

Mind's Eye Theatre™

LAW S

of the



CHANGING BREEDS: 2™



A Supplement for playing Gurahl
and Mokole

WEREWOLF
THE APOCALYPSE

Mind's Eye Theatre

LAW S

of the

Wild

CHANGING BREEDS: 2

Does Gaia's Memory Still Remember?

During the terrible War of Rage, the Garou brought slaughter to their shapeshifting cousins. The mighty werereptiles called the Mokolé and the gentle werebears called the Gurahl hid themselves away to avoid destruction by their enraged brethren and were forgotten. Now, centuries later, they venture out from their hidden swamps and caves to a world that needs their healing and memories more than ever. But has time mended the wounds of the past, or have they only festered?

Can Gaia's Healers Mend the Wounds?

This book contains all-new material for creating and playing one of the Changing Breeds, either the werereptile Mokolé or the werebear Gurahl. Patterned after the first **Changing Breeds Book**, each section contains everything that even a new player could want to become acquainted with the society and setting, create a character and begin playing.

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Table of Contents

Chapter One: Gurahl 6

Chapter Two: Mokole 104





By Way of Introduction

If you've already seen this because you own **Changing Breeds Book 1**, you can head on over to what you're looking for. If this is your first outing with the **Changing Breeds**, you'll want to pause and look at this.

Welcome to the **Changing Breeds Book 2**, the second supplemental book covering the other shapeshifters. Here you'll find the Gurahl werebears, gentle giants who are the healers and teachers, trying to mend a world that may be too damaged for even their efforts. Here you'll find the Mokolé werereptiles, the scions of the mighty dinosaurs, who remember the past as if it were yesterday, and whose memory catalogues a litany of grievances. Here you'll also find notes that refer you to **Laws of the Wild**.

It's inevitable when putting together a supplemental book that something gets dropped on the way due to space and other considerations. In this case, there's a number of effects that are identical to Garou Gifts or systems, and we figured it would be a bigger bang for the buck to have new material here rather than yet another rehash of a Gift or Trait from a book you already have.

So, if you want to get the most out of this, you'll need **Laws of the Wild** to assist with basic character creation, definitions of some Gifts and a framework for the cosmology. Chalk it up to these sneaky critters who decided the best way to hide secrets was to make others go looking for them.





Gurahl

First Greeting

Welcome, youngling! I see you recognize me already from the dreams you've been having. Come on in. My friends call me Adirondack Annie — "Addie-Ann" for short. I'm your Buri-Jaan, or mentor. Don't worry about the dreams. They helped you find me so I can teach you about yourself and what you are.

But come on, stand up and dance with me first. I may be less traditional than some of our kind, but I want to give you the greeting you deserve. I've dreamed about you too, and I feel I know you just a little. Later you'll learn the pain that dancing brings to us, but for now, know that you're a Gurahl, and these dances are your heritage. Just copy what I do. When you meet others, you'll have to know the proper forms. There's lots of variations in the ritual, depending on who you're approaching, the time of year, even whether it's an accidental meeting. Different greetings are appropriate for petitioning another of us or for offering help, for giving warnings or just for asking permission to pass through. Don't worry, it gets to be second nature after a little practice. Currently, we consider you a cub because you don't know very much about who and what the Gurahl are and where you fit in. That's what I'm here for.

Here, let me tie this necklace on for you. It's made of woven beads, what some folks call Indian beads. Made it myself as your greeting gift. I wove in the patterns for mountains, rivers, forests and plains and made the top blue for the sky. Wear it and remember your first teacher among the Gurahl. Let it always remind you what we're doing in the world.

Here's a little taste of fish and a few berries. When you taste the berries, you remember the sweet fruits of Gaia's creation. The salt on the fish represents the tears we've shed protecting the world. This drink of water symbolizes life. Drink deeply of life but know that you must also face death as



part of the cycle. You not only need to know how to heal, but when to let a creature who's too damaged or too old meet death with dignity. This pouch holds herbs useful in healing. Keep it and fill it with the tools of your trade. Always offer healing to any creatures who are of Gaia.

Now come on and give me a hug. Not just a human-style hug — hold tight, know that we trust each other. Can you smell me? Take a deep breath. Now, even at a distance, we'll know one another in future.

Do you like your necklace? Giving such a gift to a new cub is part of our tradition. You'll see that we're a pretty tradition-bound folk. Don't wince, kid, it's a *good* thing! It serves to remind us of who we are and what we're doing in the world. It also honors Gaia and keeps us focused on our goals and not on someone else's personality. You may find other Gurahl you don't like, but if you keep things on a traditional basis, you won't have to put up with the other fella's opinion too much.

One Bear's View: History

In the old days, we Gurahl would have danced this tale for everyone to see. We rarely dance now, usually only on formal occasions. That joy's been corrupted for us, turned into a shameful spectacle of ridicule and cruelty. You *have* heard of dancing bears? We'll talk about that later. We Gurahl dance when teaching so that your body will never forget the lessons you learn. It's also the most expressive way we can impart the majesty and the sadness of our story. Someday, you'll teach a new cub, so move with me now in the Dance of Centuries.

This first movement is known as the Creation Dance. We show our respect for Gaia and her creation through these steps. As you watch the dance and learn the steps, I'll tell you some of our history.

In the Beginning

Stand quietly, feet apart. Sway back and forth. Can you feel the life pulse of the Earth through your feet? Now, lift your foot. Now you're part of both earth and air. Now walk over and dip your feet in the pond. Face the sun. Now water and fire become a part of you. Breathe in and hold that breath. Your own spirit completes the part of the dance that is uniquely you.

Feel the motion as we turn. Now, change to your bear form and we'll turn again. This begins the first movement in our Creation Dance, just as the world when it first took on form and began to spin its way toward time.

Gaia's Creation

Some of our legends say that Gaia walked among the stars and chose one to give light and life to the home She wanted to make for Her children-yet-to-be. They say She danced just as we have, lifting Her feet and turning, performing the Creation Dance. As Her feet passed, earth sprang into being,



reaching out from her in all directions and becoming land. She waved Her hands, creating the winds, She sang and the spirit of Her song became the fire at the Earth's heart. When She combed out Her hair, it became rivers and seas. As She stroked the land it became covered with grass and flowers and trees. Her brothers and sisters came to see Her creation and became the planets and the moon, and Gaia's joy at Her creation emerged as sparkling laughter that produced children to share the world with Her.

How We Came To Be

Different tribes of Gurahl explain how we came to be in different ways. Some say we were humans who moved away from more civilized lands and grew long pelts. Some of us then became Gurahl, others bears. Others claim we emerged from hollow hills and that's why we like to hibernate in caves during the winter. Many say the Great Bear (a creature of spirit) mated with Ursa Major (a creature of matter) to produce Ursa Minor, the joyful cub (a creature of both matter and spirit) who represents the Gurahl in the earliest stages of our lives. They say we were born of the cub's love for his mother and father. Others simply believe that Gaia called us forth from Her own heart, nurturing us and teaching us to become the protectors of Her Earth and Her children — including humans.

You may someday hear the Garou say that humans ruined the world, but we Gurahl cherish humans alongside all Gaia's other creatures. There exist a lot of similarities between us — both have expressive faces, both can walk upright on two legs — but we believe that humans copied us, not the other way around.

Some say we existed even before the great dinosaurs; others claim the Gurahl could not have existed without humans to breed with. Some lorekeepers say Gaia created us from the bones of the earth and gave us the ability to breed with both our Kin later. I wasn't there and neither were you, so we'll probably never know. I think it's honor enough to know we are the best-loved among Gaia's changing children.

The Calm Before Corruption

Long before the Gurahl were born, the Mother had three other children. We Gurahl call those three Yarn Spinner, Tapestry Maker and Pattern Breaker, those whom others call the Wyld, the Weaver and the Wyrn. Yarn Spinner whirled through every part of the world, creating things wherever she went. Tapestry Maker took those creations and arranged them into patterns and crafted things, and Pattern Breaker saw the bright new items and broke them apart so there would be room for new things and raw material for Yarn Spinner to use.

At that time, the balance was maintained and we were able to interact with humans as protectors, nurturers and teachers. Some of us even gave our lives for them, sacrificing our own flesh and skins in times when our naked



siblings would have starved or frozen. Seeing our devotion to the rest of Her creation, Gaia gave us a great gift, one we don't share with the other Changing Breeds — the gift of returning life to one dead. This great honor we reserved for those who nobly sacrificed themselves for others. Many human tribes celebrated their connection with us, forming bear cults and healing societies when we taught them the rudiments of our lore.

Pattern Breaker's Madness

As mankind became more settled, Tapestry Maker grew in power. She saw that Pattern Breaker was destroying her beloved creations and cried out, berating him. As any good brother would, Pattern Breaker tried to dry her tears and asked how he could make her happy again. What he didn't notice until it was too late was that Tapestry Maker's tears fell over him as he comforted her, forming a woven net all around him. In terror of being confined, he thrashed mightily — vainly trying to break the strands of sorrow that enmeshed him. When they failed to break, he fought harder, only to enmesh himself further. Maddened by terror, Pattern Breaker lashed out at anything he could reach, breaking things that should have endured and spewing corruption in his wake.

The Dance of Creation as it was meant to be faltered and died. The dance which succeeded it became a never-ending series of off-kilter steps vainly trying to restore the balance. That movement goes like this...

Balance Point

Crouch down and place your palms on the ground. This step is known as the Balance Point. On all fours, we achieve stability we cannot know on only two legs. This is the reason why we have four legs in bear form, to feel the four corners of the earth. Savor the balance and expel your breath. Now rise again, slowly, taking in a gentle breath as you stand upright.

Lift one leg, bending your knee so it is almost level with your chest. You have to thrust out your arms to maintain your balance after only a short time. Hold the position, even if you feel like you may stumble. Now, try to turn in place (like we did before in the Creation Dance) by edging your one remaining foot in a circle. Not easy, is it? This is the step we call Gaia's Dilemma. It reminds us how precarious our Mother's hold on the Earth truly is since the corruption of he who is now called the Wyrn.

The Changing Children

After us Gaia birthed other Changing Breeds to perform other tasks. She made the Mokolé to be Her memory when the world became too large to recall everything we needed to know. The Bastet were Gaia's eyes, watching whatever happened. The Corax became Her messengers — mostly because no one could keep them quiet anyway, and we felt it was better that they have something important to say rather than repeating idle chatter. Others were



born as well, the Ananasi, the Rokea and the Nuwisha. Each had a special purpose in Gaia's creation.

It was our job to protect and heal the land and its creatures. We tried to be everywhere the Wyrms were, nurturing new growth, guarding what we could from his corruption and healing what was made sick by his diseased coils. But Pattern Breaker had grown too large. Even on four legs and perfectly balanced, we were completely overmatched. Seeing and feeling the Earth's pain, we knew we could no longer fulfill our duties without more help. We asked the Great Mother to send us more brothers and sisters to help us. Gaia knew that despite our best efforts, trying to heal what was already broken was far more difficult than keeping it from being ruined. She decided that rather than make more healers, She would create warriors — fierce defenders dedicated to fighting the Wyrms. That way we Gurahl could concentrate on healing and preservation and leave the battle to Her new children, the Garou.

The Garou

Our lorekeepers claim the Garou were birthed from Gaia's pain over our inability to cleanse the Wyrms' corruption. She didn't blame us, knowing that Her child Pattern Breaker had become too large in his corruption for anyone to heal until his ongoing ravaging of the Earth was halted. To curb his excesses, She created the Garou. We welcomed our newest siblings and introduced them to the other Changing Breeds. We were proud that our youngest brothers and sisters would fight the Wyrms and help us defend Gaia. As we were commanded in the beginning times, we cherished them and sought to teach them.

We also taught humans many secrets, passing on our knowledge of Gaia's land so they could plant and grow crops to feed themselves. All we asked in return was that they honor our other Kin, the bears. Many believe that bears (and we) are carnivores, but we are not. Both our bear Kin and we (except for those of the frozen North) eat everything that humans do — grains, fruit, meat and vegetables. By teaching humans to plant crops, we helped them survive more easily and made it less necessary for them to hunt and kill so many of Gaia's other creatures. We maintained the balance.

Just as we taught humans, we tried to teach the Garou skills they would need to fight the Wyrms. We taught them the *Rite of Purification* and the *Rite of Passage*, and imparted knowledge of Gifts such as *Mother's Touch* and *Sense the Wyrms* to them so they would have warning of the Wyrms' presence and be able to heal themselves when wounded. Another thing we tried to teach them was harmony, the skill of balancing their own feelings to give themselves peace and tranquillity. This they couldn't learn.

We realized it was no one's fault. Gaia had made them full of Rage so they might combat our great enemy, and they saw no use in our calm deliberation. We didn't understand one another; indeed, we couldn't understand. We were just too different.



We Gurahl live separate from one another; each maintains a certain territory. Somewhere within that range, each Gurahl keeps a special den where she goes to rest and regain her energy. Many of us also once kept a home in a village or settlement so we'd be available to teach and heal the humans there. We offered these gifts to the land and animals within our range as well. Humans trusted and honored us, and we tried to teach them harmony and how to live on the land without causing damage to it. We needed to be solitary because there were always too few of us, and we had a lot of territory to cover.

The Garou found our ways inexplicable. To them, humans were just parasites on the land. They tried to cull humans like herds, hoping to keep their numbers down. They might as well have told wild flowers not to grow. Our wolf brothers thought our attempts to teach humans were highly suspect, like teaching the enemy. Unlike us, the Garou live, hunt and fight as a pack. This was necessary because they were battling the Wyrms' corruption and there was greater chance of success in battle when several warriors attacked together. Humans honored bear, but they feared wolf. Where they asked for our help, they implored wolf not to bring them harm.

Prelude to War

Stand quietly, shoulders slumped forward and hang your head. Now rock from side to side, slowly. Lift your foot until it just clears the ground and take a step forward. Now slide your other foot sideways and move to follow it. Take a step backward with the original foot. Lift your head and arms as though beseeching the heavens for an explanation. This is the Step of Sadness and Regret. We dance it to commemorate the pain of the Great Betrayal, the worst era of our history.

We should have seen it coming: As we taught the Garou more of our lore, they became jealous of what we *didn't* teach them. We told them to be patient. Our own kind don't learn our deepest secrets and greatest rites while still cubs. Even those who have drunk deeply of life's experiences may only understand some of our knowledge.

That's not saying the young are incapable of understanding how something works intellectually, but that sometimes life wisdom is needed before you truly appreciate what you've been taught. No wise parent gives a baby matches; the baby can't comprehend what the consequences of lighting those matches might be. In the same way, no elder Gurahl places the burden of our most secret knowledge on the shoulders of those too young to make informed choices. Much less would we teach knowledge of how to bring the dead back to life to the rash, impulsive Garou.

In our earliest days, we used the Gift extensively and discovered to our regret that it was best to save such powerful manifestations for very special circumstances. All of us determined to use the Gift only for those who nobly sacrificed themselves for others, and then only rarely.

You don't understand. Why would we allow our friends and siblings to die when we only needed to use Gaia's Gift to make them live again? Well, the easiest answer is that we aren't like Tapestry Maker. We don't insist that



because something existed, it must *always* exist. We live our lives — and many of them have been quite extended, encompassing centuries. But when it's time to die, why should we cling to this existence or be forced back to it by well-meaning others, when our spirits can go back to Gaia and be made into new beings? Even those of us who choose not to be made anew find great happiness in the Summer Lands, where we rest from our labors. We only restore one of our own when she's cut off in her prime or when it seems as though her work is unfinished.

The other reason? When something has served its purpose, it's time to move aside and make room for something new. If it doesn't, the old thing can get trapped in place and rots from within. Continuation without growth and without deepening understanding is pointless — and dangerous. I'd think twice about approaching some of our kind who've slept for centuries. I have no knowledge of what's happened to them during their long hibernation. Many may awaken renewed and ready to take up our place in the world once again; others may have become twisted and corrupted.

Finally, I'll tell you the greatest danger in using this Gift. The time elapsed between a beloved Gurahl's death and his resurrection is vitally important. If the one using the Gift were not present when the other Gurahl died, she is taking a terrible chance that it has been too long and the Gurahl's spirit has moved on. Do you see that blackened copse yonder? That's the result of a cub's foolishness in calling forth something he couldn't control.

When it's been too long — and sometimes even when it hasn't — something else returns rather than the Gurahl's spirit. I can't begin to tell you the horror and destruction a Bane inhabiting the body of a Gurahl is. I hope you never discover that knowledge for yourself. Now, with that knowledge, you'll understand the rest of my story and my dance.

Like greedy children, the Garou wanted it all and demanded knowledge immediately. They believed that we should give them the Gift of rebirth because they could use it to bring back warriors killed fighting the Wyrms. We grieved along with them for the loss of their brave warriors, but we couldn't give them what they wanted.

The First Great Council

Stand and stretch forth your arms at shoulder height as if encircling the shoulders of others. Though we do not have a full circle, we will act as though we do. Close your eyes for a moment and imagine a circle filled with other Gurahl. Move to your right, crossing one leg behind the other. Now move forward as though closing the circumference of the circle. Drop your arms and turn to face outward. Bring your arms up again and again move to your right. Step outward as though allowing the circle to expand. Face inward again and repeat the steps to the left. Outward, and repeat again to the left. Now, move around the entirety of the circle as though weaving in and out with others until you return to your original position. This is the Circle Dance of the Council where we all meet to reach an accord. You'll need to know the steps when you attend the Autumnal Equinox.



Meeting together in our first Great Council, we talked a long time about the Garou and what we should (and should not) teach them. Maybe you think we were arrogant in assuming we knew what was best. We'd lived a long time in Gaia's world and knew it far better than our younger siblings. We spoke of their great, often uncontrollable Rage. We thought about their precipitous natures, how they failed to think things through before taking action. We knew that they rarely had the luxury of long thought before making decisions, and decided the risk was simply too great. We could not trust *Gaia's Breath*, her greatest Gift, in the hands of the Garou.

We knew they would use it on every fallen warrior, thinking this would make them invincible. Never had we found occasion to try to use the Gift more than once on the same Gurahl, but we suspected the Garou would try it over and over — with disastrous consequences. They would corrupt themselves from within, never realizing what it was they brought back into their midst. Gaia's warriors would become Pattern Breaker's Bane-wolves. What was meant to bless would become a curse once bequeathed to our younger Changing Kin. As we feared, the Garou did not understand.

The War of Words

Choked by jealousy, the Garou demanded that the Gurahl share all Gaia's Gifts or else. We refused. So they stabbed us in the back, telling the other Changing Kin we were hoarding Gaia's greatest Gifts for ourselves, saying we wouldn't help them fight Pattern Breaker. Soon, rumors started that the Gurahl had fallen to the Wyrn. Some believed them, thinking that if Gaia chose them to root out the Wyrn and its minions, they should know who was corrupt and who wasn't. Many friends suddenly avoided us; many withdrew their support. We were left alone and in silence.

The Great Ice

The great Ice Age began, and the Garou, looking for a fight, blamed it on the Gurahl, saying we were supposed to guard the lands and we'd shirked our duties and tried to destroy the warriors of Gaia in retaliation for telling the others we had fallen to the Wyrn. Not all knew it was a lie. Many were misled by their leaders and had no reason not to believe whatever they were told. I have always regretted that more Garou failed to challenge what their leaders told them, but I suppose subservience and loyalty to the pack leader is bred into them.

Whatever the reason, the Garou pointed to the coming of the great ice as proof that we had given up our guardianship of the land, allowing it to be locked into ice. Using that as the excuse, they began active attacks on us and urged the other Changing Breeds to do likewise.

A few Garou used the bridge created by the ice to cross into the Pure Lands in search of new homes far from the battle. Many Gurahl went with them. Among these Garou, fewer believed the lies. Many welcomed our company, and we each found new Kin among the people and animals in our



new homes. Many tribes honored both wolf and bear and learned from both of us. But the damage had been done. Even with the lessened effects in the Pure Lands, elsewhere, we found ourselves embroiled in the War of Rage.

The War of Rage

We know now that we should have remained true to our own natures. We are better healers than fighters. We should never have responded to force with force of our own. Could we have defused the Garou's Rage by refusing to respond to it? Or would we simply have perished under their fangs and claws? We'll never know.

Led by the Silver Fangs, the Garou declared war on us. We could barely function for the sorrow that we were fighting those who should be allies. Always before, we had been able to protect those under our care and ourselves, but now we faced a tremendous disadvantage.

Wherever the Garou sought us out, we fought back. As great in strength as we were in healing, we inflicted horrendous damage on our foes. Despite our strength and endurance, we weren't made for battle as the Garou were. We couldn't stand alone against an entire pack. We fought; they died and we died. But there were fewer of us. One by one, we fell before their attacks, and when we died, our lands and people were left unprotected. Some Garou turned their Rage on our unprotected Kinfolk, slaying them to eradicate "the Wyrms' minions." Many human tribes who honored us were completely wiped out. Our bear Kin also died, slain by the Garou. Some bear species began the slide into extinction because of the actions of the Garou during the War of Rage. Perhaps if we'd been more concerned with saving them than with fighting back in a losing battle, they'd still exist.

In many parts of the world, though some of our Kinfolk survived, the native Gurahl population was completely destroyed. The Okuma, once the proud tribe of Asian Gurahl, were all lost to what is known in the East as the War of Shame. Russian Gurahl subsumed many of the Okuma's Asian Kinfolk into their own tribes. They've since become a part of our River Keepers. Some of the few Okuma Kinfolk left also joined with the Mountain Guardians, but since that tribe was a late arrival (split from the River Keepers once we reached the Pure Lands), more ended up with River Keepers than with the Guardians. The War of Rage destroyed many Gurahl and decimated many tribes of our Kinfolk.

Initially, our bear Kinfolk, more cunningly hidden and living in more remote areas, were better off. Then the true toll became known. In each place where Gurahl guardians were destroyed, the bears soon declined. Nowadays, almost all the bears in those regions are gone.

Still, there was worse to come. It wasn't enough that the Garou tried to kill us. Many of Gaia's warriors were more interested in capturing and torturing our Kinfolk and us in a misguided attempt to force the secret of *Gaia's Breath* from us. The fortunate ones died quickly. Not one betrayed the secret, a testament to our dedicated natures (what many call our stubbornness).



