, and it's always nice having folks all over the country owing you one. By this point enough Garou scattered over enough territory owe you one that nobody's dumb enough to renege, lest you call in someone else's marker to set the matter straight.

Destiny: Finally called upon to fight his own battle when something big, ugly and Wyrn-tainted comes oozing down the river in 1875, Tallafiero is killed while buying time for his foreman Gerry Corbin and several others to get away and summon reinforcements. He does not kill the beast, but wounds it enough that Corbin is able to kill it later. Watches-the-Waters never marries, and leaves his estate to the Beltons, with instructions to look for a successor to take up his duties.

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Philodox

Tribe: Silver Fangs

Physical: Strength 3 (5/7/6/4), Dexterity 2 (2/3/4/4), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5)

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 5 (4/0/2/2), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2)

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 1, Empathy 4, Expression 3, Intimidation 3, Larceny 5, Primal Urge 1, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Etiquette 4, Firearms 2, Melee 1, Leadership 4, Survival 2

Knowledges: Culture 2, Investigation 3, Law 4, Linguistics 2, Politics 4, Science 1

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 5, Fetish 2, Kinfolk 1, Pure Breed 3, Resources 5, Rites 2

Gifts: (1) Eminent Domain, Persuasion, Resist Pain, Scent of the True Form, Sense Wyrms (2) Call to Arms, Commanding Voice, Mend the Forked Tongue, Stare-down (3) Disquiet, Wisdom of the Ancient Ways

Rank: 3

Rage: 6, **Gnosis:** 4, **Willpower:** 8

Rites: Moot Rite, Rite of Cleansing

Fetishes: Dream Catcher

Other Characters

Kinfolk

Harris and Abraham Belton

Harris Belton's family has been in service to the Tallafiero's since the early 1700s. He and his twin brother Abraham are the last members of the Belton family, as neither has taken a wife nor produced any illegitimate heirs (the very notion would shock both Belton Brothers silly). Instead, they work for Watches-the-Waters. Harris runs Tallafiero's household, serving as head of staff and essentially the Garou's eyes and hands for administrative matters in town. Abraham is the business' factotum, and runs Tallafiero's shipping concerns with remarkable efficiency. Both are shy, unassuming men who just happen to be crack shots — even Tallafiero's imposing reputation doesn't keep the occasional riverhand from getting rambunctious. The brothers are on the far side of fifty, slender without being frail and possessed of full heads of silver hair. Both dress impeccably well; the only way to tell them apart is that Abraham uses a gold-handled cane, while Harris' is silver.

Wraiths

Dameyune Wilson

Wilson is the latest Hierarchy agent sent into town; unlike the others, he's got a solid head on his shoulders. Rather than announcing his presence with sword drawn, he came in on one of the ghostly sternwheelers that occasionally dock at the would-be Necropolis posing as a riverhand looking for a place to hide out for a while.

An imposing man over six-foot two, Wilson was part of Benedict Arnold's expeditionary force to Canada. A victim of exposure while on the march, he gravitated

back to his home town of New York — and to the Hierarchy Citadel there. For the past few decades, he's been instrumental in bringing the Hierarchy to places like Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, and then on down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Marked indelibly with the sigils of both Outrage and the Emerald Legion, Wilson is surprisingly subtle, and one hell of a recruiter for the Hierarchy. He's also very good at observation and at scouting out an enemy's weaknesses — and he thinks he's gotten Hazen's number.

Annabelle Lapin

One of the old-time rebels, Annabelle has been in Baton Rouge as long as the British have. She died of yellow fever during the heady nights of 1764, right after the English took over the territory of West Florida. A slip of a young woman, not yet married but casting wistful eyes at the newly arrived Belton, she thankfully died before her parents and younger sister did. God must have had reason for being especially merciful to her, because she didn't emerge from her Caul until they'd passed on to wherever weaker souls go.

These days Annabelle watches over the Belton family's remaining scions, and there are times when she suspects her Shadow is the reason neither of the twins ever married. After all, both men are dead ringers for their grandfather, who died so long ago unaware of Lapin's feelings for him.

Jeremiah Tilton

Tilton may be the only real friend Hazen's got, though how much a friend he really is remains to be seen. Another veteran of the Battle of New Orleans, Tilton survived another 13 years after the fight before succumbing to some disease or other that made him cough up his lungs in bloody chunks. Tall and rangy, he brought his squirrel gun over to the other side with his ghost, and stomped his way across Louisiana from Natitoches to Baton Rouge when he heard his old buddy was ostensibly in charge there. For the last few decades, Tilton has been Hazen's best friend and sidekick, not to mention his backup in fights and his muscle when laws needed enforcing. Mind you, Tilton's also got a hair-trigger temper, a Shadow that shakes itself loose way too often and a rep for being a little too quick with that relic squirrel gun.

Les Invisibles

Chavis

Chavis is a river man, a man who talks to Damballah and Legba and tells their secrets to Toussaint when the man comes out to see him. Chavis has sworn never to set



foot on shore, so he dwells on the boats who tie up at the city's docks, or that pass by in the night. He's a fey man, given to casting oracles by looking in the water and passing on those secrets to those who come down to see him. He's been known to call to the living and the dead to pass on his wisdom, and he talks to white as well as black. Chavis is a plain talker, not much given to riddles or mysteries, but instead doling out truth to those he thinks need to hear it.

Ida Reboulet

Ida was a freedwoman, a house slave on a plantation who learned to read and write at a local church and who bought her freedom with the money she made on those rare Sundays her owner let her have to work for herself. With the extra money she had, she left New Orleans with the idea of heading up north to start a new life.

She never made it. A lone freedwoman traveling the river was just the sort of prey a couple of riverboat sharps were looking for. During the dogwatch the third night out of New Orleans, they cornered and robbed her, then threatened to sell her as a runaway.


She threw herself over the side instead and made for shore, but never got that far. The boat she was on was a sidewheeler, and one of the paddles caught her on the side of the head. Knocked out, she went down like a stone.

Now Ida haunts the riverbank just upstream from the city, waiting for the men who robbed her to come back downstream. They're going to come back, she knows, one of these days. In the meantime, though, she's fallen in with Toussaint, who sees her as both a potential ally and a kindred soul.

Garou

Steers-by-Starlight

A riverhand who works flatboats as opposed to steamers, Steers-by-Starlight is a Strider who finds the infinite variety up and down the river to be good enough for him. Almost six and a half feet tall in Homid form, Steers-by-Starlight is a thin, silvery wolf with mismatched eyes. In his guise as a bargeman he works cargoes for Tallafiero (and others),



occasionally accepting assignments and at other times bringing back tidbits of information. Half the time he doesn't even take work, preferring to run up and down the river looking for news or signs of the Wyrn.

When dealing with humans, Steers-by-Starlight goes by the name of Jakob, and is accounted one of the better hands to be had on the river. Legendary for his taciturnity, Jakob's reserve is only broken when someone pulls out a mouth-harp; he's been known to play for hours when the muse touches him.

Ellen Riverhawk

Down New Orleans way, there's a treaty between the vampires in the city and the Uktena out in the swamps, and that's just fine for them. Up closer to Baton Rouge, there's no deal, and that's one of the reasons the city's been kept Leech-free so far. Ellen's Uktena, of Caddo blood and not in a forgiving mood. Her tribe ceded its lands back in 1835; she's been decidedly unhappy about the matter her whole life and has been taking out her aggression on anything coming down the river that displeases her.

Ellen lives in a deceptively ramshackle hut about three miles down the river from Baton Rouge, where she can keep an eye on the deep-water traffic coming into the city. When a cargo smells funny to her, she takes action. The rest of the time, she makes a living off sailors who come to her for "charms" and fortunetelling. Tallafiero loathes her with a passion, but isn't about to make a move against her; her presence serves as a check against Watches-the-Waters' baser instincts when he gets tempted to try to sidestep Gaia and ship something that isn't quite pure.

Gerry Corbin

Gerry is one of the very few permanent Garou residents of Baton Rouge. A foreman on Tallafiero's docks, he's Watches-the-Waters' muscle when situations come up that the Beltons can't handle. The rest of the time, he runs the gangs that load and unload Tallafiero's cargoes, and keeps an eye on who comes and goes along the waterfront.

Corbin is Fianna, and a recent immigrant to the United States. He came in on a ship that ran Liverpool-New York-Baton Rouge (the city is the last deepwater port on the Mississippi with both sea and rail access), was spotted by a few of the spirits Watches-the-Waters keeps bound as lookouts, and was offered a job if he'd stick around. Corbin quickly accepted, and has been Tallafiero's #1 bullyboy ever since.

In his natural form, Corbin is only 5'8", but built like the lower two-thirds of a rock outcropping. While he's going bald up top, Corbin's arms and chest have a thorough dusting of fiery red hair, and he's also the proud bearer of a full beard and mustache.

Connections

In a town with as transient a population as Baton Rouge, it's hard for everyone to know everyone. Still, here's a short list of which members of the Awakened population are aware of one another.

- Annabelle knows exactly what the Belton family is, and by extension all of the Garou associated with the Tallafiero house and business. They are all unaware of her presence, though she will violate the *Dictum Mortuum* blatantly to protect the Beltons from harm.

- Chavis knows everyone. Abraham is aware of something not quite right on the water, but has no idea what it is. Corbin, on the other hand, has spoken with Chavis, and reported the conversation to Tallafiero.

- Ellen knows and has spoken to all of the river ghosts, but none of the other Garou save Tallafiero. The Beltons won't go near her place.


- Tallafiero has had some sort of dealings with both Toussaint and Hazen, and is hedging his bets while he sees who comes out on top. He is as yet unaware of the Hierarchy incursion.

- Marie knows all of the Dead, and not a few of the living. Surprised? You shouldn't be.

Story Ideas

For Garou

- The pack comes into town on a riverboat following a Wyrn-tainted shipment someone's slipped onto one of Tallafiero's vessels. He sees the pack as a bunch of ignorant pups out to wreck his profits; they see him as a tool of the Wyrn. Much chaos ensues. Can the characters find the real culprit before Tallafiero decides to have them disposed of once and for all — and what happens to the watch along the river if they pack somehow succeeds in taking down Watches-the-Waters?



• Ellen targets the ship the characters are on, mounting hit and run raids of increasing severity. Can the characters find out what's happening and stop it without things getting out of hand? And will Ellen listen to the characters, considering the fact that there just might be something rotten on the ship after all?

• The characters are immigrants, getting off an ocean-going vessel in Baton Rouge to avoid the Leeches in New Orleans. They're alone and pretty much friendless—but of course Tallafiero will be there to lend a helping hand. The question is, what will he ask for in return?

For Wraiths

• The Circle is the Hierarchy second team. Their mission is to infiltrate the town, make contact with Wilson, and begin disposing of or converting the resident population. Of course, this sounds a lot easier than it is, and Wilson just might be willing to sacrifice the Circle to protect his own cover if he feels the time isn't right....

• Hazen approaches the Circle and asks for their help. Someone's been flushing wraiths on the fringes of town down into Harrowings, and one witness has pinned the dirty deeds on Tilton. Hazen's reluctant to move in on his best friend without more evidence—a lot more evidence—so he asks the characters to follow Tilton and find out what's been going on. Mind you, Tilton won't take kindly to this behavior if he spots the characters—and neither will his Shadow. And what will the characters do if they decide their target isn't the culprit (It's Wilson), but he sees their suspicious behavior and decides that they're to blame?

• Chavis buttonholes the Circle before they get into town with word that one of them is going to meet his end in the city, but that they've got to go in anyway. Why? Some of the old Spanish Heretics are back as Doppelgangers, and they're looking for vengeance. Hazen's got his hands full already, and he's going to need help stopping them—and how much will the Circle sacrifice for the sake of strangers?

Across the Shroud

• The Pack sets up shop in Baton Rouge and starts systematically reducing sites they think are Wyrn-tainted—but start knocking off Fetters in the process. Will they do enough damage to unite the squabbling wraiths of the city, and what's going to happen to them if they do?

• Chavis has been having premonitions of something terrible about to hit the city in the Skinlands, and he needs agents to do something about it. That means talking to Marie, and getting her to get the Garou

involved. But will the characters listen to her without proof, and what sort of reaction will they get from the rest of the town if they ignore her?

• Some of the ghosts that Ellen's made come upriver looking for blood, and they're not picky where they get it from. All Garou are fair game, in their eyes, so they go to work on Tallafiero and his people. Will the characters interfere, or try to trace the wraiths' rage back to its source? And if they do, how will they deal with Ellen, who has very good justification for what she's done.

Hatter's Well

The shadows stretched across the desert when Hatter's Well came into view, nestled in a valley among ragged ochre cliffs. Overhead, the Arizona sky blazed like a giant campfire suspended from the setting sun. A small river wound its way off into the distance, reflecting the fiery splendor of the heavens. Cooking fires burned in the town's homes, their smoke rising into the sky. The evening's first oil lamps illuminated the windowframes, causing the buildings to appear as though they opened their eyes like animals waking up as darkness falls.

"Civilization," said Walker, the Iron Rider, with a relieved sigh as he shifted in his saddle. "And not a moment too soon. My behind's so damn sore I can't feel my legs!"

"Yeah, and they're raping Gaia like everywhere else they take their civilization," Red Eagle said coldly, gesturing at the wooden towers and viaducts jutting over the hilltops, tell-tale signs of mining operations.

"Let's not start that again!" Walker said. "Look, if it wasn't for civilization, we wouldn't be riding these horses—they're not native to this here land, you know. Plus, if not for civilization, we wouldn't be smelling that wonderful smell of steak cooking." He took a deep breath. "Ah, smell that...let's find the saloon, now!"

"Stop." Lilly held up a hand, smelling the breeze, her pale face creasing in a frown. "Wait. Don't you smell it?"

"Yeah. It's dinner."

"No. Not that. Deeper...."

Red Eagle sniffed the wind. The annoyance that had been evident on his face was replaced with a mixture of anger and disgust. "By the Great Spirit! Can it really be so strong?"

"What is it?" Walker sniffed at the breeze. "I don't smell anything."

"That's because your sense are dulled by too many cigars and too much alcohol. If you spent more time away from your precious civilization, you'd smell it, too," Red Eagle quipped



"Smell what?!" Walker said, exasperated.

"The Storm Eater. This whole valley's been poisoned by the Storm Eater..."

Hatter's Well was first settled in 1854, by a group of Mormon farmers who coexisted peacefully with the Navajo tribes in the area, and who were far enough away from any caerns to not pose a threat to local werewolves. Further, one of Hatter's wives had the blood of the Black Furies tribe flowing through her veins, causing the Garou who dwelt in the region to permit the farmers to live peacefully, watching for males and females of their number to develop among them. After being virtually wiped out by violence shortly after the War Between the States, Hatter's Well was reborn and grew larger than ever before due to the discovery of silver in nearby mountains.

A History of Hatter's Well

In 1852, Mormon patriarch Ezekiel Hatter, his four wives and 17 children left Salt Lake City and headed south. He had feuded with church leaders on several issues and had finally had enough. Hatter and his family headed south and settled in northern Arizona. A well-educated, industrious man who had suffered persecution for his religious beliefs while living in Missouri got along well with the local natives, avoiding many of the problems suffered by other settlers in the territory. He and his kin traded extensively with the natives, and it is said that Navajos even helped build the fences around Hatter's fields.

In 1854, Hatter discovered an underground spring not far from where he had settled, and for six months he and his family labored to turn it into a well. Their efforts were successful, and they then irrigated their fields from two sources of water — the nearby stream they had been using since settling there, and the well. They were so successful in their farming efforts that they found themselves with enough food to not only trade with the Navajo, but they were also able to sell or donate food to the other settlers who trickled into the region in increasing numbers. The Hatters kept their Mormonism at a relatively low pitch, shying away from the missionary efforts normally central to their faith — this had been at the heart of Hatter's conflict with the other Mormon leaders. By mid-1860, a second Mormon family and three non-Mormon families had settled in the area and the community known as Hatter's Well was firmly established.



Ezekiel Hatter died of pneumonia in the winter of 1867, a few months before the waves of violence started by the War Between the States hit the burgeoning community. A group of bloodthirsty bandits were fleeing westward from a group of hired guns assembled by some of their victims. It is unknown exactly what happened in Hatter's Well that fateful day, but when the posse arrived in search of their quarry, they found all the bandits dead — many of them savagely mutilated — and all but three of the townsfolk shot to death. The three survivors were young Ruth Hatter and her three-year-old daughter Mary, and a former slave named Harlan. The Hatters had been hiding in a woodshed, but Harlan escaped from being lynched by the renegades...with help from whatever had killed them. Harlan was unable to tell the gunmen what transpired in the town as he had been driven insane by whatever it was he saw. He died two days later, after raving incessantly about monsters emerging from the mouth of Hell itself.

Ruth insisted on staying at Hatter's Well, despite the urging of the hired guns to the contrary. But, as her fate wasn't their concern, after burying the citizens of Hatter's Well, they gathered up what remained of the bandits and rode eastward to collect the balance of the money they were owed. Only one of them, Michael Lafferty, remained behind. He had fallen in love with Ruth, and he chose to see to her safety rather than collect money.

Ruth herself died during the summer of 1868, her heart broken from the loss of her large family. Michael and Mary lived alone in the decaying remains of Hatter's Well for four years, until 1872 when a prospector named Wyatt Turnball arrived in the town, practically dead from thirst. The pair nursed him back to health, and in gratitude he shared his discovery with them: He had found silver in the hills near the town.

Within three months, Michael, Mary, and Wyatt had developed their claim to the point where they could hire workers to mine the silver for them. Word spread that silver had been struck, and soon miners flocked to the area in the hopes of striking it rich. Michael, Mary and Wyatt's mine continued to be the most successful in the area.

The community grew steadily. The close proximity of the silver mines to both the river and the well dug by Hatter's family caused it to grow quicker than other boom towns. If anything slowed the growth of the town, it was the recurring legends of devils and ghosts roaming the hills around the mines. Periodic outbursts of violence also plagued Hatter's Well, spurring gunfights among friends and causing partners in mining ventures to kill each other. Locals believed the violence to have been prompted by a



combination of too much greed and too much whiskey, but the truth was far more sinister — creatures born of the Storm Eater were at the root of much of it.

By 1880, Hatter's Well is a booming rough-and-tumble mining town that was home to 1,200 men, women and children. The town sports five different saloons (three of which double as brothels), two churches, two undertakers and one school. Michael Lafferty serves as the town's sheriff and keeps as much law and order as is possible with the rowdy miners. Recently, after a mob of miners lynched one of the saloon owners for charging too much for whiskey, he established an ordinance that forbids anyone except the sheriff and his deputies to carry guns within town limits.

The Secrets of Hatter's Well

Beings beyond human knowledge and comprehension dwell in the Storm Umbra near Hatter's Well, breeding foul and unnatural creations. In truth, Hatter's Well is the center of a particularly nasty twist of the Weaver. Caerns cannot be created within a 100-mile radius as they quickly become corrupted, and the poisoning of the land caused by heavy silver mining in the hills around Hatter's Well brings forth the twisted spawn of the Storm Eater from the very silver veins that the miners have come to extract.

The Guardian of the Well

Ezekiel Hatter loved his family more than life itself. His desire was that Hatter's Well would be a safe haven for them, and he continues to protect what he views as the most important part of the town — the well — even after his death. Hatter continues to exist as a powerful wraith, and he slew several of the bandits who attacked the town when they tried poisoning the well.

Ezekiel Hatter

Background: Ezekiel was a stern and loving father and a devoted husband. When he fell victim to illness, Hatter felt that his duty to his family and the community he had built with their help had not yet been fully discharged. Thus, with what he believes to be the blessing of the Lord, he has stayed on Earth to continue executing his responsibilities.

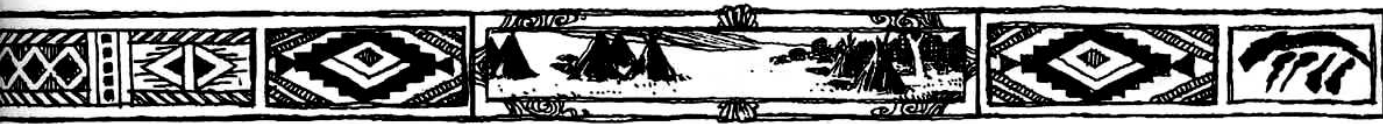
Image: Ezekiel Hatter appears like a broad-faced white man in his early 50s. He is powerfully built and appears to be in the best of health. His once-dark hair is now shot through with iron gray. He dresses in a black suit and a wide-brimmed black hat. He carries no personal effects.

Roleplaying Hints: You are a peaceful man for whom violence is a last resort. However, you are also a strong believer in Biblical justice, and you feel that evil men who live by the sword deserve to die by the sword.

Since your death, you have grown aware of many threats to Hatter's Well — threats that emerge from the mines and creatures who must be spawned from Hell itself. You have also discovered that you are not the only guardian of your family — a strange half-human, half-beast woman rose to its aid when the outlaws struck at Hatter's Well. She has since explained that she is a "werewolf," a strange breed whose blood flows in the veins of your last surviving child, Mary, blood given to her through her mother. Named Helen, this werewolf has promised to teach Mary all she needs to know about her strange abilities to change into powerful animal forms.

There are also other wraiths like yourself, some evil, some indifferent toward the town and your family. Some wraiths have come into being through your actions, while others have come into existence through acts of senseless violence. You vainly tried to recruit





them to help you guard the town, but discovered that the others are wrapped up in their own goals. Still, you watch them all, ready to react to and eliminate any threat that may present itself.

Destiny: Ezekiel Hatter remains a protector of the community he helped found to this very day. His grandchildren and great-grandchildren still live in the city, and are among the leading citizens there.

Nature: Caregiver

Demeanor: Leader

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 2

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 3

Skills: Crafts 3, Etiquette 1, Leadership 3, Stealth 1

Knowledges: Medicine 1, Occult 1, Politics 1, Religion 2, Science 1

Backgrounds: Allies 1 (Black Fury Garou; see Helen Virtis, below), Eidolon 2, Haunt 1 (the well at the center of Hatter's Well), Memoriam 4

Passions: Protect Hatter's Well (Fear) 5

Arcanoi: Lifeweb 2, Outrage 4, Pandemonium 3, Puppetry 3,

Fetters: Well 5, Hatter family 3, Old Hatter homestead 2

Willpower: 7

Pathos: 6

Permanent Corpus: 8

Shadow: The Martyr

Angst: 4

Thorns: Shadow Familiar 5

Shadow Passions: Protect Hatter's Well (Greed) 5

The Guardian of the Hatters

Ezekiel Hatter's third wife, Ruth, was a young woman with dark hair and Semitic features. She was, unknown to her, a Kinfolk of the long, proud bloodline of the Black Furies. The primal blood lay dormant in her, but there was a chance that any daughters she bore might be werewolves, so the tribe kept careful and quiet watch over her.

Ruth's first guardian was New Moon Ebony, a cagey Ragabash, but when Ezekiel broke away from the other Mormons in Salt Lake City, it became impossible for her to watch over Ruth and her own offspring effectively. Years went by during which only occasional checks on the Hatters were undertaken, but when news reached the Black Furies that Ruth had given birth to a daughter,

Helen Virtis relocated from her home in Kansas to Hatter's Well. Helen arrived just in time to save Ruth and the young Mary from the murderous cutthroats who decimated the town in 1868. Her fortuitous arrival forced her to break the veil, and, although Ruth and Mary were both protected by the Delirium, a freed slave by the name of Harlan was not so lucky. The sight of Helen assuming Crinos form drove him mad.

Helen spent the next few years watching her charges from afar, hiding on the outskirts of Hatter's Well and spending most of her time in wolf form. She wept bitterly when Ruth died from her broken heart, but her spirits soared as Mary exhibited signs of her Garou nature. Even from a distance, Helen could see that Mary was distraught by the unnatural ochre and gray areas of lifeless rocks that turned up in ever-greater numbers near the silver mines.

After it became apparent to Helen that she would not be able to stop the influx of miners to Hatter's Well, she moved to town to become its schoolmistress. She hid her true nature from the growing populace of the city while keeping a closer eye on Mary than before — she knew the girl would soon experience her first change, and Helen wanted to be close at hand to help her through it.

Mary grew into a beautiful young woman, and she went through her first change at 17 after a young miner's advances flustered and scared her. The young man paid for his indiscretion with his life, but Helen managed to ease the trauma Mary suffered. For a little over a year now, Helen has been teaching Mary the ways of the Black Furies. The young Garou has discovered the existence of the Storm Eater's spawn in the mines. Currently, Helen struggles to keep her increasingly overconfident charge from attempting to battle the Storm Eater before she has fully mastered her Gifts or learned all that Helen has to teach.

Once Helen made her presence known in Hatter's Well, Ezekiel Hatter approached her with an offer of aid and support. The two share an interest in ensuring that Mary grows up safely, and a rare alliance between werewolf and wraith grows stronger as the influence of the Storm Eater increases in the area around Hatter's Well.

The harshness of the Savage West has not taken a visible toll on Helen, and as one of the few unmarried women in Hatter's Well who is not a "saloon girl" and still has her good looks, she is the object of many suitors' affections. Helen has given some thought to her responsibility toward continuing her bloodline, but she knows she must wait for the right man.



Helen Virtis

Background: Helen was raised by her grandmother after her parents were slain by Black Spiral Dancers in Greece. In order to escape the increasing violence and decay of the Old World, the two Black Furies traveled to the United States.

Helen and her grandmother settled in Kansas. She learned the traditions of the Black Furies while living there, and became an adult during a battle against a vicious band of Storm-Born that were terrorizing isolated settlements. When Helen heard about a Black Fury cub who needed a new watcher, she volunteered for the task and relocated to Hatter's Well.

Since she has started teaching Mary Hatter, Helen has entertained the hope that she might open the young woman's mind to more thoughts and possibilities than her deeply religious background and upbringing allows for.

Image: Helen Virtis is a lean woman in her mid-30s. She has olive skin, brown eyes and long black hair in which the first strands of gray have started to appear. She favors dresses that are dark in color, though she can frequently be seen wearing more practical men's clothing when she is at home. Helen's lupus form has black fur that is shot through with gray.

Roleplaying Hints: You are friendly, outgoing, and well-liked by the citizens of Hatter's Well. Publicly, you serve as the community's school teacher, but privately your primary interest lies in teaching Mary Hatter about her nature and aspects. While you decline the advances of your suitors gracefully, you don't accept any nonsense from men who would try to force themselves on you, either physically or emotionally.

On the other hand, you are aware that you aren't getting any younger. You have a responsibility to bear young so that your line may continue, and you need to find a suitable mate. So far, you have only met one man in your life who you can respect — and no other man will father your child. Unfortunately, a pack of Storm-Born slew him a few years ago. Ever since, you have tried getting over the memory of his strong presence while searching for his equal.

Destiny: Helen is killed three years from now in a battle against spawn of the Storm Eater. Her husband is left to raise their infant daughter alone.

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Theurge

Tribe: Black Furies

Physical: Strength 3 (5/7/6/4), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 4 (6/7/7/6)

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3 (2/0/0/0), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2)

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 4, Expression 2, Primal Urge 2

Skills: Crafts 1, Firearms 3, Leadership 1, Melee 2, Stealth 2, Survival 5

Knowledges: Culture 3, Enigmas 3, Linguistics 1, Medicine 3, Occult 2, Rituals 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 1 (the sheriff of Hatter's Well), Fetish 1, Rites 3

Gifts: (1) Jam Gun, Persuasion, Sense Wurm, Song of the Seasons; (2) Command Spirit, Commanding Voice; (3) Devil Talons, Disquiet, Pulse of the Invisible

Rank: 3

Rage 6, Gnosis 4, Willpower 8


Rites: (Accord) Rite of Reconciliation; (Death) Wake Rite; (Mystic) Rite of Binding

Fetishes: Medicine Bag

Mary Hatter

Background: Mary is the only surviving daughter of Ezekiel Hatter, the man who founded Hatter's Well. After most of her family was slaughtered by outlaws, she became the ward of a gunslinger who is now the sheriff of Hatter's Well.





Upon her First Change, a fellow Black Fury, Helen, approached Mary and told her that she is a descendent of a proud and ancient line of Garou. Helen has been teaching Mary about Black Fury culture and the powers she can wield.

Image: Mary is a tall, shapely and graceful young woman who carries herself with inborn dignity — the fact that she is of a pure breed shows in both her human and wolf forms. She has chestnut brown hair, dark green eyes and fair skin. She favors dresses that are light in color, and frequently tries to keep up with fashion. Mary's wolf form is sleek and its coat as black as night.

Roleplaying Hints: You know you are a woman of great allure, but you also know you must remain faithful to your Mormon beliefs; you must keep all men at bay until you find the one who God has ordained will be your husband. You abruptly and rudely turn down any advances on the part of men, the vigor of your rejections only slightly less severe than what either of your guardians visit upon the man who can't take no for an answer.

You also are keenly interested in limiting the damage miners do to the landscape around Hatter's Well. You've loved its rugged beauty your whole life. Helen tells you that the love of nature is in your blood. Were it up to you, the miners would all be driven from the region and the land would be restored to what it looked like when while you were growing up.

You have adjusted to the truth about your heritage — that you are a member of a grand and ancient race that is a breed apart from the rest of humanity. However, you are still uncertain if everything Helen teaches is right and proper. Some of the rites she has shown you bring to mind the kind of pagan acts the Bible warns against. You are currently trying to decide if Helen is both helping and hurting you...helping your body while corrupting your soul to the point where you won't ascend to be with God when you die.

Destiny: After Helen is killed, in part due to inaction on Mary's part — Mary continues struggling with her doubts over whether Helen was corrupting her or not — the young Garou devotes her life to battling the Storm Eater whole-heartedly, while working toward pulling the various tribes of Garou closer together. Mary fears that her own distrust of Helen might be a common thing among Garou, and feels that they need to pull together. She dies of old age in 1937, after helping Helen Virtis' granddaughter come of age and master her Garou birthright.

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Philodox

Tribe: Black Furies

Physical: Strength 2 (4/6/5/3), Dexterity 2 (2/3/4/4), Stamina 2 (4/5/5/4)

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 2 (1/0/0/0), Appearance 4 (3/0/4/4)

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Athletics 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Expression 1

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Crafts: Sewing 3, Firearms 1, Performance (Singing) 2, Ride 1

Knowledges: Culture (Mormonism) 2, Medicine 2, Politics 1

Backgrounds: Mentor 2, Pure Breed 2, Resources 2

Gifts: (1) Jam Gun, Sense Wyrms, Song of the Seasons

Rank: 1

Rage 2, Gnosis 1, Willpower 6

Rites: (Mystic) Rite of Binding


The Phantom of the Wagon Wheel Saloon

As Hatter's Well grew with the influx of miners, so did the number of saloons in the town. While Ezekiel Hatter was alive, he would never have allowed such establishments within 10 miles of the town that bears his name, but now there are five different watering holes along the town's main street, three of which double as brothels.