We believe that the Garou tried to persuade or compel the other Changing Breeds into declaring war on us as well, seeking to justify their own attacks and to force all others to acknowledge their leadership of all Gaia's children. Some among our lore-tellers even claim that this was the real reason for the war, so that the last-born could assume the rightful place of those born before. Each group responded in its own way. Our Changing Brothers and Sisters have their own stories to tell of their choices during the War of Rage. We have very little information concerning their actions, and that knowledge comes to us second-hand, from the Corax. We were removed from our Kin (even the other Changers) during that time.

We know that the Corax gave information to the Garou, but then helped many of us escape from almost certain death. They've told us the Nuwisha turned and left, and that the Bastet fought the Garou tooth and claw to survive. The Mokolé, the Rokea, all the others (including many Changing Children who didn't survive) came to realize that they themselves were next and refused to join. The Garou themselves helped them choose when they decided preemptive strikes against the other Changing Breeds were necessary.

We knew then that there was no way for us to persuade them of our innocence or stop the War. Our presence was causing our Kinfolk (bear and human) to suffer. As long as we remained, the Garou would have a focus for their Rage. The only answer was to disappear.

The Withdrawal

Those still surviving met in the Second Great Council. There we decided our only option was to retreat from the world to save our Kinfolk and ourselves from utter destruction. Many of us abandoned their bodies and entered the Umbra. Some went to the Summer Lands where they found their reward for their services to Gaia. Others fully retreated into their secret Dens or Umbral pockets and entered an almost permanent hibernation. The Garou (and many other Changing Breeds) assumed we had all died or left Earthly existence. Since they believed the secret of *Gaia's Breath* was lost along with us, the Garou entered a final rampage, then let their Rage cool. Despite a few more flare-ups here and there, the War of Rage was ended.

The Centuries of Quiet

Throughout the greater part of human history, the Gurahl have only occasionally taken an active role since then. Humans became ever more settled, and the Garou tried to control them through the Impergium. Had we been there, we might have been able to stop them, but we were gone. That might be said about a lot of situations in the ensuing years. Few of us still interacted with our human Kin. From such meetings, tribal Kinfolk learned some of our secrets of healing and sacred dances. We continued to teach them respect for Gaia. Bear cults, most dedicated to healing and the ritual hunting of bears for sustenance, proliferated among those tribes. More of us contacted



our bear Kin, keeping those channels alive as well. But even those contacts were greatly limited.

The Hunt and the Sacrifice

Many human tribes in the Pure Lands and in the cold lands of northern Europe and Asia celebrated the ritual killing of the bear as central to their religions and to the survival of their peoples. A festival lasting several days re-enacted the tale of Bear Mother and her Son, the Cub whose formal death as a willing sacrifice brought necessary food, clothing and tools to the tribe. In many cultures, this festival also marked the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter. The spirit of the sacrificed Bear, during this time of year, descended into the Underworld where he assumed the role of guardian of the dead. In the spring, with the fertile reawakening of plant and animal life from beneath the snow, the Bear re-entered the world, reborn to the Bear Mother in order to give his life once more, at the proper time, to his tribe.

Sleeping and Awake

For the most part, though, the Gurahl slumbered. The greatest secret among the Changing Kin — known only to the Corax and us (since we were unable to keep it from them) — was that despite our apparent disappearance (and assumed demise), we remained in the world or just beyond it. Even now, some of us still sleep just beyond the edge of the world, but the rest of the elder Gurahl have each spent some time traveling from one area to another, maintaining a watch on those regions we once nurtured.

Great Grandfather, Great Grandmother

It became a tradition passed down from one Gurahl to the next that at least one of us would always be awake to watch and help — if we could. That one is known as the Great Grandfather or Grandmother. It is that Gurahl's responsibility to travel through the world encouraging the protection of our bear Kin and seeking to keep alive the traditions of tribes who still honor Bear as a totem. It is a thankless job and takes a toll. No Gurahl can go on day after day struggling against the unstoppable tide of so-called progress that is overwhelming all wild creatures everywhere. Eventually, the Great Grandparent sickens from the poisons and sadness of the world and returns to the Den to cleanse away the stench. Before doing so, she's charged with awakening another and passing on all that she's learned. That one then becomes the new Great Grandparent. In this fashion, we've kept abreast of some of the changes in the world and kept a paw in when we could.

Inevitable Decline

It's not really surprising that our race declined precipitously. We weren't unaware that this would happen. None of us truly wanted to bring new children into the world when they had little to look forward to except fear,



deprivation and being hunted. Further, we were afraid of what it would do to our children — that if we *did* produce offspring while embroiled in the war, they wouldn't be true Gurahl, but pseudo-Garou, taught to fight and attack rather than nurture and heal, encouraged to ferocity rather than compassion and understanding. You see, we knew from our own reactions what would happen. Though we live to heal and help, it took only a few short years for us to throw off our nature and respond to attacks with our own hatred and Rage. How much more vulnerable would our children be if they were brought into a world consumed by war among the Changing Children?

Of those few who *were* born during that time, almost all entered their Uzmati auspice before they had matured fully. Urged on by anger, many who should have lived long, productive lives instead fought and died when they were little better than cubs. Another effect of the wars was the loss of many cubs before they even had a chance to learn what they truly were. There were so few of us to be mentors to them, and of those, many were afraid to leave hidden shelters and seek out the newly changed. Most cubs went mad with fear over what seemed to be some sort of possession taking hold of them. Superstitious humans killed others, believing the untrained cubs were dangerous monsters. Eventually, as Kinfolk stopped mating with Kinfolk and we stopped mating entirely, there were no more Gurahl children born. The only ones of us left were the elders, most of whom preferred to sleep rather than once again take up the guardianship entrusted to them by Gaia.

We were wrong. Once the Garou's Rage abated, we should have returned and resumed our duties. Simple fear wasn't the reason, but hurt. We felt we'd been betrayed. We'd asked Gaia for help and She had instead created the Garou, who in their Rage turned against us. Some of the truly ancient among us asked why we should nurture Gaia's creation. She hadn't stopped Her vicious Garou from killing us. Many forgot that Gaia had opened the way into the Umbra for us to escape, that she had taught us Gifts to soothe our wounds and even to restore those who had died. They remembered the pain, the hurt and the anger, they clutched old wrongs to their hearts and fed on despair. Thus, some of us fell to darkness. Ironically, the actions of the Garou succeeded in making some of the most powerful of us into what they most feared: corrupt minions of the Wyrn.

Wars strafed across the face of Europe, Asia and Africa as humans became more numerous and fought for territory or ideology. For the most part, we weren't involved. We slept, and allowed the Great Grandparent to move from place to place, trying to ease suffering and prevent the tribes who still acknowledged our teachings from perishing.

The World Moves On

A new religion of peace and brotherhood arose. For a time, we hoped that they would bring healing and understanding, but they too fell to the evil and greed of a few. They even hounded those who honored Bear, making them



worship their white god or be put to the sword. Considered barbarians and heathens by these so-called civilized folk, many Kinfolk bloodlines were lost as whole tribes were slain or converted and forgot the old ways.

Soon, only scattered tribes living in remote areas remembered Bear and the teachings of the Gurahl. Our bear Kin fared little better. Hunted for their fur and fat, bears became little more than curiosities in many places. Some feared bears because of their strength. Humans who knew nothing of Bear believed the Totem's children were fierce and vicious. Believing it showed others how brave they were, humans who had forgotten how to live close to the wild paid hunters to capture bears and bring them to the cities where they were used for "bear baiting." Never heard of it? Bears were shackled to stout poles, starved into a state near frenzy, and forced to fight for their survival against dogs, other wild animals or groups of men with spears.

Yet, this "entertainment" was not the worst punishment they inflicted on our proud Kin. Many won't understand why what I'm about to talk about affected us so deeply. I hope you aren't one of those.

Link hands with me. Step closer and close your eyes. Ah! You didn't expect me to draw blood, did you? Now, imagine that the pain was much worse and that you had no way to know I inflicted it on you to make a point.

Someone — maybe a Garou Kinfolk (but maybe I condemn them unjustly) — discovered our greatest joy and made it into our greatest shame. They took our sacred dances and turned them into a grotesque spectacle. Our bear Kin suffered cuts, punctures, burns and whippings that forced them into a shuffling parody, a pain-filled clumsy movement humans called dancing. The advent of the dancing bear ended our joy in the dance. Because our innocent Kin suffered such humiliation and pain, even today we find dancing distasteful and difficult. What was once sacred has been forever sullied and profaned by this crime.

The New Spring

Our worst fears were realized when European humans discovered the Pure Lands. Neither our bear Kin nor our tribal Kinfolk were safe any longer — and we, who should have been their protectors, were trapped in slumber. Some of us wonder even now if the invader Garou had confined themselves to displacing our tribal folk and hunting our bear Kin, would we have awakened? I have no way of knowing. The blessing disguised in this disaster was that they went far beyond terrorizing our Kin, forcing us to once again take an active part in the affairs of the world.

When the European Garou came to the Americas, we Gurahl reemerged in force — not at first, but later as the problems they loosed became too dangerous to be ignored. We hoped that our Kinfolk had grown strong and numerous enough in the Pure Lands to care for themselves. We prayed that the Garou had learned from the War of Rage. Our Kin were strong, but not strong enough. The Garou had apparently learned nothing. This time, they



attacked their own kind. The tribes of the Pure Lands, the Three Brothers as they called themselves, became the victims. Pushed from their lands and forced from their sacred places, they lost control of Banes they had bound when they first came to the Pure Lands.

The horror known as Eater-of-Souls was destroyed almost before we were fully awake. The Croatan sacrificed themselves to stop it. Some among us felt the Croatan's spirits pass on their path back to Gaia. We stirred in our sleep. Some among us spoke in dreams to others, asking if we should arise and see if *Gaia's Breath* could save these noble spirits. The Great Grandfather considered entering the Geth-Rura (Place of Dark Combat) to fight the Death Bear for the Croatan's return. In the end, Gaia let us know that this was not the time.

We fully awoke as the invaders moved westward. Taking over caerns and driving out the native Garou, the Europeans unbound a major Bane that had melded together with the mania of the Weaver. Called the Storm-Eater, its screaming presence tearing through the Umbra proved a pretty effective alarm clock. The Garou couldn't handle it alone. As secretly as we could, the Gurahl emerged from our Dens and offered our help to the native Garou. Most of them kept our involvement — and our return — quiet. As usual, however, the Corax blabbed the secret. Most of the Europeans refused to believe it, but our effectiveness was lessened by having to look over our shoulders for the attack we feared was coming.

This was a bittersweet time for us. Tribes welcomed us as healers and providers. Many appealed to us for strength and sustenance just as earlier tribes had done. Where we could, we answered them. The tribes honored Bear in all the Totem's forms — father, mother and little bear. They kept Gaia's laws and learned what we had to teach them. For a time, we hoped that our long years of exile were over. Maybe if we'd had a little more time, we could have come back in triumph to cleanse the corruption left in the Storm-Eater's wake, but the invaders gave us no time. Inexorably, they took more and more land from our Kin, stealing their hunting grounds or planted fields, confining them to barren strips no one else wanted.

We couldn't save our people from their fate, but we were able to renew our ties to our Kinfolk. After this, the Gurahl were afraid to go to sleep for long periods, for either our Kinfolk or the other Changing Breeds might need our help at any moment. Though true Gurahl children were still rare, a precious few were born just before the turn of the century, produced when we lifted our ban on mating. We trained them to protect as much of the wild lands as possible and hoped they could revitalize us, giving our eldest a new reason to wake — the chance of having new cubs to teach and cherish.

Modern Times

We've taken heart from the successes (however small) we achieved when we helped defeat the Storm-Eater. More and more of us awaken each year. New cubs are being born in greater numbers for the first time in centuries. Perhaps our time of waiting is finally over and we can take our rightful place



in the world again. But we can't ask for or hope for too much. Our bear Kin all over the world still suffer greatly and our human Kin languish in some of the poorest communities known to man. Yet we hope. We hope we aren't too late, that we haven't slept too long, that Gaia still accepts our service.

Now we're almost finished with our dance. Lift your head and stand with your feet apart, just at shoulder width. Now leap into the air, raising your hands as if you might catch the stars in your fingers. Bow to me and I'll do the same with you: This is the Step of Acknowledgment, performed when we each see each other as we truly are, knowing the other to be the first and most beloved of Gaia — healers, providers and teachers.


This is my gift to you — the dance of the centuries. You're a new born, one of our greatest treasures. Remember the steps, even if you never dance them again. You're like the little bear just now, full of self-confidence and the energy of youth. You have many triumphs and mistakes yet in front of you. Remember my words to you, but don't let them weigh you down. Be inquisitive, revel in your strength and the joy of a summer day. These too I bequeath to you, for to heal others you must have hope. There's time enough for the darker duties later. For now, dance the dance you are given and know yourself for what you are.

Alone and Together (Gurahl Society)

If you want to be a part of Gurahl society and life, you'll have to attend the Council of Autumn. But you are not ready. As yet, you have no name among us. What do you really know about being a Gurahl? You've heard our history, but you know almost nothing of us. Why do we travel alone? What makes the Mountain Guardians different from the Ice Stalkers? These are the things I'll teach you. So listen now and when the council meets, you may know enough to be given your Gurahl name and accorded a territory of your own to protect.

Painted Faces

Now, it's not all dancing. You need to know a lot more about us before you go before the Council of Autumn. While we are healers and nurturers, there's more to us than that. We're fierce protectors in our own right and we help when and where we can, but beyond that, we try to teach others so they can help themselves. If we stepped in every time there was a minor problem, we wouldn't be doing our job right. We stand behind creatures and folks and try to catch them if they fall, but sooner or later, they have to stand or fall on their own. So, if you're to teach others, you need to know some answers yourself. Why do we travel alone? What happens at our meetings? What makes each tribe different?



Apart and Together (Gurahl Lifestyle)

Together

We live alone and most often travel alone as well. The three exceptions to this are during the Gallivant, while we are mentoring a younger Gurahl and when we form groups to handle specific problems. Of course, none of this necessarily counts for the Ice Stalkers.

The Gallivant

The first year or so after a young Gurahl undergoes her First Change are critical. Elder werebears mark a few potential cubs, watching them closely and gathering them into our fold at the time of their First Change. The new cub is given a mentor who assumes responsibility for teaching the new Gurahl about herself, her true people and her place in the world.

Others must endure the Change alone. Soon after they change, however, they either feel a call from or feel the need to seek out another of their own kind to learn what they need to know. Often, dreams or visions guide them. Some of the dreams may be sent by their prospective Buri-Jaan (mentors) while others come from Gaia or Bear. Sometimes it isn't clear exactly who sends the visions, but most fledgling Gurahl manage to travel where they need to be to meet with their mentors.

An unlucky few seem to be deaf to the visions and the call. They don't know themselves for what they truly are, instead cringing in fear and self-loathing at the monstrous thing they've become. Denying their heritage, they refuse Gaia's summons, most often sinking into insanity or a murderous killing spree that ends with their deaths. A few survive to become what we call Abandoned Cubs, but we'll talk about them later.

New cubs that accept their true natures enter the Gallivant. This is a time of concentrated learning interspersed with carefree rambling. New-changed Gurahl almost always start their existence under the Arcas auspice, governed by the spirit of Little Bear or First Cub. It's a time to be curious, childish, playful and funny while still picking up knowledge of who and what they are. In essence, it's an extended romp under the light-handed guidance of an elder mentor (much like a mother bear teaches her cub using play as a teaching aid). That doesn't mean the cub learns nothing serious, simply that she's given a joyful time to get to know Gaia's beauties and bounty so she'll understand what it is she was born to protect and nurture.

The Buri-Jaan

Sometime after their first few years as Gurahl — usually after they've gone through both the Arcas and Uzmati auspices — many werebears are called to become Buri-Jaan. This word most closely means "mentor," but might also be translated as parent, elder sibling and one who has achieved certain honors. It's rare for a werebear under the station of *Soma* — aunt or



uncle — to be tapped as a mentor. As a Buri-Jaan, an elder werebear accepts a newly Changed Gurahl and embarks on a year-long escapade with him during which she instructs him in the ways of the Gurahl and prepares him for his acceptance as a full member of his tribe.

Occasionally, she discovers she needs to extend the teaching to two years. This isn't seen as a strike against either her teaching or her pupil's abilities; often it serves the purpose of preparing a young werebear for a particularly arduous task he'll be called upon to perform. Such destinies may be revealed to either the Buri-Jaan or another elder who confers with the mentor as to the best course of instruction for her important pupil.

While the Buri-Jaan treats this responsibility with the utmost seriousness, she also usually finds a renewal of purpose and a return to almost childlike delight in Gaia's wonders as she enjoys the antics and discoveries of her pupil. For this reason, many Gurahl choose to give up protecting a specific area in order to serve as Buri-Jaan to new-fledged werebears year after year. In some cases, where the need is great and there aren't enough mentors to go around (a rare occurrence until quite recently), a Buri-Jaan will take on two cubs, doubling her burden, but increasing her potential amusement as well.


Don't give yourself airs if your own Gallivant lasts two years, young one. It may not portend any great deeds in your future — some younglings just can't get the hang of scooping honey from a nest. Yes, I'm kidding. I thought you were supposed to be Arcas....

Singular Versus Groups

Bears (except polar bears — here we go singling out the Ice Stalkers again) rarely travel together. A mother may travel with her cubs while teaching them, but once they're grown, she sends them on their way. Mating is often a matter of meeting the right bear at the right time, spending a few, brief hours or days together, then separating again. Mother bears feel affection for their cubs and protect them fiercely, but there is no correspondence among bears with the wolves' lifemates.

We tend to follow that same pattern. The areas we guard, we walk alone (unless we're currently acting as mentors or have just given birth to a cub). We use a ritual that tells us who our optimal mate is, and it isn't always the same one as the last time! Promiscuous? We are not! Another Changing Breed holds *that* distinction, thank you. Like Gaia's wild creatures, we choose the strongest and most healthy with whom to mate. This is the best way we know to ensure having hardy children. That's not promiscuity; that's survival.

While we elders often prefer solitude, many younger werebears find satisfaction through traveling in groups. Often such excursions (with other young Gurahl or with members of the other Changing Breeds) signal the first real freedom a young Gurahl experiences. She's able to make her own choices and mistakes without a mentor poking his nose in to correct her. This may be a time of hanging out with other young creatures while waiting for maturity to catch up with her, at least among those still in their Arcas stage. These treks



can be anything from carefree larks to semi-serious attempts to find worthy foes to challenge. Despite our penchant for going it alone, many lifelong friendships develop from forming a “pack.”

Gurahl who have entered their Uzmati phase often have other reasons for banding together in a group. Some become vigilantes, bent on punishing those who defile Gaia’s wild lands and creatures. Others may need a small army to take on foes too strong to be defeated by one werebear. While such tasks usually don’t occupy a particular Gurahl for longer than he remains an Uzmati, it never hurts to have tough allies you can call on in a pinch.

Though less common, older Gurahl may find it convenient to join groups as well. Kojubat may need support from others while searching for old songs and stories. Further, moving in the circles of the other Changers, our songmakers and tale spinners learn *their* stories and hear *their* thoughts on the world. From such knowledge, they say, comes understanding of both others and ourselves. One of our best known Kojubat, Blackback Ferraday, has written a whole saga based on the tales he heard while a part of a mixed Changers band.

No surprise here, but Kieh cooperate with all kinds of folk with occult interests. They delve into dangerous areas seeking fetishes or magical gear that might be too dangerous to be left unattended or in the hands of despoilers. A Kieh’s wisdom is sometimes the only thing that stands between an acquisitive Corax and some shiny trinket capable of blowing up half the world.

Rishi have group interactions too. They interpret Gaia’s laws for other Changers as well as for us. Some laws cross species boundaries, and hearing how other Changers handle their affairs helps us decide if we’re still doing it right. As those charged with keeping the peace among us, the Rishi need to understand others so peace isn’t lost in misunderstandings.

It’s easiest for us to travel together or with other Changers or our human Kinfolk. One Gurahl traveling with Kinfolk (both bear and human) isn’t that unusual in the wilderness, but we usually have to leave the bear Kin at home when visiting the city. It’s far less common for us to travel with non-Kinfolk humans or supernatural creatures but don’t let the elders tell you it never happens. Some of the fae — particularly those who take on animal form — can be particularly amusing, and I have nothing against mages who respect nature. Don’t be too quick to judge, but don’t act the fool either. Use your nose and examine your potential companions with a clear mind and a just heart. Those who aren’t worthy usually show their true colors fairly quickly.

The Settled Among Us

Now that you know absolutely that we live alone and travel alone for the most part, I’m going to tell you about exceptions to the rule. Many of us adopt this lifestyle for at least part of our lives, so don’t feel like you have to be the Lone Ranger type all the time, because it just ain’t so, paleface.



Some of us do take lifemates. Not exclusive breeding partners, but bears or Kinfolk with whom we take up residence and live with for a good portion of the time. This is something of a new thing for us. It was more common in ancient times. Back in those days, people (at least the ones we usually associated with) thought nothing of the strong hairy man who came home once every few months to visit his wife and children or the bear-wife who traveled far from home and came back with a cub by her side. Things were different then.

During the years we went into hiding, we dared not expose our Kinfolk to the Garou's claws by living with them or even visiting them openly. Settled home life was based more on our human side than the bear instincts. After all these years, some of us are trying to revive the custom of keeping a normal home and devoting part of our time to our families, but over the years, we've gotten accustomed to the ursine way of life.

Remember too that even though we aren't exclusive when it comes to mating, we care very deeply about our husbands and wives and make devoted parents. Many of us give up several years to remain apparently human in order to raise our non-Gurahl children. As our mates are invariably Kinfolk, they don't berate us when we decide to leave. They know as well as we that we wouldn't go if we were still needed. It's all very foreign to our ursine Gurahl (who *do* make up a majority of our numbers), but it lets our homid siblings find a stability that many of them find lacking in a solitary existence. Since they're more used to a settled home life, they respond better to having a home and family they can live with or visit when the mood strikes them. We've even found that more homid Gurahl are now being born among us, an occurrence that might be related to this lifestyle.

Alone

As you've probably gathered by now, most Gurahl walk alone. We don't have the luxury of packs and septs full of companions ready to shoulder the burdens for us. Most often we have no back-up at all. When we put it on the line, we aren't risking anyone else but ourselves. That's why you most often find us in nurturing or healing roles. It just isn't very smart for a werebear to get involved in a fight if she doesn't have to.

Being alone doesn't mean we never meet others of our kind or other Change Children. When other Gurahl enter our territory, we generally know it fairly quickly. We don't immediately rush out to give battle, but we don't always hurry out to greet them either. Smells and signs of foraging tell us fairly accurately where the other one is and what she's up to. If either of us wants to meet with the other, we can scratch out a message on a tree or follow our noses until we get close to the other Gurahl. Once in the neighborhood, so to speak, it's considered polite to sit down and ask permission to approach.

Other Changers are welcome depending on their type and what they want. Nuwisha and Corax are okay by me, Bastet don't bother me, and even certain tribes of Garou are fine, so long as they aren't there to try to take over. Any of the others, I'd want to know what they were doing in my protected



realm. Still, we rarely have a problem with those who just pass through or some of our near Kin who take up residence nearby.

You know Gurahl are seriously angry whenever we actually do engage in battle because we know we're our own army — forward scout, general, combat troops and medical corps all rolled into one being. And if we get our butts kicked, there's nobody else there to pick up the pieces. So we have to be pretty pissed to fight at all.

That's the drawback to being alone. There are advantages. Sometimes it's exhilarating to be on your own, the only large creature for miles. You can enjoy the silences and sounds of Gaia's creation without having to politely acknowledge someone else's inane yapping and chattering. You can go where you want without having to consult a carload of friends who each need to make "just a short trip to the whatever" first. You make your own hours, getting up with the sun, going to bed with the moon. You don't have to dress if you don't feel like it. Finally, if there's something you have to do, you have the satisfaction of accomplishing it on your own, and if you fail, you've no one to blame but yourself.

Some of us get so used to being alone it's hard for us to return to our social sides. There are tales of Gurahl who upon meeting hikers or campers, turned and fled rather than having to remember how to speak the language. Personally, I think that's taking things a little too far. When you don't remember how to be human, you need to indulge in a little interaction. That either means joining a group, taking on the role of mentor or attending a meeting. Of the choices, going to a meeting is probably the most nerve-jangling in the short run. Of course, it is the short run rather than the more long-term interactions called for by the other two choices.

Meetings

Several kinds of meetings attract our interest despite our rumored solo natures. These range from a chance encounter to organized get-togethers held with specific purposes in mind. Most of these have been revitalized during the last century since there are now enough of us who are awake and active to make meetings of more than four Gurahl possible.

Fests

Did you hear the one about the two werebears? They crossed paths on a barren mountain top, said "Good Morning" and called it a wild revel.

— Nuwisha witticism

Whenever two Gurahl meet, you have the makings of a fest — a small one, but a meeting, nonetheless. Most often fests occur when several Gurahl (though usually fewer than 20) decide on a place and time to meet. Fests are held for numerous reasons and can occur almost any time. Sometimes, we just get tired of being alone and want a little company. We also pass along news to those who patrol more remote areas. Most often, we look for opportunities to introduce our new cubs to others who can give them a different perspective.



Fests may be held in honor of events which have great impact on our Kinfolk, such as the salmon run (an absolute necessity for certain of our bear Kin's survival) or to celebrate the harvest. Then we combine fishing or harvesting with talk, feasting and showing one another the creations we've been working on during the year. Fests are like miniature art fairs when that happens. Some share stories or poems, others reveal the carvings they've been making. Everyone has something she's in the process of creating or a finished work to show off. Sometimes, we trade our handiwork for other items made by those talented in areas we lack. My friend Jeremy Nimble-Talon made this necklace I'm wearing. I gave him an embroidered belt in return.

Fests provide us with a chance to see friends we don't often meet, some much needed relaxation without the need for the more formal and ritualized behavior expected at Regalia and Council and the opportunity to show off our talents. All but the most insular werebears love attending fests. And if you meet a Gurahl who doesn't like fests, keep your distance. There may be something seriously wrong.

Regalia

Each of our tribes hold meetings that most members try to attend if they can. All are held in late spring once we're assured that our bear Kin are off to a good start for the year. Regalia are held in hidden areas far away from civilization so we lessen the chance that clueless humans will stumble on the party. Gurahl come from far and wide to meet with others of the tribe and discuss problems we're all facing. For example, the River Keepers may hold long discussions, receive reports and make plans to deal with the pollution of rivers where salmon runs provide the tribe members and their bear Kin with much-needed food. The Mountain Guardians may take council about how to stop clear cutting in wilderness areas they call their own. Ice Stalkers may decide on political measures and empower a lobbyist to stop seal hunting by everyone but native tribes so their polar bear Kin don't starve. Certainly in the last couple of years, the failure of the white acorn crop and how to supplement their black bear Kin's diets continues to be of great concern to the Forest Walkers.

Regalia are formal affairs, with a lot of ritual and ceremony attached to everything from greeting one another properly to presenting arguments in council. At each Regalia, a leader (facilitator might be a better word since it lacks the connotation of having the final say in things) is chosen to oversee the next one. A few particularly charismatic folks are chosen more than once, but we generally share the burden fairly evenly. Did I say burden? I meant honor, of course.

One of the most stirring spectacles during the Regalia is the tribal version of the Dance of Centuries. You haven't really seen it until you've attended a Regalia and seen the costumes and face paint of the participants. Handmade, each costume showcases the traditional colors of the tribe in feathers, beadwork and embroidery, but each is also an individual expression of its wearer. Individual inspiration also governs the choice of face paint colors and



patterns. Aside from the traditional patterns depicting earth, air, fire, water and spirit, intricate designs convey the story of that particular Gurahl's life and deeds. Often, you can tell what rank another Gurahl is simply by looking at how ornate her dancing costume and paint is. Many choose to show their affinity for a chosen auspice by utilizing a particular color as the background hue in their regalia (yes, that's why we call the meeting by that name). White stands for Arcas, black for Uzmati, blue for Kojubat, red for Kieh and green for the Rishi.

We don't display our works during Regalia, but we often exchange gifts with special friends. In addition, during the mornings, many of our greatest crafters hold informal classes to teach their skills to others. First-year artworks by those who were presented as new cubs at last year's Council of Autumn are judged by older crafters who work in the same medium. While there is some amount of criticism involved, the usual intention is to encourage the younger artist and help her learn new techniques. Naturally, new talents in leather working, cloth dyeing, embroidery, feathering and beadwork are much sought after at the Regalia.

Aside from the more serious concerns of Regalia, we welcome this gathering as a time to renew our ties with old friends and meet new Kinfolk. Lots of rituals for finding the optimal mate are held during Regalia! Our feasts allow each of us to show off our best new recipes. Let me give you a warning, young one — don't trust anything from old Uncle Ironjaw Snaretooth's table. He's our resident good-time Charlie with his peyote muffins and mushroom-cactus root tea. It'll have you dancing all right.

Powwows

Midsummer brings the time for powwows. These are a series of intertribal celebrations where Gurahl from different tribes meet, feast, show off their best works and tell one another the epic story cycles of each tribe. There's usually a lot of music, but never any dancing since it's considered shameful to dance before the other tribes. It would show a lack of respect for our tortured bear Kin.

Although there are several powwows, each lasting a few days, during this time, most Gurahl attend only one or two. Those who make the whole circuit get a reputation for being party-sniffers. Other Gurahl consider party-sniffers lax in their duties since no werebear has such an easily protected area he can afford to be away from it for several weekends in a row.

All this makes it sound like we have hundreds of us out there, doesn't it? Actually, a large powwow usually draws 10 to 20 Gurahl at most along with a couple dozen Kinfolk. Smaller ones may top out at a dozen people. Still, we enjoy one another's company and we hope to increase our numbers as more of you new Gurahl are born.

Sometimes it *does* seem like we know all the faces, even at gatherings far from our usual range. When that's not the case, powwows give us the chance to make friends with new members of other tribes, exchange viewpoints and learn less familiar stories. Although we all enjoy having a chance to gather



together without needing to discuss serious matters, the ones who really thrive on powwows are the Ice Stalkers. They always seem to know instinctively which powwows will be the most fun (or maybe they bring it with them). If you're planning on attending a midsummer revel, you could do worse than follow the white fur brigade headed toward a particular party.

Council of Autumn

The Council of Autumn is our most important gathering of the year. It too brings together all the tribes, but this time for serious purposes. The Great Council, made up of all the eldest from the four tribes, holds sessions to hear grievances, rule on matters of import to all Gurahl and welcome new cubs into our society. All Gurahl are welcome, but not all choose to attend. Some have no interest in making their views heard; others feel it's foolish for us to leave so many places unguarded at one time each Autumn.

Unlike at powwows, everything at the Council of Autumn is governed by ritual. We enter the grounds where it is held only after undergoing a ritual cleansing, and then we always approach from the direction associated with our tribe. Ice Stalkers from the north, River Keepers from the south, Forest Walkers from the east, Mountain Guardians from the west. Each tribe claims territory within the meeting grounds in those quadrants and sets up living quarters to last for the duration of the council.

By tradition, on the first night of the council, the Ice Stalkers host the River Keepers at a feast while the Mountain Guardians welcome the Forest Walkers in the same manner. No real business is conducted before those feasts. When the meal is over, the new cubs from all the tribes are sent into the central area of the encampment, where they undergo a further cleansing ritual. Then criers move through the camp summoning everyone into the Great Council Ring, a huge cleared area. The four chosen elders, each representing one tribe, welcome us all and officially open the Council of Autumn with the call to a song in praise of Gaia.

Each representative goes to a tribe that is not her own and asks a blessing over all members of that tribe. When that's done, we send up a roaring summons for the new cubs. They enter the center of the circle and stand before the chosen four. Each speaks her name and also names her Buri-Jaan, formally thanking his mentor for her teaching. Once the tribes have heard their names, the new cubs spread out across the circle and dance the Dance of Creation for the assembled tribes. This is both a great joy to us, to see our ways passed down to a new generation, and a terrible sadness, for we remember the shame we allowed to be inflicted on our Kin.

When the dance is over, each cub is required to recite the Code of Ursa. After the recitation the four chosen elders go to each new cub. The first elder gives the cub a small cup of honey mead while saying, "I give you the fruit of Gaia's creation."



The second elder rakes her claws across the cub's bare arm saying, "I give you the pain of the world, so that you may feel the suffering of others."

The third elder places his hands over the new-made wounds, soothing them with healing balm while saying, "I give you the gift of healing. Use it wisely to cure the pains of others."

Finally, the fourth elder gives each cub a sprig of evergreen saying, "I give you this symbol of eternity. When all other trees are brown, it keeps its greenery. When lands are plowed under or burnt over, the first tree to return is the evergreen. Keep this and know who you are. Now you are Gurahl."

The whole camp rejoices and welcomes the new cubs into our midst. Songs and stories are told late into the night and then we sleep.

Each succeeding night a new tribe hosts a different one until all have been hosts to one another. During the days, the council meets. Since we have no king and no tribal leaders beyond those whose rank grants them the courtesy of listening to them, the council decides things by accord. If the majority of those present believe something to be a good idea, then we adopt that policy. Dissenters are given a year — until the next Council of Autumn — to come up with convincing arguments why we shouldn't. After that time, if the majority still feel we should do whatever it is, we put the practice into effect.

Not everyone wants to attend council and those who don't can spend their time creating art, cooking for the feasts, caring for any cubs too young to be presented and sharing stories. Even this has the feel of ritual. There are certain times set aside for performing these chores and recreations (mostly so that rambunctious singing or play doesn't distract or disrupt the council). When the council's over, we all depart, each returning to our protected area revitalized and connected with others of our kind for another year.

Grandparents' Summoning

This is the rarest kind of meeting we have and happens only in emergencies. Should news reach the Great Grandparent of some terrible calamity that the werebears might avert or help fight, she mystically sends out a summons to all Gurahl — asleep or awake — to join her at a certain spot prepared to defend Gaia's creations to the death if need be. When we receive the summons, we gather our healing paraphernalia, take up whatever weapons we have and answer. There's no hanging back and assessing the situation. If a Grandparent calls, the event is both urgent and potentially deadly. The last summons came when the Storm-Eater took shape and was loosed in the Umbra.

Language: Spoken and Written

Like most thinking creatures, we Gurahl have our own unique language. Initially learned as a spoken tongue during our first year as Gurahl, the language is called Rar-Azgai. Even those not raised in Kinfolk families usually find the language easy to learn, so don't despair. It's simple (with only 22



distinct sounds, each corresponding to a scratched mark) and concerned with simplistic ideas. Rar-Azgai can't convey complex thoughts, being concerned with fairly primal ideas: hunger, danger, good food, meeting and so forth. We use human language, with its greater complexity and terminology, for abstract concepts when we want to talk in depth.


We've deliberately kept the language minimalistic, refusing to add new words to it or to try to broaden its scope. By keeping it within the realm of growls and roars, we disguise it as "normal" bear sounds. Variations can be achieved through the speaker's adoption of certain postures or through emitting particular scents when necessary. Such things may clue other Gurahl in to subtleties they might miss in the words themselves or show them that the speaker is in fact making a joke. Despite its limitations, several Gurahl songmakers and poets create their works entirely in Rar-Azgai. Many of the works so created are highly evocative and strangely moving. You'll hear some when you attend a council.

The marks that correspond to each sound in the language serve as a sort of pictographic alphabet. Each mark is one that can be reproduced by a Gurahl in either Bjornen or Ursus form by using her claws. While in Homid or Arthren form, a Gurahl can cut such marks into a surface such as a tree with a sharp knife. We often use messages written in Rar-Azrai as boundary markers, letting other Gurahl know they've entered another werebear's protected area. Sometimes when Gurahl become aware that other werebears are in the vicinity, we leave a Rar-Azrai message in the other Gurahl's path asking for a meeting. Other uses for the written language include leaving warnings of danger, marking particularly fertile areas and as a reminder of direction in unfamiliar terrain. Like posture used with the spoken version, how deeply the marks are excised can convey more information than the words. Likewise, a scent left rubbed into the marks can tell another Gurahl reams of information.

In recent times, we've begun translating the scratchings into pencil or ink representations. A daring few have even devised a printed script that looks similar to runes. While these lack the extra subtlety available to the depth or smell of scratchings, they do have the advantage of being a little more portable. Having heard from Kinfolk of the success of the Navajo code talkers in World War II, some werebears like to joke that if the need ever arises, our language would give the enemy real fits!

Tribes

We Gurahl recognize four primary tribes, with a few localized offshoots or extinct groupings. Membership in a werebear tribe doesn't necessarily relate to a Gurahl's racial background or Kinfolk species; instead, it describes or acknowledges the individual's affinity with and dedication to a particular geographic feature. This preference manifests in the tribal names: River Keepers, Mountain Guardians, Forest Walkers, Ice Stalkers.



Because there are so few Gurahl in the world today, tribal affiliations often come about out of necessity rather than by predetermined conditions like ethnic heritage or place of birth. Generous speculations put the total werebear population (not counting those still sleeping in the Umbra or in hidden Dens) at somewhere around 400—less than some single Garou tribes. For this reason, new Gurahl tend to gravitate toward the tribe that needs them most and for which they feel the strongest kinship. This fluidity provides us with both advantages and disadvantages.

On the plus side, we stand a reasonable chance of keeping the tribes we have from dying out, like some of the forgotten Gurahl tribes. If the Mountain Guardians need bolstering, the chances are good that some young werebear will discover that he belongs with the Mounties. On the minus side, we don't have the strong sense of tribal identity of other Changing Breeds such as the Garou or the Bastet. Of course, when you come to think about it, our lack of cliquishness may not be such a disadvantage after all.

There are the four main tribes of Gurahl: River Keepers, Ice Stalkers, Mountain Guardians and Forest Walkers. You may belong to any of them, but I'd be honored if you chose my tribe, the Mountain Guardians, as yours. Regardless of tribal differences, there are certain things we all agree on:

The Code of Ursa

Listen up! This is the single most important song I'll ever teach you. You'll hear it lots of times in the future, but you may as well start memorizing it now. The Code of Ursa is known to all Gurahl and forms the basis for our society. It's been handed down since the earliest times when Chewanna First-Mother and Goloyé Seeks-After-Death first sang it.

Cherish the Cubs

We Gurahl take our roles as parents and mentors very seriously. It's our job to provide everything new cubs need, from food to spiritual guidance to practical training. Then we step back and let the younglings see if they can handle things. Since we cherish our young so highly, we prepare them to handle their futures as thoroughly as we can. They are our future as a race.

Protect the Land

This is our primary duty and the reason for our existence. All else stems from this. Gaia gave the land and all the creatures on or in it into our care. She made us the caretakers, the nurturers, the protectors of her creation.

Heal the Sick

One of the greatest gifts given to us is the power to heal those who are sick or injured. It is the second most important aspect of being Gurahl. Unless a creature is so corrupted that there is no hope for him, we do not begrudge our healing to any, even those Garou tribes most responsible for hunting and killing us. Sometimes the task requires days or even months of our care, but this is what



Gaia asks of us. We don't use our special Gift of *Gaia's Breath* on anyone other than Gurahl. Most of us have never used it at all. All other healing we can give someone, however, is given fully and with no bitterness or enmity.

Nurture the Needy

At one time the Gurahl actually gave up their own flesh that their Kinfolk and other human tribes might live. This gift to those weaker than ourselves was seen as a duty, a way of protecting and nurturing those under our care. So long as the bones could be gathered together, other Gurahl could bring the one who sacrificed herself back by using *Gaia's Breath*.

We still have the responsibility for trying to see that those within our protected areas and those whom we encounter in our travels have the sustenance they need. Another aspect is nurturing others' spiritual sides. We can help others through example and by teaching them to listen to what Gaia is saying. We never turn away a hungry soul, whether it thirsts for sustenance or spiritual awakening.

Teach the Suppliant

Soon after her First Change, each Gurahl receives word of a mentor awaiting her. For the next year (at least), the elder werebear travels with the younger one, teaching her all he knows of Gurahl history, culture, societal norms and world view. While many feel that teaching the young fulfills the requirements of the Code of Ursa, others believe that as Gaia's best loved they have a duty to teach their changing siblings, whether that teaching takes the form of lore, rituals or the knowledge of Gifts. Accordingly, we Gurahl were once far freer with our knowledge. This enabled other Changing Breeds to profit from our lore and gain Gifts they would otherwise have been without. Still, many complained that we doled out our knowledge too sparingly. Our refusal to share the Gift of *Gaia's Breath* ostensibly caused the War of Rage. In consequence, we Gurahl have tended to keep our wisdom to ourselves ever since that time, fearful of the time bomb we might be creating if we entrust dangerous knowledge to those not ready to handle it maturely. If non-Gurahl show maturity and caring, we will teach them. Until then, we hope that Ursa and Gaia understand our reticence to fulfill this part of Her code.

Breed Wisely

Though we are long lived, the Gurahl produce no metis children. One reason we are so blessed is a ritual that allows us to find a suitable mate for ourselves, one who is healthy and strong and whose characteristics will compliment our own and produce a strong child. Gaia has also bestowed a gift on us that any joining that might produce a metis will be childless — either the union proves sterile or any conception aborts. Solitary predators overseeing some of the most hostile territory on earth cannot afford infirmities. Knowing that a deformed werebear might easily become a dead werebear, our Mother spares us the pain and takes the infirm ones back before they're ever born.



Cleanse the Tainted

As those meant to protect Gaia's creation, we have a duty to keep the world as pure as we possibly can. Whenever we encounter someone who is tainted with the feel of the Wyrn or made unclean through the intrusion of malignant or malicious spirits, we Gurahl try to wash their spirits free of whatever infects them. We may do this through a process as simple as talking things over or complex as performing a powerful ritual.

Though we are no less repulsed by fomori than any other Changer, we know that not every one of them invited the invading Bane inside. Rather than killing the host, we have learned a ritual that allows the victims to throw off the shackles of the controlling spirits and be themselves once more. In cases where illness or insanity can be cured, we do so willingly.

Guard the Secrets

Seeing the destructive jealousy and anger of the Garou when we told them they were yet too immature to have knowledge of *Gaia's Breath*, many of us realized for the first time why this stricture is part of the Code. We now guard our secrets, making certain that none of them leak out to cause trouble. I believe we are also meant to maintain our knowledge of many secret things so that if we ever need such knowledge it will be accessible — because we kept it safe!

Rights of the Elder

In many cultures, especially during modern times, elders are seen as outmoded and useless. Among the Gurahl, we cherish our elders as fountains of knowledge. Our elders speak with the voice of experience and perform their duties aided by decades (in rare cases, centuries) of well-practiced rituals and Gifts. Those whom we consider elders often count powerful spirits among their allies and have traveled through each auspice, learning what each part of their personality has to offer. We revere such elders for their wisdom and experience and hope to profit from what they can share with us. Their longevity (and their unique viewpoint) entitle them to special treatment. Therefore, when we meet in council, any elders are accorded the privileges of the best seats, the finest food and first right to speak. They may also claim the right to speak again after everyone else has done so. Their songs and poems command great attention and respect while their works of art are considered featured items when we display our handicrafts. Should any elder claim the right to act as Buri-Jaan to a youngling, any other claimant steps aside, realizing that the knowledge the elder can impart to the new Gurahl far exceeds her own. In essence, our elders are considered irreplaceable treasures. They are living repositories of first-hand historical knowledge and of many spirits' Gifts unknown to younger Gurahl.

Remember Your History

Whoever said "Those who don't remember history are doomed to repeat it" must have been a werebear. Perhaps it's because so many of us hibernated



for so long that we became reflective and introspective. Such states of mind lend themselves to historical assessments. Certainly, our concern with tradition is tied in with this as well.

To me, this is a command to recall all the experiences other Gurahl or I have been through. Only through doing so am I able to decide how best to handle certain situations.

A further interpretation of this admonishment is that it allows us to make quick judgments concerning things we may never have encountered before, but which we know others among us have. My cautionary note to this is: Don't be so caught up in history that you blind yourself to changes in the present.

Punish the Guilty

This part of the song warns us to be certain of our facts before taking action, then laying out various responses to everything from rudeness to mass mayhem. In some ways, it serves as a kind of touchstone for us, allowing us to see how Gurahl responded to wrongdoing (and the perpetrators) in the past. Then again, shunning has gone out of style as a punishment for offending one's elders.

And that's the main danger in this. Some Gurahl seem unable to step outside the strict observance of punishments for wrongs committed and make their own decisions in the matter. I think the main value of this portion of the Code lies in reminding us that we *are* Gaia's protectors, and as such, we have a duty to punish those who harm Her creation. Rather than slavishly following specifics, however, we need to decide how serious an offense is, then work out some sort of retribution which helps us rectify the wrong rather than just punishing the guilty.

Avenge Wrongful Slaying

Essentially, this is our way of saying, "an eye for an eye." Some of our younglings are shocked when they first hear this part of the Code. We spend so much time telling you about our nurturing and rituals, our artworks and our traditions that we sometimes forget to mention this particular practice. While it's true we'd rather educate people about Gaia's creation and all our parts in it, sometimes that just isn't enough. When other ways fail, it's time to let our anger dictate our actions.