The oldest of these is the Wagon Wheel Saloon, a three-story structure that serves drinks and food, provides tables for gambling, and rents rooms with or without women. It is currently owned and operated by Dugan Smith, an Easterner who acquired the establishment after settling debts left in the wake of the previous owner's demise.

Shortly after Dugan took control of the saloon, stories of it being haunted began to circulate. A customer known for beating up the pleasure girls was thrown from a window, while a cardsharp's cheating was revealed when his cards were suddenly yanked from his hands — and sleeves. Dugan himself found it impossible to sleep in the building until he stopped charging the girls extra for their rooms. Although the ghost is rarely heard from and never seen, it almost always haunts cardsharps and other lowlife who try to take advantage of others at the saloon.

The haunting seems to be centered on the former owner's bedroom, so it is widely held that the ghost haunting the saloon is the spirit of Willis O'Neill. O'Neill was lynched by angry miners after a competitor accused him of watering down his whiskey during a time



when the saloons were having a hard time getting shipments. The belief is that he is atoning for his sins of greed.

For once, conventional wisdom is almost correct. The ghost is indeed the restless spirit of Willis O'Neill, haunting the saloon because of his great feelings of guilt over his actions while he was alive.

Willis O'Neill

Background: O'Neill moved to Hatter's Well in order to make a mint off hungry, thirsty and love-starved miners. Securing loans and recruiting women, he built the three-story building that still houses the saloon to this day.

O'Neill's only goal was to make as much money as quickly as he could; he toyed with the idea of expanding his saloon into a general store, but the manager of the general store was friends with the sheriff. He didn't want to attract undue attention to himself. Instead, he mistreated the women by forcing them to work extra-long hours and pay for their room and board, and charged too much for his whiskey. He had a few cardsharps on regular retainer who "drifted into town" on an irregular basis and took miners for all they were worth while giving O'Neill a percentage of the take.

Finally, five years ago, O'Neill decided he wanted to move back East and open a respectable restaurant sometime within two years. He needed to supplement his income, and one way he did this was to establish his saloon as the only place to get whiskey in Hatter's Well. O'Neill hired a group of cutthroats to attack a wagon train carrying whiskey and other supplies for the saloons; it was the last shipment of the season before the winter sealed the mountain passes to the east and west. By attacking the shipment and stealing the whiskey, he ensured that the Wagon Wheel was the only place the miners could get whiskey. (O'Neill claimed he'd been stockpiling the whiskey for a while, and that he'd "gotten lucky." In truth, he was restocking his supply from a hidden cave several miles out of town.)

O'Neill doubled his whiskey prices, and the miners paid it. However, his envious competitors spread rumors that the reason O'Neill seemed to have an inexhaustible supply of whiskey was because he was watering it down. One night, O'Neill decided to raise the price to triple of what it had been prior to the hijacking. The miners, who already felt they were being ripped off, rioted. Although the sheriff tried to protect O'Neill (and was dealt a drubbing in the process), the saloon owner was lynched at the edge of town. That same morning, O'Neill had checked both his finances and

whiskey stock. He was \$300 away from having enough money to start his restaurant back East, and there were five barrels of his ill-gotten whiskey left.

None of the other saloon owners had predicted the circumstances that caused O'Neill's death — the intent of the barman who started the rumor about the watered-down whiskey was merely to damage O'Neill's business — but none of them feel any guilt over what happened to their less-than-savory competitor. O'Neill, however, feels plenty of guilt over the greedy, selfish life he led. As the terrified man felt the sharp pain of his neck snapping, his final thought was that if he could undo the wrong he had done, he would live his life differently.

When O'Neill regained consciousness, he wasn't in Hell like he had expected, but back in his room in the Wagon Wheel. O'Neill, who had been raised by strict Christian parents, decided that God was giving him a chance to right the wrongs of his life. He has now dedicated his efforts to making sure that the Wagon Wheel is run honestly, and that the girls who work there are treated with respect and dignity.

He occasionally has conversations with Ezekiel Hatter, and is friendly and outgoing toward any other wraiths who pass through town. He also warns them of the "devils" who live in the mines.



Image: O'Neill looks as he did when alive: a lanky white man with thinning hair. He wears boots, black pants, and a striped shirt.

Roleplaying Hints: You spent your life thinking about nothing but money. You didn't care who you hurt to get it, and you could never get enough. Now, God has given you a chance to atone for the sins of your lifetime. It's not easy, though. The greed that once consumed your soul is still with you, and it tempts you to become your old self at every turn. Worse, your own personal demon wants to destroy the Wagon Wheel, now that you've gotten the current owner to run an honest establishment. But you fight it. Every day, you fight it; eventually you will have atoned for your sins, and you will join God in Heaven.

Destiny: O'Neill is destroyed in 1962 when a band of Spectres invade his haunt, one year after the Wagon Wheel is named a historical landmark.

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Caregiver

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Athletics 1, Awareness 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 1, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Etiquette 1, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Performance 2, Ride 1

Knowledges: Accounting 1, Bureaucracy 1, Business 3, Cooking 1, Politics 1

Backgrounds: Eidolon 2, Haunt 4 (the Wagon Wheel)

Passions: Cleanse soul of sins (Guilt) 4, Expose the dishonest 3 (Shame)

Arcanoi: Castigate 2, Embody 2, Outrage 3, Pandemonium 1, Phantasm 2

Fetters: Five hidden barrels of whiskey 5, women employed at the Wagon Wheel 5

Willpower: 9

Pathos: 8

Permanent Corpus: 7

Shadow: The Freak

Angst: 6

Thorns: Aura of Corruption, Dark Allies 2, Shadow Life, Spectral Prestige 1

Shadow Passions: Corrupt the innocent (Lust) 3, Drive Wagon Wheel out of business (Hate) 3

The Vengeful Bandit

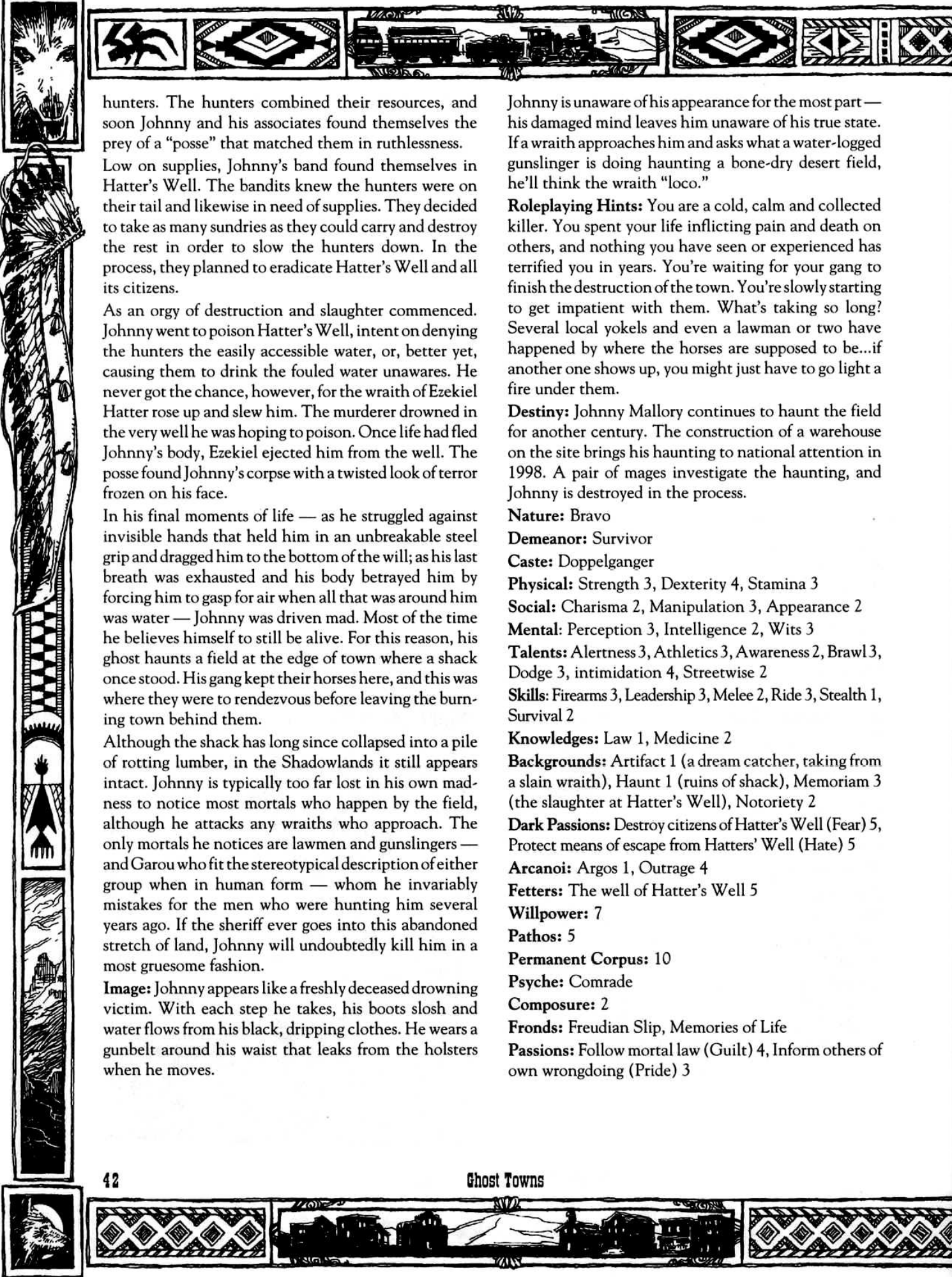
At the edge of Hatter's Well is a barren field. Nothing, not even scrubs, grow here. The collapsed remnants of a shed stands here, and it serves as the haunt of an insane Spectre.

Johnny Mallory

Background: Johnny Mallory was not a nice man. Ever since childhood, he enjoyed bullying and abusing others. As he grew older, he required increasingly severe acts of violence to satisfy his twisted urges. For years, he reveled in the bloodbath that was the War Between the States, murdering Confederate soldiers with wild abandon under the guise of defending the Union. When the war ended, Johnny's lust for violence remained, but petty bullying no longer even came close to satisfying him. One night, in a haze of alcohol, he went too far, and a young couple lost their lives as a result.

Johnny fled west. In the lawless frontier environment, his hunger for violence soon made him the leader of a band of outlaws. For a year, they left a trail of blood, as they robbed and looted their way through Kansas, Colorado and the Utah Territory. Eventually, however, several victims pooled their money and Johnny and his band of murderers found themselves pursued by bounty





hunters. The hunters combined their resources, and soon Johnny and his associates found themselves the prey of a "posse" that matched them in ruthlessness.

Low on supplies, Johnny's band found themselves in Hatter's Well. The bandits knew the hunters were on their tail and likewise in need of supplies. They decided to take as many sundries as they could carry and destroy the rest in order to slow the hunters down. In the process, they planned to eradicate Hatter's Well and all its citizens.

As an orgy of destruction and slaughter commenced, Johnny went to poison Hatter's Well, intent on denying the hunters the easily accessible water, or, better yet, causing them to drink the fouled water unawares. He never got the chance, however, for the wraith of Ezekiel Hatter rose up and slew him. The murderer drowned in the very well he was hoping to poison. Once life had fled Johnny's body, Ezekiel ejected him from the well. The posse found Johnny's corpse with a twisted look of terror frozen on his face.

In his final moments of life — as he struggled against invisible hands that held him in an unbreakable steel grip and dragged him to the bottom of the well; as his last breath was exhausted and his body betrayed him by forcing him to gasp for air when all that was around him was water — Johnny was driven mad. Most of the time he believes himself to still be alive. For this reason, his ghost haunts a field at the edge of town where a shack once stood. His gang kept their horses here, and this was where they were to rendezvous before leaving the burning town behind them.

Although the shack has long since collapsed into a pile of rotting lumber, in the Shadowlands it still appears intact. Johnny is typically too far lost in his own madness to notice most mortals who happen by the field, although he attacks any wraiths who approach. The only mortals he notices are lawmen and gunslingers — and Garou who fit the stereotypical description of either group when in human form — whom he invariably mistakes for the men who were hunting him several years ago. If the sheriff ever goes into this abandoned stretch of land, Johnny will undoubtedly kill him in a most gruesome fashion.

Image: Johnny appears like a freshly deceased drowning victim. With each step he takes, his boots slosh and water flows from his black, dripping clothes. He wears a gunbelt around his waist that leaks from the holsters when he moves.

Johnny is unaware of his appearance for the most part — his damaged mind leaves him unaware of his true state. If a wraith approaches him and asks what a water-logged gunslinger is doing haunting a bone-dry desert field, he'll think the wraith "loco."

Roleplaying Hints: You are a cold, calm and collected killer. You spent your life inflicting pain and death on others, and nothing you have seen or experienced has terrified you in years. You're waiting for your gang to finish the destruction of the town. You're slowly starting to get impatient with them. What's taking so long? Several local yokels and even a lawman or two have happened by where the horses are supposed to be...if another one shows up, you might just have to go light a fire under them.

Destiny: Johnny Mallory continues to haunt the field for another century. The construction of a warehouse on the site brings his haunting to national attention in 1998. A pair of mages investigate the haunting, and Johnny is destroyed in the process.

Nature: Bravo

Demeanor: Survivor

Caste: Doppelganger

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, intimidation 4, Streetwise 2

Skills: Firearms 3, Leadership 3, Melee 2, Ride 3, Stealth 1, Survival 2

Knowledges: Law 1, Medicine 2

Backgrounds: Artifact 1 (a dream catcher, taking from a slain wraith), Haunt 1 (ruins of shack), Memoriam 3 (the slaughter at Hatter's Well), Notoriety 2

Dark Passions: Destroy citizens of Hatter's Well (Fear) 5, Protect means of escape from Hatters' Well (Hate) 5

Arcanoi: Argos 1, Outrage 4

Fetters: The well of Hatter's Well 5

Willpower: 7

Pathos: 5

Permanent Corpus: 10

Psyche: Comrade

Composure: 2

Fronds: Freudian Slip, Memories of Life

Passions: Follow mortal law (Guilt) 4, Inform others of own wrongdoing (Pride) 3

Spawn of the Storm Eater

These creatures are created by the malevolent spirit that has been awakened in the Savage West. They are fed by the waste the silver miners are laying to the hills into which they tunnel, and by the selfish greed in their hearts and minds.

Spawn appear at random intervals and locations. The only constant is that they always emerge from exposed silver veins, drawing form and substance from the metal that many mortals value above life itself, and then kill nearby miners. After the Spawn's lust for destruction has been sated, the silver from which it had taken form dissolves into worthless, black dust.

Spawn come in a variety of shapes and sizes, each taking the appearance of the creature or person that its next intended victim fears the most. The spawn's duplication of the feared being is perfect in every respect, except that it appears to be made entirely from silver.

Some townsfolk and miners have witnessed spawn attacks from a distance. The appearance of silvery apparitions attacking men are at the root of stories of ghosts and banshees haunting the hills and mines around Hatter's Well.

The Spawn's Attributes, Abilities, and Health Levels are always one dot above whatever ratings its target possesses. Once the target has been slain, the Storyteller should roll a single die. If the result is 5 or better, that particular Spawn ceases to exist. If the result is less than 5, the Spawn picks a new target, and its appearance and statistics change accordingly.

Involving the Characters

The characters encounter the wraith of a murdered Kinfolk. It tells them of a trio of powerful Mockeries are making their way to the town of Hatter's Well, where they intend to kill a Black Fury known as Helen Virtis (who believes them to be Storm-Born, unbeknownst to them). They have a long-standing feud with her, and are pursuing her westward to settle an old score; they tortured the Kinfolk to death in order to discover her current location. The Kinfolk tells them that Helen went to Hatter's Well to act as the mentor to a young Black Fury who had been raised there, unaware of her true nature.

The characters can either be familiar with the Hatter family, or they can have met Helen before she went to Hatter's Well. When the characters reach Hatter's Well,



MR 107

43



they arrive a few days before the Mockeries. During this time, they can renew their old acquaintance, and they can get to know Mary. They will be the only other Garou Mary has met, and the characters can be a boon in resolving (or strengthening) the reservations she has regarding what Helen has been teaching her.

When the Mockeries arrive, the characters discover that there are twice the number of Mockeries as player characters in the troupe — far more than a trio. Once they arrive in Hatter's Well, these vicious murderers won't be content with just killing Helen — they want to kill her protégé and any allies she may have as well as destroy her home and all who share it with her: They want to destroy Hatter's Well. As the Mockeries know rites that will allow them to command the Spawn of Storm Eater, the troupe may well have too much on their hands.

The characters will have allies in Mary and Helen— other townies, including the sheriff, are cowards who spend their time hiding. Ultimately, they may be able to trick the Spectre of Johnny into destroying a Mockery or two, once they learn of his insanity.

Malvado Canyon

The rain sluiced down in thundering sheets, pounding on Brody like a thousand fists. He smiled despite the drubbing the weather gave him, a hoarse bark of laughter escaping his lips.


"What's so damn funny?" Wolk growled. Although they rode hunched together on the same horse, Brody barely heard the comment over the storm. His partner's obvious irritation brought on another snort from Brody.

"I was just thinkin' how lucky we are," Brody explained.

Wolk turned in the saddle. Brody leaned back so they wouldn't crack their skulls again. Brody had almost lost his hat the last time they'd knocked heads accidentally, and since he'd actually paid good money for the hat he was determined to keep it. Spitting the words through his thick mustache, Wolk snapped, "Lucky? You call drownin' in a rainstorm lucky? You call havin' your horse go lame lucky? You call bein' chased by half the population o' Salt Lake City lucky?!

You got a mighty queer definition o' luck, Brody."





"Come on, Wolk. They ain't caught us, have they? You said yourself that even if the storm hadn't come along, we'd have lost the posse by headin' west then doublin' around like we did." Wolk turned his back, but even his muttering didn't stop Brody. He was suddenly full of joy and determined to share it, even if Wolk was too much of a damn prune to appreciate it. "And we could just as well've lost both horses, the way we been ridin' 'em. We're almost to Malvado, ain't we? Besides, this rain ain't as bad as it was. Can't last forever, right?"

"Coulda fooled me," Wolk snapped. "Been comin' down near a whole day, now. Strangest thing, the weather lately. I ain't never seen storms like this around this time o' year in all my life."

As if to support Wolk's statement, a jagged fork of fire blasted down from the heavens. The lightning lit up the sky for an instant, revealing a monochromatic landscape of scrub brush, scattered pines and open rolling plains. The road ran in a black slash empty and straight to a thick cluster of buildings a few hundred yards away. The mountains behind them rose in a dark smudge, blending into the storm clouds above. In the lightning's stark clarity, the men could see every weathered detail of each building. The place looked desolate — not surprising considering the weather. Despite the town's barren appearance, a polished sign gleaming wet from the rain welcomed travelers to Malvado Canyon — Population: 1,200 hardy souls.

Brody shook Wolk's shoulder and spoke after the thunder rumbled to nothing. "I'll make you a deal. They've got the best brothel outside of Frisco here. I'll buy you a roll in the hay and even throw in a change of clothes from my half of the thirty thousand." Brody slapped his other hand to the bulging saddle bags he sat on. "How's that sound?"

Brody heard Wolk chuckle in spite of himself. "Sounds like my luck's finally changin'."

Lightning slashed down again. Both men cried out in surprise as the mare reared up, its neigh blending into the deafening roll of thunder. Wolk slammed into Brody and both tumbled from the horse. Brody grabbed tight to the saddle bag as he fell so that it landed with him on the rain-soaked mud. The horse vanished into the darkness, the staccato of its retreat lost in the drumming rain.

Gasping and cursing, Brody and Wolk clambered to their feet and stomped up the muddy road. "Goddamned nag!" Wolk yelled. "I'll have your hide, by God!"

"I doubt it," came a voice from the darkness.

Brody and Wolk stopped short. In the steady rain, they could just make out several — maybe as many as five — shapes near the sign welcoming them to Malvado Canyon. Brody wasn't sure where they could've come from, since the nearest building was a good 100 yards away. Still, he

couldn't deny that he heard the soft patter of raindrops on worn leather hats and dusters, or that he saw the unmistakable gleam of cold steel firearms. From Wolk's guttural swearing, Brody figured his partner noticed much the same.

"What the hell is this?" Wolk said, slowly closing the distance.

Brody followed, trying a more reasonable tone. "Yeah, fellas. We're just on our way to Cheyenne; got caught in this Godforsaken storm. We don't want any trouble."

"I was about to say the same thing," the voice replied. Coming closer, Brody saw the four figures more clearly. A single man in the center held an umbrella and didn't appear to be armed. However, the other three men with him were definitely well-heeled. The two to the left of the man under the umbrella held shotguns; the one to the right rested his hands on a pair of crossed pistol butts. Remembering the saddle bags he clutched, Brody gulped nervously.

Wolk tried speaking, but the central figure cut him off with the same quiet intensity as before. "You men are criminals. Common robbers," he said with certainty. "I tolerate no criminals here."

"What? Criminals?" Wolk adopted a wounded expression, stepping closer until the only thing separating him from the other man was the water drizzling from the umbrella. "Sir, I'm offended by such—"

"No. No lies, no games. I know what you are, and I'll not have it in my town. I can see what you've done just as clearly as I can see your death upon you."


"That's how it is, is it?" With a cry, Wolk slashed at the stranger with a bone-handled knife. The umbrella dipped downward, and Wolk slipped behind it. Brody's view of his partner and the stranger was obscured by the wet black material. "Shoot, Brody! It's our only chance!" Wolk yelled. Then came a grunt and a strange tearing noise.

Brody fumbled for his six-shooter, but dropped it and the saddlebags when Wolk shrieked with anguish and pain. Brody couldn't begin to comprehend what the figure could have done to Wolk to cause such a horrific cry, but just the sound of it unmanned him. Overwhelmed with sudden terror, Brody ran from the road into the low brush beyond. His fear was so great, he gave no thought to why the other men hadn't taken the opportunity to shoot at him. Brody cared only about getting as far from them as possible.

On the road, the central figure turned to the man on his left. "What did I tell you about doing that, Mr. Larkin?"

Larkin smiled, cold green fire fading from his eye. "Sorry, Gideon," he replied, not sounding the least bit contrite, "I don't know what came over me."

"Should we go after him?" the hulking form on the far right asked.



Gideon dropped what was left of Wolk to the ground and pulled the knife from where Wolk had stabbed it in his side. After flicking the blade into the darkness, he said, "No, Yancey, that is more trouble than it would be worth." Gideon's mouth twitched in a cold smile. "I'm sure the curs will take care of it. They could use the exercise."

Lightning spread a web across the sky once again, thunder rumbling behind. The men paused as if in appreciation, their attention brought back to earth only by Gideon's cold voice.

"Well then. Why don't you gentlemen take care of that trash. And don't forget the satchel." With that, Gideon turned and walked up the road, his hand extended beyond the umbrella's edge to wash the blood away.

The man named Yancey hoisted Wolk's crumpled form over one shoulder while the last man picked up Brody's saddle bags and pistol. The deputies then followed their sheriff back into town, melting back into the night as silently as they came.

Welcome to Malvado Canyon...

Well, hello there! Yessir, you've come to the right place. I can give you a shave and a haircut, and I've even got a couple o' baths in the back. Sure, I don't have quite the same, er, amenities as down t' the Providence, but if you're lookin' for a good soak you can't go wrong here.

Have a seat, fella. I'll start you off with a nice steamed towel. Good for loosenin' the pores, y'know. Makes for a nice, close shave. Ah, there you go.

So, from the look of your clothes I'd say you've been on the trail awhile. No offense meant, fella; I'm just sayin' looks like you've probably seen a bit of the world. Well, can't find a nicer corner of it than right here in Malvado Canyon. We're smack on one of the busiest trade routes between Cheyenne and Salt Lake City, y'know. Right in the foothills of the Rockies and just a few days east of Salt Lake, this here sprawlin' valley's a natural stopover. The canyon walls protect us from the worst of the seasonal storms, too — and they can get a mite terrible, from what I hear.

Town's named after the canyon all right. Why bother comin' up with another name? The place sprung up years ago as a supply post for trappers makin' their way down from the mountains, or so they tell me. What's that? Yeah, I'm a bit new to Malvado myself. Came through about three months ago just after spring thaw, headed for San Francisco. As luck would have it, the old barber up and vanished just a few weeks before. Some folks said he gambled somethin' fierce and ducked out

rather than pay up; others say he got lost on one of his fishin' trips and the redskins got him; and there's those who say the things what prey on the Injuns got him. All I knew was that this town needed a barber, and here I came. And mister, I must say I don't think I'd've found a better job in all of San Francisco.

Anyway, let's see how you're doin'. Feel your pores all breathin' nice? All right, time to lather you up.

Yessir, Malvado Canyon services all manner of teamsters, trappers, prospectors and what-have-you who find their way West. Then you've got the wagon trains headin' back East with goods and gold to boot! Even ruffians stop by on occasion — that Outlaw Trail they use is supposed to be right in our back yard (o' course, the sheriff don't take kindly to outlaws, most have learned to pass on by). Just about any type of person you can think of has come through here at one time or another. Not too surprising, considerin' all the trade that makes its way through. With that kind of traffic, this town is perfect for makin' a good livin'. It's the first real stop after the Rocky Mountains for folks headin' West, and the last supply post before the Rockies for those goin' East. Then you've got the farm hands and cowboys stoppin' off durin' cattle drives, and the trappers comin' down to trade and resupply.

I just sharpened my razor, so you shouldn't feel a thing. Just hold still, fella; there we go. Yup, we got near everything you'd see back East. We got a general store, bank, hotel, two saloons, a freighting company and a jail. Tried to set up a telegraph office, but the damn Injuns kept tearin' the lines down.

Those savages can be trouble. Best not to stray outside the city at night, fella. There's redskins — and worse, some say — lurkin' out there, just waitin' to grab an unwary traveler. Yessir, you'll hear some mighty strange stories from some of the old-timers here, about what's out there in the wilderness. Still, long as you stay right 'round here, you're safe as houses. It's not like the sheriff really needs four deputies for the town. He just keeps 'em on hand to protect folks against the Shoshoni in the hills.

Crime? Heh. Malvado Canyon's one of the most peaceful towns you'll ever find, mister. We don't see much in the way of crime — no repeat offenses, leastways. Our sheriff's a hard man, sure, but he's a fair one. There're brawls in the saloons of course, but one of the deputies always pops up right quick to make sure things don't get too out of hand. The deputies are a weird bunch, I admit, but the sheriff keeps 'em right in line.

And any folks who do cause trouble the sheriff either locks up for a spell or tells to clear out. Sure thing, somebody gets a warning one night you're not gonna see 'em the next morning. Some people say the law cracks down a little too hard sometimes, but me? I think we need a little order out here in the wilderness, and Sheriff Gideon's just the man—

Whoa, fella! didn't mean to nick ya but jerkin' like ya did caught me off guard. Ah, it's just a little cut, not even bleedin' much. There we go, that should help. Sorry? Oh, sure, Sheriff Gideon. Big fella, dark and lean. Dresses mighty fine, keeps himself lookin' nice for the visitors — I should know, I give him a trim once a week. I guess he's made a name for himself down New Mexico way. Said to me once that the sheriff *represents* the town. If folks see a dirty-lookin' man in ratty clothes, they're not gonna feel safe. A fella lookin' like Sheriff Gideon does, though, well, he looks like that to inspire confidence.

Yeah, I asked him the same thing. I mean, I figured it's the mayor who represents the town. Y'know what he told me? He smiled that smile he gets sometimes and said, "Tom, the mayor may speak for Malvado Canyon, but I'm its heart and soul. Without me, there'd be death and terror runnin' rampant. Injuns and worse comin' down from the mountains and up from the land to terrorize Christian men and women. I keep death at

bay." O' course, he said "ground," not "land," but he does that sometimes. Comes from Europe originally, from what I hear. Can hardly tell from his accent, but he'll pull a funny word sometimes. But doesn't that little speech just fill you with confidence? And you should hear how he says it. I swear the way that man gets your attention, he could make the dead get up and dance a jig—

Oh, hell, mister! Look there, you done made me slip again. You're gettin' awful jittery, if you don't mind me sayin' so. Was it somethin' I said?

Watch Your Step

You're the new gentleman, aren't you? Yes, there's been a bit of talk about you already. Certainly, we get our share of travelers through Malvado, but not many are as curious as you.

Hmm? Asking questions isn't a healthy thing around here, is all. A threat? You flatter me, sir! A little slip of a girl like me threatening a big strapping fellow like yourself? The mere thought of it makes me blush!

I'd like to give you some advice, is all. Have a seat; come on, I won't bite. (At least, not for free.) See, stranger, everything has its place here. I don't just mean in the Providence, but in this entire town. The townsfolk are a God-fearing people, and they look out for their own. As long as you mind your business, you'll have no trouble. But folks who get too curious, well, they have a way of disappearing.





Keep your voice down! I'm trying to help you keep that handsome head attached to your shoulders. Look, I've lived in Malvado going on five years now, and I know what I'm talking about. It's not a bad place, stranger — in fact, as long as you stay in line, it's one of the nicest places a body could think to live.

But that's just it. There are folks who can't seem to leave well-enough alone. They have to poke a bit too hard, push a bit too far, all for the sake of what? Curiosity? Those who get too interested end up causing trouble for the rest of us as well as for themselves.

I'm telling you as straight as I can, stranger. As long as you mind your business, help your fellow man and contribute to the town, you have nothing to worry about. But Malvado won't stand for it if you go causing trouble. This may sound crazy, but I've —ahem— seen things from time to time. They come for the shiftless and the troublemakers, mostly. But sometimes, if the curious push too far, the things get riled up enough to come after the rest of us. That's why we don't like the curious type.

No, I can't be any clearer than that. I don't know exactly what the things are, and I don't want to know. Some things are better left alone. If you keep poking around, you may just find out what's going on. And I'll bet that's the last thing you ever learn.

History

Despite the friendliness and cheer most residents in Malvado Canyon extend to travelers, the town hides disturbing secrets. Most people take it in stride that the sheriff has a shady past, that trouble comes to town on occasion, and that dangers lurk in the hills. It is the Savage West, after all. Malvado is unique, however; its mysteries greater and darker than any would suspect.

To begin with, the canyon acts as a kind of supernatural reservoir. It stores spiritual energy, Pathos, seemingly gathering it from the surrounding mountains and plains to collect in the base of the valley — in the town of Malvado Canyon itself. This constant flow of supernatural energy has eroded the barrier between the physical world and the spirit world. Wraiths can interact more easily with the living here than in most other places. Considering the canyon's relative isolation, few Restless even knew of its existence. Fewer still found a way to take advantage of this rich energy source.

The local Shoshoni tribes were among those who did know of the place. They refused to even name it for fear that, in doing so, it would gain power in the living world. They kept a respectful distance from the canyon; it was a place of spirits, not of man.