"Wrongful slaying" used to mean killing females of child-bearing age or taking too many creatures or plants from a particular area. Nowadays, it means much more. In the modern world, few people have the need any more to actually hunt creatures for food or to gain warm furs to protect them from the cold. Why would anyone want to take more than he needs, whether it's rare plants to ease pain or a deer used as meat for a family? I have never understood that sort of greed, nor do I understand the competitiveness among hunters that sometimes results in the killing of some of the best breeding stock among the so-called "game animals."

Even worse are those who — apparently oblivious to the impact — wipe out entire ecological pockets to build something in the area. Circumstances



may conspire to make it more effective for you to vent your ire rather than coldly going through the motions of a lawsuit. If a builder ignores warnings or rashly goes ahead and bulldozes the land to make his project inevitable in an "it's done, so it's too late to complain about it now," move, just off the bastard. It's what you'll feel like doing, so go ahead. Just don't get caught.

If something offends you or repulses you so deeply that your immediate response is the desire to tear apart whoever is responsible, then you should probably go ahead and let your Rage come to the fore. No one says your Rage has to be expended in killing anyone if that's not your style. Tear her Rolls Royce into postage-stamp size pieces; she'll get the message.

Some among us feel that these last two parts of the Code were added after the War of Rage. They argue that we became a more vindictive and angry race after fighting for our existence against fellow Changers and that our Rage was not born of Gaia at all. These Gurahl claim Rage as a gift from the Wyrms. While it gives us an edge in battle, they feel that it still corrupts us, diverting us from our original purpose as caregivers and healers. That's a debate that (pardon the pun) rages hotly among our more scholarly brethren. For myself, I believe that Gaia would not have expected us to act as protectors without giving us some ability to fight for her. We may not have the same advantages as the Garou, but we certainly aren't helpless either. Our outrage gives us greater strength to take down a foe quickly or else gifts us with the stamina to see a fight through to the end rather than making us speedy powerhouses. Whether we would have it so or not, we possess a spark within us that makes us livid when we witness an outrage. I don't believe that makes us corrupt; I think it makes us morally responsible enough to act as the protectors of Gaia's creation.

The Art of Life: Philosophy of the Gurahl

Some feel we should devote our every moment to actively protecting our chosen territories rather than "wasting time" producing art. We believe that Gaia's creation should exist in a balance. Our place in maintaining that balance lies in being nurturers as well as protectors. Nurturing extends to caring for our own and others' emotional and spiritual sides just as thoroughly as we tend to their bodies. Art and ritual are our expressions of that care.

As nurturers, we have developed a philosophy that includes beauty and creativity as essential parts of our lives and the lives of those we tend. Our art is a small tribute to Gaia's own act of creation.

We indulge in all kinds of handicrafts from scrimshaw and beadwork to quilling, painting, sculpting, basket-weaving and pottery-throwing, but we go beyond the physical. Many of us are master song-crafters, storytellers, dramatists, riddlers and humorists (our favorites, to the chagrin of other Changers, are shaggy bear stories). You've already heard about dancing and the joy and shame it brings to us. Beyond that, we involve ourselves even more deeply when we construct elaborate costumes for ourselves and paint our faces for special dances. All of these enhance our lives, helping to shape us and giving us outlets for our feelings and energy.



Yet it goes deeper than that. When we dance the Dance of Centuries, we open ourselves to the feelings we express through the movements and we reveal ourselves as a people. Some of our arts are designed to teach us the patience we need in tending to the injured and ill.

We werebears surround ourselves with very stylized — or artful — practices, adhering to strict forms of behavior when we meet formally. That ritualistic behavior extends to all aspects of life. We even indulge in challenge *displays* when we disagree. We use ritual and create works of art because we choose to immerse ourselves in them as expressions of our creative spirits, a side of ourselves we don't want to lose or neglect. We can only nurture others when we care for ourselves and keep ourselves healthy in spirit, and our spirits cry out for something more than eternal vigilance against corruption. We celebrate ourselves, that which is given into our care and Gaia herself by doing so.

Where the Bears Are

Once bears lived throughout the world. In modern times, their ranges and ours are greatly constricted.

In North America, all four tribes have good representation, though we still aren't what you'd call numerous. Sadly, even our scarce numbers far exceed our Kin who dwell elsewhere. The Americas provide a home to the greatest number of Gurahl and our bear Kin of any other place on Earth.

Three of our tribes have a small presence in South America. River Keepers, Forest Walkers and Mountain Guardians all have a few places they call protectorates. The Ice Stalkers have no presence in South America because most of them prefer colder climes. Though we have made a concerted effort to breed with the native spectacled bear, they are exceedingly rare, and we most probably will lose them before too much longer.

Our kind has many of our roots in Europe. Brown bears originated there, and the precursors of the Ice Stalkers come from Siberia and the Scandinavian Arctic. Some of these still exist, though most bears in Europe face extinction in the very near future. Several River Keepers and a few Ice Stalkers have returned to Europe to try to reverse that, though their efforts are hampered in Eastern Europe and Russia, where humans live in such dire straits they care little for the bears' plight.

Asia is home to several types of bears. Even the panda at one time shared an ancestry with our bear Kin. Now, they are a species unto themselves. Like many of our Kin, they too face annihilation, so we retain great sympathy for the panda, the almost-kin. The native werebears, called Okuma, all perished in the War of Shame, creating a situation in which both our human Kinfolk and bear Kin were left without guardians. Thus, the moon bear (native to the Himalayas, Tibet and Japan), the sloth bear (once found from northern India to Sri Lanka) and the sun bear (known in northeastern India, southern China, Burma, Malaysia, Borneo and Sumatra) all now exist on the very brink of extinction. All have frightfully small populations left and their wild areas



have been ravaged. The governments and people of these lands have little time for or interest in preserving bears when many humans can barely subsist.

The native shapeshifters, who call themselves hengeyokai, resist the intrusion of western Changers into their territories. Because there exist no native werebears, however, a few of us have been allowed to cautiously enter these lands and begin breeding (in small numbers) with some of our remaining native human Kinfolk. Yet we failed in our role as guardians; we should have sent new protectors long ago and we didn't. It was easier to hide and to sleep and now all we can do is be witnesses to the last days of those who did not deserve to perish.

Africa doesn't support any bears or werebears except for the few Gurahl who have visited those lands. In essence, Africa belongs to the other Changers, and we don't encroach on their territories.

Polar bears found in North America range from the Hudson Bay and Baffin Bay in Canada north into Alaska and to the North Pole. Likewise, our white cousins can be found in Greenland, Scandinavia and in Siberia. What might not be so obvious to many outsiders is that a few black bears and many brown bears and grizzlies roam the sub-arctic portions of Canada, Alaska and parts of the northern United States. Many Gurahl from this stock find common cause with the River Keepers and Mountain Guardians, but an almost equal number join with the Ice Stalkers.

Gurahl and The Umbra

The Umbra is our "otherplace," a region beyond the bounds of the physical world where things assume their true forms. Unlike the Garou, who possess the luxury of stepping sideways into the Umbra by peering into a reflective surface, we must take a more direct and brutal method to enter it. I have never been sure why this is so. My guess is that we exist so much in this world as its protectors and nurturers that the world just doesn't want to let us leave it behind, even for a short time. Since we can't just go like Alice through the looking glass, we have to actually break out of the material world and into the spirit one. Luckily, the rite that allows us to do that is relatively easy and simple. It creates a temporary "hole" or doorway so we may pass through from one world to the next.

A few Gurahl are lucky enough to possess an Umbral Glade. This is a green, growing place filled with Gnosis. It rests within the Umbra and attaches to a secluded Den in the material world. Access to the Umbra through the Den and into the Glade is as easy as walking through an open door — but then, the spots *are* secluded and you have to know what you're looking for. Few Gurahl leave such sites untended.

Once we're actually in the Umbra, we travel through it like anyone else. In essence, you think about where you want to go and head in the direction that feels "right." There are paths through and even guides available for those who feel a little strange about traveling an unknown territory. Many of those spirits owe us for healing them in the past.



We usually enter the Umbra for specific purposes rather than on explorations or pleasure jaunts. When we cross over into the other world, it's usually to find someone or something or to fight the Death Bear. This dangerous undertaking is far too difficult for new cubs, so be warned!

Our eldest sleep within Umbral Glades because these places are the most secure. Usually a spirit or a group of spirits agree to watch over a resting place in return for something they want. This can be easy, like the spirit who asks a certain Gurahl to acquire a piece of shiny river rock and bring it to her. Conversely, the spirits may test a Gurahl (asking a favor of her or requiring her to retrieve a series of items that can only be acquired through negotiation with a powerful spirit or supernatural). Should the Gurahl satisfy the spirit of her good intentions and need for privacy, she can find no better protector and friend.

Little Sisters and Brothers (the Other Changing Breeds)

We have very complex relationships with the other Changing Breeds and with some of the supernaturals in the world. As you've probably noticed by now, we are a rather slow moving folk. We take a while to make up our minds. Often, we don't judge others until we've had a good, long look at them first.

As a people, we have not yet agreed to let the Garou know for certain that we've returned to the world. We most often deal with ronin, Silent Striders or Stargazers, and we often find common cause with the Uktena. Some Uzmati-auspiced werebears work alongside certain Wendigo, but most of us prefer to be a little less enraged on a daily basis. Still, many Changers and a few other creatures know that the Gurahl walk among them.

Garou

The legacy of the War of Rage colors our feelings about Gaia's warriors. Those Garou we get along best with tend to be Galliards or Philodox, and I won't tell you we truly like all the tribes. Most of the time, we do remember that the Garou were once considered our little brothers and some of them still evoke feelings for them in us. Still, I'm always cautious in dealing with them. You never know when they might turn on us again.

Ajaba

Hyenas, hmm. I've actually never met an Ajaba. I've heard the same rumors about their animal Kin that everyone else has: They're dirty, slinking carrion-eaters whose madness expresses itself in insane laughter. Somehow I can't believe Gaia would create such a despicable animal, then craft a werecreature from it. So, maybe we shouldn't believe everything we hear.

Ananasi

The spider folk tend to occupy different places than we. Many other shifters look on them with grave suspicions. Perhaps because we are not so against the Weaver's crafts as others, we do not automatically condemn the Ananasi because of their webs. They possess knowledge we would like to



learn, though it is doubtful we have any lore to offer them in return that they would want and we would be willing to give.

Bastet

Immoral, promiscuous gossips—at least among themselves—the werecats spy out everything that happens in Gaia's creation. Though we don't practice their lax ways, we sometimes compare notes and share stories with the Bastet. They too suffered the werewolves' attacks. We aid them when we can and remain friends.

Corax

The wereravens talk too much. They flit around all over the place poking their beaks into some things they ought to leave alone. Of course, they sometimes share that knowledge, making them valuable scouts. We feel some gratitude to them for helping to save many of us during the War of Rage, but we also know that many of them acted as spies for the Garou, pointing out our hiding places. While I can't fault them for wanting to survive, I'm not sure I'm comfortable with the idea that they did so at the expense of other Changers.

Kitsune

Werefoxes, the Kitsune I have heard most about are the Orientals. I know very little about them. They prefer the fields; we prefer the mountains and forests. I know nothing evil of them except that they are said to be clever and crafty, so I am willing to keep an open mind.

Mokole

And I thought I only knew a little about the Kitsune! The lizard folk suffered as we did in the War of Rage and they also withdrew. I'm not sure what they've been up to recently, if anything, but I do know they are not creatures who want others' company.

Nagah

Nagah once ruled the river bottoms. I have not heard of any Nagah in a long, long time. If any still exist, they might also slumber as our elders do. They would be formidable allies if we knew where to find any.

Nuwisha

The werecoyotes are incorrigible tricksters who embody the laughter of Gaia and keep us from taking ourselves too seriously. We share a common background through our Kinfolk connection. Bear, Coyote and Raven all served as powerful totems for the natives of the Pure Lands, thus we cherish the Nuwisha as our pesky but lovable close kin.

Ratkin

The rats inhabit the cities and rarely cross paths with us. If they are at all like their animal Kin, I'd be wary of cornering one.



Rokea

Although we frequent rivers, we have few occasions to visit the oceans. Therefore, we know almost nothing about the Rokea. I read *Jaws*, but I have no idea what application it has to the shark people.

Outsiders

We don't exist in a world peopled only by other Changers and humans. Many supernaturals abide in places where we rarely encounter them. Nonetheless, you should know they exist and something about them before you take up your own protected lands.

Vampires

The worst of the lot. These creatures are the walking dead who feed off the living to keep themselves going. Most indulge in political schemes and not a few are the sort of tycoons who trash wilderness lands to make room for bigger parking lots. They make fierce opponents. Never think that because one looks young, she is weak or inexperienced.

The worst thing a vampire can do to you is to change you into one of their kind. Such creatures we call the Umfalla, or Soul-dead. Garou lump them in with their vampire-werewolf crosses called Abominations. Such mockeries are no longer the Gurahl we once knew; instead, they prey upon those they should protect. If ever you come across one, call for as much help as you can get and put her down like the mad thing she has become.

Mages

We rarely have dealings with mages. A few who practice healing magic and herbalism occasionally interact with us. For the most part, we find they are too caught up in their own affairs to pay much attention to us.

Wraiths

The only time we have dealings with wraiths is when we enter the fringes of the Dark Umbra to fight the Death Bear. Then we see them more as background window dressing than as anything else.

Changelings

Of the others, we find the changelings most like ourselves. They love music, poetry, song and drama. They passionately seek out art and craftings. Such things give them substance to remain as they are rather than fading into the everyday human world. Aside from their love of the arts, however, we find changelings far too fickle for our tastes. They often move so fast that we lose track of what we're trying to say to them, or they change their aspects, becoming morose and sullen where a few minutes before they were happy and sociable. We don't understand them, but we find them curiously interesting.



Mummies

To the best of my knowledge, I've never met a mummy. I doubt the Egyptian supernaturals travel in the same circles we do. On the other hand, if they do indeed live in cycles alternating death with life as I've heard, I'd love to talk to one about our ability to raise the newly dead and how it differs from what they do.

Lexicon

The terms given below are specific to Gurahl.

Arcas (ARE-kus): The stage of Gurahl life that corresponds with the New Moon; similar to a Ragabash Garou.

Arthren (ARE-thrun): The near-human form of the Gurahl, corresponding to the Garou's Glabro shape.

Bhernocht (BEAR-noct): A state of overwhelming despair or sadness that resembles the Harano which some Garou experience.

Bjornen (Bee-YORE-nen): The cave-bear or near-bear form; the Gurahl version of Hispo.

Buri-Jaan (BOO-ree-ZHAWN): The name given to a Gurahl who serves as mentor to a new werebear; also, the period of mentorship (from the mentor's point of view).

Council of Autumn: The Great Council of all Gurahl tribes; the most important of the Gurahl gatherings.

Fests: Informal meetings among the Gurahl.

Gallivant: The early period of a Gurahl's post-Change existence; a time for wandering and wondering.

Geth-Rura (GETH-ROOR-uh): Literally "the place of dark combat," a realm on the rim of the Dark Umbra where Gurahl go to fight the Death Bear.

Hibernation: For Gurahl, this is a time of suspended animation attainable through a Gift or rite. It resembles the deep winter slumber of normal bears.

Kieh (KEE-uh): A Gurahl auspice similar to a Garou Theurge; the word means "doctor."

Kojubat (KOY-yu-baht): Literally, "one who speaks the truth;" the Gurahl equivalent of a Galliard Garou.

Kovi (KO-vee): The word means "bear-child," the title used for a Rank One Gurahl.

Mangi (MAN-GEE): the Death Bear, one of the triple-aspected forms of Bear.

Matae (Mah-TIE): "Wise one," the title assigned to Rank Five Gurahl.

Pattern Breaker: The name by which the Wyrms is known to the Gurahl.

Powwow: Intertribal Gurahl celebrations.

Rar-Azgai (RAHR-azh-GUY): The name given to the Gurahl tongue.



Regalia: Tribal gatherings where Gurahl of the same tribe discuss common concerns.

Rishi (REE-SHEE): The Gurahl auspice that means “wise one” or peacemaker; the equivalent of the Garou Philodox.

Sorna (SORE-nuh): “Caring one,” the name given to Gurahl of Rank Three.

Talchwi (TALL-chwee): “Honorable parent,” the title for Rank Four Gurahl.

Tapestry Maker: The Gurahls’ name for the Weaver.

Umfalla: Literally “the Soul-dead”; Gurahl who have been Embraced by a vampire.

Ursa Major: the Great She-Bear, one of the triple-aspected forms of Bear.

Ursa Minor: the Little Bear, one of the triple-aspected forms of Bear; also, First Cub.

Ursus: The normal bear form of the Gurahl; also, Gurahl born from bears.

Uzmati (Ooz-MAH-tee): A warrior Gurahl, similar to the Garou’s Ahroun.

Verden (VURR-din): “Full-grown,” the title of Rank Two Gurahl.

Yarn Spinner: The name Gurahl give to the Wyld.

Character Creation

Now that you know who you are and where you came from, it’s time to decide just what kind of individual you are. Creating a Gurahl character for *Mind’s Eye Theatre* differs only slightly from creating another kind of MET character and involves a few short steps _ and a lot of careful thought.

How to Create a Gurahl Character

You must decide on a general idea for your Gurahl based on the information your Storyteller has given you about her chronicle and your own preferences for the kind of character you enjoy playing. In most cases, your character is assumed to be a relatively new Gurahl — either just released by his Buri-Jaan for the year of Gallivant or about to complete his first year alone.

The following character creation guidelines are based on the assumption that you are playing a beginning character. For more advanced characters, check with your Storyteller for ways to modify the rules to allow for greater expertise.

Step One: Character Concept

Once you have decided to play a Gurahl, your first step should be to decide on an overriding concept for your character. Whether you decide on



a “dark and brooding loner” or a “cheerful and generous crowd-pleaser” is up to you, but you should have some idea firmly in mind before you begin making choices for your Gurahl. Check with your Storyteller to make certain that your character concept fits in with the overall chronicle so that you will be sure to have a part in the action instead of on the sidelines.

Nature and Demeanor

The Nature and Demeanor of your Gurahl character work together to make up her personality. Nature describes the inner self of your character — who she is when she’s at home. Demeanor indicates the image your character projects to others — who other people think she is. In some cases, a character may have the same Nature and Demeanor (especially ursine, who don’t see the need for the complexities of humans). The following Archetypes are especially common among Gurahl.

Architect, Autist, Builder, Bureaucrat, Caregiver, Confidant, Conformist, Critic, Cub, Curmudgeon, Director, Explorer, Fanatic, Gallant, Jester, Judge, Lone Bear, Martyr, Penitent, Showoff, Survivor, Teacher, Traditionalist, Visionary

Breed

Gurahl, like most other Changing Breeds, come from matings between a Gurahl and either a human or a bear. Thus, they share the dual nature of Gaia’s changing children. Gurahl choose their mates from human or bear Kinfolk carefully. These matings occur according to a specific ritual given to them by Gaia herself. Because of this, metis Gurahl do not occur. Gurahl feel that the lack of metis werebears reflects their largely solitary lifestyle. Unlike Garou — or humans, for that matter — who can absorb misfits and aberrations into a greater society (even if they do accord them lesser status), Gurahl tend toward solitary existences. Deformed or flawed werebears lack the ability to survive on their own, therefore, Gaia makes certain they do not come into the world in the first place.

Whenever the unthinkable does happen and two Gurahl mate, the union either produces no children or else results in stillbirths.

Before the War of Rage drove the Gurahl into hiding, werebears mated as often with humans as with bears. The War of Rage sent many Gurahl into hiding among their bear Kinfolk. Thus, ursine Gurahl proliferated while homid Gurahl waned. This trend has begun to change in the last century or so as bears continue to occupy the endangered species list.

Homid: You come from Gurahl and human stock and grew up as a human before your First Change. You may have felt your difference from the first, preferring life in the wild to life in urban settings and choosing a solitary life style over group interactions, or you may have had no inkling that you were anything other than human. You might find yourself comfortable with all the modern world has to offer, including computers, X-treme sports and real-life TV. Your new existence has probably come as a surprise to you, either welcome or unwelcome, depending on your individual circumstances.



Character Creation Process

Step One: Character Concept — Who and what are you?

- Choose Nature and Demeanor
- Choose a breed
- Choose an auspice
- Choose a tribe (the Storyteller must approve your choices before you begin play)

Step Two: Select Attributes — What are your basic capabilities?

- Prioritize Trait Attributes (7/5/3)
- Choose Traits

Step Three: Select Advantages — What do you know and what can you do?

- Choose five Abilities
- Choose three Basic Gifts (one each from breed, auspice and Gurahl)
- Choose five Backgrounds
- Note Renown (three Traits — assign as desired)

Step Four: Finishing Touches — Fill in the details

- Record Rage and Gnosis (both determined by breed)
- Record Willpower (Gurahl begin with 6)
- Choose Negative Traits
- Select Merits and/or Flaws, if desired
- Record tribe strengths and weaknesses
- Purchase Influence if desired

Step Five: Spark of Life — Narrative descriptions and other details

Initial Rage: 3

Initial Gnosis: 4

Breed Gifts: (choose one) *Persuasion, Ursa's Light, Climate Control, Dolorous Countenance*

Ursine: You come from a mating between a Gurahl and a bear — by far the most common pairing today. You probably grew up within the confines of a national park, zoo or wildlife preserve. Some event you could not handle in bear form most likely caused your First Change. Whether you accept this as a great expansion of your horizon or long for a return to a simpler way of life is up to you.

Initial Rage: 4

Initial Gnosis: 5

Breed Gifts: (choose one) *Heightened Senses, Voice of Woe, Burrow, Weather Watch*



Auspice

Unlike Garou, Gurahl do not have a fixed auspice designated by the moon's phase at their birth. Instead, each Gurahl moves during the course of her life through all five of Luna's phases. Thus, every beginning Gurahl character begins play under the Arcas auspice dedicated to the New Moon. If your Storyteller allows either the *Rip Van Winkle* or *Early Maturation* Merits, then you may begin as something other than an Arcas and may choose a beginning Gift from your chosen auspice. More information on auspices is given later in this chapter.