The first settlers to cross the pass above Malvado Canyon knew nothing of this. They saw only a rolling valley with scattered copses of trees and a clear babbling stream. It seemed the perfect place to establish a stopping point for travelers. As time passed, Malvado grew in size. More and more settlers who crossed the Rockies were taken immediately by the sight of this pocket of heaven, and decided to stay instead of continuing West.

Some wraiths drawn to the canyon resented the intrusion — but they were too few to drive away the living. A handful of people might have been frightened enough by strange noises on the wind and ghostly shapes in the night to pack up and move out, but by this point Malvado's population was in the hundreds. The influx of the living helped reinforce the Shroud that separated the two worlds as well, making it more difficult for the wraiths to cross over and scare people away. Additionally, wagon trains and supply shipments came through regularly, helping to maintain the townspeople's grasp on reason — and sanity.

Before long, the citizens of Malvado Canyon learned to not speak of the sporadic apparitions, sudden chills and occasional murmurings they were exposed to. They poured their efforts into creating diversions — gambling, music, variety shows, prostitution, liquor — to assure themselves and each other that Malvado was a fine place to be.

Even so, the sheer amount of supernatural force accumulated in the valley took its toll on the townsfolk. Those who stayed for more than a few years in Malvado Canyon felt a growing sense of unease. Some reconciled themselves to their life in the valley, but others decided to move on after a few years or so. There always seemed to be someone new to take their place, lured by Malvado's surface charm. The canyon sustained itself for some time in this way, the dead and the living existing on the same uneasy rhythm, neither quite acknowledging the reality of the other.





The Supernatural Influence of Malvado Canyon

The canyon influences both Garou and wraiths. Its close connection to the Shadowlands, or Dark Umbra, is especially significant to the Restless Dead, but impacts on Garou to a certain extent as well.

Still, any supernatural in Malvado Canyon may make a Perception + Occult roll (difficulty 5) to sense the power emanations. Success shows the character smudgy, indistinct shapes overlaying everything (the reflection of the Shadowlands), and gives a sense of raw energy flowing about her.

Sensing the canyon's emanations is also possible from outside the valley. Characters may make the same Perception + Occult roll at +1 difficulty for every 25 miles distant (to a maximum of difficulty 10). So a character riding along 50 miles from Malvado Canyon would roll Perception + Occult at difficulty 7 to sense its power.

Wraiths

Malvado Canyon is a kind of natural Haunt. The entire valley has a 4 Shroud rating, and the town itself has a 3 Shroud.

Additionally, the canyon generates its own supply of Pathos. Each nightfall within the game, a wraith may roll her highest Passion (difficulty 8). Each success rolled grants the wraith one point of Pathos. Interestingly, this energy flow is in constant flux. If the wraith botches this roll, her Shadow gains a point of Angst for each botch rolled.

Garou

The Shroud rating also acts as the Gauntlet rating for those Garou who wish to step sideways. The lands of the dead here are separated from the living world by the most tenuous of barriers; as a result, the Garou ends up directly in the Dark Umbra. See the Appendix for further details.

The Storm Eater changed all that. Just as Malvado Canyon attracted ambient supernatural energy, it drew to itself the fallout of the Storm Eater's raging across the High Umbra. Its Umbral storms thundered to the canyon like water rushing through a tight rapids. Each wave acted almost like a kind of minor Maelstrom, throwing the entire valley into upheaval on both sides of the Shroud. Wraiths were hard-pressed to resist the corpus-rending force of the storm waves, and each blast weakened the valley's Shroud even more. Tremendous thunderstorms washed over Malvado Canyon in the Skinlands during these times.

Malvado surely would not have survived much longer were it not for the timely intervention of the man known as Gideon. A Shadow Lord Theurge of notable ability, Gideon heard stories about the canyon and decided to see if he could use the energy it collects.

After dispatching the previous sheriff, a cowardly former gunslinger, Gideon set himself up as the law. As sheriff, Gideon could travel anywhere in the area without causing suspicion. This allowed him to research all he could on Malvado Canyon, and to mold the town to better suit his needs. He also used his talents as a Theurge to help stabilize the local Umbral terrain and question the Restless Dead on the area. Through his own abilities and by interacting with wraiths, Gideon confirmed that the valley was definitely a place of great spiritual power, but tied too closely to the Dark Umbra to be useful as a caern. Its energy was raw Pathos, not spiritually-charged Gnosis. A Garou stepping sideways in Malvado Canyon would find herself directly in the Dark Umbra — what wraiths call the Shadowlands. Nonetheless, Gideon was determined to find a way to use this resource — not only as a potential tool against the Storm Eater, but also to gain more renown for himself.

His studies brought the attention of a local Wendigo pack, who felt that Gideon's pursuits defied the natural order. After the pack raided the town, Gideon reassured the townsfolk and vowed that he would deal with this "Indian attack" in a firm and decisive manner. Gideon's pride wouldn't allow him to go to his tribe regarding a matter he felt he could handle himself, so he called in a quartet of mortal bounty hunters he'd worked with in the past.

The Posse

Peter Larkin, Darnell Wallace, Yancey Morgan and Adam Haslett rode with Gideon in years past. Each man had a history, but dedicated himself now to upholding

justice. Their methods could get extreme at times, but they saw that as the necessary price to pay for bringing law to a lawless land.

They reached Malvado within days after Gideon contacted them, and agreed to hunt down the "Indians" that threatened the town from the hills. The posse knew that strange things happened around Gideon, but none of them were prepared to confront a pack of Garou. The Wendigo lured the posse into a trap, from which Gideon himself barely escaped.

Wallace and Morgan were torn apart in moments, and Haslett mortally wounded. Unfortunately for Larkin, he was buried in the rockslide Gideon used spirits to trigger during the Shadow Lord's retreat to the Umbra. The Wendigo moved on, confident in their victory and unaware that Gideon still lived.

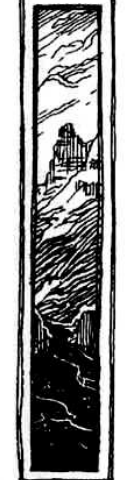
Shaken and still in the Shadowlands, the Shadow Lord saw his men emerge as *Enfant wraiths*. Gideon seized the opportunity, tearing the cauls from their faces. While he had tried to bind wraiths much like he would a spirit, he had not been

successful. Gideon hoped, due to having a personal connection to these men, that he might meet with success this time.

Gideon returned to town, guiding the new wraiths. He spent months using every ability at his disposal to create a lasting bond to the former bounty hunters. Gideon discovered that focusing on revenge and justice proved to have the greatest positive effect on his posse. While Gideon simply planned to have a group of wraiths at his disposal, his encouragement and the wraiths' own intensity resulted in a success greater than Gideon could have imagined.

Six months after their untimely deaths, Morgan and Wallace crossed the Shroud and inhabited their bodies once again. Larkin joined them later, after disappearing further into the Dark Umbra for a time. Newly risen, each Walking Dead forced his way from underneath the rock fall and returned to Malvado. The low Shroud and the massive amount of Pathos the canyon stores were certainly as much factors in their "rebirth" as was their own intense





Passions and Gideon's fiery personal ideals. Haslett remained in the Shadowlands, but likewise came to Gideon's side.

The Wendigo

Word of the strange goings-on in Malvado Canyon went from one tribe of Shoshoni to the next and even to other Indian tribes. After some months the news found its way to a Wendigo pack to the north. Already well aware of the danger posed by the Storm Eater, the pack made its way southward along the Rocky Mountains. The Wendigo pack's Theurge sensed the energy surrounding Malvado miles before the Garou reached the canyon. The pack decided to show the white settlers their error in building a town in the valley.

The Wendigo pack roared through Malvado one night, tearing apart any townfolk unlucky enough to be outside and setting fire to a number of houses and to the general store. They hoped that the ferocity of the raid would be enough to send the settlers fleeing from the valley — and, were it not for Gideon, the Wendigo's plan may well have worked.

Despite Gideon's skill as a Theurge and his posse's talent as manhunters, they didn't stand much of a chance against a pack of Garou. Gideon retreated by stepping sideways after he saw his comrades torn apart. He called on spirits to trigger an avalanche into the gulch, hoping to bury the native Garou under tons of rock. The Wendigo pack were not caught as seriously as Gideon hoped, but were injured grievously by the rock fall. Battered and bloody, the Pure Ones climbed out of the avalanche and returned to the mountains. From what they could see, it was a messy victory, but a victory nonetheless.

The Wendigo never considered reaching into the Umbra, since their Garou senses were overpowered by the scent of death due to the canyon's close link with the Shadowlands. As a result, the pack didn't realize at first that Gideon still lived, and had recovered the wraithly forms of his fallen posse. Months later, the Wendigo heard word from one of the nomadic Shoshoni tribes that the town still prospered.

The Garou returned to discover that Gideon was still sheriff and his posse was still with him, after a fashion. The bounty hunters were dead, yet alive. Such a thing was a violation of the natural order in the Wendigo's opinion. The Wendigo pack considered the Risen to be mockeries of some sort, a direct result of meddling with the deathly pall that hung over the valley. The Garou were more determined than ever to cleanse the town — not only of the Wurm-tainted parasites, but of the townfolk in general.

That didn't prove to be as easy as it was the last time, however. Gideon had gained some powerful allies in the Walking Dead, powerful enough to stand against Garou.

A Final Look

Malvado Canyon has suffered a fundamental change, and not for the better. The strange shapes in the night, the eerie moans on the wind and the sudden chills in the air grow in frequency and intensity. Even the brightest day seems pale and washed out. The residents veil their panic behind strained smiles and rowdy entertainment, and drown their fears in liquor and sex.

Sheriff Gideon has become increasingly grim, responsibility weighing heavily on his shoulders. His posse is a cold bunch, distant at the best of times and downright frightening on other occasions. Lawbreakers are dealt with harshly — and often fatally.

Yet at least it's safer to stay in town than it is to leave. While wagon trains generally pass through unmolested, those residents who try to move away invariably end up dead or missing, once they pass beyond the protection of Gideon and his men. Something in the hills doesn't want the townfolk to leave.

Unbeknownst to the townfolk, a growing number of dissatisfied wraiths gather in the Shadowlands as well. Many of them were sent across the Shroud prematurely by Gideon or one of the posse, a result of Gideon's increasingly heavy-handed law enforcement techniques. The sheriff is trying to keep a tight lid on the town, since he doesn't want any unpleasant surprises. He has enough to deal with now that the Wendigo have returned, and his success with the Risen posse seems to have weakened the Shroud to a disturbing degree. Although Gideon's deputies are a match for the Garou and can hold off disgruntled wraiths as well, it seems it's only a matter of time before everything falls apart.

Places of Note

Malvado Canyon is a busy place, but it's already past its peak of success (although the townfolk don't realize it quite yet). The town was on a well-traveled trade route that brought in steady commerce. However, once the Union Pacific railroad was completed to the north, more traffic diverted that way. Also, while Gideon did an impressive job of keeping crime down and hostiles away from the town, its nature as a weak point in the Shroud couldn't help but make most folks decidedly uneasy. The sporadic raids by the Wendigo pack didn't help matters any.

Brearley's General Store

The place to go for the basic necessities, whether you need a new hat, some flour or a solid ax handle. The proprietor, Willard Meany, has connections with major



Getting Involved

There are a number of ways in which characters may be drawn to Malvado Canyon. While the Storyteller may create any number of story hooks that will lead the troupe to the valley, a few selections are outlined below:

- **Chance:** The tried-and-true method of coincidence could bring the characters to Malvado. All manner of traffic passes through the town each day, heading both East and West. The characters could sense the power emanating from the valley as they pass by and decide to stop and check it out.

- **Supernatural Menace:** Like the Wendigo, the characters may have heard of malevolent forces at work in the valley. Considering the danger posed by the Storm Eater and its minions, it would be only natural that concerned characters would investigate the situation.


- **Lure of Power:** There are also rumors that Malvado Canyon is a source of great supernatural power. Like Gideon himself, the characters might wish to learn the true extent of this force and how they might bend it to their will.

- **Survival:** This would be important mainly for wraiths in desperate need of Pathos (and what wraith isn't?). Rumors about a "sure-fire" Pathos source are bound to find their way to other parts of the Shadowlands, but not every wraith is willing to go on a wild goose chase to find it.

- **Threat of the Wild:** The Wendigo in the hills dispatch residents who try leaving Malvado for good. While most normal folks think there's Indians and wild animals in the hills, rumors have leaked of darker things afoot. Indian hunters or European Garou who suspect the truth of these natives might want to head to the canyon and teach the redskins a lesson.

- **Friend in Need:** A character may be related to or close friends with a resident of Malvado. Afraid of leaving but wanting help, this relative or friend could have sent the character a letter requesting aid (written cryptically, of course, just in case Gideon or the things in the hills got hold of it).





suppliers of dry goods, clothing and firearms. His store is always stocked with the latest fashions and freshest goods money can buy — and he adjusts prices accordingly.

First Bank of the Rocky Mountains

This is the third branch in an up-and-coming financial concern based out of Montana. The Bank of the Rockies deals mostly with storing valuables for travelers passing through, its efforts to sell parcels of the valley to settlers never seeming to work out in the long run.

Calliope Hotel

A pretty swank place; if you only want a plain room-with-a-bed affair, you'll have to look elsewhere. Enough well-heeled folks come rolling through Malvado that the Calliope can afford a fair amount of bells and whistles. Dean Ferro runs the Calliope with a great deal of flair. Despite the recent troubles, he's still able to book solid musical acts and other entertainers on a regular basis.

The Providence

This establishment handles the clientele who are a bit too "earthy" for the Calliope. Miss Wanda Clark is the Providence's proprietor, and keeps a number of girls on staff to perform singing and dancing numbers long into the night. For the right price, the ladies also perform other, more personal, entertainment in one of the 12 rooms on the second floor. Miss Wanda keeps a few gambling tables in the front to help draw customers, but the main focus is on having a rollicking good time.

McCabe's Saloon

"Getting lucky" has a different meaning here. The focus at McCabe's is on drinking and gambling. It's a rough-and-tumble place; if you're not serious about playing cards or downing liquor, you'd best not bother coming in. Still, those in the know or with just the right look are shown to the private rooms in the back. Kimball McCabe keeps a few secret gambling rooms that rival the Calliope's Presidential Suite for plush style. McCabe and Miss Wanda have an arrangement, using the back door connecting their establishments to allow gentlemen travelers to partake of a woman's charms in the Providence, or to slip in to a high stakes game of poker at McCabe's.

Austin Freight Company

This Texas freighting concern handles hiring teamsters to transport goods as well as running a stagecoach line. The route runs from Denver through to San Francisco. While the Malvado stop used to see heavy business,

it's the first business in town to feel the hit of the incoming railroads — and the fallout of recent supernatural events.

Notable Characters

Sheriff Gideon

Background: Gideon keeps the details of his past shrouded in mystery and legend. He's reinvented himself a half-dozen times — "Gideon" is almost certainly not his real name — but always with an eye toward manipulation as opposed to outright force. Still, he's never been above using violence when it suited him. Most Garou would know virtually nothing about him; only another Shadow Lord might have an inkling of Gideon's long past.

Gideon has been in Malvado Canyon for a number of years prior to the characters' arrival, and was instrumental in bringing prosperity to the town. When he first arrived, Gideon set about making the place safe for trade and settlement. His greatest obstacle was the local Indian populace. He'd barely pushed back the Shoshoni, but things were going poorly for Gideon until his deputies were slaughtered by the Wendigo pack.

Since Gideon was already in the Dark Umbra when his deputies emerged as new wraiths, he was well-poised to draw them to him before Oblivion or any local reapers did. He cultivated the posse to the full extent of his abilities, and was rewarded by having three of them re-inhabit their mortal shells. The fourth remained in the Shadowlands, but proved to be just as useful.

With his posse of Walking Dead, Gideon has withstood every sortie the Wendigo pack has thrown against him. This buffer allows Gideon to finally take the time to devote most of his attention to experiment with Malvado Canyon's incredible energy reserves.

Image: The werewolf known as Gideon is a tall, lean man in his early 40s. Although his deeply lined face and slightly graying hair attest to the long roads down which he's traveled, they also serve to give him an air of distinction. Gideon's dark, Slavic complexion, hawk nose and piercing black eyes add a combination of keen intelligence and veiled menace. Although his mouth often quirks into a smile underneath his thick mustache, Gideon's grins seldom show any warmth. He's a man who's obviously taken a lot of time to cultivate an appearance of formidable power, and his efforts seem to have paid off.



Roleplaying Hints: You've followed many paths in your pursuit of renown, and you have much to show for your accomplishments. You are a figure of note in your tribe, and have attained a rank any Garou could be proud of. Yet still it is not enough. You must constantly challenge yourself, and strive to attain ever more ambitious goals.

In Malvado Canyon, you see the greatest challenge of your long life. It is a place of spiritual power, but tied too closely to the Dark Umbra to be useful as a caern. Still, this very connection could be a useful tool were it harnessed correctly. You study the wraiths in this place with enthusiasm, hoping to bend them to your will like you would a spirit. So far you've met with little success, although the "accident" involving your posse's untimely demise resulted in the surprise of three Risen.

If you can encourage more wraiths to focus themselves, and to channel this attention against malevolent forces like the Wyrms and the Storm Eater on both sides of the Shroud, you will achieve incredible renown. You will allow no one to stop your efforts, least of all the

Wendigo pack that roams the nearby mountains. Still, those who would join you are welcomed (though not entirely trusted).

Your efforts as a lawman in the past were a convenient means to an end. Similarly, you follow your duties as sheriff mainly to sustain the posse's desperate need for spiritual energy (Pathos), and to satisfy your own desire to manipulate others.

The recent problems in Malvado have shaken your resolve, but you're determined to persevere in your goal. Your pride is too great to simply cut and run. You will be victorious against the upstart Wendigo, the wraiths who defy you and against the canyon itself — or you'll die trying.

Destiny: Gideon's bullying eventually proves too much for the people of Malvado Canyon. One by one, they defy his Boss Tweed-like "rule," and keeping up with them is more than he and the Posse can do. Gideon "retires" after the veritable revolt, and becomes a recluse on the outskirts of the town.

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Theurge

Tribe: Shadow Lords

Nature/Demeanor: Architect/Leader

Physical: Strength 4 (6/8/7/5), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/5), Stamina 4 (6/7/7/6)

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 5 (4/2/2/2), Appearance 3 (2/0/3/3)

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Awareness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Expression 3, Intimidation 4, Primal-Urge 4, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Etiquette 3, Firearms 4, Leadership 4, Melee 2, Ride 2, Stealth 3, Survival 1

Knowledges: Culture 2, Enigmas 3, Law 2, Linguistics 2, Occult 4, Rituals 5

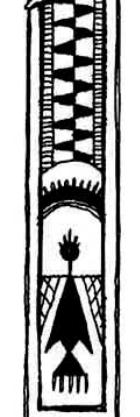
Backgrounds: Contacts 4, Fetish 4, Resources 3

Gifts: (1) Aura of Confidence, Brand of Suspicion, Persuasion, Spirit Speech; (2) Commanding Voice, Command Spirit, Luna's Armor, Sight from Beyond; (3) Disquiet, Icy Chill of Despair, Pulse of the Invisible

Rank: 3

Rage 5, Gnosis 8, Willpower 7

Rites: Rite of Binding, Rite of New Territory, Rite of Summoning, Rite of Talisman Dedication



Possession

Each one of the Walking Dead requires a Conduit in which to store his Shadow. Morgan and Wallace's Conduits are their deputy stars; Larkin's is a straight razor he keeps in his boot (although he wears a star like the others). They defend their Conduits ferociously, but it is conceivable that a character may separate one of the Risen from his Conduit.

If that character takes the Conduit into her possession, the Shadow can act as if it is the character's own darker half. The Shadow can gain Angst from the character's actions that fuel its Dark Passions, it can whisper advice to the character, and it can even offer Shadow Dice to the character. In short, the Shadow acts just like it normally does with its Psyche.

The character is also in grave danger of being overwhelmed by the Shadow the Conduit contains. If the Shadow's temporary Angst exceeds the character's permanent Willpower, it may try to take over the character. The Shadow spends a point of temporary Angst and rolls on its adjusted temporary Angst rating. The character may roll her permanent Willpower to try and resist the control (the difficulty for both rolls is 6). If the Shadow rolls more successes, it seizes control, dominating the character's actions for the remainder of the scene. If the character equals or beats the Shadow's successes, she retains control of herself (although the Shadow may well try again later...).

Note: the character more than likely has no idea that the whispered voice and strange urgings she hears is a separate entity. As far as the character knows, the Shadow's interactions with her are nothing more than her own thoughts. This includes being possessed by the Shadow; the character retains no memory of her actions during the time the Shadow is in control, but won't necessarily know that she was possessed. Only a character with extensive interactions with wraiths will have any idea of what's happening.

The Posse

Although these four men came from different walks of life, they were united in their passion for justice. They were not the bloodthirsty killers who often become bounty hunters. Instead, the posse defended justice and the oppressed with an almost zealous intensity. With their deaths, this urge has gained even more importance to their continued existence.

Through a combination of their desire for vengeance, the townsfolk's fear and need, Gideon's encouragement and the canyon's vast reservoir of Pathos, the Walking Dead serve Malvado Canyon as grim deputies, the Shadow Lord their sheriff and the town's protector.

Peter Larkin

Background: Larkin was the darkest one of the posse, his pursuit of justice more from a desire for power and control over others than due to any altruistic leanings. He was a successful gunfighter for a number of years, but was clever enough to see which way the wind was blowing. Larkin joined the side of law and order, taking the role of bounty hunter and tracking down the outlaws he used to ride with. Larkin never feared death in life, and now that he's dead he realizes just how right he was.



Image: A slender man with a pockmarked face, Larkin wears an unassuming gray suit and a wide-brimmed hat pulled low over his features. He has a weak mustache that always looks disheveled no matter how frequently he combs it. Despite being buried under a rock fall, the cold winter and dry mountain air kept decomposition to a minimum. As a result, Larkin's body is in decent shape. He can pass for living without too much trouble, although his cold smile and occasionally flaring green eye tend to disturb people more than a shambling corpse would.

Roleplaying Hints: You don't look like much and you like it that way. You were deadly with a gun in life, and you're pleased to note that death hasn't slowed you down any. You returned most recently of all the posse members, due mainly to the time you spent training in the Intimation Arcanos. Now that you have a fresh perspective on things, you're nowhere near as enamored of Gideon as you once were. In fact, your Shadow might have a point when it says that perhaps his time is over....

Destiny: The powerful Shadow contained in Larkin's straight razor certainly plans on causing as much havoc as possible before succumbing to Oblivion. After Gideon's control erodes, Larkin moves on, led by his Shadow, to become one of the first "serial killers" in American history.

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Conniver

Circle: the Posse

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Talents: Alertness 4, Awareness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 2,

Dodge 4, Intimidation 3, Larceny 2, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Firearms 4, Melee 3, Ride 2, Stealth 2, Survival 1

Knowledges: Culture 1, Investigation 1, Linguistics 1, Occult 1, Politics 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 1, Eidolon 2, Notoriety 1, Wealth 3

Passions: Uphold justice (Revenge) 3, Manipulate others (Ego) 5, Show off marksmanship (Pride) 2

Arcanoi: Fascinate 1, Intimation 3, Lifeweb 2, Puppetry 2

Fetters: Straight Razor (Conduit) 4, Pistol 3, Deputy Star 2, Sheriff Gideon 1

Willpower: 6

Pathos: 7

Permanent Corpus: 10

Shadow: The Director

Angst: 5

Thorns: Pact of Doom, Shadowplay, Shadow Trait (Stamina)


Shadow Passions: Humiliate Gideon (Contempt) 3, Resist Oblivion (Fear) 4

Darnell Wallace

Background: Wallace grew up the son of a farmer. The local sheriff wanted a "clean" town, however, and systematically drove out the blacks in the area. Wallace's father refused to leave, however, and tensions mounted until one night when a group of men dressed in white hooded sheets set the house on fire and killed every person who tried to escape the blaze. Wallace happened to be out possum hunting, and rushed back in time to see the killers ride off. From that moment, Wallace dedicated himself to bringing to justice those who would abuse the law and subjugate others for their own ends. He's spent years tracking down the men who killed his family and exacting retribution. Dying reinforced this belief, since a number of wraiths are the victims of others' crimes.

Image: A black man of medium build, Wallace dresses in rugged leathers and faded denim. He's obviously more comfortable on the range than in a saloon. Of course, having been ripped up by Garou, it's difficult for him to enter a saloon without scaring the people out of





their wits. He keeps his distance from the townsfolk, and keeps his hat pulled low and jacket closed whenever possible.

Roleplaying Hints: You were a skilled tracker, and vital to the rest of the posse because of it. You prefer the wilderness to the city, feeling civilization is inherently corrupt. You've become concerned at the harshness of the posse's actions of late; you believe that you're doing right, but you feel the fear spreading in those around you.

Destiny: Wallace already has trouble with his status as one of the Walking Dead. His Passions are strong, but he's finding that the sheer intensity of staying in his body is difficult to maintain. In time, Wallace gives up his Risen status and joins the Hierarchy, helping pave the way for Stygian control over the American West.

Nature: Caregiver

Demeanor: Mediator

Circle: the Posse

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Awareness 1, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 1, Empathy 1

Skills: Animal Ken 3, Crafts 1, Firearms 3, Melee 4, Ride 3, Stealth 3, Survival 4

Knowledges: Investigation 3, Law 1, Linguistics 1, Medicine 2

Backgrounds: Allies 1, Contacts 2, Wealth 2

Passions: Protect the innocent (Duty) 4, Punish criminals (Revenge) 4, Find peace (Fear) 2

Arcanoi: Embody 1, Fatalism 3, Inhabit 1, Puppetry 1

Fetters: Deputy Star (Conduit) 5, Old Homestead 3, Sheriff Gideon 2

Willpower: 5

Pathos: 7

Permanent Corpus: 10

Shadow: The Martyr

Angst: 3

Thorns: Death's Sigil 1 (scars ooze darkness), Shadow Trait (Strength), Shadowed Face

Shadow Passions: Spread pain (Self-Loathing) 3, Kill his family's murderers (Hate) 4

Yancey Morgan

Background: Abused and unwanted as a child due to his ungainly appearance, Morgan fell in with a hard bunch. He thought with his fists and showed no mercy,



since that's all he knew. Still, he grew increasingly unhappy. Gideon rescued Morgan from his downward spiral, and brought him into the posse. Morgan discovered great personal satisfaction in becoming a bounty hunter instead of a criminal. He was too simple to unlearn his violent behavior, though, and brings his great rage to bear on lawbreakers of all stripes.

Image: Morgan is a huge man, almost seven feet tall. He was never terribly pleasant looking, and the claws of the Wendigo didn't help any. Still, most people note his sheer size and don't comment on his scarred visage. Morgan moves deceptively fast, his heavy lumbering gait surprisingly silent and fluid.

Roleplaying Hints: Although you're not the sharpest tack on the board, you aren't the stereotypical "dumb muscle." You're not sure what happened to you recently, and figure it's best not to think about it too hard. You're cautious of others, because you know that you're the type people like to trick since they know they can't beat you by force. Still, you react almost reflexively to obvious authority. Gideon is your beacon in more ways than one. He not only gives you direction, but his almost palpable aura of command fuels your Passions.

Destiny: Morgan's future is tied directly to Gideon's. At this point, the Shadow Lord is the only thing that keeps Morgan going. Gideon's ultimate failure causes Morgan's Shadow to gain purchase over the big wraith, and Oblivion follows swiftly.

Nature: Child

Demeanor: Bravo

Circle: the Posse

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 1, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Intimidation 3, Larceny 1

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Firearms 3, Melee 4, Ride 2, Stealth 1, Survival 2

Knowledges: Law 2, Medicine 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 1, Notoriety 1, Wealth 3

Passions: Protect the posse (Love) 3, Punish criminals (Hate) 3, Seek approval from others (Ego) 4

Arcanoi: Embody 2, Puppetry 1, Serendipity 2

Fetters: Deputy Star (Conduit) 5, Sheriff Gideon 5

Willpower: 6

Pathos: 5

Permanent Corpus: 10

Shadow: The Pusher

Angst: 4

Thorns: Bad Luck, Shadow Trait (Strength), Shadow Trait (Stamina), Trick of the Light

Shadow Passions: Lose others' confidence (Self-Loathing) 4, Prove superior strength (Pride) 3

Adam Haslett

Background: Haslett heard the call of the West late in life. He was a capable accountant in Philadelphia, but the more he read of the West the greater his dreams became. Finally, one day, he quit his job, left his wife and made his way across the Rockies. Haslett proved to be a capable bounty hunter, and over time he became resigned to the fact that he would never excel at anything. Joining the posse was more a coincidence than anything. Haslett made a good second fiddle no matter what the task, and complemented the others well.

Image: A stocky man with a blotchy complexion in life, Haslett doesn't look much better now. He wears a faded brown suit and a small brimmed hat. Although he wears a pistol, Haslett's weapon of choice is a Bowie knife.

Roleplaying Hints: You were never as strong as Morgan, never as sharp as Larkin. Still, you had your share of common sense. You were the glue that held them together. Then Gideon came along and you felt pushed into the background. After you died, you still wanted to prove that you were worth something. Having no interest in staying in Morgan and Larkin's Shadows, you remained a wraith. You've already proven your worth, patrolling the Shadowlands and watching for threats against the town and the posse. What's most galling of all is that you only seem to become needed after your life is already over.

Destiny: Resisting the urge to return to the Skinlands is the second time Haslett has defied others' expectations. He's discovering a newfound motivation in the afterlife, and is interested to see if now, finally, he will excel at something. Like Darnell Wallace, Adam Haslett finds the meaning in unlife he needs in the Hierarchy's push to claim the United States.