Arcas — The Bear Cub

Auspice Gifts: *Open Seal, Walk Like a Man, Cajole, Sense of the Prey*

Tribe

Your tribe indicates primarily your place of origin rather than your family "lineage." Each tribe has its own philosophy, strengths and weaknesses. More detailed information on the four Gurahl tribes is given elsewhere in this chapter.

The tribes of the Gurahl are:

Forest Walkers: At home in the vast forests of the Pacific Northwest and the southeastern woodlands of the US as well as the forests of Europe and the rainforests of South America, these born storytellers are among the most outgoing of the Gurahl.

Advantage: Gains one extra Influence

Disadvantage: Must spend a Willpower Trait to walk away from a story

Ice Stalkers: Natives of the arctic and sub-arctic regions, these Gurahl encourage artistic ability and possess an insatiable curiosity.

Advantage: Starts with one *Performance* Trait relating to artistic endeavors

Disadvantage: Cannot walk away from an unsolved mystery, riddle or enigma

Mountain Guardians: Primarily associated with the grizzly bear of the American northwest, these strongest of the Gurahl seek to expand their Kinfolk base.

Advantage: Starts with one extra Physical Trait

Disadvantage: Must spend a Willpower Trait to refuse a challenge of any kind

River Keepers: Originating near the great rivers of the world, these water-loving Gurahl are superb athletes and dedicated conservationists.

Advantage: Starts with one Survival Trait

Disadvantage: Must spend a Willpower Trait to refuse a gift of fish or the chance to indulge in fishing or eating fish

Renown Traits

All Gurahl begin play with four Renown Traits, in any combination of Honor, Wisdom and Succor.



Step Two: Attributes

Choose seven Traits from your primary category, five Traits from your secondary one and three Traits from your tertiary category.

Physical Traits

You may choose any Physical Trait listed in **Laws of the Wild** for your Gurahl character, though Dexterity-related Traits may occur less frequently than those associated with Strength or Stamina.

Social Traits

You may choose any Social Trait listed in **Laws of the Wild**, though Gurahl characters are more inclined to have assertive Traits such as *Commanding* or *Intimidating* rather than more passive traits such as *Beguling* or *Ingratiating*.

Mental Traits

Any Mental Trait listed in **Laws of the Wild** is suitable for a Gurahl character. The Negative Trait *Submissive* occurs only rarely among Gurahl.

Step Three: Advantages

The next step involves choosing those Traits that make your character unique and provide her with a broader range of possibilities in her actions. Advantages include Abilities, Gifts, Backgrounds and Renown.

Abilities

Choose five Abilities for your Gurahl character, referring to the Abilities listed in **Laws of the Wild**. You may choose an ability more than once to indicate a particular focus on or expertise in that Ability. Remember that ursine Gurahl follow the same rules as lupus Garou in determining which Abilities they may not select as beginning characters. These Abilities include: *Academics*, *Bureaucracy*, *Computer*, *Drive*, *Finance*, *Firearms*, *Repair*, *Science* and *Security*. Homid Gurahl may not choose *Primal-Urge* as a beginning Ability without permission from the Storyteller.

Gifts

Your Gurahl character starts the game with three Beginning Gifts, one each from his breed, auspice (usually Arcas) and from the general category of Gurahl Gifts.

Backgrounds

Your Gurahl character has background qualities that give her certain advantages due to her birth, upbringing or social circumstances. You may choose five Background Traits for your Gurahl character. Backgrounds may change as you play your character. You may lose some Backgrounds and gain



others without the loss or expenditure of experience; Backgrounds change primarily as a result of play. Your Storyteller may require you to spend experience to make some changes permanent, but only after you've done the legwork in roleplaying.

Gurahl may choose from most of the Backgrounds described in **Laws of the Wild**, with a few modifications. Gurahl have no need of the *Totem* Background, since all Gurahl honor one or all of the three forms of Bear and receive Bear's "marks" automatically. The *Pure Breed* Background does not apply to Gurahl.

Umbral Glade

Since Gurahl do not congregate in caerns like Garou, most werebears possess Dens in secluded spots which offer them a private place for meditation as well as a secure area for hibernation. Some of these Dens open onto Glades in the Umbra where they serve as a "mini-caern" in which a Gurahl may refresh his Gnosis. While a Gurahl character may assume he has a Den, only those characters who select the *Umbral Glade* Background have one of these wellsprings of Gnosis. If more than one Gurahl remains in an *Umbral Glade* in order to regain Gnosis, the total Gnosis available must be shared among the recipients.

A Gurahl character may select this Background more than once. A single level of *Umbral Glade* gives the Gurahl a small realm that supplies her with one point of Gnosis per day. For each additional level of this Background, the character's *Umbral Glade* produces one more point of Gnosis and is also larger in size. (The Storyteller should assign a particular area to the character to serve as her *Umbral Glade* during play.)

Renown

Gurahl have three categories of Renown: Honor, Wisdom and Succor. Starting Gurahl characters begin the game with four points of Renown, awarded to them by their Buri-Jaan as an indication that they have found their teacher and successfully survived their First Change. Thus, Gurahl begin play at Rank One with the title "Kovi." Although the Gurahl's Buri-Jaan supposedly assigns Renown, the player should decide which three Traits he wants for his character (with the Storyteller's permission).

Gurahl with the *Abandoned Cub* Flaw begin the game without Renown or Rank until she finds a mentor who can serve as her Buri-Jaan and award her Renown accordingly.

Honor

Gurahl acquire Honor Renown through their devotion to the Code of Ursa and through their respectful dealings with others. Werebears emphasize tradition and rituals, and the proper respect for these matters results in increased Renown among other Gurahl. Gurahl also receive Honor for assisting Kinfolk in times of hardship and for selfless actions that promote the



greater good of the Gurahl. Refusing to give in to petty feelings of vengeance or anger also earn Honor for the Gurahl, particularly if these actions of restraint help to bring Gurahl and Garou closer together.

Honor's Precepts

Remember well the old ways.

Respect those who teach and who learn from your teachings.

Revere Gaia's creatures and treat them accordingly.

Kinfolk Modifiers

Forest Walker Kinfolk, if human, may supply the Gurahl with one piece of useful information (usually in the form of a story) per session.

Ice Stalker Kinfolk all have at least one Trait in *Investigation* or related Abilities, if human.

Mountain Guardian Kinfolk all have an extra Physical Trait, whether human or bear.

River Keeper Kinfolk may supply the Gurahl with food or some other necessity once per session.

Succor

Gurahl recognize their role as Gaia's nurturers by awarding Renown for acts of healing, compassion and purification. Gurahl who aid those in need or who act to save lives garner respect from their peers for these actions. In addition, those Gurahl who protect endangered species or preserve and reclaim lands for Gaia receive recognition for their deeds. Those who risk their lives in combat to heal allies also qualify for Renown in this category. Many Gurahl consider Succor the most important of the three Renown categories.

Succor's Challenges

Help is never wasted, even when it isn't wanted.

Everyone needs some sort of healing.

Compassion is its own reward. Don't expect thanks.

Wisdom

Gurahl place a great value on self-knowledge in addition to knowledge of their place in the world. Gurahl who devote themselves to studying lore and legends and to preserving traditions or who attempt to understand the dual nature of the Changing Breeds earn respect from other Gurahl. The discovery of ancient relics or forgotten stories, the creation of new rites and Gifts or the discovery of lost ones also merits awards for Wisdom. Most importantly, Gurahl who receive insights regarding the coming Apocalypse gain Wisdom Renown.



Wisdom's Secrets.

There is always more to learn.

Hardships provide occasions for self-knowledge.

Even your enemies can teach you something.

Renown Awards

Gurahl use the same methods as Garou for acquiring (or losing) Honor and Wisdom Renown; see **Laws of the Wild** for examples. Storytellers may wish to make changes to specific items that qualify for Honor or Wisdom Renown where appropriate.

Since Succor is a form of Renown which is unique to the Children of Bear, the following lists illustrate ways that Gurahl may acquire or lose Succor Renown. Storytellers may add items to these lists as they see fit.

Actions of Succor

Saving the life of an innocent or helpless creature

Assisting someone who is hungry or homeless

Providing healing for a wounded individual

Aiding someone in battle through the use of Gifts such as *Delay the Death Bear's Coming*, *Refresh* or some other appropriate non-combat Gift

Healing a damaged spirit

Working to preserve endangered species or wilderness area

Cleansing the land

Providing counsel or instruction to someone who needs it

Serving as a Buri-Jaan

Bringing a fugitive to safety

Offering aid in a supporting role

Risking your life to save another's

Successfully restoring life to a dead Gurahl

Scandalously Non-Succoring Actions

Deliberately putting another individual at risk

Ignoring someone's plea for help

Refusing to cleanse tainted or corrupted lands

Deliberately harming a non-hostile spirit

Attacking an innocent (or a neutral) party without provocation

Refusing to teach a willing student

Refusing to act as a mentor to a new Gurahl

Acting without compassion

Attacking a foe that does not retaliate



Renown Traits

Traits for Wisdom and Honor are the same as those for Garou (see *Laws of the Wild*). Traits for Succor are unique to Gurahl.

Wisdom: *Crafty, Inspired, Inventive, Pragmatic, Profound, Respected, Revered, Sacred, Scholarly, Spiritual, Venerable, Wise*

Honor: *Admirable, Commendable, Dutiful, Eminent, Esteemed, Fair, Honorable, Impartial, Just, Noble, Objective, Proud, Reputable, Trusted, Virtuous*

Succor: *Affirming, Benevolent, Encouraging, Generous, Gentle, Helpful, Nurturing, Protective, Reliable, Supportive, Steadfast, Understanding*

Renown Chart

Rank	Title	Address	Renown Traits
1	Kovi	Child	4
2	Verden	Brother, Sister	8
3	Sorna	Aunt, Uncle	12
4	Talchwi	Mother, Father	24
5	Matae	Grandmother, Grandfather	32

There exists a sixth Rank, occupied by only one Gurahl from each tribe at any one time. These individuals bear no "title," but Gurahl address them as Great Grandfather or Great Grandmother or, simply, Ancient One. No specific Renown Cost exists for such an individual, but all Gurahl recognize an Ancient One on sight and behave with respect and deference.

Rank

Gurahl are not as status-bound or as hierarchical in the structure of their society as are the Garou. They do recognize the wisdom of their elders and honor them with courtesies and formalities. In general, as a Gurahl ages, he passes not only through the range of auspices but also rises in Rank, from cub to elder. As a Gurahl gains in Rank, he acquires the right to learn more complex and powerful Gifts and rites.

In order to acquire a new Rank, a Gurahl must receive the acknowledgement and recognition of her elders. This recognition usually takes place at the Council of Autumn, the primary occasion for conferring a new Rank on a worthy Gurahl, though increases in Rank may also occur at lesser meetings. To gain Rank, a Gurahl must recount his deeds — most often



in the form of a story, song or dance — to the other Gurahl present at the gathering. These attendees then confirm the candidate's worthiness.

When a Gurahl who is eligible for an increase in Rank cannot attend a Council, she may claim her Rank anyway and defer the formal acknowledgement until a time when she can attend a Council. This "honor system" method of gaining and using Rank reflects the fact that Gurahl often spend extended amounts of time away from others of their kind and so do not always have the luxury of a confirming "audience" or panel of judges to evaluate their worthiness. Often, the only one who can assess whether a Gurahl deserves a new Rank is the Gurahl herself.

Losing Rank comes from a deliberate or willful violation of the Code of Ursus or one of the three precepts of Renown. Gurahl elders reserve the right to strip an errant Gurahl of either Rank or Renown, though on some occasions a Gurahl may voluntarily surrender a level in Rank as atonement for some gross misdeed.

Titles

Rank titles among the Gurahl denote family relationships rather than authoritarian or "command" hierarchies. Therefore, Gurahl refer to their Rank One members as *Kovi* (Child). Rank Two Gurahl have the title *Verden* (Brother or Sister) while Rank Three Gurahl are known as *Sorna* (Aunt or Uncle). Gurahl of Rank Four gain the honorific title of *Talchwi* (Mother or Father) while elder Gurahl of Rank Five are referred to as *Matae* (Grandmother or Grandfather).

Rage, Gnosis and Willpower

The Gurahl, like the Garou, use Rage, Gnosis and Willpower in order to perform extraordinary tasks. For the most part, Gurahl use the same rules for these Traits as those described in **Laws of the Wild**. The differences are explained below.

Using Rage

Unlike Garou, werobears do not use Rage to gain extra actions or attacks. Instead, Gurahl channel their Rage to increase their strength in battle and absorb damage from attacks, making them extremely difficult to defeat and devastating in the ferocity of their blows. Gurahl may, like werewolves, expend Rage to effect an instantaneous change of form. The methods whereby a Gurahl uses Rage appear below.

Changing Forms: By expending a Rage Trait, a Gurahl may change into another form immediately instead of using up a full action per form. Thus, a Gurahl may spend Rage to go from Homid to Crinos in a single action, bypassing the intermediate Arthren form. Gurahl may, of course, assume their natural form again without an additional expenditure of Rage.

Extra Physical Traits: By expending a Rage Trait, a Gurahl may gain an additional Physical Trait on a one-for-one basis up to a maximum of twice her



Physical Trait total in Homid form. For example, a Gurahl who has seven Physical Traits in Homid form may (if she has enough Rage Traits) spend enough Rage to increase her Physical Traits by as much as seven, regardless of her current form.

Extra Damage: Gurahl may expend Rage Traits on a one for one basis to increase the number of Health Levels inflicted in a Physical Challenge. The Gurahl must state beforehand that he will use a Rage Trait for the purpose of doing additional damage if he wins the challenge. If he loses the challenge, he loses only the Trait risked in the challenge itself, not the Rage Trait. (Depending on the nature of the battle, the Storyteller may choose to award the Gurahl an additional Rage Trait if he *does* lose the challenge.)

Extra Health Levels: Gurahl may, alternatively, expend Rage Traits to absorb damage — in effect, giving herself an additional health level per Rage Trait expended. While she cannot use Rage to heal damage already taken, she can use the extra health level gained from Rage to prevent her from taking additional damage immediately. For example, a Bruised Gurahl who expends Rage to increase her health levels remains at Bruised if she receives an additional wound rather than becoming Wounded. Rage Traits spent to increase health levels before taking damage prevent the Gurahl from becoming Bruised until those levels are gone.


Remaining Active: Like the Garou, Gurahl may spend a Rage Trait if he becomes Incapacitated from losing a challenge. This expenditure allows him to recover one Health Level in order to continue fighting. If this negates an aggravated wound, the Gurahl acquires a battle scar unless the player wins a Simple Test.

A Gurahl who loses all her Rage Traits can no longer shift forms until she regains at least one Rage Trait. Gurahl who have no Rage revert immediately to their birth form.

Regaining Rage

Gurahl have a more difficult time regaining Rage than their Garou cousins. Unlike Garou, the werebears do not rouse themselves to anger easily. In fact, Gurahl must work hard to replace their lost or expended Rage Traits. Harsh words, insults or similar rebuffs seldom awaken a sense of anger in Gurahl. On the other hand, direct and hostile threats to their protected lands or creatures arouse in Gurahl a sense of righteous anger that makes it easier for them to regain Rage.


Gurahl see themselves as nurturers and protectors, so much so that often they look upon Rage as a sign of weakness, particularly when it seizes control of their actions. Many Children of Bear regard Rage as a force that runs counter to their purpose in life and that, while vital to their essence as one of Gaia's changing children, nevertheless needs to be placed under strict controls. Some Gurahl recognize the need to vent their anger periodically in order to prevent or forestall the devastating consequences of frenzy. Frequently, spending Rage Traits often so upsets the equilibrium of the Gurahl



that she seeks solitude after an outburst, spending some time in meditation to restore her composure.

The presence of imminent danger, however, may speed up the rate at which a Gurahl recovers lost Rage, allowing him to do so with an ease similar to that of Garou. Storytellers should determine the circumstances under which Gurahl may regain Rage whenever danger does not pose an immediate threat. A good rule of thumb may be that the Gurahl regains one Rage Trait per week.

Frenzy



Gurahl do not give way to frenzy as easily as their Garou cousins. On rare occasions, however, they succumb to their inner beast and surrender to uncontrollable fury. In order to frenzy, a Gurahl must lose two Willpower Challenges (current Willpower versus current Rage, no Traits risked). On the other hand, Gurahl find it easier to overcome or suppress the desire to give in to the desire to frenzy. After five minutes, a frenzied Gurahl may attempt a Simple Test in order to back away from frenzy.

Because Gurahl do exist as protectors and nurturers, they do not acknowledge the existence of the "flight" version of frenzy. A Gurahl caught in the throes of Rage always goes on the attack.

Gnosis

Gurahl gain and spend Gnosis in much the same way as do the Garou. See **Laws of the Wild** for rules and guidelines regarding using Gnosis Traits and replenishing a Gurahl's supply of Gnosis Traits. The Gurahl may also use the *Rite of Replenishment* (see below) to replenish their Gnosis supply.

Gurahl who possess access to an Umbral Glade have a regular supply of Gnosis according to the number of Background Traits invested in the Glade.

Willpower

Willpower measures the inner strength of mind and purpose of a character. This Trait allows the Gurahl to overcome certain temptations or urges that might prove unworthy, embarrassing, cowardly or otherwise detrimental to herself and her companions. Willpower enables a character in dire straits to perform feats that, under normal circumstances would prove impossible. (Humans sometimes exhibit "hysterical strength" in emergencies, enabling them to lift a car off of a trapped person or fighting a raging current to save someone from drowning.) Gurahl and other strong-willed



Changing Breed characters can even stave off death if they exert a powerful enough will to live.

Willpower enables characters to have a second chance, achieve an automatic success or resist failure.

Each Gurahl begins the game with a number of Willpower Traits. Gurahl are notorious for their tremendous force of will (see the section "Marks of the Bear" for a description of *Adamant Will* below). Gurahl may use these Traits to accomplish many objectives. Some of the possible uses for Willpower Traits appear below:

Negate Frenzy: By using a Willpower Trait, the Gurahl may avert a frenzy, gaining the ability to resist giving in to the circumstances that might normally spark such a loss of control.

Automatic Successes: A Gurahl may use a Willpower Trait to gain an automatic success in any Simple Test or Static Challenge. (See *Adamant Will* for an elaboration on this use of Willpower.).

Replenish Traits: Gurahl may use a Willpower Trait to replenish all lost Traits in any one category: Physical, Social or Mental.

Ignore Wound Penalties: A Gurahl may use a Willpower Trait to ignore the effects of wounds (such as Incapacitation) for one challenge.

A Gurahl that uses a Willpower Trait loses that Trait for the remainder of the story, subject to the exceptions and limitations described in *Adamant Will*, below. Storytellers may choose to return a spent Willpower Trait to a character as a reward for extraordinary roleplaying, based on successful portrayal of a character's Nature or an appropriate Derangement or Flaw or on roleplaying excellence in general.

Step Four: Final Touches

Now that you have the basic information you need to play your character, you can take the opportunity to fine-tune your character concept by adding on more Abilities, Backgrounds, Merits and/or Flaws, Influences and less tangible information that relates to how you interact with other characters.

Negative Traits and Flaws

Rules for gaining additional Traits, Abilities, Backgrounds, Merits or Influences by acquiring Negative Traits or Flaws follow the guidelines as described in *Laws of the Wild*. You may choose Negative Traits from among those listed in *Laws of the Wild*, keeping in mind the relative appropriateness of certain Traits for Gurahl characters, detailed above in the explanation of Traits. Flaws are subject to the restrictions and recommendations listed later on in this chapter.

Influences

Gurahl may acquire Influence Traits in the same manner as Garou do, according to *Laws of the Wild*. Some Influences are more appropriate for



Gurahl. Because of their interests and their focus on protection, nurturing, teaching and healing, Gurahl are more likely to acquire Traits in the following areas of Influence:

Church — The community orientation of many mainstream churches and their highly traditional approaches to religion have a certain appeal to Gurahl. The Children of Bear who acquire *Church* Influence tend to gravitate toward socially active, community-oriented churches rather than ones that focus exclusively on the “afterlife.”

Health — Gurahl have a vested interest in medicine and healing. Werebears who involve themselves in the affairs of the modern world often find the fields of health care and disease prevention viable channels through which they can affect large numbers of people. Gurahl who invest in the *Health* Influence may have a contact with members of the local Board of Health, hospital boards or government health organizations.

Legal — Some Gurahl involve themselves in the legal process, whether through victim advocacy organizations or groups using the law to protect the environment. Gurahl who select the *Legal* Influence may exercise some control through legal counseling services or through Kinfolk within the judicial system.

Occult — Many Children of Bear have seen the opportunity to work within some of the new mystical movements that proliferate in the modern world. Gurahl with the *Occult* Influence sometimes serve as advisors to mystic and shamanic religious groups.

Police — The Gurahl respond strongly to the police motto “to protect and serve.” Often, Gurahl who select the *Police* Influence use their clout to counter the influences of other, less benevolent, supernaturals.

Politics — A few Gurahl recognize the need to become part of the “system” in order to garner protection for Gaia’s interests. The Gurahl who choose the *Politics* Influence have contacts in political lobbies or have Kinfolk who occupy positions of political power.

Transportation — Gurahl concern themselves with large territories and keep aware of the people and creatures who pass through their lands. The proliferation of superhighways as well as the increase in noise pollution from the spread of airways across the wilderness has convinced many Children of Bear of the need to take an interest in the organizations that control travel and transportation. Gurahl who select the *Transportation* Influence may work within the DOT to delay or re-route prospective highways or make certain that necessary roads intrude as little as possible on the surrounding countryside.

University — The Children of Bear believe in the importance of education. Gurahl who select the *University* Influence have the means within their grasp of structuring the minds and hearts of the next generation through their influence over educational policy, teacher selection and the awarding of grants and endowments.

Gurahl have less of an interest in the *Bureaucracy*, *Finance*, *High Society*, *Industry*, *Media*, *Street* and *Underworld* Influences than do members of other



Changing Breeds. If you wish to select one of these Influences for your character, you should work with your Storyteller to come up with a solid reason why your Gurahl would acquire connections in that particular area.

Spark of Life

Your Gurahl consists of more than numerical statistics and Trait descriptions. You now need to come up with the “story” of your character’s life, filling in all the details that cannot be summarized in lists or numbers.

Background: *Who was your Gurahl before the First Change transformed your character’s life? If you are an ursine Gurahl, how are you adjusting to human society? If you are a homid Gurahl, how do you now feel about your ability to transform into a bear? Do you have a job in the mortal world? Are your parents still living and do you still keep in touch with them? Do they know about you?* You need to answer these questions, as well as any other questions that occur to you in the process of coming up with your answers. In addition, you should decide (with the help of your Storyteller) just how your character fits in to the larger society of Gurahl or with whatever group figures in the chronicle you are now part of.


Motivations: *What is your goal in life? In addition to your part in Gaia’s plan, what is your lifework? If you have not yet settled on a focus for your life, what has prevented you from doing so?* As a Gurahl, you have some ideas about your place in the world. You know that Gaia chose the Children of Bear to teach and provide succor for her other children. But you also have individual goals and desires. Bear’s children also have a high regard for the arts and crafts, and you know that sooner or later you will decide on a “lifework” that will represent your special contribution to the beauty of the world.

Appearance: *What do you look like in Homid form? What sort of clothing do you favor? What does your body language say about you?* Depending on your Background choices and your tribe, you may prefer some types of dress over others. A wilderness guide dresses differently from a kindergarten teacher or a traveling doctor. Your external appearance communicates your attitude toward life in general and material concerns in particular. While there is not quite as much tribal difference among Gurahl as among the Garou tribes, Ice Stalkers and Forest Walkers do project very different approaches to life.

Equipment: If you chose the Fetish Background, you already possess the item (or items) represented by your choice. While you may assume that your character has some reasonable items in his possession — such as a watch or a wallet — you should get the Storyteller’s permission for anything of significance, such as weapons, computers, cell phones or vehicles.

The Many Forms of the Gurahl

Gurahl have five forms from which they may choose: Homid (pure human), Arthren (near human), Crinos (the half-human, half-bear hybrid fighting form), Bjornen (the cave bear) and Ursus (pure bear). As with the various forms of the Garou, each of the Gurahl’s forms provides advantages as well as corresponding disadvantages.



Rules for changing from one form into another follow the guidelines set forth in **Laws of the Wild**.

Homid: the Human

Trait Adjustments: None.

Change Description: This is the normal state for characters to assume when they interact with human society. There is no difference between a Gurahl in Homid form and a “normal” human being. Although most Gurahl in Homid form stand taller and have more physical bulk than average humans, they fall well within the parameters of “normal” human appearance. Human-born Gurahl exhibit their ethnic phenotype when in birth form. Ursine Gurahl in Homid form retain their overall pigmentation, but coat color varies so widely among both brown and black bears that a considerable variety of skin and hair colors exist among the bear-born. Like Garou, Gurahl in Homid form do not regenerate damage, but may carry silver weapons without taking harm from them.

Arthren: the Near Human

Trait Adjustments: The character gains the following additional Physical Traits: *Ferocious*, *Brawny* and *Stalwart* x 2. A Gurahl in Arthren form may bid these Traits just like normal Traits. A Gurahl also gains the Negative Traits: *Tactless* and *Bestial* for the duration of time spent in this form.

Change Description: The “near-man” form of the Gurahl resembles the hairy “wild man” image popular in folk tales and regional stereotypes. Arthren Gurahl increase in size and mass, nearing the upper extreme of typical height and weight for humans. The change in form is not a severe enough departure to evoke the Delirium in humans, but it does inspire awe and intimidation in the opponents of an Arthren Gurahl.

Roleplaying: In this form, a Gurahl’s voice takes on a churlish overtone with harsh, guttural sounds to the words. Gurahl in Arthren form may still be understood without difficulty when they speak. In Arthren form, Gurahl cause aggravated damage with their thick fingernails unless they make an effort not to do so.

Crinos: the Half-Human/Half-Bear Warrior

Trait Adjustments: The Gurahl gains the following additional Physical Traits: *Ferocious* x 2, *Robust* x 2, *Tenacious* x 3, *Stalwart* x 3 and *Vigorous*. Gurahl in Crinos form also suffer the following Negative Traits: *Bestial* x 2, *Tactless* x 2 and *Feral* x 2.

Gains in Rank provide additional advantages to a Gurahl’s Crinos form in the same manner as rises in Rank augment Garou in Crinos form. See **Laws of the Wild** for the specific information regarding these additions.

Change Description: Gurahl in Crinos form conjure up nightmare images in the minds of those unfortunate enough to view them. Crinos Gurahl stand from 10 to 16 feet tall and weigh up to 2000 pounds. The face of a Gurahl in Crinos form acquires the snout and muzzle of a bear. This form also comes



complete with non-retractable claws which extend as much as nine inches from fore and hind paws. The fur becomes stiff and wiry, lending additional protection from damage. A Gurahl in this form can rip full-grown trees from the ground, upend logging trucks or other large vehicles and shove enormous boulders at their opponents.

Roleplaying: Speech in Crinos form consists of single words and simple phrases ("Die!" "Run now!"). Gurahl who wish to communicate something more complex must succeed in a Simple Test to do so.

Bjornen: the Cave Bear

Trait Adjustments: Gurahl in Bjornen form gain the following additional bonus Traits: *Enduring*, *Ferocious* x 2, *Rugged* x 2, *Tenacious*, *Tireless* x 2 and *Tough* x 2. Bjornen Gurahl also receive the following Negative Traits: *Bestial* x 2, *Feral* and *Shortsighted*.

Change Description: The near-bear or cave-bear form of the Gurahl evokes the prehistoric ancestor of the modern day bear. Taller, heavier and more dangerous looking than a normal bear, these huge creatures sport elongated claws and sharp fangs, both of which do aggravated damage.

Roleplaying: Instinct, rather than reason, drives the actions of a Gurahl in Bjornen form. In this form, Gurahl lose the ability for human speech entirely, though they can still communicate in the Gurahl tongue or the language of bears.

Ursus: the Bear

Trait Adjustments: While in Ursus form, the character gains the bonus Traits *Enduring*, *Rugged* x 3, *Tough* x 2 and *Tireless*. The Ursus Gurahl also receives the Negative Traits *Bestial* x 2 and *Feral*.

Change Description: Ursus Gurahl resemble idealized normal bears. Homid-born Gurahl adopt the Ursine form most natural for them in terms of tribe and habitat. Ursus Gurahl may not cause aggravated damage with their claws, although their bite does cause aggravated damage. A Gurahl in Ursus form enjoys the advantage of a keener than usual sense of smell (see the section "Marks of the Bear" for additional details).

Roleplaying: In Ursus form, a character responds more readily to instinct. Ursus Gurahl may speak the language of bears as well as an abbreviated version of the Gurahl tongue. Thinking like a bear becomes easier than attempting human thought patterns in this form.

The Faces of the Bear: Gurahl and Their Totem

One of the most powerful of the animal Incarna, Bear stands close to Gaia. Bear's massive bulk, nurturing ways and potential for violence represent Gaia's own qualities given animal form. Bear enjoys a special closeness with the Gurahl, the first of Gaia's changing children and the ones whose lives most closely match



the cycles of Gaia's seasons. Bear's Incarna possesses a triune nature, and the Gurahl recognize this as part of their devotion to their Totem spirit, finding enough variety and in this three-fold manifestation to answer most, if not all, of their needs for representation and patronage in the spirit world.

All Gurahl have Bear as their Totem and receive all her marks at the time of their First Change (if they have not already manifested some of them in their pre-Change lives). They, therefore, do not need to select Totem as one of their Backgrounds during character creation. Most Gurahl favor one aspect of Bear over the others, reacting to the different aspects of each of Bear's forms according to their temperament and, sometimes, phase in life. In fact, it is not uncommon for Gurahl to shift their attention and devotion from one of the faces of Bear to another depending on circumstances, need and understanding of their place in life.

Many Gurahl identify with Arcas immediately after their First Change, seeking in the example of the Little Bear a guide for their time of wandering and exploration. When Gurahl enter their Uzmati or warrior stage, they often find themselves attracted to the ferocity and implacability of Mangi, the Death Bear. Other Uzmati lean toward Ursa Major, the Great She-Bear, who is both nurturer and fierce defender of her charges. During their Kojubat years, many Gurahl gravitate toward Ursa Major, finding in her the sense of continuity and tradition that resonates with their own concentration on the legends and history of the Gurahl. Kieh, like Uzmati, find either Mangi or Ursa Major reflects their own focus on mysticism and healing, since the cycle of life and death takes both aspects into account. As they age or when they enter their Rishi auspice, Gurahl often find themselves drawn to Mangi, seeing in the Death Bear a symbol of their own purpose in life — the defenders and protectors who sometimes answer the needs of their charges by sacrificing themselves so that others might live. Other Rishi return to a devotion to Arcas, finding a renewed zest in life as they near the completion of their cycle.

Ursa Major: The Great She-Bear

The Great She-Bear shares many qualities with Gaia herself. She demonstrates the compassionate, nurturing, maternal and life-giving aspects of the Great Mother. Ursa Major is the All-Healer, who touches her children with her own love and shelters them under her protection.

Mangi: The Death Bear

The Death Bear, called Mangi or the Spirit Hunter by some of the human tribes who honored him, generally assumes a masculine aspect. Mangi acts as the guardian to the Otherworld of the dead and takes charge of the spirits of Gurahl who pass through his domain on their way to their inevitable reunion with Gaia. Mangi symbolizes Bear's anger over the cruelties afflicted upon the children of Ursa Major. Mangi also symbolizes birth as well as death, for he stands on the threshold of the two worlds. Only with his permission may Gurahl return slain spirits back to their bodies in the world of the living. Some



Gurahl see Mangi and Ursa Major as consorts, a mated pair whose union gives birth to Arcas the Celestial Cub.

Arcas: The Cub

Also known as the First Cub or Ursa Minor, Arcas completes the three-fold aspect of Bear's Incarna. Just as bear cubs are some of the most rambunctious and wonder-filled of Gaia's creatures, Arcas represents the joyous spirit of discovery and playfulness and the indomitable spirit of youthful enthusiasm. The First Cub embodies the wide-eyed wonder and excitement experienced by many Gurahl as they embark on their Gallivant and discover what it means to be one of the Children of Bear. The First Cub serves as a reminder to the sometimes overly serious Gurahl that play and whimsy also have their part in the grand purpose of saving the world and fulfilling Gaia's will.

Marks of the Bear

The Children of Bear share some qualities with their younger cousins, the Garou. Silver affects them just as it does Garou, and Gurahl regenerate damage just as Garou do. Gurahl have a few additional advantages given to them by Bear in order to assist them in fulfilling Gaia's purpose for them, as well as corresponding disadvantages to provide balance.

Adamant Will: Gurahl begin with six Willpower Traits, giving them a distinct advantage over most other Changing Breeds when it comes to focusing their determination or resisting attempts to control their minds. As protectors of the earth and nurturers of the weak and helpless, Gurahl need to use their strong wills to oppose anyone who would harm the places and creatures under their care. Gurahl receive a free retest in any challenge involving their need to defend and protect.

This high level of determination and mental focus also makes it harder for supernatural creatures such as vampires to influence the mind of a Gurahl. Gurahl gain two free retests in Mental Challenges involving attempts by supernaturals to dominate or otherwise affect their minds. In a similar fashion, Gurahl benefit from a free retest to resist wraithly possession or for any type of control by mages.

In general, Gurahl gain a boost to their Willpower whenever they are engaged in a contest of wills over something related to their duty to Gaia. Storytellers may give Gurahl extra Traits for the purposes of breaking ties or award an additional retest, depending on the circumstances. This does not mean that Gurahl can never lose a battle of wills or fall under the control of another creature, just that it takes a lot of effort on the part of the Gurahl's opponent to succeed.

Intractability: Gurahl have a stubborn streak that serves as the downside to their strong will. Whenever one of the Children of Bear sets his mind and will on a course of action, it is almost impossible for him to change his mind or rethink his decision — even if new information comes to light that proves his actions wrong or detrimental. In general, Gurahl have a strong regard for



tradition. This love for the tried and true methods of accomplishing goals and performing certain activities often blinds them to new and better ways of achieving the same ends. Whenever someone attempts to go against a Gurahl's decision or convince him to rethink his position or course of action, the Gurahl must make a concerted effort to overcome his own mind-set. The Gurahl must spend a Willpower Trait and win a Mental Challenge in order to change his mind. Otherwise, he persists in his previous efforts or refuses to alter his opinion or decision. Alternately, if the need to alter his plan of action or belief is important enough, a Gurahl may forego the Mental Challenge and spend two Willpower Traits to change his mind. If he chooses this method of overcoming his stubbornness, the Gurahl may not gain the benefits of Adamant Will for the remainder of the playing session since he has deliberately weakened his will.

Keen Smell: Like bears, Gurahl have an extremely refined sense of smell. Their highly sensitive noses can locate sources of food, detect mating partners or sense the presence of intruders in their lands. In all forms except for Homid, Gurahl can smell their enemies long before they arrive. Gurahl gain a free retest to tests involving perception when they can reasonably use their sense of smell. Storytellers may rule that Gurahl automatically learn some kinds of information without testing. In addition, Storytellers should describe distinctive odors to Gurahl characters whenever appropriate. However, particularly strong or pungent odors (stinky cheese, skunk spray, heavy perfume, sulphur) may overwhelm a Gurahl's sense or cover up a subtler, more important smell.

Poor Eyesight: While bears have a keen sense of smell, they also suffer from less than perfect eyesight. Gurahl are not blind, nor do they need to wear glasses. In Homid form, in fact, most Gurahl (unless they have a specific Flaw that gives them flawed vision) have normal vision. What they lack is the keen sight of an eagle. In addition, Gurahl are not as attuned to how things look as how they smell or feel. They are less likely to notice small visual details when searching an area. A Gurahl standing on high ground is more likely to smell an approaching intruder than to see one coming. Gurahl may not retest challenges involving perception that rely solely on visual cues for success.

Biorhythmic Control: Gurahl have the ability to regulate or alter their internal biological mechanisms, slowing down or speeding up their metabolism, raising or lowering their internal temperature, controlling their heartbeat, etc. If a Gurahl faces a situation in which altering her biorhythms might be useful, she may cause some significant change in her body functions by winning a Simple Test. The Storyteller should determine what kinds of changes are appropriate and permissible.

Seasonal Lethargy: Gurahl have such a deep connection to the Earth that their bodies tend to respond to the changing of the seasons in ways that do not always give them an advantage. Gurahl experience a psychological lethargy during the winter months, perhaps in sympathy with their bear-cousins' urge to hibernate. Though Gurahl themselves do not hibernate, they do become sluggish and less active in winter than during other times of the year. Punctual individuals may oversleep in the winter, showing up late for



meetings and gatherings. The desire to "take a nap" may recur at odd times during the day. While most of these effects are best used as roleplaying guidelines, Storytellers may wish to assign a one-Trait penalty to certain challenges to indicate the character is working under groggy condition.

Bhernocht

When a Gurahl knowingly fails in his duty or willingly abandons a perceived obligation in order to pursue another, more frivolous or ephemeral course of action, he undergoes a partial loss of the indomitable will inherent to his species. Such a voluntary dereliction of duty results in the loss of a Willpower Trait as well as the forfeiture of the advantages gained from Adamant Will. Until the Gurahl resumes his stated purpose (such as the protection of a particular person or group or the guardianship of a specific territory), he continues to lose Willpower Traits at the rate of one per session in addition to any Willpower Traits he may spend or risk. When a Gurahl's Willpower Traits fall to zero, he enters the profound depressive state known as *Bhernocht* — literally the "dark night of the bear." While similar in some ways to the Garou's *Harano*, *Bhernocht* has a special application for Gurahl.

Gurahl in *Bhernocht* exhibit persistent lethargy and apathy. Their listlessness accompanies a sense of personal failure. Unless a Gurahl discovers some way to overcome her feeling of worthlessness (or seeks help from another who is qualified to deal with *Bhernocht*), the werebear eventually enters a state of deep hibernation. In order to rouse a Gurahl who has fallen into *Bhernocht*-driven slumber, the person making the attempt must use either sustained force or the *Waken* Gift. Once the Gurahl has awakened, she must still recover from *Bhernocht* — a process which requires the re-assumption of Willpower Traits through either taking up the abandoned purpose or finding a new, equally important, purpose to take its place.

The Storyteller should carefully adjudicate the process whereby a Gurahl regains Willpower Traits and recovers from *Bhernocht*. Roleplaying this dramatic plunge into despair and re-emergence into the light should provide some intense drama for the character and his companions.

Breeds

Homid

Gurahl born of human and Gurahl parents have increased in the last several decades, as more Gurahl re-enter the modern world and force themselves to interact with the reigning species. Despite this population "surge," homid Gurahl remain scarcer than their ursine cousins. They realize that reliance on wild and, in many cases, endangered creatures for breeding will not produce the numbers necessary to reassert their prominence in the world. In order to take up their duty to Gaia once again, Gurahl have initiated a concerted campaign to rediscover or claim human Kinfolk and select appropriate breeding partners from the human population.



The “comeback” of the homid Gurahl has involved many hardships. Many Kinfolk lines died out as their tribal cultures either suffered from decimation or else became assimilated into mainstream “modern” societies. Entire families of Gurahl Kinfolk vanished with the wholesale disappearance of many Native American tribes in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Gurahl born to human parents frequently come from tribal societies such as those that currently exist in sub-Arctic Europe and Asia or else grow up on a tribal reservation (mainly in North America). Consequently, most homid Gurahl receive an early education filled with knowledge of and respect for tribal values, the natural world and a sense of community. In a few cases, homid Gurahl spend their early years in relative isolation, far from modern civilization. When they emerge into the mainstream of society (assuming they do at all), they often seem cultural “naifs” in need of basic introductions to the modern world and its technological wonders (cars, guns, computers, bicycles and the like). Some Gurahl, however, grow up in complete familiarity with the world of high-technology, rock and roll and the Internet.

Over the last few decades, Gurahl have attempted to develop new Kinfolk families to compensate for the ones lost over time. Most Gurahl choose as mates those individuals who prefer life in the wilderness or exhibit strong nurturing streaks. Many homid Gurahl born within the last 20 years have human parents in health care, conservation, social work or other careers with a caregiver or environmental underpinning.

Natural Form: Homid

Beginning Gifts: *Climate Control, Dolorous Countenance, Persuasion, Ursa's Light*

Initial Gnosis: 4

Initial Rage: 3

Ursine

Most Gurahl today come from matings between a bear and a Gurahl in Ursine form. Before the Impergium ended, the severe limitations on human populations guaranteed that most of Gaia's earth consisted of wild lands free of human settlements. Under those circumstances, bear-born Gurahl could more easily perform their duties than could the human-born Gurahl. Nevertheless, Gurahl came from human and bear stock in relatively equal numbers. When the War of Rage drove many Gurahl into hiding among their bear Kin, human Gurahl dwindled. As ursine Gurahl continued to breed in relative seclusion, they soon outnumbered their homid counterparts. In the modern world, however, that trend has reversed itself. Humans have become the dominant species while bear populations have fallen into the endangered species category. Fewer bears result in fewer ursine Gurahl.

Today, most ursine Gurahl come from “protected” environments — either national parks, restricted wilderness areas or zoos. Usually the bear-born retain their birth forms until some extraordinary event demands a shift into one of their other forms, most often Crinos.



Some ursine Gurahl, once they have discovered the possibilities inherent in the human form, prefer to spend most of their time in either their Homid or Arthren form after their First Change. Some of these ursine Gurahl gain a reputation for their rustic ways and their “uncanny” knowledge of the wilderness.

Many ursine Gurahl spend their early life as a cub in zoos or in some other habitat that attracts visitors and places the young werebear in contact with human society. By the time they undergo their First Change, these Gurahl have at least a passing knowledge of humans. Human Gurahl Kinfolk maintain a constant state of watchfulness on zoos and other places that host a population of bears, realizing that the appearance of a newly changed Gurahl in the midst of a group of bears usually necessitates a speedy rescue.

Ursine Gurahl usually harbor a special grudge against humans such as poachers and clear-cutters whose actions prove detrimental to the environment or the bear population.

Bear-born Gurahl have the same restrictions as lupus Garou with regard to choosing beginning Traits.

Natural Form: Ursus

Beginning Gifts: *Burrow, Heightened Senses, Voice of Woe, Weather Watch*

Initial Gnosis: 5

Initial Rage: 4

Auspice

Unlike Garou, whose auspices are fixed according to Luna's phase at the time of their births, Gurahl pass through all five of the moon's auspices during the course of their lives. Beginning as Arcas, or sons and daughters of the New Moon, Gurahl proceed through each of the auspices in succession, moving from cub to warrior to lorekeeper to mystic to wise one — an auspice that generally comes near the end of a Gurahl's time on earth.

In the distant past, when Gurahl could expect to live their lives according to the natural cycle of patterned progression, most of Bear's children experienced each auspice only once, attaining the revered status of Rishi in the last years of a rich and fulfilling life. The demands made by the modern world and the threat of the impending Apocalypse have changed the established ways. Now, many Arcas Gurahl find their fledgling year truncated by hardships and emergencies. The sudden death of a beloved Buri-Jaan or some incursion of the Pattern-Breaker into a Gurahl's protected territory may trigger a quicker-than-usual shift from Arcas to Uzmati. In a similar fashion, a Gurahl warrior may realize that she needs to learn more about the Children of Bear in order to perform her duties better; thus, she may shift from her Uzmati auspice to that of the Kojubat. Many modern Gurahl, both ursine and homid, run the gamut of all five auspices within the first decade of their existence — a phenomenon nearly unheard of before the last century.



Gurahl do not spend equal amounts of time in any given auspice. In fact, once they have proceeded through all five auspices, modern Gurahl generally choose an auspice that best suits their overall temperament as well as their function in life and settle into that auspice. Hence, many elder Gurahl will step beyond their role as Rishi and rediscover the sense of wonder they might have missed as a cub — entering a “second childhood” as an Arcas. Many Gurahl, once they have completed the cycle of auspices, revert to the Kieh auspice in order to devote themselves more completely to healing. Gurahl with a strong aggressive streak or who reside in areas endangered by the enemies of Gaia tend to return to their Uzmati, or warrior, auspice out of necessity.

The descriptions that follow provide information on the various auspices. Although most Gurahl characters begin play as Arcas, those with the *Early Maturation* or *Rip Van Winkle* Merits may, with the permission of the Storyteller, start out as a different auspice, with the possibility of choosing from a different set of Basic Gifts. The Basic Gifts for each auspice, therefore, are listed below.