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Follower

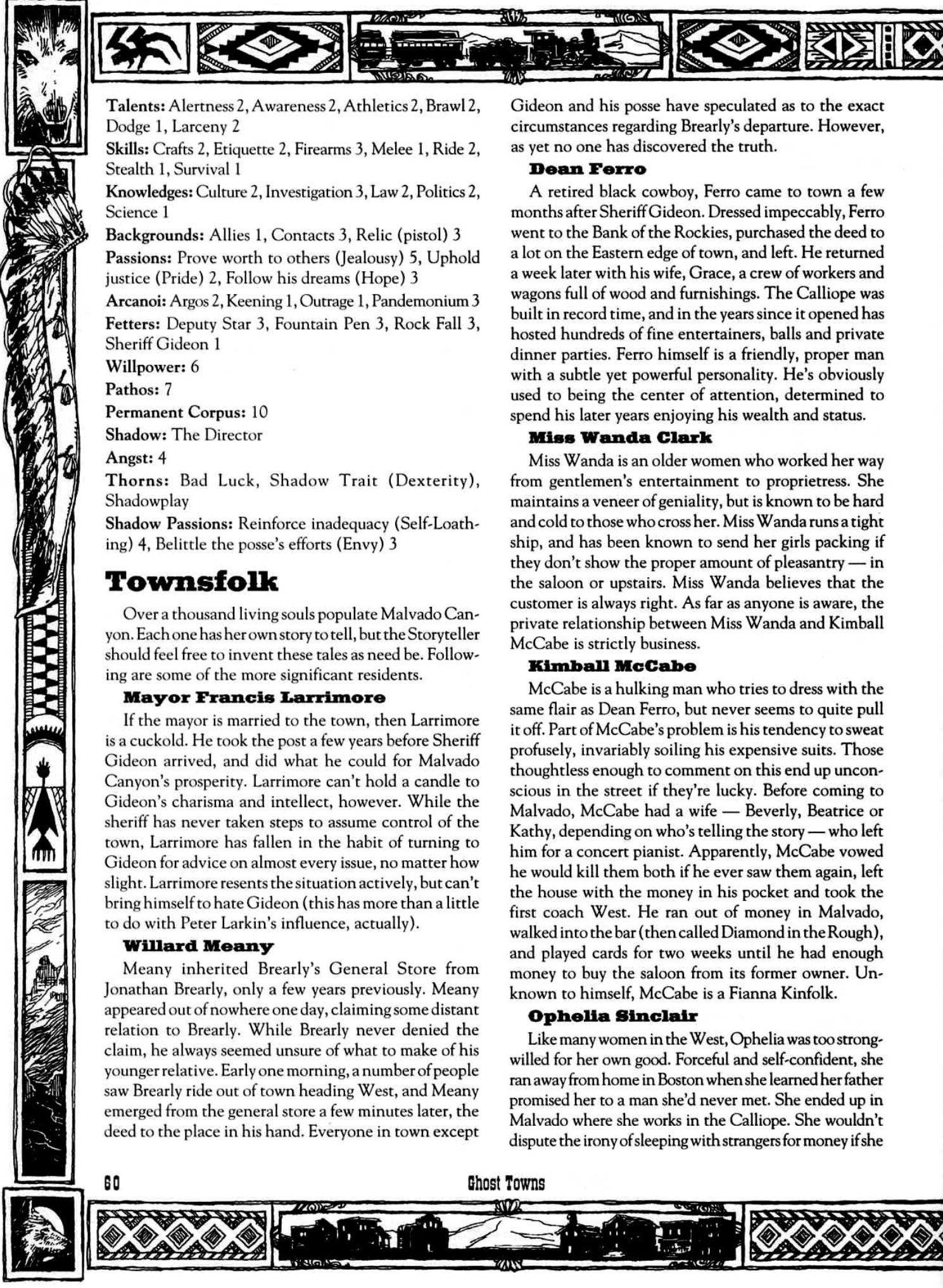
Circle: the Posse

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4





Talents: Alertness 2, Awareness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 1, Larceny 2

Skills: Crafts 2, Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Melee 1, Ride 2, Stealth 1, Survival 1

Knowledges: Culture 2, Investigation 3, Law 2, Politics 2, Science 1

Backgrounds: Allies 1, Contacts 3, Relic (pistol) 3

Passions: Prove worth to others (Jealousy) 5, Uphold justice (Pride) 2, Follow his dreams (Hope) 3

Arcanoi: Argos 2, Keening 1, Outrage 1, Pandemonium 3

Fetters: Deputy Star 3, Fountain Pen 3, Rock Fall 3, Sheriff Gideon 1

Willpower: 6

Pathos: 7

Permanent Corpus: 10

Shadow: The Director

Angst: 4

Thorns: Bad Luck, Shadow Trait (Dexterity), Shadowplay

Shadow Passions: Reinforce inadequacy (Self-Loathing) 4, Belittle the posse's efforts (Envy) 3

Townfolk

Over a thousand living souls populate Malvado Canyon. Each one has her own story to tell, but the Storyteller should feel free to invent these tales as need be. Following are some of the more significant residents.

Mayor Francis Larrimore

If the mayor is married to the town, then Larrimore is a cuckold. He took the post a few years before Sheriff Gideon arrived, and did what he could for Malvado Canyon's prosperity. Larrimore can't hold a candle to Gideon's charisma and intellect, however. While the sheriff has never taken steps to assume control of the town, Larrimore has fallen in the habit of turning to Gideon for advice on almost every issue, no matter how slight. Larrimore resents the situation actively, but can't bring himself to hate Gideon (this has more than a little to do with Peter Larkin's influence, actually).

Willard Meany

Meany inherited Brearly's General Store from Jonathan Brearly, only a few years previously. Meany appeared out of nowhere one day, claiming some distant relation to Brearly. While Brearly never denied the claim, he always seemed unsure of what to make of his younger relative. Early one morning, a number of people saw Brearly ride out of town heading West, and Meany emerged from the general store a few minutes later, the deed to the place in his hand. Everyone in town except

Gideon and his posse have speculated as to the exact circumstances regarding Brearly's departure. However, as yet no one has discovered the truth.

Dean Ferro

A retired black cowboy, Ferro came to town a few months after Sheriff Gideon. Dressed impeccably, Ferro went to the Bank of the Rockies, purchased the deed to a lot on the Eastern edge of town, and left. He returned a week later with his wife, Grace, a crew of workers and wagons full of wood and furnishings. The Calliope was built in record time, and in the years since it opened has hosted hundreds of fine entertainers, balls and private dinner parties. Ferro himself is a friendly, proper man with a subtle yet powerful personality. He's obviously used to being the center of attention, determined to spend his later years enjoying his wealth and status.

Miss Wanda Clark

Miss Wanda is an older woman who worked her way from gentlemen's entertainment to proprietress. She maintains a veneer of geniality, but is known to be hard and cold to those who cross her. Miss Wanda runs a tight ship, and has been known to send her girls packing if they don't show the proper amount of pleasantries — in the saloon or upstairs. Miss Wanda believes that the customer is always right. As far as anyone is aware, the private relationship between Miss Wanda and Kimball McCabe is strictly business.

Kimball McCabe

McCabe is a hulking man who tries to dress with the same flair as Dean Ferro, but never seems to quite pull it off. Part of McCabe's problem is his tendency to sweat profusely, invariably soiling his expensive suits. Those thoughtless enough to comment on this end up unconscious in the street if they're lucky. Before coming to Malvado, McCabe had a wife — Beverly, Beatrice or Kathy, depending on who's telling the story — who left him for a concert pianist. Apparently, McCabe vowed he would kill them both if he ever saw them again, left the house with the money in his pocket and took the first coach West. He ran out of money in Malvado, walked into the bar (then called Diamond in the Rough), and played cards for two weeks until he had enough money to buy the saloon from its former owner. Unknown to himself, McCabe is a Fianna Kinfolk.

Ophelia Sinclair

Like many women in the West, Ophelia was too strong-willed for her own good. Forceful and self-confident, she ran away from home in Boston when she learned her father promised her to a man she'd never met. She ended up in Malvado where she works in the Calliope. She wouldn't dispute the irony of sleeping with strangers for money if she

gave herself time to think about it. Instead, Ophelia simply views herself as calling her own shots. She's set her mind on taking her savings and heading to San Francisco, but is all too aware of the dangers in the hills. Desperate for a way out, she tries to convince herself that it's in her best interest to stay, while at the same time she waits for the right person to come through town and rescue her.

Finlay Morrison

A small-time preacher, Morrison has earned notoriety from his claims that the region is infested with evil spirits. He feels it's his duty to drive the darkness from the land so that God-fearing men and women can safely make lives for themselves here. Morrison is the only one who speaks openly of the fears the townsfolk have, his fiery speeches act as a kind of catharsis for the residents of Malvado Canyon. While nearly everyone in the town attends Morrison's weekly sermons, they make a point of avoiding him the rest of the time. Interestingly, Sheriff Gideon has been seen to enter the church during the week. No one knows what the two discuss.

Dr. Douglas Walcott

The town doctor, Walcott is recognized as the longest current resident of Malvado. He is a quiet and reserved man, treating the various aches and pains of the townsfolk, and spending quiet nights at home. Despite Walcott's long history in the area, few people know anything about him. They know his wife died in childbirth and that his daughter, Sandy, is the most important thing in his life, but beyond that, Walcott is a cipher. He's proven himself to be a more than capable physician, however, and that's good enough for the town.

Sandy Walcott

Dr. Walcott's young daughter, Sandy returned to Malvado a few months ago from school back East. She graduated with honors and a degree in journalism (one of the few topics her father will discuss without prompting), but instead of going to New York or San Francisco she returned to Malvado Canyon to be with her father. Sandy started a local newspaper, the *Malvado Clarion*, but the residents are uncomfortable with the topics she covers. They don't like to be reminded of the dangers in the hills, or of the trade that's slowly transferring from wagon trains to locomotive routes. Also, Sandy's unabashed enthusiasm startles most people.

Wraiths

Orson Miller

The former sheriff, Miller hides himself as best he can from Gideon while planning his revenge. He's met Adam Haslett and uses the newer wraith to find out all





he can of Gideon's habits. As yet, Haslett is unaware of the reasons for Miller's interest, but has grown wary of the other wraith nonetheless.

Randolph Walstone

A Pinkerton agent, Walstone came to Malvado on the trail of a two-bit criminal. Much to Walstone's embarrassment, the punk got the drop on him and shot Walstone dead just as he was entering McCabe's Saloon. Walstone's frustration took a back seat to wonder and curiosity when he emerged as a wraith. His keen intellect buzzed at the ramifications of his new existence. Walstone has spent the last few years since his death exploring the full extent of his wraithly self. He's not yet certain to what end he'll apply his abilities, but avenging himself against his killer is near the top of the list. In the meantime, Walstone watches Gideon's actions with great interest — in fact, he's the first wraith with which Gideon discussed the unique condition of Malvado Canyon.

Petra Volowski

The wife of a dry goods merchant, Petra had an affair with Jonathan Brearly. Her husband was more concerned with money and drinking than he was with her, despite her efforts to maintain the marriage — even traveling with him on his route. Petra and Brearly fell in love but did nothing about it for some time. Sadly, the one night they indulged in their passion, her husband burst into the room. Drunk and furious, Volowski stabbed Petra with a knife and went for Brearly. Brearly killed Volowski, but was unable to save Petra. Ashamed and mortified, Brearly sneaked out with the bodies during the night and buried them, then acted as surprised as the rest of the town at the couple's disappearance.

Despite the prayers Brearly said over her grave, Petra could not rest easy. She stayed, tied to Brearly, unable to requite her love. Although neither she nor Brearly knew how Meany came about the information, he nonetheless used the event to take Brearly's ownership in the store. Petra decided to stay in Malvado until she could exact an appropriate revenge on Meany.

Garou

The Wendigo don't have any idea what Gideon's up to, but he's obviously gained some formidable assistance. These Garou think that the region is in danger of being overrun by the Storm Eater. They would already have wiped the town off the map if it weren't for the Risen guarding it. The Wendigo have sent word out,

asking for advice on how to cope with the situation. Such things are new in their experience, and they're not yet sure what to do. In the meantime, the Garou figure their best bet is to keep anyone associated directly with the town where they can keep an eye on them.

Stormkiller

This homid Theurge often acts like an Ahroun, but the rest of the pack respects her spiritual power. She has become the pack leader in the time since the Storm Eater was freed; she took the name "Stormkiller" after defeating one of the Storm Eater's twisted offspring single-handedly. Stormkiller is fiercely determined to stop Gideon's plans, *whatever* they may be. She further hopes to discover a way to block off Malvado Canyon so that it cannot be used by Garou, the Wyrms or the Storm Eater.

Soaring Hawk

The former pack leader, Soaring Hawk decided that, due to the changing times, Stormkiller was better-suited to the job. The Philodox trained Stormkiller subtly for the role without her even realizing it. Soaring Hawk fought Stormkiller without reservation when she finally made the challenge, and was inordinately proud to lose to her. Soaring Hawk has tremendous confidence in the Theurge, and feels that she is essential to the Pure Ones' victory against the Storm Eater and the Wyrmscomers.

Sees-The-Wind

This lupus Theurge follows in Stormkiller's footsteps. Sees-The-Wind seems well attuned to speaking with spirits, and guides the pack in their travels through the Umbra. He has been studying Malvado Canyon intently, hoping to learn the true extent of its ties to the Dark Umbra.

Speaks-To-The-Past

A homid Galliard, Speaks-To-The-Past has shown herself to be remarkably adept at channeling the spirits of her ancestors. Speaks-To-The-Past has been instrumental in guiding the pack with stories and tales she's "remembered." Her maternal nature has also been a comfort during rough times, especially in recent days.

Runs-In-Silence

The younger brother of Sees-The-Wind, this young lupus Ragabash brings much-needed levity to the pack. He was given his name due to his habit of howling and barking excitedly when chasing down prey. Although Runs-In-Silence can be quiet when the need arises, the rest of the time he's a noisy bundle of nervous energy.



Paradise, Montana

We gathered on the open plain that evening for the last time. I didn't know it then, but I would never see these brave warriors alive again. Had I not chosen the road of cowardice that night, my corpse would be among theirs. I regret that decision every day I draw breath.

Our war party had traveled a long way from the Black Hills of the Dakota Mountains. The black dust barely off our feet, we gathered with the other packs to hear tales of courage, death and victory. A great battle had just been fought between our Kinfolk and the white man's army. Many braves earned their feathers and many white men lost their scalps.

Moonchaser entered our circle and took his rightful place facing east. He walked sun-wise around the fire, passing just behind me. I shivered as the powerful Theurge approached to within an arm's length of me. I feared that the others had witnessed my moment of weakness, but luckily, all eyes rested on the great wichasha wakan, holy man.

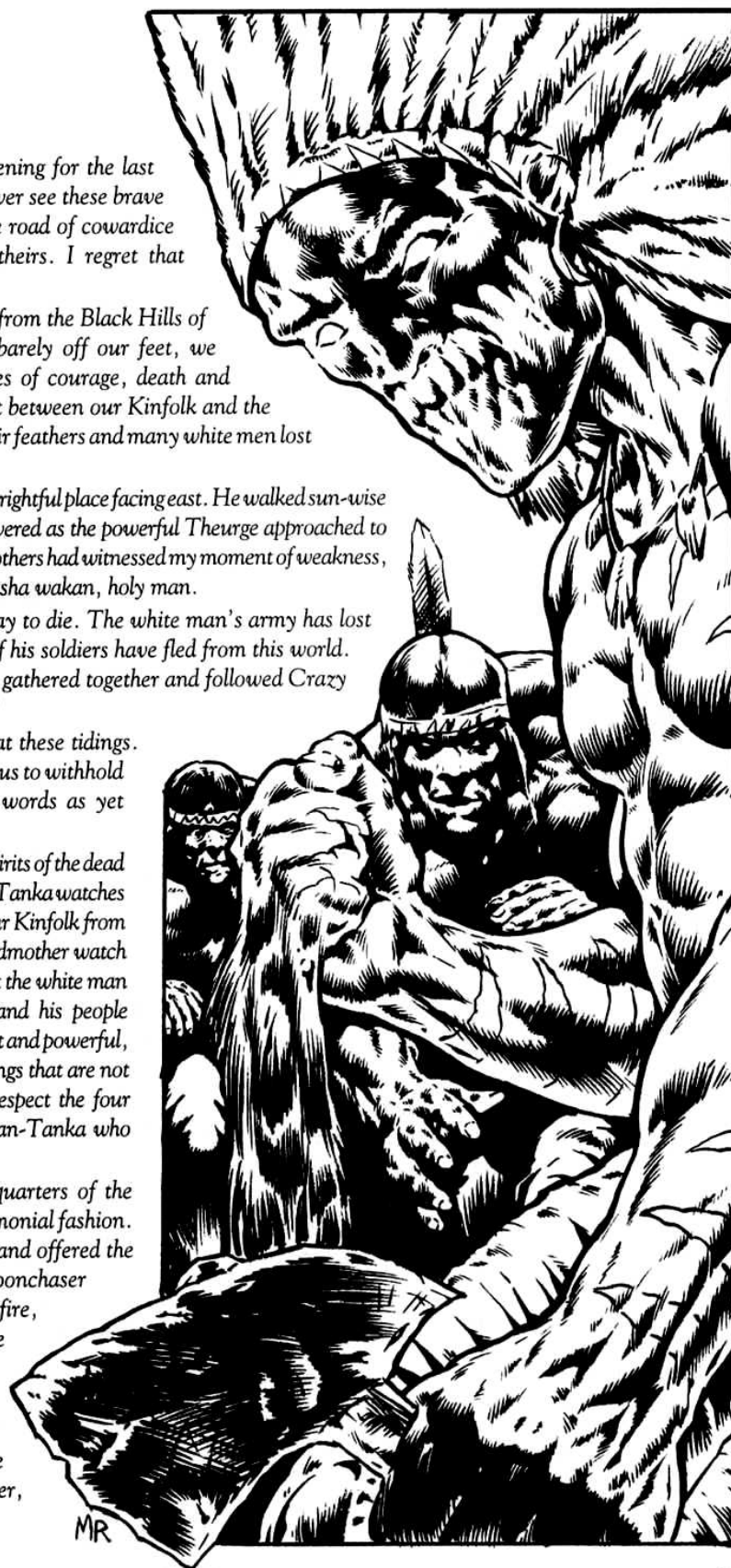
Moonchaser spoke, "Today is a good day to die. The white man's army has lost the yellow-haired devil and a great many of his soldiers have fled from this world. Many great Sioux and Cheyenne warriors gathered together and followed Crazy Horse on his road to the Little Big Horn."


Many of us wanted to howl and cheer at these tidings. Something in Moonchaser's attitude forced us to withhold our revelry, however. There were more words as yet unspoken — darker words.

"Today may be a good day to die, but the spirits of the dead are angry", the Theurge continued. "Wakan-Tanka watches over all of us and all of our people and all of our Kinfolk from his place in the sky, just as Mother and Grandmother watch over us from the ground beneath our feet. But the white man does not understand this great harmony, and his people sometimes become lost. While their god is great and powerful, the whites sometimes search for wakan in things that are not wakan. They walk this Earth but do not respect the four quarters or our four great relatives or Wakan-Tanka who watches over all of us."

Moonchaser invited each of the four quarters of the universe to enter the sacred pipe in the ceremonial fashion. He also invited the Earth to enter the pipe and offered the whole universe up to the great spirit. Moonchaser took the sacred pipe and passed it over the fire, giving Wakan-Tanka the first smoke. He then passed the sacred pipe in the sun-wise direction to each of us.

"The tribes that come with the white man do not realize that they disturb the balance. They claim to serve the Earth Mother,





but they join their Kinfolk in digging up our most sacred sites. They release ancient spirits that our people trapped long ago with the help of the Mother. The ancient Wyrms laughs at them from his secret den."

We all shook our heads in sadness, recalling the ignorance of the newcomers and the pain they cause. Moonchaser spoke again, but this time he spoke to us as if we were disrespectful children. He said, "The Wyrmscomers are not the only foolish ones! Some of us in this sept are not worthy to smoke the sacred pipe. You have sought the mysteries of the sacred as well as the evil spirits. You have sought wakan to stop the white man. The power you seek is not buried in the sand, but is buried here!" The Wendigo drew a deep breath and beat his chest twice.

I looked around at the Garou encircling the fire trying to find the ones who had violated our sacred holdings. If they were here as Moonchaser had said, I could not find them. The flood of anger in my heart nearly forced me to my feet to demand who had done these things, but my respect for Moonchaser kept me silent and seated.

"Today is not a good day to be among the dead," Moonchaser repeated. "Those who cannot find the road south continue to walk the Earth. Those who are not embraced by the wings of White Swan bring bad luck and misgivings to the living. Even our Kinfolk may become lost if their souls are not kept in the sacred way taught by the White Buffalo Cow Woman. Unable to find peace with their families, these lost spirits wander the world searching for the red road, the road south, upon which our Kin must all journey.

"The white men's souls that do not pass on to their powerful god also remain trapped here, anchored by their greed or their pain or their anger. They bring bad luck to the living as well. Unable to find peace, they must walk this Earth until time ends or until they free themselves from their pain.

"There is a great beast that stalks the world of the dead and haunts the world of the living." My ears perked up at hearing these words: This was the reason I had journeyed so far. "This spirit, that is powerful but not wakan, feeds on the anguish of the dead who cannot rest. Freed by the greed of the white man and the foolishness of our Kin, this creature turns those we love most into our greatest enemy. It brings out the hate that consumes and forces brother to kill brother.

"Our people to the west met this enemy and fell. They did not even know what took them. It swept up from the Earth and dragged them down into the dust. It did not even have the honor to show itself before it destroyed every one of them.

"The white people of Paradise met this enemy and also fell. I do not know what happened to them, but I fear their fate is like that of our Kin. Some say it is their fault that this thing happened, but I say that does not matter.

"Now, we go to bring the power of Wakan-Tanka to revenge the spirits of our Kin and free them. Our ancestors once imprisoned this monstrous Bane. Now we must destroy it."

We left the ceremony with a roar to conclude the evening's preparations. In the revelry, no one noticed as I stepped sideways and wandered out of the camp to rejoin my pack. This Bane must be defeated, but my pack will be the one to stalk and kill it. Moonchaser is old and can no longer remember the power of courage and determination. He will sing our praises at the very next moot along with those who won the Little Big Horn. Perhaps even the Wyrmscomers will learn from us and stop their conquest. Glory will be ours!

Foundation of Paradise

Paradise seems aptly named at first glance. Although I am only a new arrival, the simple folk here have given me a welcome suitable for the second coming. I believe I will be happy here. As I walk the grounds of my new church, however, I cannot shake the feeling that I have been here before. Perhaps it is just the new setting, but still I feel ill at ease in my new home. My sleep has been without rest for some nights, now. Surely when my father arrives this feeling will subside — I do miss his company.

— From the Journal of Reverend Jonathan Hanscome, June 21, 1876.

Lost among the foothills of the Dakota mountains and the deep forest of the Montana territory sits a lonely town ironically named Paradise. While the name suited the town early in its history, it now points out the fallibility of humanity and the differences between human endeavor and divine creation. For the people who lived in Paradise, their dreams shattered and their lives extinguished, the town has become a nightmare. For the creature that chose the location of the town and doomed its residents, the town lives up to its name.

The formation of Paradise differed little from that of any other frontier town. A family, in search of a new life, built a home in the untamed wilds. Soon, other families with similar ambitions built their own homes, and before long a town stood where unsettled wilderness once existed. Unlike most towns, however, supernatural forces doomed Paradise to an untimely and gruesome end.

The first white settlers in the area, William Bastion and his family, chose the area for its beautiful rolling hills and its breathtaking countryside. Their proximity to the Clearwater river expedited trade with towns further east and the wild countryside provided plenty of game following Paradise's establishment. His small home quickly grew into a trading post and even a small hostel for weary travelers. William traded with trappers and guides journeying west toward the Dakota Mountains and beyond.

The Bastion family fought fiercely against the harsh winters and managed to carve a life out of the unforgiving wilderness. Fortunately for them, the local Sioux were amenable to a friendly white man. The Sioux provided William's family with food and furs during the first winter, without which they surely would have died. After establishing friendly terms with the natives, Bastion's family prospered. They traded with the Sioux on a regular basis, acquiring what they could not grow or make themselves.

William was soon joined by his cousin, Thomas, who constructed a proper hotel and stable. Thomas also brought his family and later convinced several of his acquaintances to settle nearby. These new families set up larger farms than the meager patches of land that William had first planted. A healthy community of trade and cooperation between the families assured their prosperity.

As more settlers arrived, William found himself at the center of an emerging town. The new residents' reasons for coming were as varied as the people themselves: Some came for the promise of free land, others came to start new lives. Some made the journey to strike it rich and others came to prey off those fortunes. Still others came because they were no longer welcome back East. When the time came to make the status of the town official, William chose the name Paradise, but allowed his cousin Thomas to become the first mayor.

Thomas Bastion enjoyed the luxury of being the mayor of a quiet town that hardly had call for his political position. His main duty was to oversee the small town council that gathered on a monthly basis to discuss various issues. The first major issue the town was to face was the lack of any church in Paradise. Thomas sent inquires and organized the building of the town's house of God. After several weeks, Thomas' inquiries were answered — Reverend Jonathan Hanscome was on his way to Paradise.

The arrival of Hanscome would be both the most celebrated day since the town's birth and the beginning of the end for Paradise. He did not know it then, but Reverend Hanscome brought doom to Paradise as surely as if he had summoned the Devil himself.





Fall from Grace

As my new congregation fills the simple pews today, I cannot shake off an apprehension. My flock has little clue that their shepherd has lost his way. Since my father's brutal slaying in Missouri, I have found it difficult to believe that God still exists in this world. How could He turn His back on me after I have sacrificed my entire life in His service? Why would He do such a thing to me, when these sniveling wretches lust after their brother's wives and rut with the town whore? They drink and dance while I cannot sleep for dread of seeing my father in my dreams. He haunts me. He asks me, "Why Jonathan? Why?" I don't know, father. Can't you just leave me alone? Can't you just stay dead?

— From the Journal of Reverend Jonathan Hanscome, August 16, 1876.

The demise of Paradise came about like a spider catching a fly. The killing blow fell swiftly and unexpectedly.

Not long after his arrival in Paradise, Reverend Hanscome received a letter informing him that his father had been slain. Found drunk at the scene of a murder, an angry mob lynched his innocent father before the evidence pointed out the real culprit. The townspeople were dreadfully sorry, the letter stated, and they called upon his love of God to forgive them. He could not — and therein lay the doom of Paradise.

Sower-of-Fear, a Bane in service to the Defiler Wyrn, found the empty corners of Hanscome's soul and filled them with hatred. Whereas the man was once filled with the joy of faith, he now felt the cruel fires of anger and revenge. A madness overtook Hanscome, exacerbated by the influence of the Bane. The person who had been Reverend Hanscome was soon replaced by a resentful, hate-filled servant of the Wyrn.

Jonathan no longer spoke his sermons on the pulpit solemnly, but rather a new fervor overtook him every Sunday. The townspeople noted the change, and admired the man's seemingly renewed faith in spite of his father's tragic death. Attendance increased weekly as did church volunteers and Sunday school enrollment.

Unknowingly, Hanscome introduced new elements into his sermons each week, subtly manipulating his congregation. The people, enraptured by Hanscome's force of personality and the emotion in his homilies, absorbed every word he spoke regardless of the content of the sermons. God had no place in Hanscome's church; only the Wyrn and its corrupting influence lived there.



Sunday mass attendees would only consciously remember a rousing Sunday sermon, while the underlying words would poison their souls.

The insidious effects of Sower-of-Fear's influence became apparent slowly and inexorably. First the children, easily overwhelmed by the Bane, began to spit and curse at the air. Then the stablehand — good with animals, but as simple as they come — rolled around in horse dung and ran off into the night. Next the town deputy, a house of a man named James Smith, simply walked out of the sheriff's office, rifle in hand. The madness had set him in motion on a course that would ignite the final powder-keg of Paradise.

The poison spread quickly enough and the dim ones went first. Several of the children spoke in tongues and fought with one another constantly. Driven by the Reverend's hatred, they clawed at one another like wild beasts, bloody noses turning to broken arms. The lummoX of a deputy went next; settling a simple bar brawl with

his rifle. Soon, nearly everyone was drooling and bleeding out of their ears. They screamed for blood and killed those people who hadn't yet lost their wits. No one knew what was going on until it was too late — they were dead or a part of the chaos. Wives turned against husbands over long-buried jealousies. Envious siblings murdered their younger brothers and sisters in their cribs. Old friends slew each other for no discernible reason. Within a day every last man, woman and child had been killed or driven completely out their mind. Finally, the madness turned upon itself and the few remaining townspeople turned their carving knives and pitchforks on themselves.

Haunted Paradise

I will spit on them when I see them again. Those simpleton dirt-grubbers and their whore women, who search my soul with their lusty eyes, I'll spit on them and show them the beast's power.



The Sioux

Despite his early fears, William Bastion was welcomed by the Sioux. Although they feared his presence would draw in more *wasichu* as much he feared their rifles, the Bastion family went unharmed by the Sioux villagers. Over the first few years, the Sioux played an integral role in the Bastion family's survival. An unexpectedly harsh winter set in and only the timely provisions supplied by the tribe kept William and his family alive.

Unfortunately, the Sioux were caught completely off-guard by the rapid growth of Paradise. A community sprang up seemingly overnight where once only one man and his family lived. The white settlers chopped down trees to make their homes and burned fields to grow their crops.


The Sioux chief Running Elk chose peace over war when white settlers arrived near his home. He told his people that the white man could be dealt with diplomatically and that they could learn from each other. Of course, Chief Running Elk could deal with one white settler, but he was not prepared for the hundreds who followed. Even Paradise, which remained small until its demise, overwhelmed the small Sioux community.

On the night Paradise was destroyed, Chief Running Elk had already decided it was time to move his village. Before that desire could be carried out some of

his best warriors lost control of their senses. They screeched at the top of their lungs, holding the sides of their heads and crumpled to the ground. When they looked up again, Chief Running Elk could not recognize the men before him. Their faces contorted with madness and their eyes streamed bloody tears. One of the warriors had nearly bit his tongue off and it hung loosely out of his slack-jawed mouth. All ten of the bravest Sioux were affected in a similar manner; an inexplicable madness defiling the men and leaving only ravening beasts in human guises.

Chief Running Elk called on the stricken Sioux to hold their ground and let the holy man help them. When the holy man approached, the warriors attacked. They dropped their rifles and axes and tore him down with their teeth and hands. They slashed him with their fingernails, now hooked into clumsy claws. Other warriors joined the fray and soon all of the village was embroiled in the fight. Children impaled their parents on spears, laughing as their mothers and fathers screamed in agony. The Sioux warriors continued their rampage, killing anything that got in their way. All around him, Chief Running Elk saw his people destroying one another. Before he could regain control of his wits, his own son beat him in the back of the head with the butt of a rifle.





They'll die for hanging my father. He still comes to me every night accusing and pointing. Me! He blames me! He says I should have done more, he says I should do more. "Revenge!" he cries. I'll show him revenge — revenge in spades.

—From the Journal of Reverend Jonathan Hanscome, no date entered.

For many of the former residents of Paradise, death did not bring their story to an end. Hanscome, driven mad by the power of Sower-of-Fear, crossed into the Shadowlands as a Spectre. The mad townspeople who crossed the Shroud, likewise were quickly consumed by their bloated Shadows. Hanscome set about reaping the other newly dead and introduced them to their new world, explaining to each one that they had been punished by God and must make amends.

The reverend commanded his flock to listen to his every word and command. They were doomed, he claimed, and only he could rescue them. The thirty Paradise Restless who had emerged in the Shadowlands had no choice but to listen to the reverend; they had no idea he had started the massacre and even less idea that he now wished to punish them further.

The reverend continues to hold Sunday mass. Now, however, the ceremony is open mockery of the sacraments, complete with burning crosses and sacrifice. Hanscome, his relationship closer to Sower-of-Fear than ever before, forces the town's Restless to sacrifice what little they have left to the Bane. He chooses one victim each week, performs a ghastly ceremony and plunges a soulsteel knife into their the victim's body. The subsequent release of fear and Corpus strengthens the Bane. When a wraith becomes overwhelmed by her fear, she is consumed by her shadow and joins Hanscome's ranks of Spectres; thus both Hanscome and the Bane are served. In the mean time, the Spectres patrol surrounding countryside searching for new victims, both the Quick and the Dead.