Shifting from one auspice to another eventually allows a Gurahl to learn a wide variety of Gifts. In theory, given enough time, a Gurahl character may acquire knowledge of all auspice Gifts. In practice, however, shifting auspices is not as easy as stating the desire to do so. A combination of rules and Storyteller permission should determine whether or not a Gurahl character may change his auspice. In order to qualify for a change in auspice, a Gurahl must learn all the Basic and Intermediate Gifts from his current auspice. Additionally, he should achieve some significant change in his life style to merit the change. For example, an Arcas Gurahl should undergo some experience during the course of play that results in realizing his need to assume the role of aggressive defender that characterizes the Uzmati auspice. Likewise, an Uzmati Gurahl must make the decision to shift from his role of warrior to one of student and lorekeeper or must decide that it is time to begin pursuing his Lifework before he embarks on the change to the Kojubat auspice. In this way, Gurahl characters may accurately reflect the passage of time and their own growth in knowledge of what it means to be one of Bear's changing children.

Because Gurahl retain the Gifts they learn as they pass through the auspices, Storytellers should make certain that Gurahl players do not abuse their ability to benefit from such a wide variety of Gifts. Storytellers should insist that Gurahl characters wishing to change auspice undergo the *Rite of the Changing Moon* (see below) before allowing the change (and any attendant qualifications for auspice Gifts) to take place.

Arcas

Nickname: Cub, New Moon

Named for Arcas, the Bear Cub of the heavens (otherwise known as Ursa Minor), this auspice characterizes the sense of wonder and innocence with which the new Gurahl faces her greatly expanded world. Gurahl “cubs”



embark on a time of learning and exploration under the benevolent tutelage of their Buri-Jaan. Most Arcas Gurahl exhibit a sense of playfulness and curiosity that rivals Ragabash Garou. The Gallivant, or “time of wonder,” experienced by most Arcas Gurahl generally lasts until her transition to Uzmati. Most beginning characters start out as Arcas Gurahl.

Beginning Gifts: *Open Seal, Walk Like a Man, Cajole, Sense of the Prey*

Uzmati

Nickname: Warrior, Full Moon

Once an Arcas Gurahl has left his Buri-Jaan to begin wandering, he usually shifts his auspice to Uzmati, the warrior or Full Moon Gurahl. Though they do not carry within them the raging fire of the Garou, Uzmati Gurahl do hear the song of the warrior and the defender deep within their hearts and conduct themselves in battle with as much fierceness as any Garou Ahroun. Gurahl under this auspice focus their attention on their guardianship of their protected lands and creatures. Gurahl tend to spend several years as Uzmati, especially if their territory lies in an area susceptible to attacks by Wyrms-creatures or other hostile factions. Eventually, something happens to trigger a Gurahl's shift from Uzmati to Kojubat. This may happen when the Gurahl acquires a family or when something occurs to arouse an interest in learning more about the ways of the Children of Bear.

Beginning Gifts: *Slash of the Death Bear, Ultimatum, Mangi's Strong Arms, Threaten*

Kojubat

Nickname: Lorekeeper, Gibbous Moon

Once a Gurahl leaves the Uzmati auspice for that of the lorekeeper, she enters a quieter, though not necessarily less active, stage of her life. During this period, a Gurahl expands her knowledge of the customs and traditions of the Children of the Bear. In addition to studying the Gurahl legends and lore, Kojubat Gurahl also attempt to relate their own personal experiences as Arcas and Uzmati to the larger pattern of their lives and their place among werebear society. During this period of their lives, Gurahl learn the stories, songs and dances of the Gurahl and increase their knowledge of rites and rituals. If they have not already begun a Lifework project, Kojubat Gurahl do so at this time. Roughly corresponding to the Garou Galliard, Kojubat enjoy a tremendous amount of respect from other Gurahl, since they symbolize the embodiment of the knowledge given to the Gurahl by Gaia in the first times.

Beginning Gifts: *Beast Speech, Stonesight, Eyes of the Soul, Song of Terra*

Kieh

Nickname: Healer, Crescent Moon

After a Gurahl has lived as a Kojubat long enough to absorb an impressive body of knowledge, he changes auspice again — this time to that of the Kieh or healer. The most mystical of all Gurahl auspices, corresponding roughly to the



Garou Theurge auspice, a Kieh spends most of his time practicing the rites learned as a Kojubat. In addition, a Kieh's repertoire of Gifts usually increases by leaps and bounds as the Gurahl seeks to learn more about the mystic side of Bear. Unlike Garou Theurges, however, who sometimes tend to reclusiveness and secretiveness, Kieh express their mystic bent in communal ways or else act as healers and counselors for other Gurahl (or Kinfolk). Like Uzmati, Kieh engage in a constant battle, but they fight against sickness of the mind and body and try to conquer pain and suffering. Some Kieh choose this time of their lives to become Buri-Jaans, mentoring new cubs and introducing them to Gurahl society.

Beginning Gifts: *Diagnose, Spirit Speech, Refresh, Sense the Unnatural*

Rishi

Nickname: Wise One, Half Moon

The last auspice most Gurahl experience in their progression through the phases of Luna serves as a summary of the Gurahl's life up to this point. The Rishi has acquired much knowledge and experience as an explorer, warrior, performer and healer. Now the need to turn inward and focus on her relationship with Gaia becomes paramount. At the same time, Rishi use their inner counsel as a means of reaching outward to act as true elders of the Gurahl. Rishi act as peacemakers and philosophers, serving a purpose not unlike that of the Garou Philodox. These wise ones settle disputes, pass judgments and make the important decisions based on a lifetime of learning and doing. Many modern Gurahl enter their Rishi auspice at an earlier stage than their ancestors, serving as judges for a time before once again changing their auspice. It is not unknown for a respected Rishi to forego her position as a mediator to take up arms once more as an Uzmati, using her knowledge and experience to great effect on the battlefield.

Beginning Gifts: *Befriend, Truth of Gaia, Compel Truth, Presence of the Great Bear*

Tribes

Forest Walkers

Forest Walkers originated in the Pure Lands, according to their own legends. In the days before bears became endangered by the human population explosion, these Gurahl and their bear Kin inhabited the eastern woodlands of the American continent as well as the rainforests of Central America and Mexico. Some of them settled in the Pacific Northwest. The Forest Walkers lived among their human and bear Kinfolk, teaching them the ways of the land and how to live in harmony with the great forests that covered the Pure Lands.

With the coming of the Europeans, however, all this changed. The Forest Walkers suffered the first depredations of the European expansion, as their bear Kin were hunted nearly to extinction and their human tribes found themselves forced to leave their tribal lands for strange and unfamiliar territory. Some of the



Forest Walkers and their Kin joined the Croatan in sacrificing themselves to defeat and banish Eater-of-Souls from the Pure Lands. The Forest Walkers also joined with the Uktena Garou to protect their human Kinfolk during the period of forced relocation of the eastern tribes. In some cases, the Forest Walkers helped Kinfolk hide in the mountains and deep forests so that they could re-emerge after the bulk of their people had gone westward. Forest Walkers not only accompanied the Cherokee on their long march to "Indian Territory" in the 1830s, some also stayed behind with the Cherokee who refused to leave, thus preserving their presence in the eastern United States.

After so much hardship, however, many Forest Walkers grew disheartened and withdrew from the world, seeking refuge in their Den realms. In recent years, however, Forest Walkers have made a comeback. Now they attempt to revitalize weakened bloodlines of human and bear Kinfolk in an effort to increase their numbers so that they can once again go about their business of caring for the forests of the world and the creatures that inhabit the woodlands. Forest Walkers have also involved themselves in human political and social affairs, realizing that all human endeavors have a part in the great pattern of life. Forest Walkers have participated in civil rights and Indian rights movements, have helped environmentalists and conservationists in their efforts to preserve and restore the wilderness and have made a special effort to rescue the black bear population from extinction.

Forest Walkers believe that the power of the stories they hear and tell can help them change the world for the better, carrying out their duties to Gaia and Her creation.

Totem: Bear (Generally, Arcas the Celestial Cub)

Tribe Advantage: Forest Walkers gain an extra Influence due to their gregarious nature and their successful ability to communicate with others. Many Forest Walkers choose *Media* or *University* as their bonus Influence.

Tribe Drawback: Forest Walkers must spend a Willpower Trait in order to walk away from a story in progress or ignore the offer to tell a story.

Backgrounds: No restrictions

Bear Form: Forest Walkers usually resemble the black bears that serve as their bear Kin. Smaller than other bears, black bears are not always black, but may also have brown or reddish-brown fur.

Organization: Forest Walkers tend to form small groups of two or three individuals who travel together for mutual support and camaraderie. These gregarious Gurahl regularly attend council meetings, powwows and other gatherings since these affairs provide them with the chance to share their stories and learn new ones. Although Forest Walkers revere their elders and heed their counsel, they also retain a strong streak of independence and worldliness.

Habitat: Forest Walkers have the widest variety of territory to cover of all the Gurahl. Their versatility and adaptability allow them to reside in places as far away from each other as the southeastern woodlands of North America, the rainforests of Central and South America and the forests in Canada and



the Pacific Northwest. Forest Walkers have also taken up residence in the woodlands that remain in Europe. In the southern hemisphere, the Forest Walkers try to form alliances with the native Changing Breeds, such as the Bastet, in order to bolster the forces of Gaia. Most recently, the Forest Walkers have attempted to enter Asia in order to attempt to breed with the few bears native to that region, such as the spectacled bear. Unfortunately, they have run up against the reluctance of the local *hengeyokai* to mix with outsiders.

Protectorate: Forest Walkers have a special affinity for forested lands and tend to set up their protectorates in areas where forests proliferate. In addition, these *Gurahl* seek out the black bear population as their special creatures. They also attach themselves to various Native American tribes as well as humans of many ethnic origins, including Hispanic, African and even some European.

Outlook: The Forest Walkers cherish storytelling as a means of communicating and preserving history and tradition as well as a supreme form of entertainment. These *Gurahl* have developed an eclectic sense of cultural values and display a very open attitude toward unfamiliar cultural practices. Forest Walkers see the task of spreading Gaia's message of harmony and simplicity as best accomplished through stories.

Ice Stalkers

Ice Stalkers and their Kinfolk, the human tribes of the arctic and sub-arctic world and the great polar bears of the far northern lands, originated in some of the harshest and most starkly beautiful regions of the world. Since the ancient times, the Ice Stalkers have zealously guarded their homelands, protecting the icy northern realms from the depredations of the *Wurm*. Legends of the *Gurahl* tell how the Stalkers called down the ice and snow to the land at the top of the world in order to immobilize the minions of the Pattern Breaker, freezing them so that *Gurahl Uzmati* could capture and bind them beneath the ice. Many *Gurahl* believe that some of these *Wurm*-creatures still lie buried beneath the frozen waters of the Arctic, encased in formidable icy prisons.

The Ice Stalkers claim they led the *Gurahl* across the land bridge (actually an ice bridge) into the Pure Lands in the ancient times. Instead of traveling southward to warmer climes as did many of their brother and sister *Gurahl*, the Ice Stalkers elected (as did the *Wendigo Garou*) to remain in the cold northern lands that reminded them so much of the territories they left behind in the Old World.

Despite the fact that the Ice Stalkers remained outside the mainstream of most human history for centuries, they played important roles in the lives of their Inuit and Aleut Kinfolk in North America as well as their Yupik Kinfolk in Siberia. Their primary concern, however, has focused on their polar bear Kin. The Stalkers have worked over the centuries to strengthen the species and monitor the balance of nature in the lands of the polar north.

Ice Stalkers have made tentative and wary agreements with the *Wendigo Garou*, staying out of the way of these hot-tempered werewolves as much as



possible and ceding them large portions of territory originally claimed as protectorates by the Stalkers. In order to keep in touch, at least in part, with the outside world, some Ice Stalkers through the centuries have made their way south to make contact with other Gurahl tribes. Their most common (though even that was rare) contact with humans outside the indigenous tribes of the arctic regions consisted of sightings or encounters with arctic hunters, particularly those who pursued the whales, sea lions and seals — confrontations usually resulting in disaster for the humans.

Eventually, the advent of technological improvements in hunting techniques evened the odds, and Stalkers found it more difficult to overcome human hunters equipped with high-powered harpoons and sturdier, high tech boats. In the 19th century, when the Storm-Eater awoke, a few Ice Stalkers joined their River Keeper and Mountain Guardian cousins to help contain that destructive spirit. When the gold rush in Alaska brought many Europeans into the far north, the Stalkers tried to minimize the intrusive presence of these outsiders as much as possible. The 20th century brought about the discovery of oil in the far north, thus opening the door for the servants of the Tapestry Maker and the Pattern Breaker as oil companies and developers sought to lay claim on the rich resources that lay beneath the ice and snow. The damage caused by offshore oil spills and other invasions of the natural environment have roused the Stalkers to an uncharacteristic level of anger, making them near rivals of the Wendigo in their pursuit of those who despoil the land.

Today the Ice Stalkers work assiduously to repair the damage done to their lands by both human and supernatural enemies, whether servants of the Wyrms or greedy and ruthless opportunists. Stalkers also work to protect the polar bear population as well as the diminishing numbers of other arctic animals. They also try to preserve the culture of their human Kinfolk, both in the North American Arctic and in the far reaches of northern Europe and Siberia.

Totem: Bear (Generally *Ursa*, the She Bear).

Tribe Advantage: Ice Stalkers automatically start with an additional Ability Trait in *Performance*, *Expression* or *Crafts*. Additionally, these Gurahl get one free retest to any challenge based on their artistic abilities.

Tribe Drawback: These Gurahl have a difficult time walking away from a mystery, riddle or unsolved puzzle. Ice Stalkers must make a concerted effort to ignore anything that arouses their curiosity. Storytellers may require an Ice Stalker to spend more than one Willpower Trait in order to overcome his inquisitiveness.

Backgrounds: No restrictions.

Bear Form: In bear form, the Ice Stalkers resemble the great white polar bears of the arctic. A few Stalkers, however, come from other bear species and their bear-form resembles that of their parent species. Human-born Stalkers, while they usually look like their Inuit, Aleut or Yupik families, tend to resemble polar bears in *Ursus* form.

Organization: Ice Stalkers, more than most Gurahl, associate with one another in “family” groupings of as many as five or six individuals. Their harsh



environment demands greater numbers for survival. Ice Stalker Buri-Jaan often keep their cubs for two or three years at a time in order to make certain that the new Stalkers have the means and knowledge to exist in the difficult conditions of the arctic world.

Habitat: The Ice Stalkers inhabit the circumpolar regions of the far north, inside and along the edges of the Arctic Circle. Of late, the Stalkers have tried to expand their influence into the warmer regions of Canada and Scandinavia. Although a few daring members have traveled to Antarctica in order to explore the southern polar regions and perhaps to find out what lies buried beneath the ice of that mysterious continent, no Stalkers have attempted to take up residence there.

Protectorate: The Ice Stalkers claim the frozen lands of the far north and consider themselves the guardians of the tribal humans and indigenous animals of the Arctic and sub-arctic regions.

Outlook: Despite the homogeneity of both their homid and ursine breeding stock, the Ice Stalkers demonstrate an astonishing versatility in temperament and interests. Almost all Stalkers are excellent hunters and fishers, though they are even better at foraging. They are true omnivores, since there simply isn't enough meat to supply them with all their nutritional needs. Stalkers have manifested an insatiable curiosity as well as a true penchant for art. They work in most media, although ice sculptures tend to enjoy great popularity. Like their human Kin, the Ice Stalkers waste nothing; what they don't eat or wear, they use to fashion objects of beauty and adornment.

Mountain Guardians

The history of the Mountain Guardians coincides with the history of the Pure Lands, for this Gurahl tribe arose after the Gurahl had crossed the land bridge into the American continents, seeking a place free of the ravages of the War of Rage. The Mountain Guardians spearheaded the efforts to create an atmosphere of cooperation and coexistence in pre-Columbian America among the Gurahl, Garou, Bastet and other members of the Changing Breeds. By focusing their attention on protecting the land and its inhabitants and fighting the Pattern Breaker and its servants, the Guardians managed to diffuse any residual hostility felt by the Wendigo and Uktena against the Children of Bear. The Gurahl assisted the three Garou tribes that settled the Pure Lands in their containment of the Wyrn creatures discovered there. In many cases, the Guardians served as the primary cleansers of the lands after the Garou had trapped and bound the spirits that had poisoned the earth or waters.

Despite the atmosphere of tolerance fostered by the Guardians among the Changing Breeds of the Pure Lands, they maintained a distance from their Changing cousins, feeling it better not to tempt fate.

When the Europeans arrived, the Garou tribes most directly responsible for the War of Rage came with them. At this time, the Guardians withdrew from the world in large numbers, retreating to their Den realms or Umbral Glades and seeking refuge in the slumber of hibernation. During this period,



however, many of the Guardians' human and bear Kinfolk disappeared — driven to near extinction by the European settlers and, sometimes, their Garou relatives. The Guardians finally awoke with the loosing of the Storm Eater. After that creature was finally dealt with, the Mountain Guardians looked around and realized that their beloved grizzly bear Kinfolk had almost disappeared along with many of their human tribes.

Since that time, the Guardians have remained in the world and worked to repair the damage to their Kinfolk, which they feel responsible for allowing to happen. Guardians in the modern world involve themselves in efforts to preserve the grizzly bear population and work with various Indian rights movements to reclaim tribal lands for the Native American tribes that once inhabited them. Since they comprise not only the strongest but the fiercest of the Gurahl tribes, the Mountain Guardians realize that they will most likely join the Garou in the front lines of battle in the final days of the Apocalypse. Because of this, they work hard to perfect their battle skills and to smooth over the resentment between the Gurahl and their potential comrades-in-arms.

Totem: Bear (generally Mangi, the Death Bear)

Tribe Advantage: As the strongest of the Gurahl, Mountain Guardians start play with an additional Physical Trait. Storytellers may also allow these physically powerful Gurahl a free retest to any challenge involving physical strength.

Tribe Drawback: Mountain Guardians have such a competitive nature that they cannot refuse a challenge or dare, especially one that involves a physical contest of any kind. In order to overcome this weakness, a Mountain Guardian must spend a Willpower Trait and leave the vicinity or risk giving in to the desire to one-up the opposition.

Backgrounds: No restrictions

Bear Form: The ursine Mountain Guardians come primarily from grizzly bear stock, so their bear form most closely resembles the massive, dark reddish brown bears of the western mountains of North America. In general, Mountain Guardians have a greater physical bulk than other tribes, making them even more intimidating in Crinos and Bjornen forms. Human-born Mountain Guardians usually, but not always, resemble grizzly bears in Ursus form.

Organization: More than most Gurahl, Mountain Guardians tend toward the solitary lifestyle. They rely on occasional, rare meetings between individuals to keep them abreast of current events in Gurahl society and attend the truly important gatherings to connect with others of their tribe. In instances where they need a tribal spokesperson, the Guardians rely on their oldest active member to speak for them and make any necessary decisions in the name of the tribe. In general, each Mountain Guardian is a law unto herself, acting independently. Only the relationship between a Buri-Jaan and her chosen cub forms an exception to this practice of solitary wandering.

Habitat: Before their numbers diminished, Mountain Guardians made their homes, like their grizzly bear Kinfolk, throughout Canada, North America and even parts of Mexico. Many Guardians, particularly ursine born



individuals, reside with their bear Kin in national parks and preserves. A very few have traveled to other parts of the world in order to attempt to expand their Kinfolk lines and take up guardianship over other mountain regions lacking proper protectors.

Protectorate: Mountain Guardians claim the mountainous regions of North America and, wherever possible, other parts of the world as their protected lands. They also look after the grizzly bear population and the Native American tribes that form their human breeding pool. In recent years, the Guardians have sought mating partners from among a wider cultural group. They find humans who enjoy testing their physical limits or who demonstrate excellence in the martial arts as good partners and companions.

Outlook: Mountain Guardians display a fierce pride in their physical accomplishments. They are compulsively competitive, never turning away from a dare or a challenge and always willing to take risks that other Gurahl back away from as foolhardy or outright suicidal. To counter this seeming recklessness and daredevil-attitude, however, the Guardians put a great value on independence and self-sufficiency. An individual strong enough to risk his life and push himself beyond old limitations should also have the skills necessary to survive in almost any climate — with or without assistance.

River Keepers

Some Gurahl argue that the River Keepers form the oldest of the Children of Bear, since they prospered along the great rivers of the world — the sources of the first tribal civilizations. The Nile, Amazon, Volga, Mississippi and other massive water ways of Gaia's surface served as homes and breeding grounds for these versatile Gurahl. Working closely with their human Kinfolk, the River Keepers served their human tribes as shamans, weatherworkers, mystics, oracles and healers. Not only did they fight sickness and tend wounds, they called the rain in times of drought and, in times of greatest need, sacrificed themselves so that their Kinfolk could have food. River Keepers also mingled with the bears that congregated along the banks of the rivers, where food was plentiful. As with their human Kinfolk, the Keepers acted as leaders and protectors of the bear populations.

The River Keepers, unfortunately, suffered more from the War of Rage than many of the other Gurahl. Since they existed in direct competition with many of the Garou for lands and human breeding stock, the werewolves targeted them as objects for their Rage. The Garou slaughtered scores of Keepers and forced hundreds of them from their homes along the rivers, causing them to abandon their lands along the Nile and the Amazon. The Bastet and Mokolé who survived the War of Rage inherited some of the lands the Gurahl abandoned and the Garou missed. Their human Kinfolk fell prey in large numbers to the Impergium while bear Kin dwindled under the weapons of human hunters.

Since that time, the River Keepers have occasionally emerged from hiding whenever they felt a sense of great urgency or need. They became skilled at



concealing their identities and avoided rising to positions of prominence, but they nevertheless managed to serve their human Kinfolk in particular as advisors, teachers, spiritual leaders and seconds-in-command. In North America, the River Keepers suffered less from the aftermath of the War of Rage. They managed to work together with the Wendigo, Uktena and Croatan to purge the taint of the Wyrms from the Pure Lands. Despite their relatively harmonious coexistence with other Changing Breeds in the Americas, the River Keepers continued to maintain a low profile, not wishing to provoke matters by an obvious presence. Many chose to spend time in hibernation, rousing themselves only when necessary. Thus, a few River Keepers heard the cries of their Kinfolk when the Europeans drove them from their homes in the “new world” and emerged from seclusion to assist in taking down the Storm Eater.

Since their emergence in the late 19th century, the River Keepers have remained fairly visible in the world. They realize that their lack of involvement contributed to the loss of much of the brown bear population. River Keepers today spend much of their time and attention working to encourage the growth of the existing bear population worldwide. They also serve as advisors, consultants and workers for environmental groups that specialize in cleaning up the polluted waterways of the world. The River Keepers believe that if they can revive and strengthen their ancient pacts with the spirits who protect the rivers, they can provide the forces of Gaia with powerful allies for the final battles against the Wyrms.