The townspeople fear the reverend and his strange rituals, but are equally afraid that he is right. If God has punished them, mustn't they do penance? They believe that Hanscome's rituals free them from their purgatory. He has convinced them the Spectres are actually angels and they must go through his seemingly cruel mass in order to ascend to that level. With no one else providing any answers to the contrary, the townspeople have little hope.



The Town

Paradise used to be a peaceful town, but that's how most of these stories start. Located just east of the Dakota Mountains and right along the banks of the Clearwater River, Paradise was a family town. A narrow main street surrounded by 20 buildings comprised the town center with an additional 35 cabins filling out the remainder. All in all, 300 people made their way in Paradise. Now, however, nobody lives in Paradise anymore, and it is anything but peaceful.

Paradise's main strip encompasses most of the major buildings and commercial establishments. At one end of town, the church stands as a wooden monument to God. Its single steeple contains the bell that summoned the townspeople for Sunday mass. At the other end, the Crooked Arrow Saloon provided a form of absolution all its own — turning a fair profit on the misery of the unfortunate. The Paradise Lodge, the town's only hotel, housed travelers on their way to fortune and glory in the West and again on their miserable and bankrupt journeys back East. The mill, whose owner pressed himself in the cogs, still turns out of sight of most of the town down by the river.

The town center remains the focus for activity in Paradise. Many of the Restless congregate at the Crooked Arrow, drowning in the memories of bygone days. The reverend's church, of course, continues to hold Sunday mass, but remains a monolith of fear throughout the rest of the week. Most of the Restless now slumber at the Paradise Lodge, which provides the most comfort during the day.

Sower-of-Fear

Official town records show that William Bastion was the first settler to lay claim to the area now called Paradise, Montana. Unofficially, the area had been held by the Sioux for generations until settlers came to take it away. What Bastion did not know and what the Sioux have long forgotten is that the territory was already "occupied" before either of them got there.

This spirit, an ancient Bane, resides in the very soil surrounding Paradise. Trapped there for hundreds of years, it has forgotten its own name. The Garou call it Sower-of-Fear, and when they say its name they whisper it so as not to attract attention. Even the eldest of Garou do not remember the whole truth concerning Sower-of-Fear and its place in the world. By its very nature, the Bane tends to be forgotten, until human fear or hatred stirs it from its slumber.

Unintentionally, the townspeople of Paradise weakened the seal imprisoning the Bane when they dug the foundation for the church. Lacking any real energy, it patiently waited for humanity to provide enough nourishment to free itself. The arrival of Jonathan Hanscome and his subsequent loss of faith proved to be enough of a boost for Sower-of-Fear to begin its work. Not wanting to attract attention, it moved slowly, feeding on the reverend's hatred until it could control him. Through him, the Bane poisoned the minds of the rest of the town. It was only a matter of time before the humans lost control and killed each other.

Sower-of-Fear gorged on the flow of hatred and panic that swept through the town after the killings began. It grew stronger, but quickly ran out of nourishment as the small population dwindled. It raged at the mystical prison that still contained it, but did not have the energy to completely break free. When the last man swallowed his gun and pulled the trigger, Sower-of-Fear despaired that it would ever escape.

In the midst of defeat, the Bane discovered a new recourse. The spirits of many townspeople still cling to the town like maggots on a dead dog. Sower-of-Fear could still feel their terror as they entered the Shadowlands. It could also sense its favorite pawn — the late Reverend Hanscome — continuing his corrupted work on the other side of the Shroud. Reaching out again to touch the mind of its former slave, the Bane discovered a willing servant in its plans for escape.

Sower-of-Fear continues to thrive off the emotional energies of the Restless Paradise residents. It grows in power each day, straining the limits of the seal holding it in check.

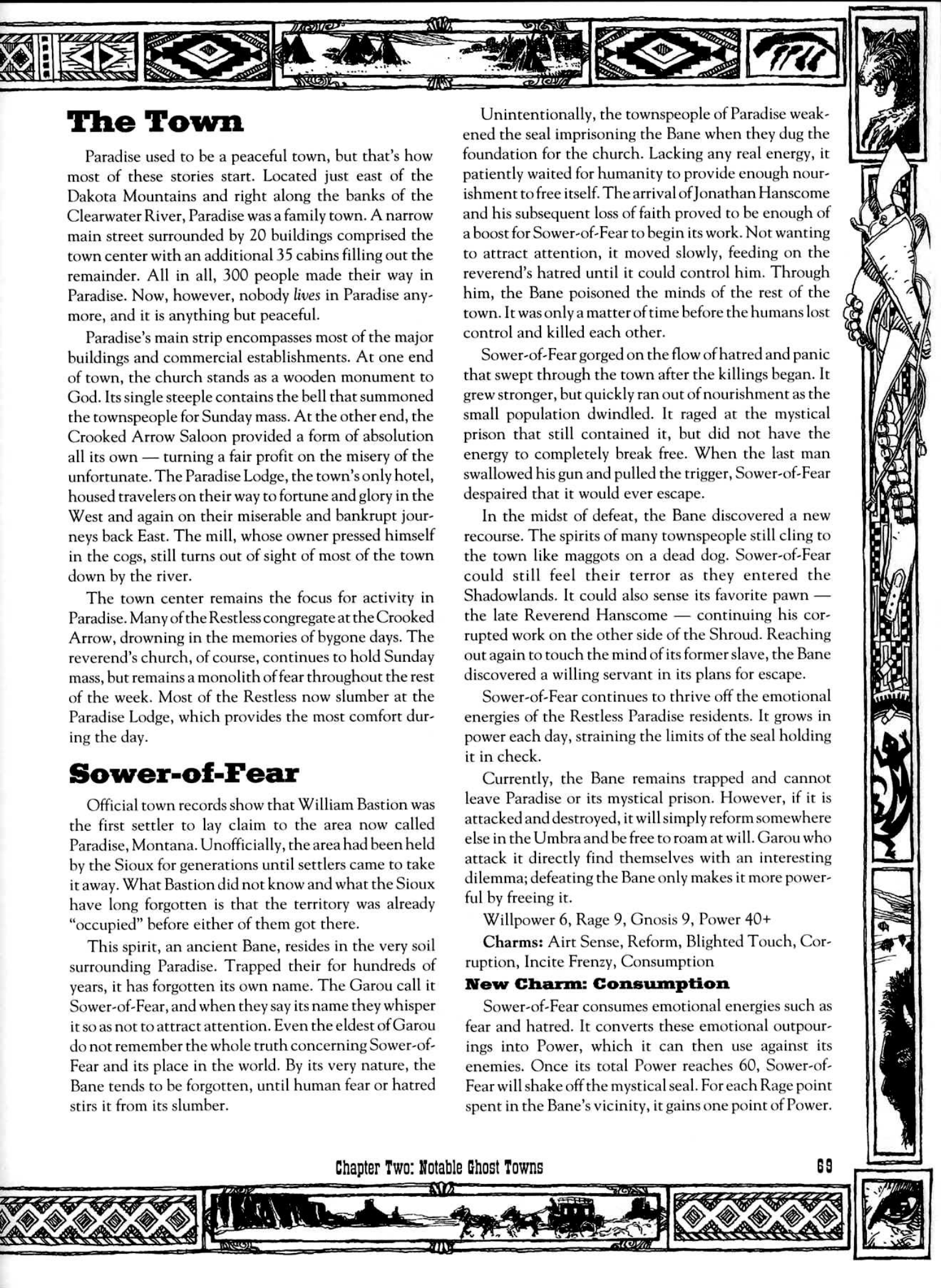
Currently, the Bane remains trapped and cannot leave Paradise or its mystical prison. However, if it is attacked and destroyed, it will simply reform somewhere else in the Umbra and be free to roam at will. Garou who attack it directly find themselves with an interesting dilemma; defeating the Bane only makes it more powerful by freeing it.


Willpower 6, Rage 9, Gnosis 9, Power 40+

Charms: Airt Sense, Reform, Blighted Touch, Corruption, Incite Frenzy, Consumption

New Charm: Consumption

Sower-of-Fear consumes emotional energies such as fear and hatred. It converts these emotional outpourings into Power, which it can then use against its enemies. Once its total Power reaches 60, Sower-of-Fear will shake off the mystical seal. For each Rage point spent in the Bane's vicinity, it gains one point of Power.





The Bane can also roll Willpower (difficulty 8) to gain one Power whenever a person, supernatural or otherwise, expresses fear or hatred.

Story Ideas

Theme

The story of Paradise revolves around one man's loss of faith and the evil that can fester in an empty soul. The characters may question their belief in Gaia and the natural state of the world, as the Spectres and Sower-of-Fear confront them both physically and mentally.

Duty to Gaia and responsibility for the Wyrms should be a main focus of a Garou story set in Paradise. The ignorant humans have released something they can neither control nor understand. It is the Garou's duty to set things right and imprison or destroy the malevolent spirit that haunts Paradise.

Something that the Garou cannot ignore, however, is that years ago they took responsibility for this spirit by imprisoning it. Allowing their guard to drop and the wards to break down leaves them as much to blame as the townspeople of Paradise.

Mood

The Bane buried under Paradise drove every man, woman and child insane before they died violently at each other's hands. Every aspect of the history of Paradise should evoke a feeling of pity. These people only wished the same from life as everyone else, yet that was torn away by a force they could neither see nor explain. Even the reverend, who inadvertently caused the calamity, can be pitied in his ignorance. The players should be overwhelmed with the totality of this tragedy.

Plots

The characters can discover the tragedy in several ways, each of which may lead the players to the town and into confrontation with Sower-of-Fear.

- **Family Ties** — One of the pack members had a human Kinfolk in the town of Paradise who maintains regular contact with the tribe. The sudden stop in communication leads the pack to the town where they quickly discover that not only has the Kinfolk been slain, but everyone has been killed.

- **Glory Hunters** — The pack learns about Sower-of-Fear's influence over Paradise and craves the glory destroying such a spirit would bring them. At first, they care nothing for the townspeople or the Sioux, but only wish to find the Bane. As they set about searching for the Wyrmspirit, Hanscome rallies the town's Restless against the Garou.

- **The Cavalry** — One or more Garou has entered Paradise and not returned. Moonchaser warns the pack that the power at work in Paradise cannot be defeated and the characters should only go to town to rescue their fallen comrades. Unfortunately, Hanscome and his band of Spectres captured the Garou and are using them to free Sower-of-Fear. The characters must convince the ghostly townspeople to help or the fallen heroes will be lost.

- **War Party** — Moonchaser has convinced the elders of several tribes that Sower-of-Fear is a significant threat and they have put aside their differences until the Bane is dealt with. The pack is summoned to join the raid on Paradise. Depending on their status they may simply be part of the diversion or be Moonchaser's personal bodyguards.

- **Reinforcements** — Sower-of-Fear, sensing an impending Garou attack, summons aid from its fellow Wyrms creatures. A pack of Black Spiral



The Shroud

The barrier between the world of the living and the Shadowlands has been dreadfully damaged in the area surrounding Paradise. The presence of Sower-of-Fear and the number of gruesome deaths has weakened the Shroud to almost nothing. At night the ghostly residents of Paradise can plainly be seen walking the streets and conducting their affairs almost as if nothing has happened.

For the purposes of game mechanics, the Shroud in the center of town is 1. The Shroud returns to normal strength in surrounding wilderness, but progressively loses strength as the power of Sower-of-Fear grows. The Shroud at the Sioux village — destroyed in the aftermath of the Paradise massacre — is steadily eroding: At the moment, the Shroud in this area is 4.

While the breakdown in the Shroud remained localized, Sower-of-Fear will soon have enough power to escape from its mystical prison. If this Bane gains its freedom it could weaken the Shroud everywhere it goes. If Reverend Hanscome and his band of Spectres have a goal, this would seem to be it.

Dancers move to aid the Bane. The characters must cut off any and all aid to Sower-of-Fear; the Black Spirals being the first of many targets.

- **Umbral Nightmare** — Sower-of-Fear's presence distorts the barriers between the spirit world, the Shadowlands and the physical realm. Elements from all three have been haphazardly criss-crossing: humans trapped in the Umbra, wraiths walking into the physical world and spirits cruising the Shadowlands. The Garou must clean up the mess the Bane causes to the natural order.

Paradise Notables

Reverend Jonathan Hanscome

Background: At first, Hanscome wanted nothing more than to serve God. After a mob lynched his father, an innocent man wrongly accused, he lost faith. Hanscome could not reconcile the loss of his father, his only living relative, with the existence of God. In this vacuum, Sower-


of-Fear planted a seed of evil that blossomed to consume the town. The Bane snuck into Hanscome's empty soul and used the reverend as a puppet

When the powderkeg of Paradise finally exploded, Sower-of-Fear released its pawn and restored his memory. The reverend, appalled at what he had created, hung himself. Unfortunately for Hanscome, death did not end his tortured existence, it only made it worse it. Bereft of his faith, immersed in guilt over his actions under the control of Sower-of-Fear, the reverend entered the Shadowlands as a Spectre.

Now a powerful agent of Oblivion, Reverend Hanscome continues to mislead the people of Paradise into believing that Sower-of-Fear is really their salvation. Every Sunday, in mockery of his previous faith, he holds mass for the great Bane wherein one of the Restless townspeople is sacrificed to the creature.

Image: Hanscome towers over most men, yet his wiry frame makes him a wisp of a man. Once, a happy glow warmed his face from his mouth to his eyes, but now that glow is a jealous green aura that surrounds his entire body. His mouth is usually a tight snarl, nearly spitting out his words. Hanscome still wears his reverend's suit, although it is now covered in mucus and blood. His head hangs limply against his shoulder from a broken neck. Only his eyes betray the keen intellect behind his deranged visage.





Roleplaying Hints: You are completely and insidiously insane. Any semblance of control is maintained strictly as a front for the Restless you control and any strangers you might come across. This town and everyone in it belongs to you. The people are your flock and you are the shepherd. Now it is time to lead the lambs to the slaughter....

Destiny: Reverend Hanscome (assuming the players' characters don't bring about his end) continues his reign of terror until 1898, when a railroad spur line's construction results in the demolition of the Paradise Assembly Church. In the aftermath, Hanscome ends up in Stygia, and answers for his crimes of heresy by being made into a barghest.

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Deviant; at times Caregiver

Caste: Doppelganger

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Awareness 2, Empathy 3, Expression 2, Intimidation 4, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Etiquette 2, Leadership 3, Performance, 3

Knowledge: Bureaucracy 1, Investigation 2, Occult 1

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Haunt 4, Status 3

Dark Passions: Avenge father's death (Vengeance) 3, Destroy Restless (Hate) 3, Serve Sower-of-Fear (Fear) 3

Arcanoi: Hive-Mind 2, Keening 3, Outrage 3, Pandemonium 2, Shroud-Rending 4

Fetters: Church 3, Journal 4

Willpower: 7

Pathos: 8

Permanent Corpus: 10

Psyche: Saint

Composure: 3

Fronds: Memories of Life, Guilt, Penance

Passions: Reaffirm faith (Hope) 3, Renew Love for God (Love) 2

Moonchaser

Background: An elder of the Wendigo tribe, Moonchaser retained his status as a holy man with the Sioux even after his first change. While other Garou chased glory in the battle with the white man or newly freed Wurm creatures, Moonchaser stayed with his people, fulfilling his responsibilities as an advisor and



spiritual guide. Over the years, Moonchaser has provided Sioux and werewolf alike with calm, thoughtful suggestions for perplexing, frustrating situations.

Moonchaser regularly travels to the Sioux village outside Paradise. When he last visited the village, however, he discovered it was destroyed, but could find no signs of the white men, other Garou or even the Wurm. From Kicking Rabbit, the ghost of a boy trapped in the village, he learned of Sower-of-Fear and the havoc it has caused around Paradise.

Although not inclined to be a warrior, Moonchaser is assembling the Garou to fight against this Bane that threatens the entire Northwest. Should it escape, surely many more would die horrible deaths.

Image: Moonchaser is old by human standards. A Sioux by birth, he maintains his religious station and dresses accordingly. Seemingly slow and frail, the Theurge actually possesses formidable endurance. The spirit world and life on the open plain have toughened him, although he lacks the combat experience of his brethren.

Roleplaying Hints: You never desired glory or even the bloodlust to fight for that matter, but now you have no choice. While the other Garou sharpened their claws on the bones of their enemies, you sharpened your

mind on the problems of life. Now body must catch up with mind as your final conflict approaches. You have seen your death in a vision: You will not leave Paradise. Sower-of-Fear must be stopped, even though it means the end of your peaceful existence.

Destiny: Moonchaser knows that he will never return from Paradise. His only hope is that he will destroy or contain Sower-of-Fear with his sacrifice.

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Theurge

Tribe: Wendigo

Physical: Strength 2 (4/6/5/3), Dexterity 2 (2/3/4/4), Stamina 5 (7/8/8/7)

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 4 (3/1/1/1), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2)

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 2

Talents: Alertness 1, Brawl 2, Empathy 4, Expression 4, Primal-Urge 3, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Crafts 3, Etiquette 3, Leadership 3, Performance 4, Stealth 2, Survival 3

Knowledge: Culture 2, Enigmas 3, Investigation 2, Medicine 3, Occult 4, Politics 2, Rituals 5

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Contacts 4, Fetish 4, Kinfolk 4, Resources 3

Gifts: (1) Call the Breeze, Mother's Touch, Persuasion, Spirit Speech; (2) Commanding Voice, Command Spirit, Dust Storm, Name the Spirit; (3) Pulse of the Invisible, Winter Forest; (4) Spirit Drain, Spirits of Decay; (5) Part the Veil

Rank: 5

Rage 3, Gnosis 8, Willpower 8

Rites: (Accord) Rite of Cleansing, Rite of Reconciliation; (Caern) Moot Rite; (Mystic) Rite of Binding, Rite of Summoning

Fetish: Medicine Bag

William Bastion

Background: William founded the town of Paradise with his cousin Thomas. Like 30 other Paradise residents, William finds himself tapped in the Shadowlands under the thrall of the mad reverend. Most of the townspeople believe the reverend to be their only salvation, but William has rejected this idea. Ever independent, William has escaped from town and fled to the old mill. From there he hopes to find help in other parts of the Shadowlands or the physical world. So far he has been unable to leave the mill for fear of being discovered by the roaming Spectres.

Image: William is a short, stocky man who died in his late 40s. As a farmer, he developed a strong back and a grip like iron as well as a strong work ethic. To his death, he maintained a simple appearance, looking more like a dirty farmhand than a town founder.

Roleplaying Hints: You miss your wife, your family and the simple days when you were alive. You'll be damned if you let that insane reverend lead your friends any further toward Hell. You know the reverend caused all this, you just don't know how. Maybe if you could find some help, you could beat the truth out of his scrawny hide.

Destiny: Bastion sacrifices himself to save Paradise from Hanscome and the Bane once he discovers it.

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Survivor

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3


Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Intimidation 3

Skills: Crafts 3, Etiquette 1, Firearms 2, Leadership 2, Performance 1, Repair 3

Knowledge: Bureaucracy 1, Enigmas 2, Politics 2

Backgrounds: Haunt 3, Artifacts 2, Legacy 4





Passions: Love family (Love) 4, Save Paradise (Pride) 3, Destroy reverend (Hate) 2

Arcanoi: Argos 1, Embody 3, Moliate 3

Fetters: House 3, Town 4

Willpower: 6

Pathos: 7

Permanent Corpus: 10

Shadow: Perfectionist

Angst: 4

Thorns: Trick of the Light, Bad Luck

Dark Passions: Destroy Paradise (Hate) 3, Kill reverend (Vengeance) 2

Kicking Rabbit

Background: Kicking Rabbit died several days prior to the massacre in Paradise. In the ritual method of the Sioux, his spirit was captured by his father to be "kept" until their mourning period had ended. At that time, Sioux child was to be released. That day will never come. Kicking Rabbit's father died in the ensuing battle with the townspeople along with all the Sioux villagers. The boy remains tied to the grounds of his village, but, unlike most of the wraiths in the area, maintains his sanity.



When Moonchaser arrived, Kicking Rabbit went to his "uncle" and warned him of the danger. Moonchaser left immediately to get help. Since that time he has not seen anyone besides the Spectres who hunt for new victims.

Image: A small, naked Sioux child with long dark hair and sharp eyes, Kicking Rabbit appears to anyone who enters the Sioux village. A longing stare precedes a pathetic plea to be freed from his village. His haunted eyes have witnessed the destruction of his people and he wishes nothing more than to travel south to the land of the dead.

Roleplaying Hints: You saw what happened and you fear it will still happen to you. Although you are already dead, you know the evil ghost who killed your family can still come and find you: He has allies among the other ghosts and they are cold and evil as well. You hide from them at night and search for help whenever strangers enter the village.

Destiny: Kicking Rabbit manages to escape the wrath of Sower-of-Fear, but succumbs to his own failings. By the close of the 19th century, Kicking Rabbit becomes a Spectre.

Nature: Child

Demeanor: Child

Physical: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Dodge 2, Expression 1

Skills: Crafts 2, Etiquette 1, Melee 1, Stealth 2

Knowledge: Enigmas 2, Investigation 2, Occult 2

Backgrounds: Eidolon 3, Haunt 2, Legacy 3

Passions: Serve his people (Duty) 2, Love of family (Love) 5, Defeat Sower-of-Fear (Vengeance) 2

Arcanoi: Embody 2, Fatalism 2, Outrage 2

Fetters: Lock of hair from Sioux ritual 5

Willpower: 5

Pathos: 5

Permanent Corpus: 7

Shadow: Parent

Angst: 1

Thorns: Death's Sigil

Dark Passions: Escape from village (Fear) 4, Listen to Spectres (Vengeance) 1



Lawrence, Kansas

"What'cha see, Bill?"

"Not much. Couple o' greenhorn kids from the 14th Kansas an' maybe 15-20 niggers from the 2nd Colored. Coons ain't even got no guns."

William Clarke Quantrill, Confederate captain, squinted toward the town on the horizon. His band of guerrilla soldiers — border scum, mostly, but mounted to a man — cantered with bloodthirsty anticipation.

"What's the word, captain?"

"Burn it," growled Quantrill, spitting out a plug of wet tobacco. "Burn the whole goddamn thing."



Flames licked up from the gutted carcass of Lawrence, Kansas like the town had been transported to Hell itself. The guerrillas, drunk long since the actual raid, regrouped on the west side of the town's rubble.

"Captain! Captain!" cried the young scout, who fought to choke back the gorge of vomit that the stench of burning flesh raised to his gullet.

"What is it, Peach?"

"Union troops...not the ones we killed...comin' from th' east...."

"That's fine, Peach. Get a dozen boys together and put 'em on rear guard. The rest of us are movin' out in five minutes."

"Yessir!"

Background and Setting

On August 20th, 1863, William Clarke Quantrill and his motley band of rogue Confederate guerrillas rampaged through Lawrence, Kansas, sacking the city and setting it ablaze. While human history is no stranger to such brutal displays of rapacity, the carnage of Lawrence's burning is an anomaly in the Savage West — every person who died in the inferno found their way to the Shadowlands. Needless to say, it's not pretty.

The Stage is Set

Like many towns in the Savage West, Lawrence is a rugged, eventful place. In the decade before the massacre, the issue of slavery tore the entire state of Kansas in two. Though predominantly abolitionist, Kansas wit-

nessed an influx of ballot box-stuffing Missourians, and remained proslavery in 1855. Free-state forces fortified the city of Lawrence in response, and drafted their own constitution outlawing slavery soon after.

In 1856, a proslavery army descended on Lawrence, leaving wreckage in its wake. Never to be outdone, John Brown formed a small anti-slavery group that ravaged five slave-state homesteads at Pottawatomie Creek.

Extremism spread like plague, and the whole of Kansas suffered at the hands of southern "border ruffians" and northern "bushwhackers," both determined to hamstring each other. Looting, murder and pillage were the rule on both sides, and tensions sparked in Kansas mounted nationwide: Antislavery Massachusetts Congressman Charles Sumner spoke out against southern "Crime against Kansas," and two days later, South Carolina Congressman Preston Brooks lambasted Sumner's head repeatedly with his cane.

Amid the Violence

Enter Quantrill.

Leading a force of over 400 mounted thugs under the nominal banner of Confederate muster, William Clarke Quantrill took advantage of Kansas' endemic discord and laid waste to Lawrence.

Over 200 of Lawrence's 2,000 inhabitants died due to Quantrill's depredations, including the mayor, sheriff and a visiting U.S. Marshal. 17 of the 26 recruits from the 14th Kansas Regiment also died, as did a few members of the 2nd Colored Regiment (who, to their credit, made for the hills as the onslaught commenced — they had been provided with neither uniforms nor weapons). 182 buildings burned as Quantrill's hellions ran roughshod over the town and over \$2,000,000 in damages resulted from the sacking.

The entire town was decimated in mere hours.


Quantrill's forces left at just after nine o'clock p.m., leaving a small rear guard to hold the city against Union forces advancing from the east.

Fate caught up with Quantrill two years later in a clash with Union forces led by Captain Edward Terrill, but the mark he has left on Kansas lingers long after his passing. But, then again, so does Quantrill....

After the Fire

In the interest of repairing the damage in the aftermath of the massacre, Baptist Minister Lucius Carter took over the relief effort and constructed a new church on the scorched foundation of the old. Pulling a congregation desperate for faith from the ashes, Carter rose to the





challenge of bringing order and spiritual consolation to the devastated citizens of Lawrence. In fact, Carter succeeded beyond his ambition — to an unhealthy degree.

Most of the citizens who died in the inferno or its wake became drones after their deaths, mindless wraiths resigned to an eternity performing the same actions they pursued in life (with even greater futility...). The religious fervor inspired by Carter and the anguish over the loss of loved ones experienced by the living Lawrence citizens brewed a tremendous amount of harvestable Pathos. Of course, the drones were hardly mining this font of emotional energy; it was only a matter of time before someone who knew what to do with it came to town.

William Clarke Quantrill returned to Lawrence, Kansas. Quantrill's death at Captain Terrill's hands only made him more hateful — enough to ensure that he became one of the Restless Dead. After a few weeks of wandering the Skinlands, Quantrill conversed with enough wraiths to get a sense for how the Underworld worked. Not only did Quantrill learn that emotional energy and malleable souls were, essentially, the coins of the realm, he also discovered that he could practically print his own money in the Skinlands: Burning Lawrence was perhaps the best decision William Clarke Quantrill had ever made, from his own perspective. As none of the wraiths who occupied Lawrence were self-aware enough to spread the word, news of the Lawrence massacre went unheard among the Savage West Skinlands. Quantrill sat on a veritable gold mine of souls.

Quantrill, with the aid
of several
Renegade

lieutenants, established a soulforge in the Shadowlands of Lawrence. As the Manifest Destiny expanded the American frontier ever westward, the prominence of Lawrence, Kansas increased. An important town on western travel routes, Lawrence — under Quantrill's thumb — has become an affluent Renegade stronghold in the land of the Dead.

Every well runs dry eventually, however, and every vein vanishes. Anticipating this, Quantrill arranged for Lawrence's town marshal, Angel Hodge, to keep raw material coming into the Shadowlands. Through his connections with itinerant "hanging judges" and his legal duties, Marshal Hodge has little trouble keeping Quantrill's forges busy. Hodge and his two deputies scour Lawrence, delivering brutal aberrations of justice as often as they administer fair law. The constabulary of Lawrence has a reputation for being harsh, but effective, and for this reason, neither U.S. marshals nor the county sheriff have taken any action against Hodge.

Voices from the Void

Quantrill's empire hasn't gone unnoticed by all of the Quick, however. Piper Dunsirn, the Scottish bank teller, has the ability to hear voices on the other side of the Shroud. Needless to say, she is constantly plagued by the cries of the drones, enfans and lemures Quantrill feeds his soulforge.

Piper's family, the Dunsirn, are a line of Fianna Kinfolk who have fallen into a bit of disfavor due to some less-than-pleasant dietary practices upheld by the branch of the family still based in Scotland. Nonetheless, Piper is marginally familiar with the spirits of the Umbra, and she knows that the voices she hears are not like those of other spirits at all. She has communicated her concerns to her Garou relations, but has entreated them not to send a pack to resolve the issue. Piper fears



the Rage of her werewolf family, and is concerned that their visit may leave Lawrence in a state similar to the aftermath of Quantrill's raid.

Add to the precarious balance the wraith of Billy Budd. A former ally of Quantrill's, Budd has become disillusioned and vengeful, and seeks the destruction of the empire he helped to build.

Lawrence teeters precariously between slow degradation and spectacular spiritual destruction. Whether a visiting pack helps or hinders the town's existence depends on how — or if — they choose to view the participants in the drama.

Theme and Mood

Lawrence, Kansas involves a bit of departure from "normal" Werewolf storylines. On the surface, there is very little to keep Garou involved other than the contrivances of the Storyteller. For more mature and introspective roleplaying, however, opportunities abound to look at the personal natures of each character.

Theme

Lawrence, Kansas is concerned with disposable morality. No character (with the possible exception of Minister Carter) is completely free from some moral blemish, and most of the characters have several or particularly grave ones. While there may not be traditional enemies to confront — the town's not littered with Mockeries or rampaging Banes — Garou who uncover Lawrence's secrets should feel pangs of conscience if they leave things as they are. If they do decide to intervene, whom should they help? No one is completely in the right, and some characters' dubious actions are completely

independent of the larger situation at hand. Examining these numerous ethical questions should provide any pack with an introspective, soul-searching story.

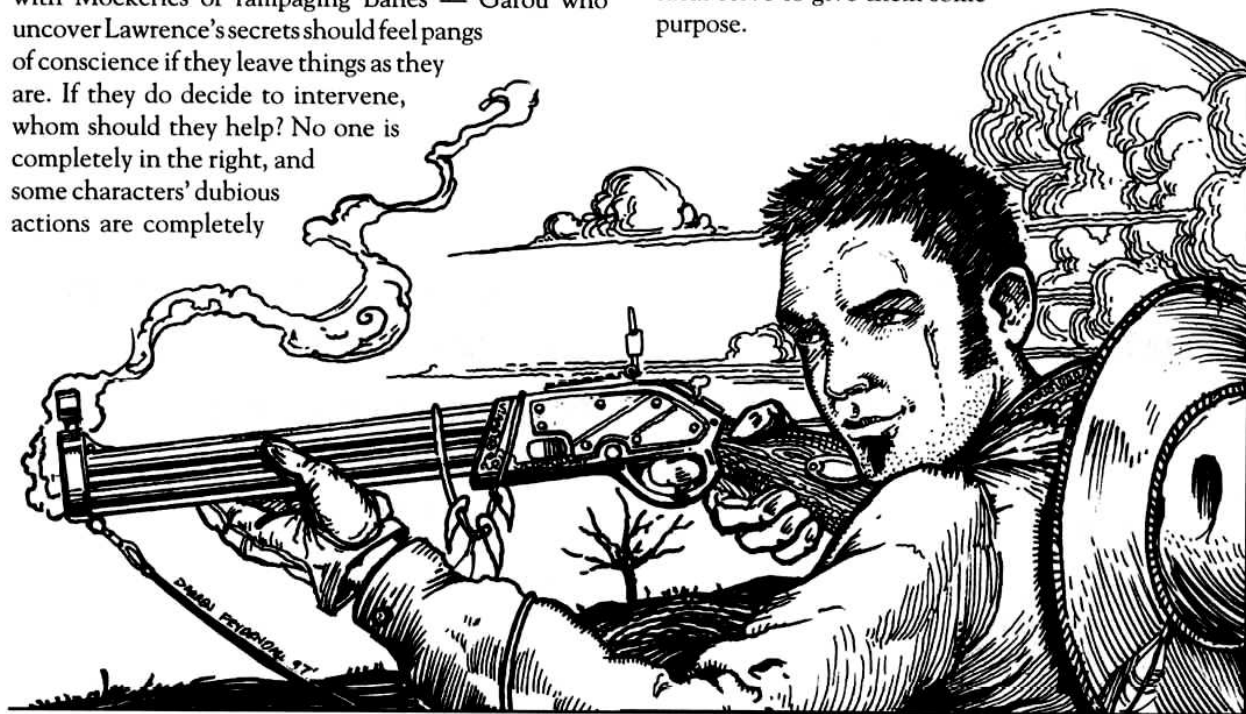
Mood

Lawrence is sick, and mired in decay. Despite the fact that it continues to grow, malignance lies just below the surface everywhere. If there are any wraiths in the troupe, their Deathstight should notify them that Lawrence is not the average town. Werewolves will feel a palpable sorrow, more like the bittersweet grasp of Harano than the ubiquitous Wurm taint. Lawrence, Kansas was wounded by William Clarke Quantrill's massacre, and rather than healing, that wound has festered.

No one is happy in Lawrence. Despite the minister's stirring sermons, people slide ever more into despair. Although he inspires a great degree of faith, Minister Carter actually does more damage than good by providing Quantrill with Pathos to spare. In addition, after the fervency of the sermon wears off, the townsfolk find themselves once again lost in their lives of drudgery and mourning.

Getting the Characters There

Lawrence grows in import daily, as it is a doorway to the American West. Nonetheless, characters need some reason to be there, and the following ideas serve to give them some purpose.





Fiat

Well, the characters don't have to have a reason to be there if you don't want them to. Then again, they probably won't care much about what's going on if nothing piques their interest. If your troupe just wants to kick ass, fill the town with Black Spiral Dancers and throw out all the material so carefully presented here.

Piper Dunsirn

Piper's Kinfolk family may implore the characters to check up on her welfare. If it suits your story, the family may forgo Piper's request that Garou not be notified of the curious state of Lawrence's affairs. If there are any Fianna in the troupe, one of them may actually be related to Piper somehow and have a vested interest in the woman's well-being.

The Enlightened Society

If the pack has spent any time foiling the depredations of the Enlightened Society of the Weeping Moon, their pursuit of the organization may lead them to Lawrence. Ambrose Marlowe Teague is the Malvosin of the town, and has undertaken a secret campaign of conversion. A bit of modification and fleshing-out will be necessary if you choose to involve the pack this way, but there's certainly enough here to keep werewolves busy.

Moots and Meetings

The pack may come into contact with the Red Talon Laughs-at-the Devil in their travels or may speak with her at a moot. The Ragabash is very interested in the aberration of the Storm Umbra around Lawrence and may solicit the characters' help in fighting the Storm Eater's presence.

Friends and Family

If nothing else, a personal appeal may serve to draw the characters to Lawrence. Perhaps a relative lives in Lawrence and requests that a character visit, or a wraith ally might have heard through the grapevine that something is afoot in Bleeding Kansas.

Plot

The tension mounting in Lawrence is not unlike a teakettle. Events should be timed so that the players' characters are involved in as much of the action as possible. The specifics of Lawrence events are left to the Storyteller's preference — some players enjoy more physical encounters and may end up clashing with the marshal, while other take greater satisfaction in social interaction and could become involved in Billy Budd's destruction of Quantrill's Lawrence Gentry.

The Soulforge

Quantrill's pride, joy and breadwinner churns away in the First National Frontier Loan Company in the Shadowlands. Always attended by at least two of Quantrill's lieutenants, the soulforge is Billy Budd's primary target. Although he lacks the power to destroy the soulforge itself (mainly because Quantrill and the Gentry would trounce him if he tried), Budd is not above playing righteous in order to convince a potential ally to aid him. A pack of Garou who see things his way would be a powerful weapon for the vengeful wraith.

The Marshal

Marshal Angel Hodge has turned his back on his Garou nature. Of course, other werewolves serve as painful reminders of his denial, and he will not hesitate to act against a pack once he becomes aware of their presence. Hodge will have unseen allies in the conflict — Quantrill and his Circle, the Lawrence Gentry. Hodge is certainly no match for a pack of experienced Garou of rank, but the intelligence he gathers through his ghostly network will keep him apprised of the comings and goings of dangerous foes.

The Bank Teller

Piper is a key player in Lawrence's unfolding events. Billy Budd will gladly exploit her if it proves useful — he knows she is surreptitiously stealing money from her bank and will not hesitate to blackmail her with this information. Ultimately, as one who is aware of the events occurring in the Shadowlands, Piper is Budd's best asset in gaining new and powerful allies. Whether she leads Garou to him (he's read her letters to the family) or provides communication with other wraiths is irrelevant, but Budd must bide his time until the opportunity would best serve him.

Persons of Note in Lawrence

William Clarke Quantrill

Background: A nasty son-of-a-bitch since the day he was born, life has been one act of violence after another for William Clarke Quantrill. Those who knew him in his youth claim that he nailed snakes to trees and shot at passing dogs.



As he grew older, Quantrill realized that brutality needed to be hidden, otherwise society would take it away. Fortunately for Quantrill, the War Between the States provided an excellent opportunity to conduct his ghastly behavior under the guise of military service. Rising to the rank of captain in the Confederate Army, Quantrill rallied a vile gang of thugs, villains and shifty drifters into a guerrilla unit that proved to be the scourge of the frontier. Lawrence burned in their wake.

Two years later, after losing numerous troops to attrition, starvation and death, Quantrill crossed swords with Union Captain Edward Terrill. The short skirmish left decisive results: William Clarke Quantrill died, victim of over one pound of lead bullets.

Of course, a man of Quantrill's nature wasn't about to let a little thing like death get in the way of his greater ambition. In his mind, he still had torture and misery to inflict. Quantrill's would-be reaper was sent into Oblivion as William beat him into a Harrowing with a soulsteel shovel.

If I can do this with a shovel, thought Quantrill, imagine what I could do with actual *weapons*. Driven by a desire to turn the resources of the Underworld to his advantage, Quantrill set out to learn the art of soulforging. After learning the art from a Renegade Artificer who had been exiled from Stygia (and forging her into a

crude soulsteel cutlass), William Clarke Quantrill once again rallied a pack of rabble Renegades to his side. If his hunch was right, he knew exactly where to find a virtual gold mine of souls ripe for the picking.


Lawrence proved to be that gold mine. Most of those who died in the inferno became Drones in the Shadowlands; a very few became sentient wraiths. Quantrill and his lieutenants built a soulforge in the First National Frontier Loan Company and crafted their luxuries from the Corpa of the hapless wraiths there before them.

Quantrill was clever enough to know that sooner or later he would run out of raw materials, however, and through a lieutenant's powers of Puppetry, he arranged a deal with Marshal Angel Hodge. Quantrill provided Hodge with information gleaned by his ghostly spies in return for Hodge's assumption of fatal justice. The marshal simply had to kill enough people to keep Quantrill's forces busy.

Irony, or perhaps poetic justice, conspired against Quantrill before long, however. His still-living mistress Kate King moved to Lawrence after his death in an attempt to begin her life anew. Quantrill still held as much passion — if not more — for his lover as he did in life. Her presence inflamed his undying desire and has recently been the cause of numerous impotent rages, as he realizes that he cannot touch her and will be forever denied the object of his passion. Quantrill has taken to Skinriding Kate as a stopgap means of stemming his anger at not being able to be with her.

Recent nights have seen a few cracks form in the façade of Quantrill's Empire, however, and the dead captain has had to undertake a campaign of damage control to prevent his town from slipping away from him. A new interest in mysticism has sprung up in Lawrence, according to Marshal Hodge; seances and mediums have come into vogue. (This is due in part to Piper Dunsirn's claims of seeing ghosts of those who died in the fire — many families wish to speak with their departed relations. Lay mysticism in Lawrence also owes a bit to Minister Carter's sermons, after which people are too excited to let matters lie.) Quantrill is familiar with the Hierarchy and the westward crawl of Stygian influence; he knows that should the word spread among the Quick about ghosts in Lawrence, the Legions would surely follow. Needless to say, he's not prepared to share the wealth of his empire.

One of Quantrill's former lieutenants has gone rogue as well (a rogue Renegade!), giving rise to a bit of paranoia on Quantrill's part. It seems that Billy Budd has either suffered a bout of remorse over his aid to



Quantrill or desires the "throne" himself. Quantrill doesn't let this bother him much...yet. He's got other concerns to worry about.

Image: Quantrill is a badger of a man: hirsute, brawny and mean. His tattered Confederate uniform betrays the gunshot wounds that ended his life, and plasmic "blood" weeps from the bullet holes whenever Quantrill is agitated. William Quantrill bears an eternal scowl that furrows his bushy eyebrows deeply. He always carries his relic pistol, a .45 caliber Colt single-action.

Roleplaying Hints: Somebody once said, "He who hesitates is lost," and that's something you've taken to heart. You act quickly and decisively — and brutally. Your strongest motivation is the continued success of your Lawrence "empire," but no man is an island, and you keep many opportunities headed toward various stages of fruition at any one time. You don't put on any false airs about your activities in the Lawrence Shadowlands: It's a grim situation, but if you weren't on top of it, you'd fall prey to it yourself.

Destiny: Quantrill is captured during a conflict with Stygian troops in 1897. After being turned over to the force commander, he travels via Midnight Express to Stygia proper, where Artificers craft him into a ghastly brooch for the Quiet Lord.

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Architect

Circle: Lawrence Gentry

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 1, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Expression 1, Intimidation 5, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Crafts 1, Firearms 5, Leadership 4, Melee 4, Ride 4, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Enigmas 2, Medicine 2, Occult 2, Politics 4

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Eidolon 3, Haunt 4, Legacy 3, Memoriam 4, Notoriety 2, Relic 4, Status 2

Passions: Maintain control of Lawrence (Spite) 4, Turn back Stygian influence (Pride) 3, Spend time with Kate (Love) 3, Discover who jeopardizes his rule and eliminate them (Greed) 1

Arcanoi: Argos 2, Inhabit 5, Moliate 2, Puppetry 1

Fetters: First National Frontier Loan Company 4, Kate King (mistress) 1

Willpower: 7

Pathos: 6

Permanent Corpus: 10

Shadow: Pusher

Angst: 8

Thorns: Infamy 7, Death's Sigil, Shadow Call

Shadow Passions: Destroy other wraiths (Fear) 4, Relax control over Lawrence (Self-Hatred) 2, Arrange Kate King's death and drag her into the Underworld (Hate) 1


Billy Budd

Background: Life is tough in the Savage West, and intolerance is often the rule rather than the exception. Too frequently clashes between cultures end in violence, and violence is never far from death.

So it was with Billy Budd and his lover. The pair traveled westward to find their fortune in California, but ran out of traveling money in Salt Lake City, Utah. They decided to stay in Salt Lake and take jobs until they saved enough money to continue their pilgrimage to California, but Savage West society kept that from happening. As Budd's lover applied for and was denied a position with the local Post Office, he was lynched in the street for being a homosexual. The mob dragged his body through the streets to shouts of "Queer" and "Berdache," finally leaving it to rest at Billy Budd's door.

Billy was destroyed. Destitute, lacking faith in humanity and now alone, he decided to take his own life. The mob didn't even give him the chance.





Billy rose from his sobs amid a cloud of smoke and heat. The rabble had set his house alight. Frantic to escape, Billy found the doors and windows boarded over. With nothing left to do, Billy drew a cold bath and slit his wrists with a straight razor, preferring the painless death to burning or asphyxiation.

It didn't end there. In Billy's mind, there was a place in Hell for him and his friends, and this was it: the burned remnants of his flat. Something was wrong, however. The man in the mask and chains told Billy that immediately.

For untold nights, Billy served his reaper, his suffering made worse by their periodic slumber in the very house in which he died. One day, before his master awoke, Billy crept into his room and removed the mask — and recoiled in horror from his lover's face.

With a bitter acknowledgment of the irony (wasn't it because of him that his lover had been killed?), Billy bludgeoned his former lover into Oblivion in his makeshift bed. Time for a new start for Billy Budd. Even Satan had rejected his soul, and doomed him to forever walk in the shadow of his brief life.

Returning eastward, Billy fell in with a group of wraiths who didn't care about his sexuality or the fact that he had killed his reaper. He learned many Arcanoi from them, but soon parted ways when it became obvious that they had too little in common to share eternity.

Before long, Billy Budd found himself in the company of William Quantrill. Though he detested the former Confederate captain from the outset, Billy saw a perfect opportunity in Quantrill's plans for revenge against the intolerant masses. Unfortunately, Quantrill had some predilection for Lawrence rather than Salt Lake City, but Billy reasoned that at least he could learn from this malefactor and perhaps address Salt Lake City later. He did have forever, after all.

Billy Budd arranged Quantrill's relationship with Angel Hodge via Puppetry. As he knew he would, Billy soon grew tired of the stale nature of Quantrill's minuscule empire. He saw Hodge weakening under the unfair arrangement and decided to leave before things went completely sour; Billy knew how unbearable Quantrill would be if his plans went awry.

Then it hit him: He had been wasting his time with the faceless mob rather than delivering personal vengeance to his persecutors. Billy knew Quantrill to be the same sort of bigoted brute as the people who did him in back in Salt Lake City. He would test the waters with Quantrill and then return to Salt Lake to make it a living Hell.

Deserting Quantrill's camp, Billy has taken up a stealthy existence at the fringes of town, waiting for the perfect opportunity to bring Quantrill's petty empire down around his ears. Billy is aware of Piper Dunsirn's ability to hear the anguished cries from the soulforge and plans on using her resources to call in aid against Quantrill. He has also been whispering in Marshal Hodge's ear, encouraging the lawman to resign his post and break his allegiance with Quantrill. Now that the pieces are falling into place, only a few key strokes remain until the sweetness of revenge comes to fruition.

Image: Billy Budd is a fair main with blonde hair and a furtive manner. His features are thin and attractive, but his nervous behavior makes him seem mousy. If Billy had had any money in life, he would have been a smart dresser, but his relative poverty forced him to wear secondhand clothes, in which he appears as a wraith (though he wears them well).

Roleplaying Hints: Somewhere between learning of your lover's betrayal and falling in with Quantrill the pressure has taken its toll. You are sometimes aware of your paranoia and your irrational conceptions of revenge, but it doesn't make a difference — they've got to pay. Hide behind a web of intrigue and lies, strike with stealth and exact your vengeance against whoever crosses your path or arouses your ire. To Hell with all of them.

Destiny: Insanity wreaks havoc with Billy Budd, and before he makes it back to Salt Lake City he is claimed by Oblivion.

Nature: Rebel

Demeanor: Survivor

Circle: None (Former Lawrence Gentry)

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 1, Dodge 2, Expression 4, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Etiquette 2, Firearms 1, Meditation 2, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Enigmas 1, Occult 2, Politics 1

Backgrounds: Notoriety 1

Passions: Harm the intolerant (Hate) 5, Return to Salt Lake City (Revenge) 4, Ruin Quantrill's efforts (Spite) 2

Arcanoi: Embody 3, Keening 1, Outrage 3, Phantasm 1, Puppetry 4

Fetters: Burnt-out Home 2

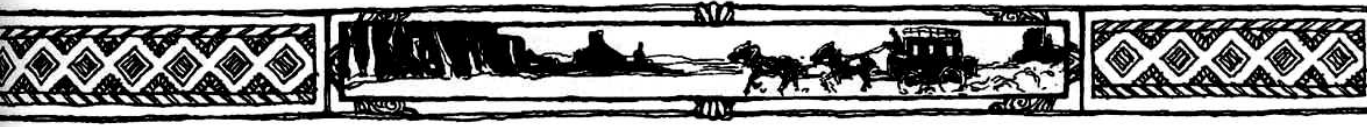
Willpower: 5


Pathos: 5

Permanent Corpus: 10

Shadow: Rationalist

Angst: 5





Thorns: Aura of Corruption, Trick of the Light, Shadowplay

Shadow Passions: Make Quantrill aware of the Psyche's plans (Self-Loathing) 3, Foster paranoia (Greed) 2, Never return to Salt Lake City (Spite) 2

Piper Dunsirn

Background: Piper came to Lawrence a few months prior to the massacre, leaving her Kinfolk family Back East. She transferred from a prominent New York bank to the First National Frontier Loan Company.

Piper had always been known for her unflappability and her strong resolve. Thus, as she began to hear the voices of Quantrill's soulforge victims, she knew not to betray any of these sensations visibly. Realizing that she only heard the howls at work, she maintained her composure there (to great effect, as Quantrill has no idea that she's the one who threatens his security), only telling a few close friends about what she hears after business hours.

Piper has recently become interested in the lay mysticism spreading through Kansas. She has her own planchette that she uses to host seances, but, like most other seances held in Lawrence, very little of substance actually comes of these. She hasn't ever encountered a "real" spirit with her charlatan's tools, as she knows the

difference between parlor tricks and the real McCoy. She pursues her occult hobby in hopes that it may someday prove useful to her (as she is away from her Kinfolk family that could teach her more about the spirit world).

Piper also maintains steady communication with her distant family. They know about the curiosities she experiences in Lawrence and they desperately wish for her to return to them. Nevertheless, Piper is determined to see the situation through, even begging her family not to tell its Garou relations about the mysteries of Lawrence.

Also adding to Piper's trouble is her financial situation. As a single woman bank teller, she doesn't make much money and lives in the Dorchester hotel, just inside town. To improve her lot, she has undertaken a bit of minor embezzlement here and there — less than \$500 currently. She keeps the money in one of the drawers in her room (if she put it in the bank, they'd know something was going on, after all), which serves to plague her with the guilt of her dishonesty every time she returns home.

The town sawbones believes that if Piper doesn't come to some sort of resolution soon, she's going to collapse from exhaustion. Naturally, he has no idea of the true problems facing the young Scotswoman.

Image: Piper is a plain-looking woman in her latter 20s. Her red hair indicates her Caledonian ancestry, as does her fair complexion (which turns ruddy when she becomes agitated). She always wears clothing appropriate to a woman of the times — full dresses and skirts and long-sleeved blouses — and is actually a bit put off by those bold women who adopt the dress of men.

Roleplaying Hints: You are quiet and unassuming, but not as oblivious as some would believe you to be. Keep your composure, as people and spirits are sometimes drawn to those from whom they provoke reactions. You are almost blasé about the supernatural, but that's only because you are very familiar with it. You do not know for certain that ghosts exist, but you are beginning to formulate your own opinions about the matter based on the horrible voices you hear at work.

Destiny: Piper manages to hold her own — after getting the hell out of Dodge—er, Lawrence. Piper moves to Fort Worth, Texas in 1869, where she marries Lukie Broward. The two enjoy almost 50 years of marriage, and Piper follows Lukie to the grave two years after he contracts fatal cholera.

Breed: Human (Kinfolk)

Tribe: Fianna



Nature/Demeanor: Conformist/Martyr
Physical: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2
Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2
Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3
Talents: Alertness 1, Empathy 4, Expression 2, Larceny 2, Subterfuge 1
Skills: Crafts 2, Etiquette 2, Performance 1
Knowledges: Culture 2, Enigmas 2, Investigation 1, Law 1, Occult 3, Politics 2, Science 1
Backgrounds: Allies (Family) 1, Pure Breed 1, Resources 1, Willpower 4

Marshal Angel Hodge

Background: Angel Hodge was born to lose. His past is a collection of failings both personal and professional, and the only reason he manages to keep his job as a lawman is because of the image of discipline he ruthlessly maintains in his town.

Born to Bone Gnawer parents, Hodge's metis Garou nature caused him no end of grief through his early childhood and into adolescence. Rather than be a part of a culture that didn't want him, Angel fled on his fifteenth birthday and fell in with a group of bandits. Making money as a ruffian didn't bother him until he accidentally fell into the Storm Umbra while looking at a stolen Waltham pocket watch. There, Hodge spoke with a servant of Rat, who informed him that living in ignominy disgraced his Totem. "You need not be proud," said the spirit, "but you must accept your nature."

This solidified Hodge's mindset — he would absolutely deny his Garou heritage.

Angel Hodge only learned a few Gifts before turning his back on Gaia, but these were enough to give him an advantage over the humans with whom he now cast his lot. Hodge went through life without the guidance of a Garou mentor and with abysmally poor self-esteem. At various times living out of a bottle, hopelessly lost in opium hazes, on both sides of weapons and running from justice or for it, Angel decided to just settle down and take it easy. After the Lawrence massacre, the town decided to bring in a marshal to supervise the sheriff (who turned out to be a useless drunk), and Hodge weaseled his way into the position.

Then the ghosts came. Marshal Hodge knew the voices weren't traditional spirits, but he had never dealt with ghosts before. When the Renegade William Quantrill revealed himself to Hodge, Angel made a deal with the devil. In return for the information that would allow him to keep his commission, Hodge had to kill a



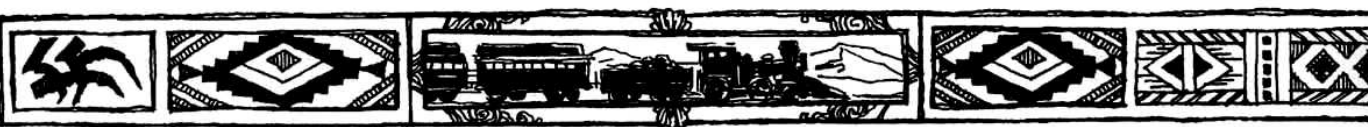
few folks every now and then. No one would challenge him; people would be too damn scared that the marshal would find out *their* secrets to put up any resistance. Just a bit of extreme justice every now and then...

Or so it seemed. Over time, Hodge has learned about Quantrill's Empire Across the Shroud, and working with the maniac sickens him. Of course, if he stops doing what Quantrill asks, someone else will take his position, and they'll be after Hodge first and foremost.

Now Angel Hodge is a despondent wretch of a man in private. He knows his days are numbered, but he just can't seem to shake off Quantrill's yoke.

Image: In homid form (which he uses almost exclusively), Angel Hodge is physically impressive without being enormous. His eyes have a steely gaze, lessened only by the bags developing beneath them. Perpetual five-o'clock shadow graces his face and his shoulders now slump, lending him an air of decrepitude and decline. Angel Hodge should have been twins were it not for his metis birth, and his chest and stomach bear the lifeless likeness of his sister-who-never-was. In Crinos and lupus forms, this face is evident due to the total lack of fur in the area. Hodge's hair and fur are a dull gray.

Roleplaying Hints: Just do what you said you would and everything will be fine. Well, maybe not fine, but things can only get worse and you're too damn old for



that. Don't take any lip from these townsfolk — keep them in their place or they'll bring you down the moment they see weakness. Vicious justice is all you've got left — your punishments may be extreme, but at least you're not murdering innocents...yet.

Destiny: Marshal Hodge eventually has enough of his tainted existence and succumbs to Harano. In a series of agonizing attempts at suicide (all foiled by his regenerative powers), Hodge is ousted from office and finally reaches his merciful death by throwing himself in front of a train.

Breed: Metis

Auspice: Galliard

Tribe: Ronin (Formerly Bone Gnawer)

Nature/Demeanor: Judge/Reluctant Garou

Physical: Strength 4 (6/8/7/5), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 5 (7/8/8/7)

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 4 (3/1/1/1), Appearance 1 (0/0/1/1)

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4 (Quick on the Draw), Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Expression 1, Intimidation 5 (One Mean Lawdog), Primal-Urge 1, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Firearms 5 (Gutshots), Leadership 3, Melee 3, Ride 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2

Knowledges: Investigation 4, Law 3, Medicine 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Resources 3

Gifts: (1) Mindspeak, Persuasion, Shed, Scent of Sweet Honey

Rank: None (Ronin)

Rage 4, Gnosis 2, Willpower 7

Rites: None

Fetishes: None

Other Lawrence Personages

The following individuals play important roles in the day-to-day affairs of Lawrence, but they are unlikely to become as involved with the story as the characters detailed above. Storytellers are encouraged to assign whatever Traits they see fit to these characters, should such mechanics become necessary.





Minister Lucius Carter

Minister Carter tends to his flock as would any good priest. An eloquent speaker, Carter inflames incredible passion in his parishioners, which ensures that Quantrill always has a steady supply of Pathos. Should Quantrill be removed effectively, some other enterprising wraith would surely be able to gain the benefit of Carter's powerful sermons.

Minister Carter believes in leading by example. He is very well versed in Biblical and theological matters, and is a paragon of Christian virtue. Carter is a bit concerned with the rash of occultism that has recently blossomed in Lawrence, and he plans on addressing the matter in one of his sermons quite soon.

Laughs-at-the-Devil

This Red Talon Ragabash followed the scent of a Garou to Lawrence while separated from her pack. Unfortunately for her, that Garou turned out to be the disappointment known as Marshal Angel Hodge. Laughs-at-the-Devil has yet to decide whether or not Hodge is worth the bother, but is intrigued by the strange goings on in the Umbra around Lawrence. Leave it to the damned monkeys to despoil what would otherwise be fine...

Laughs may be an ally to characters who approach her with earnest concern. While not as murderous as others of her tribe, she is still more than a bit mistrustful of humans. Not at all concerned about the town of Lawrence, Laughs does care about the state of Umbral affairs and wishes to see the Storm Eater's corrosion of the Gauntlet/Shroud addressed. Laughs has dealt with wraiths before and may be a useful source of information on matters concerning the Restless.

Leah Ranier

Leah arrived at Lawrence, Kansas at the behest of the governor's office. Her role is largely governmental, as she is an assessor for the state, sent to determine whether or not Lawrence public officials accurately reported the damage from the massacre years ago. While she won't be a physical threat in and of herself, she can call forth some state and federal firepower, should instances of outlaws (or werewolves) duking it out in the street ensue.

Ambrose Marlowe Teague

Lawrence was long overdue for a member of the Enlightened Society of the Weeping Moon before Teague arrived. Since his adoption of Lawrence, the society claims a chapter of 16 members, and you'd better believe they're aware of Quantrill's wraithly presence. Teague commands a bit of Manes Saturnal (see **Frontier Secrets**), but not enough to lend him extensive power over the formidable wraiths of the town.

Teague has secretly fostered the town's interest in the occult and has anonymously commissioned an ornate planchette and Ouija table for visitors to the Continental Gentlemen's Salon to use. Under his guidance, the society plays their trademark game of watching, learning and subtle influence. Teague's primary interest is Quantrill, however, and he has been racking his mind to figure out what he could offer the wraith in the interest of an alliance.

The Lawrence Gentry (or, The Empire Across the Shroud)

The Lawrence Gentry comprises Quantrill's six lieutenants and the "Emperor" himself. These Renegades are no matches for Garou man-to-man, but they do wield arrays of Arcanoi that should be as mysterious to Garou as they are effective. As Quantrill becomes more and more unstable, he refers to the Gentry as the "Empire," believing that labeling it thus solidifies its position. More cowed by their leader than convinced, the rest of the Circle's members play along with the charade.

This very dependence marks every member of the Circle — they have latched onto Quantrill because he has vision. They lead comfortable existences and are allowed to indulge in their own indiscretions and nastiness, but they know that without their leader, they will fall prey to the nastiness of the Shadowlands. Though not fanatical toward Quantrill, they realize which side their bread is buttered on and will fight for him in whatever capacity needed unless all looks hopeless.





The half-life of my life is no life at all.
— Kelley Deal, "Canyon"

In a story in which the main characters are werewolves, it may be difficult to maintain a sense of mystery and wonder around the supernatural. Wraiths, operating under an entirely different set of rules than the spirits familiar to most Garou, take a story's potential for heroism and horror into new territory: beyond death.

Integrating the Restless Dead — and the dangerous Underworld they inhabit — into a Savage West chronicle requires a bit of forethought, but the payoff is worth it.

Naturally, this chapter is intended for the Storyteller's eyes only.

Theme and Mood

Werewolves and wraiths exist in entirely different worlds. How much these two worlds overlap, and why, should be the initial questions considered when creating a crossover chronicle. From the outset, a Storyteller's personal vision of how much these two worlds interact with one another establishes the theme of the story and its overall mood.





Relations

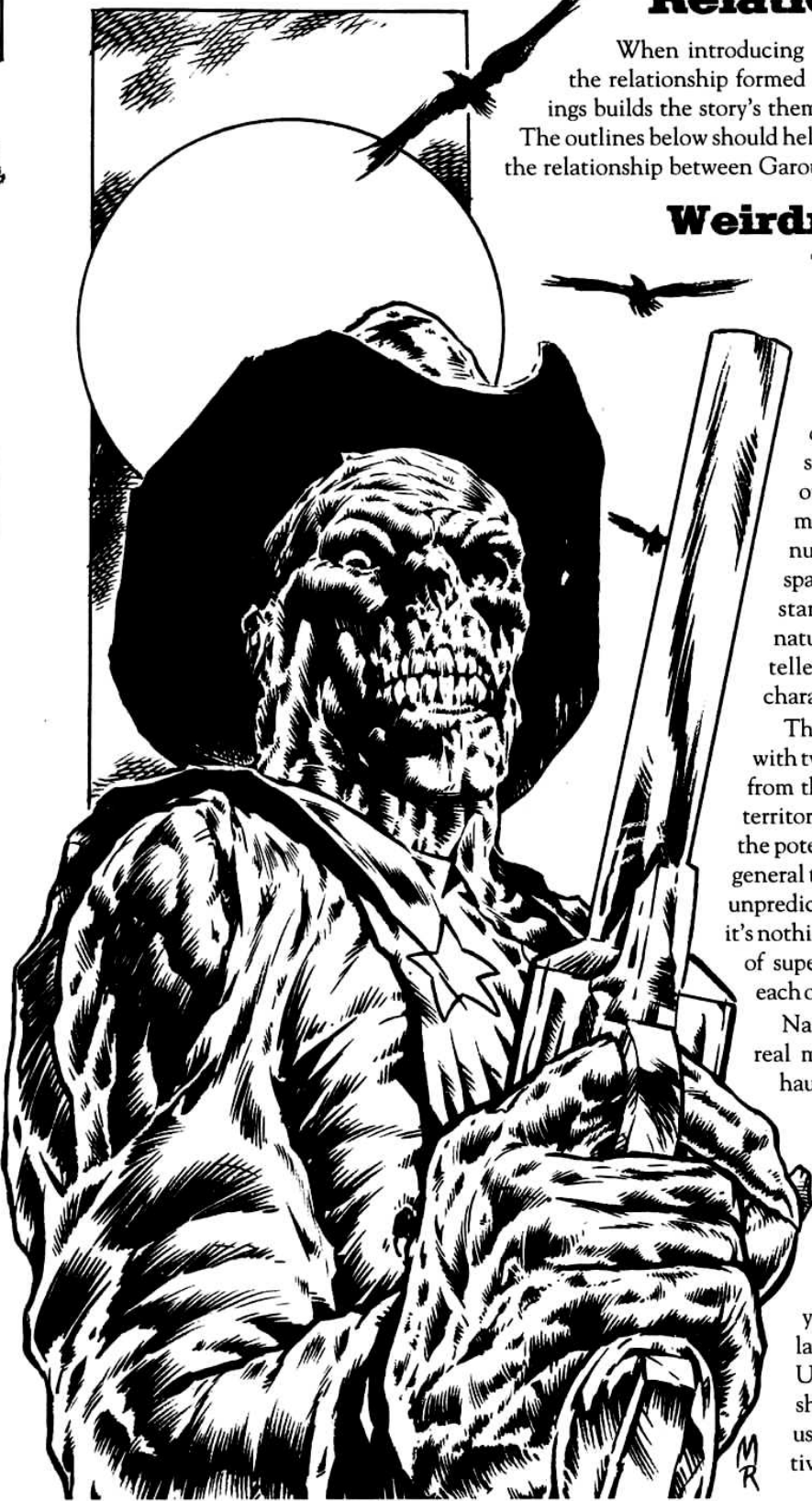
When introducing wraiths to a **Werewolf** chronicle, the relationship formed between the two supernatural beings builds the story's theme and defines its initial direction. The outlines below should help a Storyteller quickly characterize the relationship between Garou and ghosts in a story.

Weirdness Over Yonder

One of the simplest ways of introducing the occasional ghostly presence to a **Werewolf** chronicle is the time-tested standby of "the old house up on the hill," where spooky things occur. There might only be one wraith at home or there might be a couple, but keeping the number small gives the werewolves space to adjust to their new circumstances. In addition, the intimate nature of the story allows the Storyteller to get very detailed with the characters in question.

This works best as a one-shot story, with two primary characteristics: distance from the security of the characters' usual territory, and near-total ignorance about the potential dangers they face. The story's general theme is one of an unexpected (and unpredictable) danger away from home, but it's nothing personal, just two different types of supernatural creatures learning about each other and occasionally butting heads.

Naturally, the werewolves will need a real motivation to visit the site of the haunting. Curiosity or a need to prove themselves might work, but the more smoothly wraiths and their environs can be woven into the current chronicle, the more effective their introduction will be. Werewolves may automatically assume that any weirdness over yonder is either Wyrms-based or related to some happenings in the Deep Umbra. These preconceptions are shattered, of course, as none of the usual solutions will prove to be effective against the Dead.



From the wraith's perspective, all they can see is that a group of hideous monsters has invaded their haunt. People who don't know about the Garou, even dead people, have a notoriously hard time seeing these monsters as heroes and probably do their damndest to run them out. Whether or not the werewolves and wraiths eventually start communicating with each other is up to the players.


In a small-scale encounter (as opposed to a story based around a fully populated ghost town), werewolves have the chance to step slowly into the weirdness by handling no more than a handful of wraiths at once, at least at first. Hopefully, they can learn a bit about the Dark Umbra's side of things as their experiences prepare them for later encounters. Sending werewolves outside their usual stomping grounds and forcing them to handle a ghostly menace (by either befriending or combating the restless dead) forces them to consider how much they really don't know about their world. It may also give them a new appreciation for what they do know.

If the players don't end up liking the wraithly diversion, then it was just a ghost in a house up on a hill and the chronicle can move on to other, more werewolf-centric adventures. If the story goes well, then the players have a new recurring ally or enemy on the other side of the Shroud.

Allies Across Realms

In a world of monsters, it takes true strength to be a hero. The most idealistic sort of werewolf/wraith crossover chronicle positions the two beings side by side against their respective threats. In the uncertainty of the Savage West, such an alliance may be hard won — the characters are just as likely to have been long-time enemies before deciding that the greater problems they face are more important than any personal enmities. Werewolves and wraiths have a lot in common — the Garou struggle to restrain their Rage while the Restless Dead





choke back their Shadows. The theme of this story is the keystone of the heroic arch: courage. After all, valor is in short supply both in this world and the next.

A story of allies on opposite sides of the Shroud lends itself well to a mixed chronicle of both wraiths and werewolves in the same troupe. By necessity, their relations may be strained at times depending on the occasional upheavals that occur in both worlds, but the effort required to maintain their relationship will pay off in the end.

On the other side of the coin, the "allies" could just as likely be Black Spiral Dancers and Spectres. An alliance of villains is just as rational as an alliance of heroes. Thankfully, bonds of this sort tend to be short-lived, since both parties ultimately serve different forms of destruction, but there's always the possibility of a Black Spiral Dancer capable of accepting a dead man's aid in furthering the plans of the Wurm, coupled with a Spectre willing to wait for Oblivion to claim his partner (as it eventually claims all things). As a word of caution, the "villains" contrivance works better as a Storyteller device for a one-shot story than a full-fledged chronicle — mortality rates (and Obliviation rates⁹) tend to run high.

Scratch My Back

A more neutral and more common relationship for Garou and ghosts is a limited partnership based on favors exchanged for knowledge or action. The main theme of this story is trust. Because of the Shroud, separating the flesh of the Skinlands from the plasm of the Shadowlands, trust

can be a difficult commodity to come by. Very rarely does a Garou even know that a wraith stands beside her; even more rarely can the Restless Dead speak to the living in anything but the faintest and briefest of whispers. This makes it hard for either side to have faith in the other. Werewolves have no idea what their invisible partners are up to, and even a wraith (even assuming he understands the language of the Garou) can't spy on every place in the living world at once.

The characters struggle to maintain a balance between suspicion and faith. Hopefully, the characters live through it and the chronicle can progress along to one of the other themes discussed here.

Secrets

Cross-realm relationships are difficult to maintain, and not always because of the physical restraints. Friends on both sides have very good reasons to keep their relationship secret from elders and peers alike. The major theme of a story based on such secrets is a person's inner conflict between guilts: guilt over fulfilling her commitments to a creature she shouldn't be dealing with and the guilt over misleading her friends in order to serve what she imagines to be a higher purpose.

Many Garou elders are leery of meddling with the Restless Dead, as the nature of the Shadowlands is a complete mystery to most of the living. Even the younger werewolves, while often more open-minded than their tribal leaders, may react poorly to the thought of conspiring with ghosts.




Wraiths are tied to the Skinlands (and thus maintain their presence in the Shadowlands) through their Fetters — people, places and things that hold deep emotional meaning for the ghost. A Fetter's destruction can easily drive a wraith over the edge, so the Restless Dead guard them carefully. If a living being recognizes something as a wraith's Fetter, it may put the ghost in a precarious position. More than once, ambitious humans have sought out Fetters in order to control wraiths. This sort of blackmail can keep a wraith tap-dancing for a while, and it can just as easily be done by a werewolf as a normal human.

The reasons behind a secret relationship are what make it interesting. A secret based around a mutual bond is the easiest to rationalize hiding. Perhaps the wraith is Kinfolk, or was otherwise drawn to aid the Garou out of sympathy and that's the origin of their bond. Perhaps the Garou, out on an unrelated illicit errand, saved the ghost's Fetter but now the werewolf can't admit the origin of the relationship without implicating herself. If it's an especially guilty secret — as when one side is blackmailing the other for selfish reasons — the victim may find herself slipping deeper and deeper into a net of lies in order to explain the situation to the other characters. Regardless of the secret's origin, game play becomes interesting when one of the players has an "invisible friend" behind the scenes, whether the friend is helping or hindering.

Maligned and Misunderstood

There are many different types of wraiths in the world, with different perspectives and goals. Renegades and Heretics, those who openly flaunt their Guild membership and all the other ghosts who hold beliefs that run counter to those of Charon's government, are the most numerous types of wraiths in the Savage West. Legionnaires serving various Deathlords, though rare in the Savage West, try to keep order and enforce Stygia's rules, tinhorn sheriffs of the dead. Spectres terrorize the living and the dead alike as Oblivion eats away at them. Drones, nearly bereft of will, monotonously walk through the same actions over and over again. To further complicate things, wraithly spies from the Dark Kingdom of Jade and the Bush of Ghosts prowl the lawless Shadowlands of the Savage West, intent on learning any secrets they can.





Similarly, there are a wide range of tolerances and opinions among the werewolf tribes. The ghosts of townsfolk who were slaughtered by a marauding band of Wyrn-tainted Garou would almost certainly overreact to the next person they see assuming a Crinos form.

The point is, with so many different ways of expressing what goes on in the Shadowlands and among the Garou, it's easy for folks to build up an incomplete opinion. If a character has been exposed to only one aspect of the werewolf or wraith society, it would be easy to make generalizations about all the rest. A story based around the "Maligned and Misunderstood" model has a group of characters coming to grips with their assumptions about the ways of others. The story's theme is one of overreaction in the aftermath of a bad experience, with the goal of eventually proving that one bad apple doesn't spoil the whole bunch. If a character is able to rise above his prejudices, he may easily find a friend on the opposite side of the Shroud — or, if nothing else, someone much more like himself than he'd believed before.

Varmints!

Among the Garou who believe the persistent rumors about wraiths, some feel compelled to hunt them down. This is a certain way to earn the ire of not just one particular wraith, or even of a small coterie of wraiths, but of the entire population of the afterlife. A classic version of the dusty, old, haunted-house shtick is the "ghostbusting" story: Werewolves must rid a location of its ghostly inhabitants. This can be a cakewalk or a struggle or a disaster, depending on how much knowledge each side has of the other's strengths and weaknesses. The predominant theme of this story is pride. Neither side yields its outlook, certainly not for someone on another level of reality.

The pride of the Garou is legendary; few consent to defeat from an otherworldly threat. Unfortunately for a potential Garou ghostbuster, a wraith generally has more than pride on the line. The site might be a haunt, which may be grudgingly abandoned if the werewolves play too hard. But if the site is a Fetter, binding the wraith to the earthly plane, he's going to put up quite a fight. The only way to move a stubborn wraith from his Fetter is to destroy it or the wraith. Destroying a Fetter might be easy, depending on what it is, as werewolves are notoriously good at breaking things. (Finding out what the Fetter is might be a problem. For example, in a graveyard, is the wraith attached to the whole place or just to one tomb?)

An alternate version of this story is "Put 'Em Down," in which a werewolf's ghostly ally succumbs to his Shadow. Rather than see the destructive wraith continue to disgrace her friend's memory, the werewolf shoulders the burden of putting her friend down while she still can. This version of the story should be played in a much more melancholy fashion than the average ghost hunt.

Destroying a wraith is hard for the living to accomplish, but it's not impossible. Besides, if a werewolf destroys a wraith's Fetters, she'd damn well better hope she can destroy the wraith as well, since he's not going to leave her alone — ever. The story then turns into a permutation of "Vengeful Dead" (below). In the worst case scenario, multiple wraiths may have shared the same Fetter, and *all* come looking for revenge.²

From a wraith's point of view, a "varmint" story literally reverses the roles, putting the werewolf in the position of the unwanted interloper. Merely shooing Garou away from a favorite haunt (or an endangered Fetter) seldom solves the problem. While there's a certain mystique about ghosts, werewolves are very stubborn creatures and don't take well to being told what to do, especially by creatures they don't understand. If the ghosts are somehow able to pierce the Shroud enough to actually kill the shapeshifter instead of driving him away, it'll merely serve to attract even more attention to their presence. As greater numbers of Garou flock to the neighboring countryside, rumors may surface in the Shadowlands about which wraithly scoundrel started the ruckus in the first place.

Vengeful Dead

This is another classic setup. A Renegade wraith (or perhaps even a Spectre) has — or, on some more psychotic occasions, *imagines* he has — a personal grudge against one of the chronicle's living characters. This is another good way to jump-start the relationship between the Quick and the Restless Dead, as well as being a simple one: Justice becomes the story's primary theme.

After selecting the target of torment from the afterlife, one of the first things a Storyteller needs to decide is the origin of the grudge. If the wraith is angry about the desecration of a Fetter, that's one thing. If the motivation behind the wraith's revenge is one of her Passions, however, that's something entirely different. A wraith is much less likely to *ever* stop torturing a person who represents unfinished business from earthly life than she is to stop her persecution of a person who irked her in death. For example, a person who burned down a schoolhouse is unlikely to be harassed by a little

girl's wraith for as long as, for example, the cruel teacher who used to whip the girl with a hickory switch in front of the class for not finishing her homework.

If the Garou accept the duty of protecting someone from a ghostly threat, there's always the chance that their charge is actually deserving of the wraith's dark scrutiny, leaving the werewolves with a different moral problem all together. If the victim is deserving of his fate, the Garou may aid the hand of justice. Even still, some werewolves might defend their charge on the general principle that the Restless Dead shouldn't meddle in the affairs of the living.

Resolving a ghostly grudge can take a story in a variety of directions. The wraith can be destroyed by the werewolves; the wraith can extract an appropriate revenge from her target and cease to be a problem; the wraith can encounter problems on her side of the Shroud that take her attention away from her revenge plans; or something else entirely could happen to the target of the wraith's ire, leaving her unsatisfied even in death. Regardless, the characters may take the chance they're given to learn more about the Shadowlands and its mysteries. It might be nice to have a few friendly faces on the other side. It sure beats all the ugly ones that'll be there anyway.

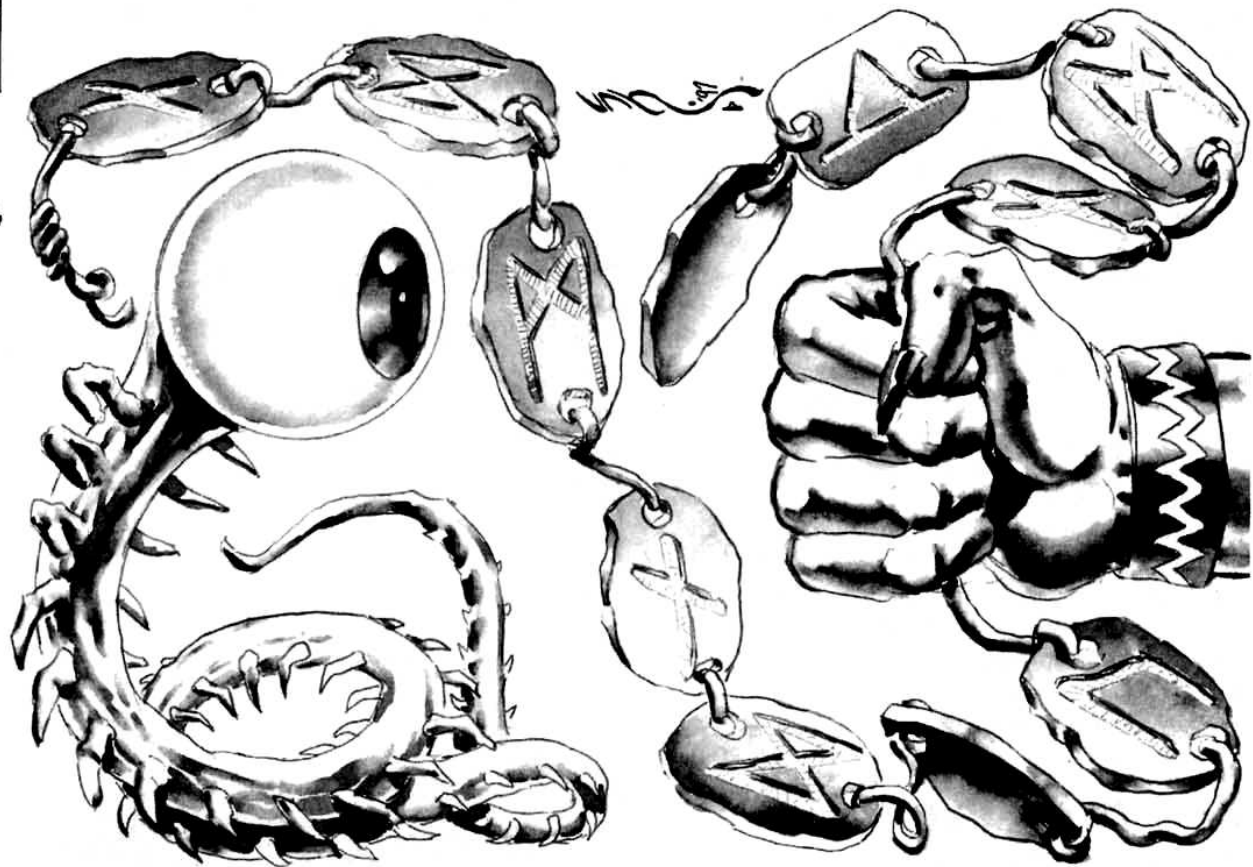
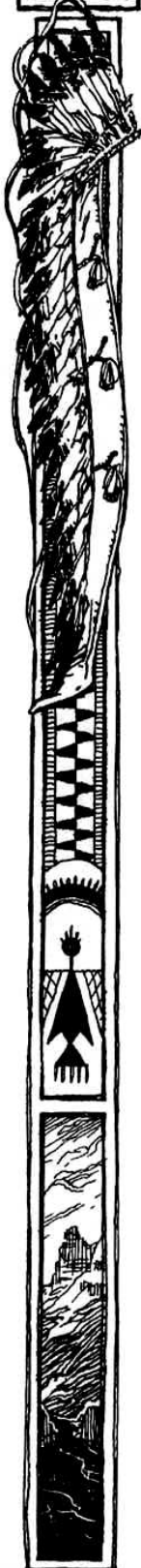
You Ain't From Around Here

Ghost stories are some of the oldest and most powerful of all cautionary tales. The greatest examples are those in which the main character (or characters) go for an up-close and personal look at the afterlife, the better to help the dead warn those who still live and breathe. The furthest boundary of the werewolf/wraith adventure, and sure to induce a damn good scare, climaxes with the full immersion of living beings in the Shadowlands.

The "why" of werewolves in the Shadowlands sets the story's primary theme. If the Garou are trapped there or otherwise left to find their own way home, the story's theme will be different than a story where the werewolves have gone there on purpose to achieve some goal that might be worth the suffering of visiting the afterlife.

The secondary theme of the story is generally displacement, as the characters struggle to get their footing in a decidedly alien environment. This is the story in which any good relationships a Garou has formed in the Shadowlands finally pay off. Holding the general respect of a ghost town's inhabitants gives a character an incredible advantage and makes for a fine base from which to explore the countryside.





Of course, the other side of this story's coin has the Restless Dead living up to their name and crawling from their graves to sate those passions that can no longer be ignored.

Faux Wraith

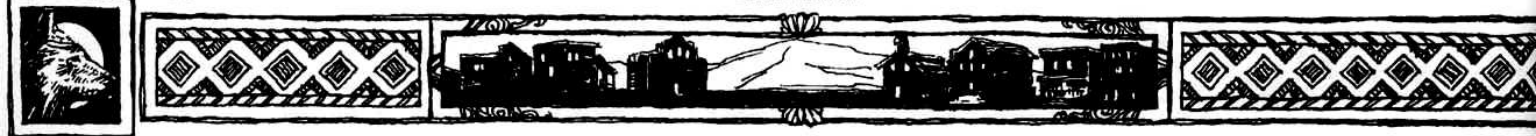
A staple of the young ghosthunter crowd is the mysterious and inscrutable horror that's revealed in the end to have mundane origins. Witnesses are duped into thinking their antagonist is a ghost when it's really some boob in a white sheet, trying to scare the kids away to get the insurance money. In the Savage West, of course, when Old Man Willard puts on a bedsheet he's more likely to be burning a cross than he is to be impersonating a ghost, but the general idea still holds true. Many of the stories described above can be reworked to assume a human (or, at least, living) threat, faking intervention from the afterlife.

How the fake ghost is accomplished is generally up to the Storyteller, but it should generally reflect the faker's actual knowledge of the afterlife. If those being conned have no clue about the Shadowlands, it's much easier to

provide them with acceptable proof. People with true knowledge of the Shadowlands — especially when they know that their marks have had actual experience with the dead — can make more convincing fakes than charlatans, unless deliberately adding discrepancies to achieve other aims.

Spooking characters into reacting against a perceived ghostly threat is also a good way to force their hand concerning how much they know about the afterlife. Anyone with knowledge of the Shadowlands — or, even better, allies there! — should be able to determine fairly quickly if a threat truly exists. As the best example of duplicity, some traveling charlatans fake both ghostly presences *and* skills at exorcism. Naturally, the ghostly threat vanishes after the fakes get their money...

Of course, a wraith could just as easily strong-arm a known charlatan into covering her activities, further confusing the issue. Multiple layers of subterfuge are possible here, but don't forget that too many levels of "is it, isn't it" merely annoy people. Art, it's been said, is knowing where to stop.



Interaction

By defining the degree of interaction allowed between Garou and wraiths in a story, a Storyteller goes a long way toward setting the mood. Any of the stories described above can be run with almost any degree of interaction, large or small. If wraiths are used sparingly, then suspense is built and mystery is easier to maintain. Stories in which wraiths appear openly and interact frequently with characters tend to be driven more by horror than mystery.

The more interaction that werewolves and wraiths have with each other, especially over time, the more they'll discover about their opponent's strengths and weaknesses. This can be good and bad. Werewolves may grow more accepting of the inhabitants of the afterlife, but they will also grow more adept at circumventing the Dead's ghostly advantages. Similarly, the complicated psychology of the Garou — not to mention how adept they are at breaking skulls — is almost as unknown to the Restless Dead as wraiths' complex politics are to werewolves. As a wraith learns more about the Garou, werewolves become easier to manipulate.

On a more basic level, wraiths almost always have an advantage over the Garou. After all, every wraith has spent at least some time living, however long ago, while very few werewolves have spent any time dead. Werewolves may represent an aspect of the material world that most wraiths probably don't know about, thanks primarily to the Veil, but at least the ground rules are familiar. Ghostly Kinfolk are the most likely to successfully cross between the two worlds, since they tend to have a fair amount of knowledge about the ways of the Garou, and they understand and appreciate a werewolf's perspective on dealing with the dead more than other wraiths.

In any case, exposure of one side to another tends to lessen the mystery of the situation. A Storyteller basing his Savage West chronicle around both the living and the dead has the challenge of continuing to refine a story's mystique rather than allowing the Shadowlands to become just another place inhabited by lists of Traits to be slaughtered by the troupe.

Minor Interaction

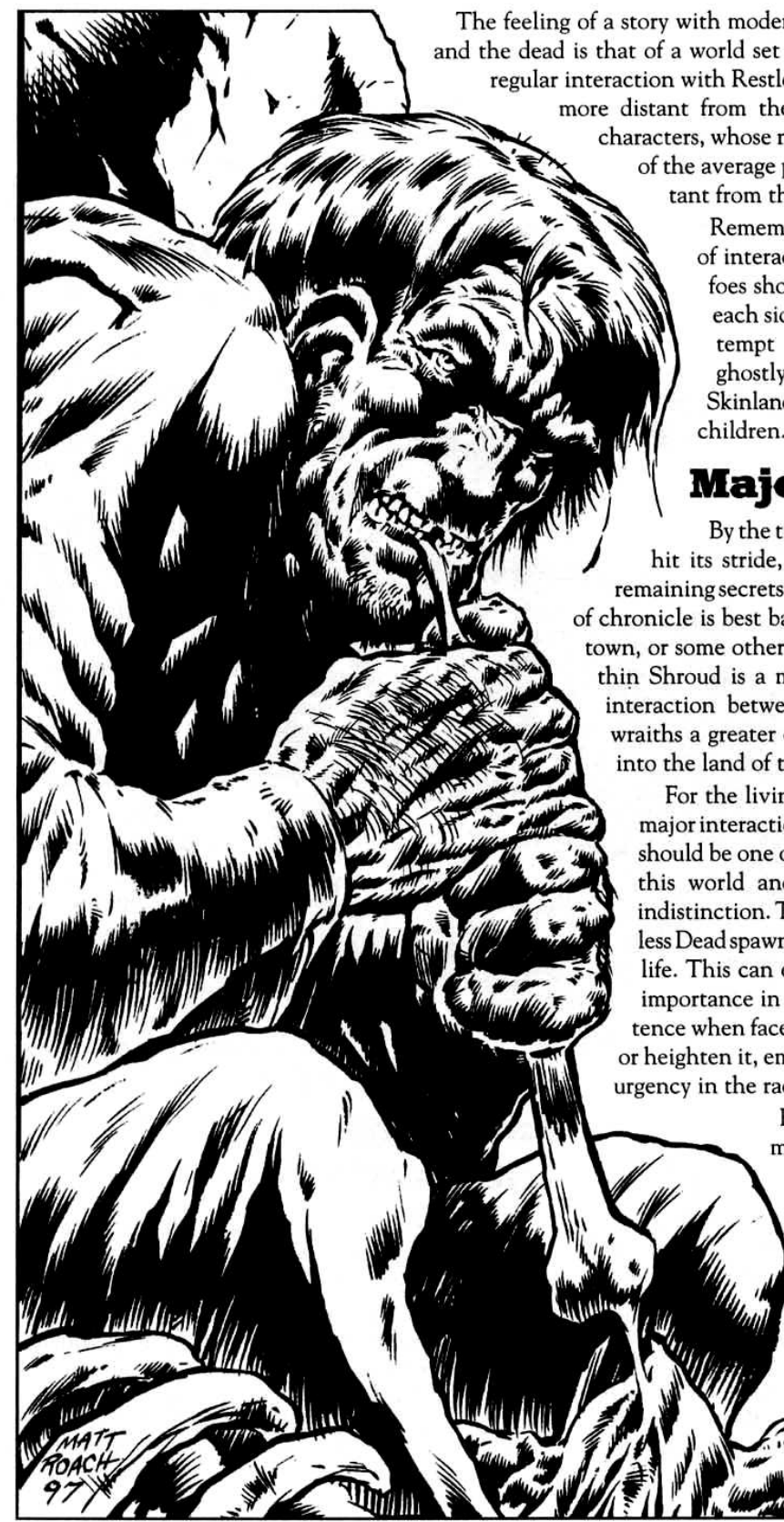
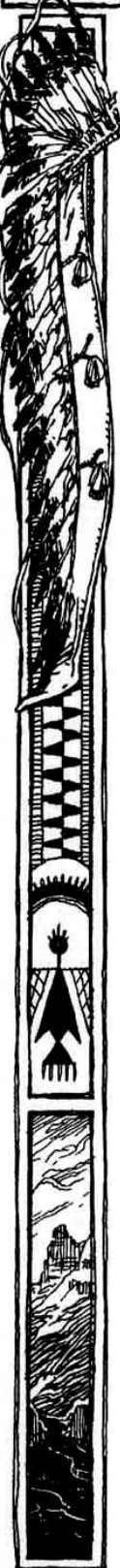
Werewolves and wraiths need not be able to communicate regularly to remain either confederates or enemies.

With the deeply enigmatic mood of mystery that results from such a low degree of interaction, living characters might not initially guess there's a ghost in their midst. For instance, a Garou may not discover that his blackmailer is actually a ghost until after it's too late to do anything about it. The same holds true for a "secret admirer." The eventual revelation of the mischief-maker (or anonymous tipster) as a ghost may be dramatic, emphasizing the shock of the supernatural, or it may just as easily be quiet, as when two adversaries acknowledge respect for each other with subtle smiles of respect.



Moderate Interaction

In a story with only moderate interaction between the living and the dead, with one or more characters knowing more about the Shadowlands and its machinations than the typical werewolf, a great deal of mystery still remains. But the mystery is no longer merely around the ghost's existence, but around the specifics of her existence. For example, the question might not be, "Is this spirit a wraith?" but "Is this a wraith or a Spectre?"



MATT
ROACH
97

The feeling of a story with moderate interaction between the living and the dead is that of a world set on its side. While characters have regular interaction with Restless souls, they should feel more and more distant from the "normal" world — even Garou characters, whose normal world is not the same as that of the average person, should feel increasingly distant from the structure of their society.

Remember, as a chronicle increases the level of interaction between the two, friends and foes should show a greater familiarity with each side's business. Werewolves might attempt to ferret out the Fetters of their ghostly enemies; wraiths may remind their Skinlands agents to wield silver against Gaia's children.


Major Interaction

By the time a werewolf/wraith crossover has hit its stride, the two sides may have very few remaining secrets from each other. Naturally, this sort of chronicle is best based around a well-populated ghost town, or some other place where the Shroud is thin. A thin Shroud is a must if a Storyteller expects major interaction between the two worlds; it allows the wraiths a greater chance of success at reaching back into the land of the living with their Arcanoi.

For the living, the initial mood of a story with major interaction between themselves and the dead should be one of all-out terror, as the line between this world and the next blur to the point of indistinction. Too much interaction with the Restless Dead spawns a feeling of distance from everyday life. This can either reduce a character's sense of importance in the world, instilling feelings impotence when faced with the ultimate futility of it all, or heighten it, emboldening him with a new sense of urgency in the race against Oblivion.

For the dead, a story that allows for major interaction with the world they once knew could be a painful one, though it may ease the resolution of a Fetter or facilitate the calming of a Passion. However, increased contact with





the Quick gives a Shadow all sorts of interesting fuel, and anyone who knows about wraiths knows where that road goes . . .

Notable Changes

One of the secrets to maintaining the spookiness of a ghost story lies in never letting anyone see the whole picture. So naturally it's more difficult to inspire a sense of mystery in people who've played **Wraith** and are presumably well-versed in how things work in the Shadowlands than it is to spook people who don't know any of the capital words used to describe the afterlife. Still, even those who are familiar with the **Wraith** setting find it holds new mysteries when moved to the Savage West. Players making assumptions about the latter based on exposure to the former are in for big trouble.

There are several notable differences between the state of the Underworld in **Wraith: The Oblivion** and the Storm Umbra of **Werewolf: The Wild West**. Most importantly, Charon still rules Stygia. While the Shroud thickens every year, it's much easier to pierce than in the modern World of Darkness. In addition, the Necropoli are still relatively new, concentrated on the East Coast. Just as America's West is still savage, so is its

analog in the Shadowlands. Heretics and Renegades ride invisibly alongside bandits and mountain men, openly flouting the Hierarchy's claim on their souls. Many of these ruthless ghosts are also hunted by Native American wraiths in retribution the genocide practiced upon their kind, an event called "The Flaying" by Stygia. (This event dates back to when European wraiths first set foot in what was for them a new world; it and

many other interesting facts about wraiths are discussed in **Frontier Secrets**.)

In many ways, the Savage West exists at a much more traumatic — and *dramatic* — time in the Underworld than its modern analog. Charon and his Deathlords have just lost their Fetters, and can no longer walk the Shadowlands like any other wraith. A sense of order falls away as Stygia's most powerful beings must rely on their lessers to enact their will. Heretics and Renegades, blamed for the destruction of the Fetters of Stygia's leaders, populate the Savage West in great numbers. This puts the Dark Kingdom of Iron under more pressure than ever to

rein in these wild forces. Legionnaires, while infrequently seen west of the Mississippi, are the wraithly sheriffs of the afterlife, bringing a semblance of Stygia's order to the ghost towns. They, like everyone else trying to make something out of the chaos of the frontier, have their work cut out for them.

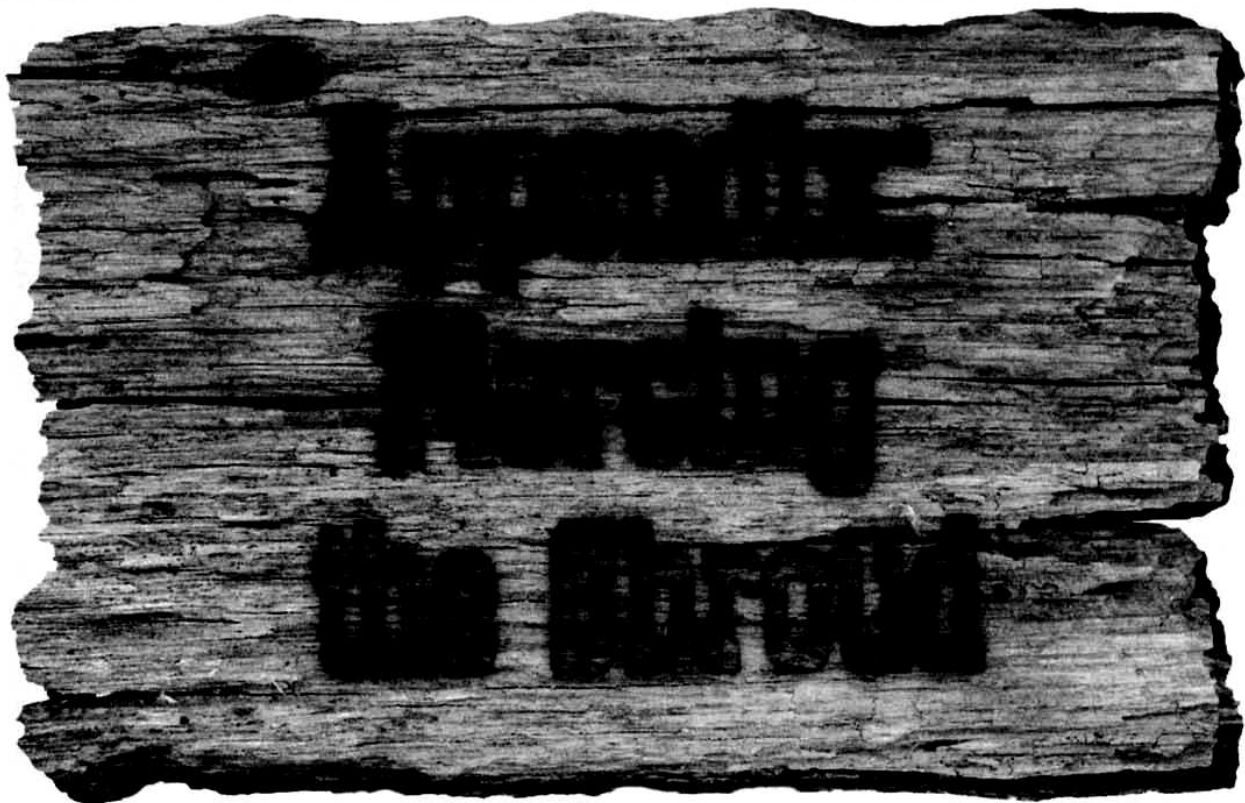
The Boo Factor

However a Storyteller ends up merging wraiths and werewolves in the Savage West (or even a setting of her own devising), no one should rely on "The Boo Factor" to keep a game going.

The Boo Factor comes into play when it's dark, the characters are getting a little anxious and then someone freaks out because something jumps out of the darkness, except that it turns out to be nothing more dangerous than a cat, an ally returning from a scouting mission or some other non-threat.

Don't misunderstand! The Boo Factor can be used for a genuine dramatic purpose, and has been employed by the best tale swappers to relieve the built-up pressure of mounting fear, only to build it up again. Even so, the Boo Factor is nothing but annoying in anything larger than single doses.





The Dark Umbra? Be careful if that's where you're headed. Those spooks don't take too kindly to our ilk, and some of 'em are mean as sin.

— Earl Cotten, Bone Gnawer Ahroun

This book presents a variety of reasons for Garou characters in the Savage West to head into the realms of the dead. *How* exactly the characters get there is a matter of some complexity, though. Garou history is rife with tales of werewolves visiting the Underworld, but very few of them agree on the most efficient method of the Garou's passage there.

This appendix presents some of the mechanical devices for getting your chronicle's characters into the Dark Umbra. Use these systems with caution — your characters don't want to become *permanent* fixtures in the Shadowlands...



Rites

The only way Garou may truly enter the Shadowlands is through the use of traditional rites. Each tribe has a different method and legend concerning passage into the wraiths' native realm, but all of these legends are united by one pervasive thread.

Rites intended to bestow passage into the Dark Umbra are always at least Level Three — inexperienced Garou have no business going there, for the most part. These rites are always Mystical in nature, and frequently must be learned from and empowered by death-related spirits. Garou in the Dark Umbra universally appear as dark patches in the Penumbra.

System: The ritemaster steps into the Dark Umbra just as if she were stepping into the Middle Umbra. The player rolls Wits + Rituals (difficulty of the Shroud rating + 4, to a maximum of 10) and may not use any more dice than the character has in Intelligence + Occult. The ritemaster may pull others into the Dark Umbra with her, but she must be touching them when she performs the rite (otherwise the chain is broken and the others cannot follow). Non-Garou may not be taken to the Shadowlands with this rite.

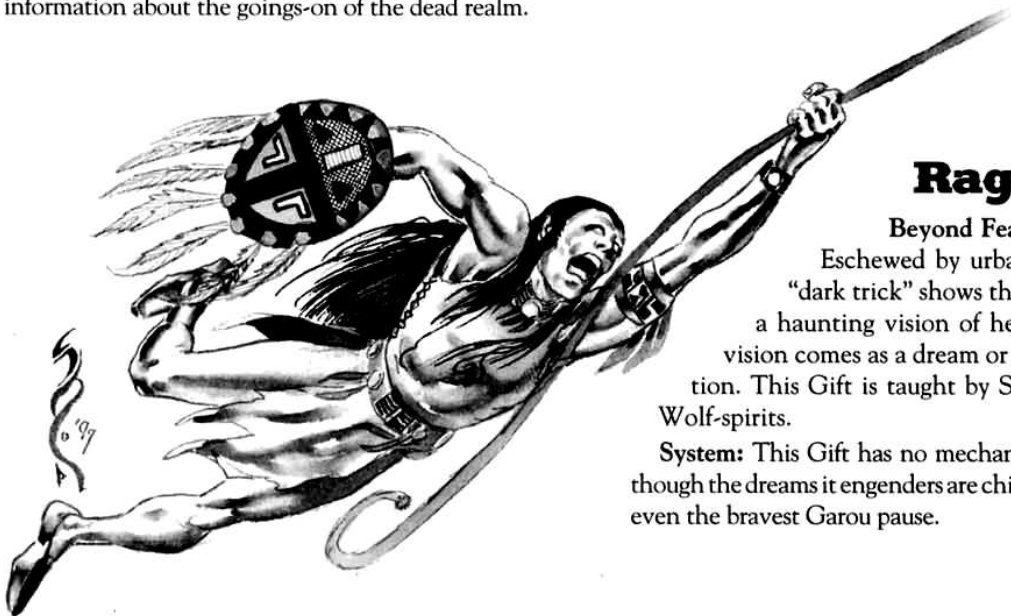
Gifts

Some tribes and auspices have learned other ways of interacting with the Dark Umbra, through Gifts taught by enigmatic spirits. Although no Gift has been reliably proven to take the user into the Underworld, several reports exist of Gifts that enable their users to glean some information about the goings-on of the dead realm.

Tribal Rites

What follows is a list of the names the tribes use for their rites of entry into the Dark Umbra. Persistent rumors indicate other, darker rites are available to those who would pierce the Shroud without the blessings of their tribes. No specific details are provided for the individual rites in question; each rite works with roughly the same mechanics detailed above.

- Black Furies — Passage to Golgotha
- Bone Gnawers — Dust to Dust
- Children of Gaia — Night's Journey
- Fianna — Balor's Cwm
- Get of Fenris — Taking Death's Mantle
- Iron Riders — Rust Soul
- Red Talons — After the Blood
- Shadow Lords — Penance in Gaia's Name
- Silent Striders — Descent into the Dark Umbra
- Silver Fangs — Enter the Dark Umbra
- Stargazers — Cheating the Cycle
- Uktena — Passage to the Hunting Grounds
- Wendigo — Bone Dance



Ragabash

Beyond Fear (Level Two) — Eschewed by urbane Ragabash, this "dark trick" shows the target of the Gift a haunting vision of her own death. The vision comes as a dream or trance-like revelation. This Gift is taught by Sickness-spirits and Wolf-spirits.

System: This Gift has no mechanical system, per se, though the dreams it engenders are chilling enough to give even the bravest Garou pause.

Theurge

Whispers From Thoth (Level Two) — This Gift allows the user to hear across the Shroud. Conversations (if any) happening in the Shadowlands become audible to the Garou. This is a very versatile and discrete Gift, as there is no visible effect: The wraiths do not know that they are being eavesdropped upon. This gift is taught by Owl-spirits.

System: The player spends a point of Gnosis and rolls Perception + Enigmas (difficulty of the Shroud rating + 3, to

a maximum of 10). If the roll succeeds, the Theurge may hear conversations within earshot across the Shroud for the remainder of the scene.

Philodox

Wrongful Death (Level One) — This Gift allows the Philodox to observe the final resting place of someone deceased and determine whether or not their death was natural or the result of other circumstances (violence, poison, sickness, etc.). This Gift does not reveal the *cause* of death, only if the death occurred by fair order or foul. While this Gift does not actually allow communication across the Shroud, a distinct feeling of emptiness occurs to the Gift user if the deceased has become a wraith, and no final delineation between natural or unnatural death is forthcoming. This Gift is taught by Eagle-spirits and, more rarely, Justice-spirits.

System: The player rolls Wits + Occult (difficulty 7). Success indicates the character obtains an accurate result, or total lack thereof...

Silent Striders

Dark Peering (Level Two) — Using this Gift allows the Silent Strider to look through the Shroud and witness events occurring there. She may not interact

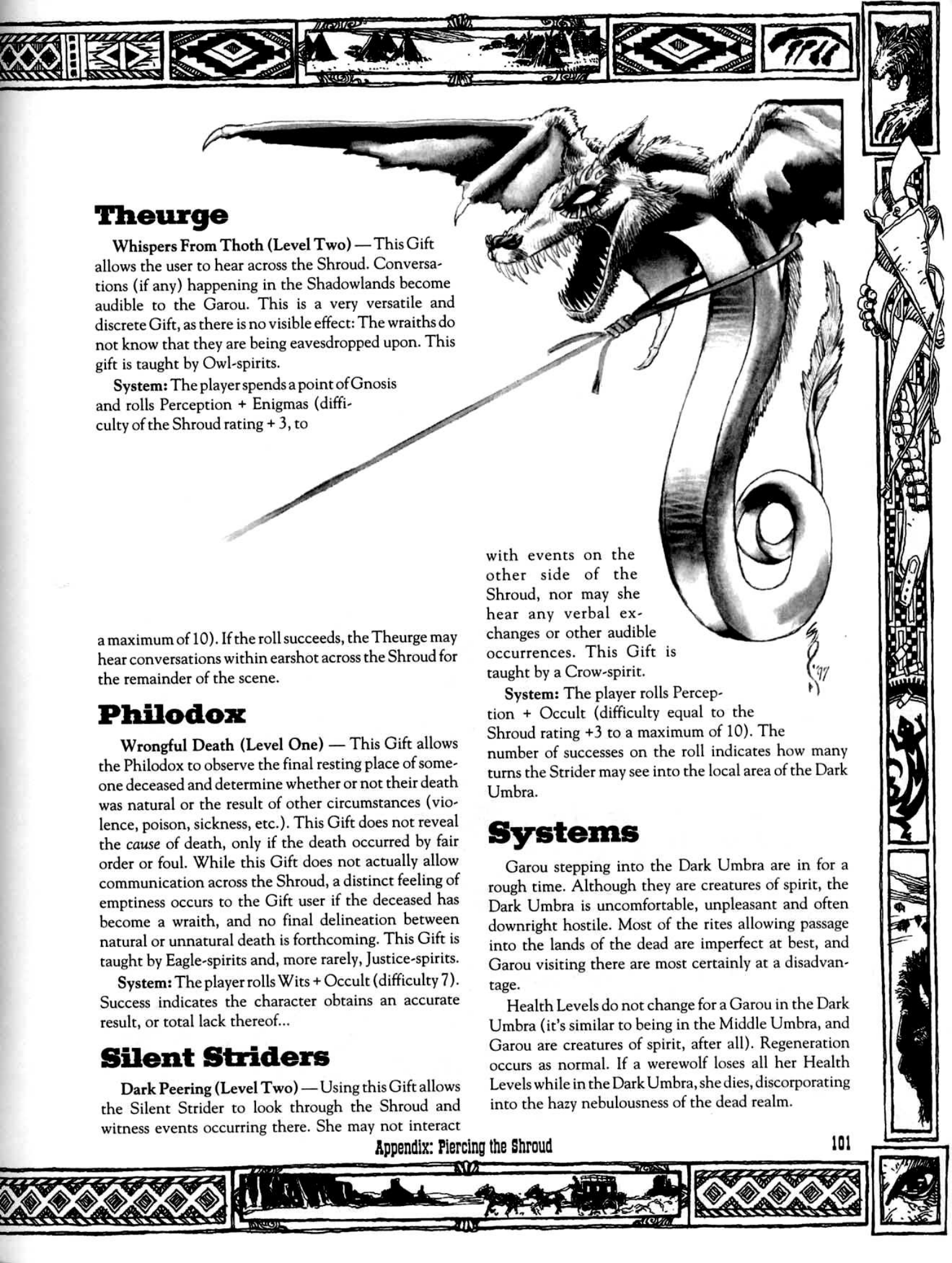
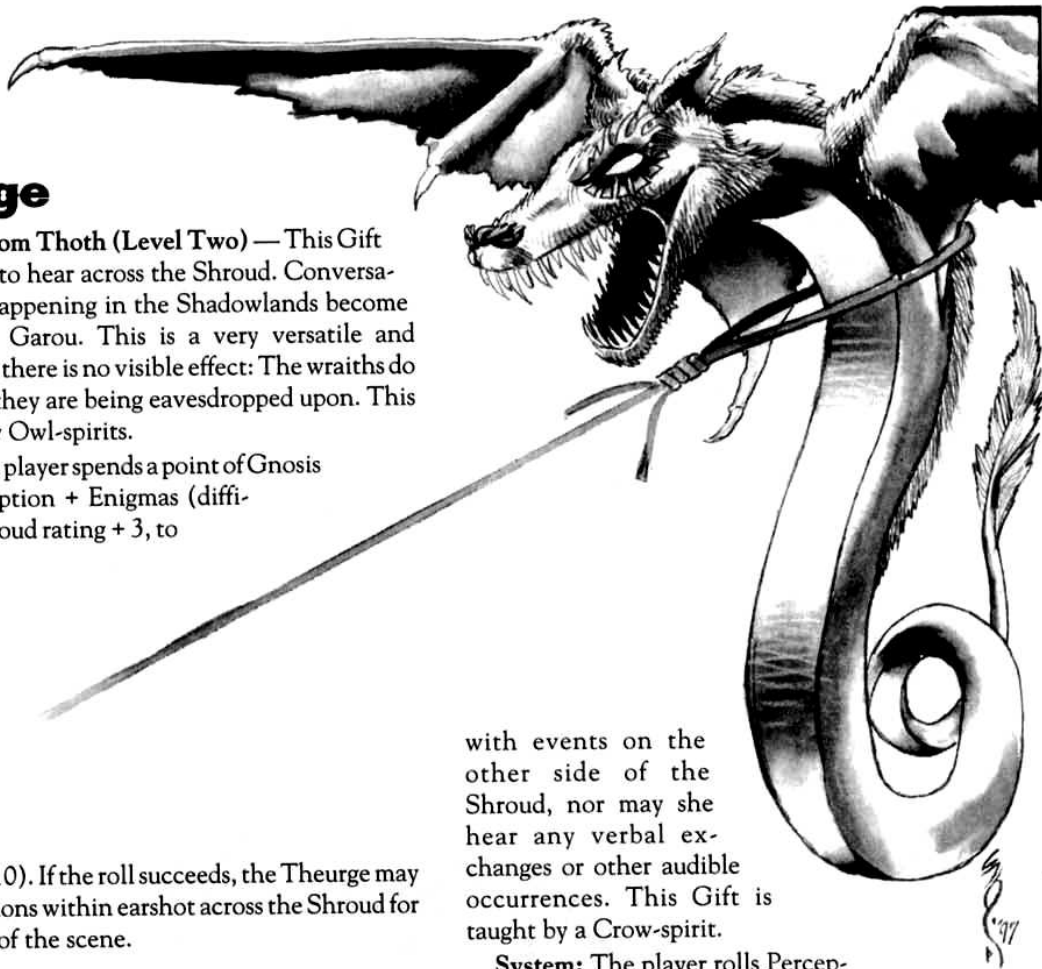
with events on the other side of the Shroud, nor may she hear any verbal exchanges or other audible occurrences. This Gift is taught by a Crow-spirit.

System: The player rolls Perception + Occult (difficulty equal to the Shroud rating +3 to a maximum of 10). The number of successes on the roll indicates how many turns the Strider may see into the local area of the Dark Umbra.

Systems

Garou stepping into the Dark Umbra are in for a rough time. Although they are creatures of spirit, the Dark Umbra is uncomfortable, unpleasant and often downright hostile. Most of the rites allowing passage into the lands of the dead are imperfect at best, and Garou visiting there are most certainly at a disadvantage.

Health Levels do not change for a Garou in the Dark Umbra (it's similar to being in the Middle Umbra, and Garou are creatures of spirit, after all). Regeneration occurs as normal. If a werewolf loses all her Health Levels while in the Dark Umbra, she dies, discorporating into the hazy nebulosity of the dead realm.





Gifts become more difficult to use while in the Dark Umbra, as spiritual energy must cross the Shroud. All Gift difficulties increase by one in the Dark Umbra, though Gifts without difficulties work as normal.

Crossover Mechanics

If you are a member of the Shriek Legion who demands systems for translating one set of character Traits into the terms of another game, here you go.

Mechanically, being in the Dark Umbra is quite similar to being in the Middle Umbra. As far as the Umbrascape is concerned, however, the Dark Umbra is radically different. The Dark Umbra is a realm of omnipresent death and decay. It is a depressing, macabre place that taxes Garou souls and makes them pine for...anywhere else. Storytellers should emphasize that for creatures as vibrantly *alive* as werewolves, the miasma of death-energy that surges around them is profoundly unsettling.

For Storytellers and players using **Wraith: The Oblivion**, use the following conversion system.

- Garou Rage is Oblivion's playground. Werewolves in the Dark Umbra acquire Shadows (most of whom are Abuser, Freak or Monster Archetypes), whose Angst scores equal the

Garou's Rage. Werewolf Shadows may have any Thorns deemed appropriate by the Storyteller, but should obviously fit the "dark side" of the character in question. (These conceits are advanced roleplaying techniques; only troupes that wish to delve into their characters' psychological beings should use these in play. Feel free to discard this rule should you not wish to involve Shadows for werewolves in your game.)

- Werewolves do not have and may not learn Arcanoi (unless, of course, they die and become wraiths for some reason — hey, don't ask me; it's your game). Garou may still use Gifts, though associated difficulties increase by one.

- Players may spend Rage to do all the things normally related to the Trait: healing, extra actions, shifting forms, etc.

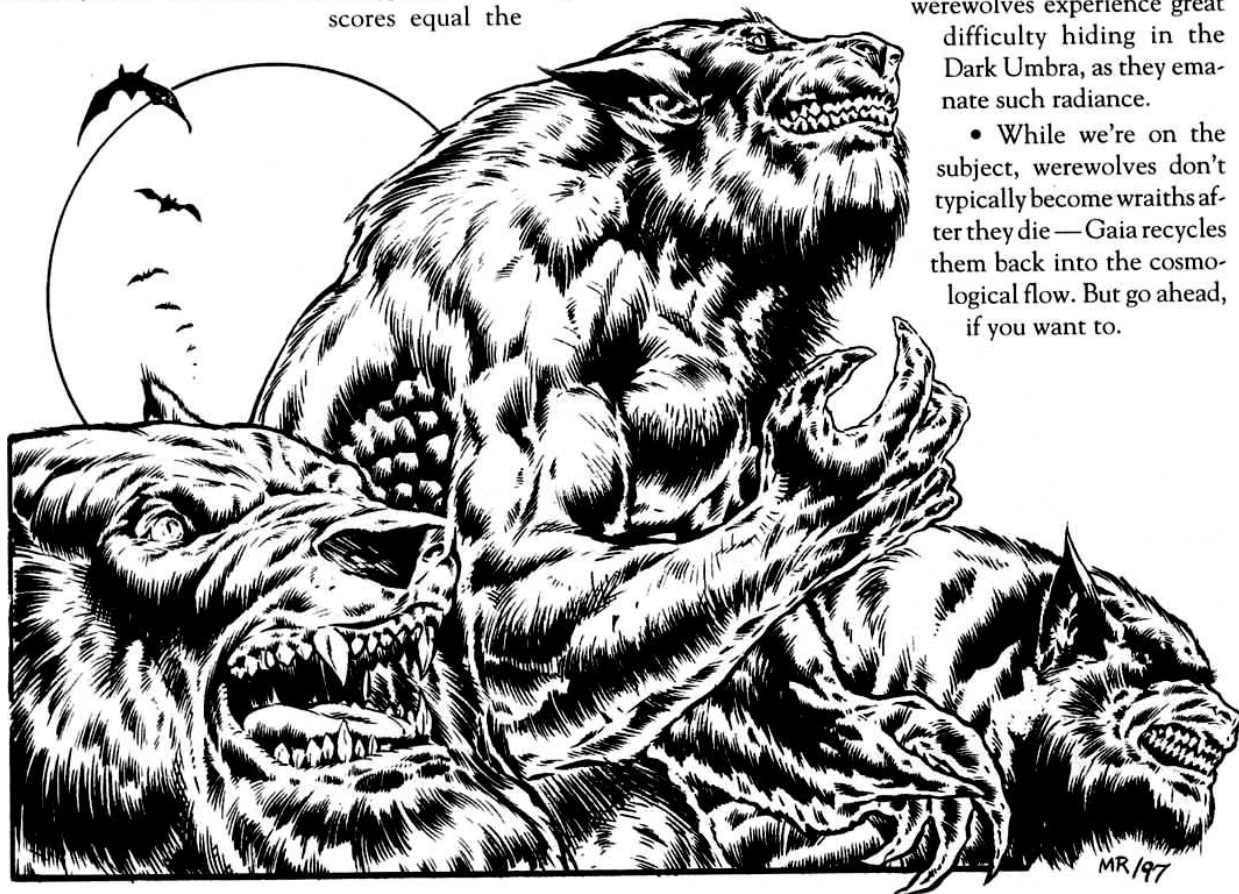
- Werewolves do not have Passions or Fetters, *per se* (they do not need Pathos, and they are, in truth, still alive).

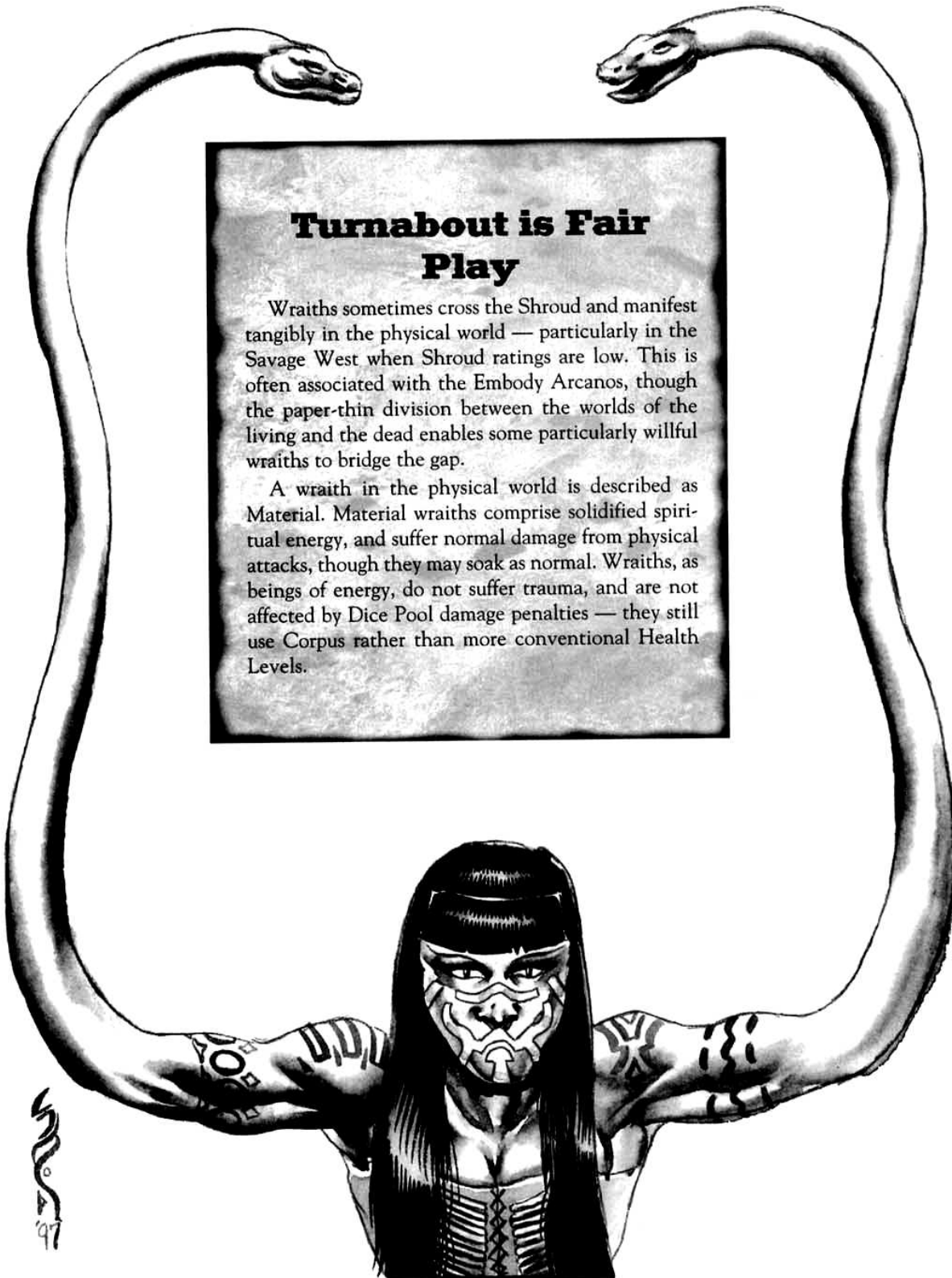
- A player may spend a Gnosis point at any time to have her Garou character "drop out" of the Dark Umbra and back into the physical world.

- Werewolves shine like beacons in the Underworld. The wraiths' inherent sense of Lifesight reveals Garou as brightly glowing, robust creatures. Obviously,

werewolves experience great difficulty hiding in the Dark Umbra, as they emanate such radiance.

- While we're on the subject, werewolves don't typically become wraiths after they die — Gaia recycles them back into the cosmological flow. But go ahead, if you want to.



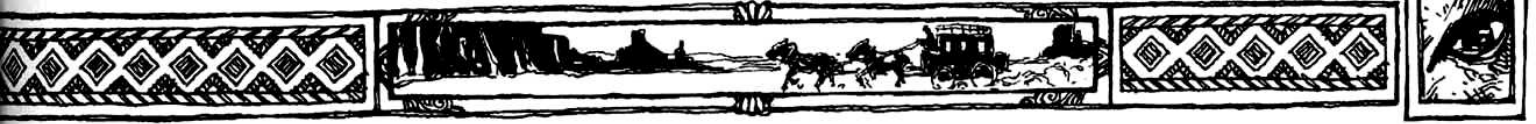


Turnabout is Fair Play

Wraiths sometimes cross the Shroud and manifest tangibly in the physical world — particularly in the Savage West when Shroud ratings are low. This is often associated with the Embody Arcanos, though the paper-thin division between the worlds of the living and the dead enables some particularly willful wraiths to bridge the gap.

A wraith in the physical world is described as Material. Material wraiths comprise solidified spiritual energy, and suffer normal damage from physical attacks, though they may soak as normal. Wraiths, as beings of energy, do not suffer trauma, and are not affected by Dice Pool damage penalties — they still use Corpus rather than more conventional Health Levels.

97



Ghost Towns™

Ghost Towns Ain't All Deserted

The Savage West is dotted with numerous sites that wraiths call home. Of course, when those wraiths start becoming a problem for the local Garou, relations between werewolves and ghosts sometimes get ugly. Just how ugly depends on what town you're talking about, and which particular pack of Garou....

Werewolves and Ghosts Side-by-Side

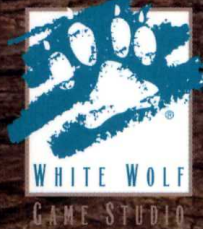
Ghost Towns offers a wealth of information to Storytellers wishing to incorporate events from beyond the Shroud in their *Werewolf: The Wild West* chronicles. Whether the chronicle demands area-specific information or a well-defined system for integrating ghosts into the story, *Ghost Towns* details it all. A unique resource for the ever-popular crossover *World of Darkness* games, *Ghost Towns* is a boon to Werewolf and Wraith players alike.

Ghost Towns includes

- Settings for five individual ghost towns as well as rules on how to create an entirely new one
- Hints and tips for involving the Restless Dead in a *Werewolf: The Wild West* chronicle
- Numerous story arcs and chronicle foundations — and guidelines for Storytellers to create their own.

Wraith
THE OBLIVION

WEREWOLF
THE WILD WEST



ISBN 1-56504-343-X
WW3703 \$15.00 U.S.