Totem: Bear (any of the three forms of Bear).

Tribe Advantage: River Keepers gain an extra Ability Trait in *Survival*. These Gurahl also receive a free retest in any challenge that involves swimming or maneuvering in the water.


Tribe Drawback: River Keepers are so fond of fish that they must spend a Willpower Trait to avoid accepting an offer of a fish dinner or a chance to go fishing — even if these activities conflict with more important or pressing business.

Backgrounds: No restrictions.

Bear Form: Most ursine River Keepers resemble brown bears, though other bear species are represented. The Keepers exhibit some of the most varied physiotypes in both human and bear Kinfolk. Larger than the Forest Walkers, the River Keepers are more compact and less massive than the Mountain Guardians.

Organization: River Keepers, because of their experiences during and after the War of Rage, do not maintain a formal tribal structure. Members of this tribe meet informally to exchange information and attempt to have one gathering each year — usually as part of the Council of Autumn. River Keepers generally travel alone, although occasionally they form small “family” groupings of two or three individuals for extended periods of time. Rather than leaders, Keepers consider their elders as advisors and teachers.

Habitat: Once they inhabited the fertile lands along the rivers of the world. Today, the River Keepers reside along the less inhabited riverways.



Many live in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest, where bears proliferate and humans are few and far between. European River Keepers try to maintain their ancient bonds with Europe's waterways, but have difficulty doing so due to the high density of Europe's human population. River Keepers also exist in Russia and, presumably in Asia as well, though little information has come from that part of the world for many years.

Protectorate: Rivers and the creatures that dwell in and around them serve as the special charges for the River Keepers. As this tribe seeks to increase its numbers and expand its Kinfolk lines, they have also grown protective of humans who dedicate themselves to traveling and caring for the rivers of the world. River Keepers draw their breeding partners from many Native American tribes, the indigenous peoples of South and Central America, the tribal populations of Siberia and some of the Scandinavian and Baltic peoples. Besides the brown bear, the Keepers breed with the Himalayan (or moon) bear, the Malayan sun bear, the sloth bear of India and the spectacled bear of South America, thus making them one of the most diverse tribes among the Gurahl.

Outlook: In many ways, River Keepers represent a strong conservative and traditional element within Gurahl society. Deeply involved in the cultural lives of their human Kinfolk, these Gurahl enjoy keeping alive the custom of gift-giving — whether as hosts or as guests. To River Keepers, gifts consist of material objects such as hand-crafted bead jewelry, woven baskets or hand-thrown pots as well as intangible presents such as songs, stories and poems. Though they do not possess the same martial skills or take as much glory in combat as the Mountain Guardians, River Keepers take pleasure in swimming, kayaking and other physical activities that keep them close to their beloved rivers.

Gifts

Gurahl legends state that the Children of Bear learned their Gifts originally from Gaia before She relegated that task to spirits of the Umbra. As the oldest of the Changing Breeds (at least by their account), Gurahl have their own names for many Gifts they share with the Garou. Unlike Garou, however, Gurahl do not have tribe-specific Gifts, having a variety of "general Gifts" instead. Gurahl learn Gifts in the same fashion as Garou, as described in *Laws of the Wild*. Gifts may retest with *Occult*, if another Ability is not specified.

Breed Gifts

Homid

Basic Gifts

- **Climate Control** — The Gurahl may use this Gift to alter the temperature in her immediate vicinity from five to 25 degrees in either direction. She can create a circle of coolness in the desert or warmth in the middle of winter that covers an area large enough to encompass up to five



human-sized individuals. Thus she can protect those around her from heat-stroke, frostbite or other effects of overexposure. This Gift lasts for 24 hours, although the Gurahl may end voluntarily end it. The Gurahl must win a Social Challenge (retest with *Primal-Urge*) to invoke this Gift.

- **Dolorous Countenance** — Similar to the Garou Homid Gift: *Paralyzing Stare*, this Gift enables the Gurahl to project a countenance so baleful that an opponent backs away, either out of shame or in submission to an obvious superior — sometimes leaving the vicinity entirely. The Gurahl must make eye contact with the intended target, spend a Rage Trait and win a Social Challenge (retest with *Empathy*). With success, the target must retreat five feet from the Gurahl, and will do his best to avoid her. By spending a second Rage Trait during the initial challenge, the Gurahl can force her target to leave the area altogether; he will not return until she leaves.

- **Persuasion** — As the Garou Homid Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Ursa's Light** — This Gift allows the Gurahl to draw down the light of the stars as a directional beacon or to illuminate an area. The Gurahl appears to reach upward toward the stars in supplication as he invokes the Gift. If the Gurahl wins a Simple Test, his outstretched hand fills with a soft white illumination that can either illuminate 100 square feet or cast a penetrating ray of light for 100 yards. (If the Gurahl invokes this Gift when Ursa Major or Ursa Minor happen to be visible in the night sky, the effect is doubled. This Gift only functions at night). Gurahl may use this Gift to counteract either naturally or supernaturally caused darkness and assist friends or companions who have trouble seeing in the dark. This Gift lasts for one scene.

Intermediate Gifts

- **Sense Need** — By means of this Gift, the Gurahl can open her mind to the world around her and sense a voiced or even unspoken cry for help from someone in need of assistance or succor from up to five miles away. The Gurahl concentrates and wins or ties a Static Mental Challenge against seven Traits (retest with *Empathy*) to detect the presence of someone in need. Spend one Mental Trait to raise the radius by 10 miles. *Sense Need* will also determine if anyone in the area is in fact in need. This Gift lasts for one scene.

- **Shape Matter** — As the Garou Homid Gift: *Reshape Object*; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Spirit Shield** — As the Garou Homid Gift: *Spirit Ward* in **Laws of the Wild**, with the following modification: The "shield" distinguishes between friendly (or neutral) and unfriendly spirits, having little or no effect on the former and actively discouraging the latter from intruding on the Gurahl.

- **Ursa's Coat** — This Gift surrounds the Gurahl with a heavy coat of protective fur colored like a starry night. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and concentrates for one turn. Once invoked, this Gift effectively halves all damage the character takes: An opponent must inflict two health levels of damage to cause one health level. The Gift lasts one scene, but the Gurahl may extend the duration of the Gift by spending an extra Gnosis Trait. The



Gift must be invoked immediately prior to a combat; a Gurahl may not activate this Gift as a "contingency." The Gurahl may move, but at a three-Trait penalty. The Gurahl may defend herself normally.

Advanced Gifts

- **Charismatic Presence** — This Gift bestows upon the Gurahl a compelling aura of attraction to humans. In ancient times, werebears often used this Gift to place themselves in positions of leadership or influence among early human tribes, sometimes serving as the spiritual center of bear cults. The Gurahl must win a Social Challenge (retest with *Empathy*) against the targets he wishes to affect (within 20 paces). Those who lose the challenge feel a great awe and respect for the Gurahl and willingly listen to and often follow his directions (though they do not become mindless slaves). Those who successfully resist may experience an active resentment against the Gurahl who tried to influence their minds. This Gift lasts for a single scene, although individuals affected by the Gift may retain some positive feelings toward the Gurahl depending on the strength of the werebear's arguments or the force of his natural personality. Hostile actions will negate the Gift's effects.

- **Fearless Unveiling** — As the Garou Homid Gift: *Part the Veil in Laws of the Wild*. Once the need for the Gift has passed, the Gurahl must perform the *Rite of the Ban* to remove any "unpleasant" or "incredible" memories from the minds of the affected individuals. This Gift lasts for one scene.

Ursine

Basic Gifts

- **Burrow** — As the Metis Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Heightened Senses** — As the Lupus Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Voice of Woe** — This Gift allows the Gurahl to use her voice as an early warning system, sending out a call that alerts all creatures (regardless of their species) within five miles of the presence of an active danger. The sound mimics that of a bear cub in distress, so other Gurahl or bears (or Kinfolk) might actually come to the assistance of the calling Gurahl. The Gurahl must spend a Gnosis Trait to invoke this Gift. This Gift lasts for one scene.
- **Weather Watch** — This Gift enables the Gurahl to make accurate predictions concerning the weather, such as approaching storms, changes in weather patterns or other significant climatic occurrences. The Gurahl need have no knowledge of weather or meteorology, but simply studies the skies with her sight, scent and taste. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Static Mental Challenge versus six Traits (retest with *Primal-Urge*) to gain information from the Storyteller as to important changes in the weather for the next 48 hours. This Gift can also determine, if appropriate, the approximate length of a dry spell or the likelihood of a tornado approaching the immediate vicinity. This Gift lasts for one scene, though the Gurahl may learn of significant weather conditions that extend beyond the duration of the Gift.



Intermediate Gifts

- **Gnaw** —As the Lupus Gift: see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Pull of the Chosen Land** — The Gurahl uses this Gift to find the quickest route to his protectorate, regardless of his current location. Even if he has been forcibly relocated to an unknown place, the Gurahl may follow an internal compass that guides him unerringly to familiar territory. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Mental Challenge (retest with *Primal-Urge*) to invoke this Gift. Once invoked, the Gift remains in effect until the Gurahl reaches his destination, though the Storyteller may require additional challenges if the werebear needs to stop to rest or sleep or gets distracted by another pressing matter (such as an attack by hunters). This Gift works in the Umbra as well as the real world.

- **Shelter of the Earth** — The Gurahl, through the use of this Gift, “disappears” amid the local environment, making use of tall grasses, concealing trees, rockfalls or whatever terrain features are around her. While slow movement is possible without breaking cover, rapid motion, such as jogging or running, ends the Gift’s effects. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and makes a Physical Challenge (retest with *Stealth*) to invoke this Gift. The effects last for one scene or until the Gurahl breaks cover by moving too quickly. If someone wishes to hunt for the Gurahl, she makes a Static Mental Challenge against the Gurahl’s Physical Traits.

- **Sweet Swarm of Vengeance** — The Gurahl can summon a swarm of angry bees which surround an enemy, harrying and stinging the targeted individual. Depending on his environment, the Gurahl may call forth as few as a dozen or as many as a thousand wasps, hornets, honeybees or other indigenous bees. The swarm obeys the Gurahl’s directions, attacking the target indicated by the summoner. Depending on the victim’s reactions and size, this attack may serve as a nuisance and distraction or may cause death due to anaphylactic shock. The Gurahl must spend a Gnosis Trait and win a Static Social Challenge against seven Traits (retest with *Animal Ken*) in order to locate a swarm of bees. Depending on the nature of the target, the Storyteller may need to adjudicate further challenges with the victim to determine the result of the bees’ attack.

Advanced Gifts

- **Bear’s Bounty** — As the Metis Gift: *Totem Gift* described in **Laws of the Wild**, except that the Gurahl addresses her petition of desperation to one of the three aspects of Bear. The Storyteller should decide the nature of the assistance the Gurahl receives, in keeping with the nature of the aspect of Bear invoked. For example, Ursa Major might provide a means of escape or an unexpected place of shelter while Mangi the Death Bear might grant the Gurahl the ability to fell an opponent with a single blow.

- **Call the Cave Bear** — This Gift enables the Gurahl to summon her prehistoric cave bear ancestor from the Umbra to assist her for one task. The task may have several parts, but must consist of achieving one distinct goal, such as



defeating a particular monster or finding some ancient burial ground or lost sacred place. The cave bear returns to its place of origin once its task is completed. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Social Challenge (retest with *Primal-Urge*). The cave bear should be considered to have the maximum Traits of a Gurahl in Bjornen form. This Gift lasts for one scene or until the creature completes the task for which it was summoned. Such a legendary spirit will not be pleased to answer frivolous summons, and may discipline its wayward descendant.

Auspice Gifts

Most Gurahl characters begin play as Arcas and select their initial auspice Gift from the Arcas list. Once a Gurahl's auspice changes, however, he becomes eligible to learn the Gifts (beginning with the Basic Level) associated with that phase of Luna. As a Gurahl progresses through the auspices, he gains the capacity to acquire Gifts from each of his new auspices while retaining the ability to learn Gifts from previous auspices. A Gurahl's Rank determines which levels of Gifts and rites he may learn. When a Gurahl has gone through all five of the auspices, he may choose to learn Gifts from any auspice so long as his Rank allows him to do so.

Arcas

Basic Gifts

- **Cajole** — The Gurahl may use this Gift to coax some item or piece of information from an individual. Expressions of wide-eyed innocence or pitiful pleading usually accompany the Gift's activation. The Gurahl can convince someone to give her food and clothing, a car or bicycle, hidden information or secure shelter through the use of this Gift. The Gurahl must win a Social Challenge against her intended target. The Storyteller may require more than one test for the Gurahl to acquire extremely valuable items (such as cars). This Gift lasts for one scene.

- **Open Seal** — As the Ragabash Gift: see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Sense of the Prey** — As the Ragabash Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Walk Like a Man** — This Gift enables a Gurahl in Ursine, Bjornen or Crinos form to alter his footprints to form an exact duplicate of a human footstep, thus creating a false trail to confuse pursuit. The Gurahl wins a Physical Challenge to invoke this Gift. The effects last for one scene. The Gurahl may extend the duration of the Gift by attempting additional tests, although the Gift automatically ends if the Gurahl loses.

Intermediate Gifts

- **Favor of Ursa Minor** — As the Ragabash Gift: *Luna's Blessing*; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Rejuvenate** — Use of this Gift provides the target with a temporary boost in spirits and a renewed zest for living, as if she had become young again. Sometimes (at the Storyteller's discretion), this Gift manifests physically, making the target appear and feel younger than her actual years. Gurahl may



perform this gift on themselves or another creature to bolster spirits, allow an elderly person the energy to complete some vital task or rescue an aging friend from depression. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Static Mental Challenge versus the target's Willpower. The exact effects of this Gift are up to the Storyteller. This Gift has no effect on the young — only the aged in body and mind can benefit — and lasts for the rest of the session.

- **Safe Passage** — This Gift allows the Gurahl (and those with him) to pass through a place without leaving any traces of his travel. The Gurahl leaves no footprints and makes no other marks upon the land due to the effects of the Gift. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Static Physical Challenge against six Traits (retest with *Primal-Urge*) to invoke this Gift for one scene (or the time it takes to travel between starting point and destination). By spending a second Gnosis Trait, the Gurahl may take up to five additional people with him and extend the Gift's effects to include them.

- **Trackless Waste** — As the Red Talon Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Advanced Gifts

- **Humiliate** — The Gurahl uses this Gift to castigate (usually verbally) up to five individuals, generating such a loss of self-esteem and shame in them that they back down from a fight or flee the area. This resembles an extremely powerful form of *Dolorous Countenance* since it affects more than one opponent. After verbally haranguing her targets, the Gurahl makes a Social Challenge (mob scene rules apply) against up to five targets. Individuals who lose to the Gurahl either back down or flee. Those who win may ignore the effect of the Gift. Even targets who manage to resist the Gift's effect still suffer a two-Trait penalty to their attack due to their belief that they will fail. The effects of this Gift persist for one week, sometimes leaving the victims with a permanent aversion to the Gurahl who so shamed them. Only sentient creatures qualify as targets for this Gift. Normal animals, Wyrn-creatures and spirits who lack a sense of shame are immune.

- **Natural State** — The Gurahl uses this Gift to return a patch of ground (roughly 100 square feet of terrain) to its natural state. For example, plowed or planted fields erupt in tall grasses and wildflowers; human-built objects such as cabins or houses fall into disrepair and collapse; clear-cut forest lands sprout saplings in abundance. The Gurahl use this Gift to heal lands that have suffered from over-development or corruption. Occasionally, vengeful werebears return a poacher's camp to its "natural state."

The Gurahl spends two Gnosis Traits. The Storyteller should determine the precise changes to the intended area. The effects of the Gift are permanent, but the land can be re-altered.

Uzmati

Basic Gifts

- **Mangi's Strong Arms** — This Gift enables the Gurahl to execute the formidable (or infamous) "bear-hug," squeezing his opponent to the point of incapacitation, unconsciousness or even death. Invoking the Gift requires



one full action. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and makes a Physical Challenge (retest with *Brawl*). Spending one Gnosis Trait adds one health level to the damage inflicted by the Gurahl by a successful grappling maneuver in combat. Spending additional Gnosis Traits increases the damage on a one-for-one basis. No more than three levels of additional damage may be added. The Gurahl must apply the additional damage all at once, though he may invoke the Gift before a battle and hold it in reserve until he makes a successful grapple. This Gift lasts for one scene.

- **Slash of the Death Bear** — As the Ahroun Gift: *Razor Claws*; see **Laws of the Wild**. The Gurahl calls out to *Mangi* as she sharpens her claws.

- **Threaten** — The Gurahl invokes this gift, stands erect and roars a challenge to his opponent, thus increasing his ability to intimidate his foe, forcing the enemy to wilt in terror or back off entirely from battle. The Gurahl may use this Gift to intimidate his own or another individual's opponent. The werebear engages the target in a Static Social Challenge against the target's Willpower (retest with *Intimidation*). If the Gurahl is successful, the opponent cannot approach any closer than arm's length and must cower in terror or turn and run. Certain conditions — such as certain Negative Traits, derangements or Flaws — may trigger fear frenzy in Garou, vampires or certain other Changing Breeds. Normal humans or animals may be so panic-stricken that they flee altogether or faint from terror. This Gift lasts for one scene.

- **Ultimatum** — Through this Gift, the Gurahl imposes her will on her opponent, delivering an ultimatum that reduces the target's actions to a choice between two alternatives (“Fight me where you stand, or else flee this place never to return.”). In this fashion the werebear may dictate the form of attack (or lack of attack), thus providing an advantage over her opponent. The Gurahl must succeed in a Willpower Challenge against her opponent, who may not take another action until one of the terms of *Ultimatum* are met. This Gift lasts for one scene.

Intermediate Gifts

- **Crush** — This Gift enables the Gurahl to deliver a devastatingly massive bear hug attack at a distance, potentially crushing internal organs, breaking bones and rendering the opponent unfit to continue battle. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and initiates a Physical Challenge versus his opponent's Willpower Traits, but does so without coming into hand-to-hand range (retest with *Brawl*). If successful, the Gurahl inflicts an additional health level of damage above the amount she would normally cause. As in *Mangi's Strong Arms*, the Gurahl may spend a second (or third) Gnosis Trait to add to the damage on a one-for-one basis. The Gift ends after one successful attack.

- **Delay the Death Bear's Coming** — This Gift enables the Gurahl or another individual so designated by the Gurahl to sustain massive damage without dying. Although the recipient of this Gift's benefits may not engage in combat or other strenuous activities, the target remains alive long enough to allow for normal or magical healing to take place. This Gift also allows the target a very limited movement, with the assistance of another person, in order to leave the



area of danger. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Mental Challenge (retest with *Medicine*). Success enables the target to gain an additional Incapacitated health level, making it possible to absorb otherwise fatal damage without dying. The phantom health level does not have to be "healed," but disappears after normal or magical healing restores a character to at least Wounded. The Gurahl must re-invoke the Gift for each individual she wishes to affect. The Gurahl may use this Gift on herself, provided she has not reached Incapacitated.

- **Silver Claws** — As the Ahroun Gift; see *Laws of the Wild*.
- **Strength of the Earth** — As the Get of Fenris Gift: *Hero's Stand*; see *Laws of the Wild*.

Advanced Gifts

- **Engulf the Prey** — This Gift allows the Gurahl to draw on his connection to the earth, causing the ground underneath his target (or targets) to open up, creating a pit large enough to swallow the intended victim(s) whole or trap them so they cannot avoid further attacks. Since this Gift affects an area, all individuals within the area are vulnerable to its effects. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and a Rage Trait and makes a successful Simple Test. If the Gurahl succeeds, a chasm approximately 15 feet across and at least 50 feet deep opens beneath the targets. Victims must succeed in a Physical Challenge to avoid falling into the pit, those who tie become partially trapped, and those who lose are swallowed altogether. The pit closes almost immediately after opening, trapping (and crushing) anyone inside unless they have some extraordinary means of survival or can go incorporeal or escape through the Umbra. (Vampires and certain Wyrn-creatures might survive but must free themselves or be rescued.)

Victims partially caught in the pit receive two health levels of damage while anyone unlucky enough to remain fully engulfed sustains five health levels of damage and is buried alive. Victims remaining alive soon suffocate unless they possess some means of escape (such as the Gift: *Burrow*, see above).

The Gurahl may not open up multiple pits without additional uses of this Gift.

- **Rage of the Mother Bear** — Through this Gift, the Gurahl may arouse in herself a white-hot anger, endowing herself with uncharacteristic rapidity of movement and action. While under the effects of this Gift, the Gurahl may take extra actions either during combat or in the event of an emergency requiring swift responses and desperate measures. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and a Willpower Trait. If she wins a Physical Challenge, she receives an additional action for that turn. She may expend additional Gnosis or Willpower Traits on a one for one basis to gain more actions. The Gurahl must take all her additional actions in the same turn or lose them.

Kojubat

Basic Gifts

- **Beast Speech** — As the Galliard Gift; see *Laws of the Wild*.



- **Eyes of the Soul** — As the Lupus Gift: *Scent of the True Form* in *Laws of the Wild*, except that the Gurahl uses his “inner vision” instead of inhaling the scent of the target to determine the true nature of the individual.

- **Song of Terra** — By making contact with the earth and invoking this Gift, the Gurahl may “hear” something about the recent history of the place around her. Depending on the degree of concentration (how “hard” she listens), the Gurahl may discover events that have taken place in the vicinity within the past 24 hours. The Gurahl may learn about acts of violence, overhear conversations or discover which creatures have passed through the targeted spot. The contact with the earth must involve bare skin (such as placing one’s bare palms on the ground, putting a ear to the ground or standing on ground in bare feet), and the earth cannot be under anything such as concrete. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Static Mental Challenge (retest with *Primal-Urge*) against eight Traits. The Storyteller then informs the Gurahl of appropriate events concerning the targeted piece of ground. As a general rule, the Gurahl “hears” the most immediate or most intense piece of information first. This Gift lasts for one scene.

- **Stonesight** — The Gurahl, using this Gift, may examine a large rock or stone, seeing “through” it to determine its use or potential. Useful primarily for sculptors or stone workers who need to assess a particular piece of rock, this Gift also determines mineral composition or the presence of fossils. The Gurahl need only concentrate on the stone to activate this Gift. A successful Gurahl learns some information about the stone’s composition, its potential use in art or construction or some other piece of useful knowledge. As an example, the Gurahl might learn that a particular stone contains crystals within a volcanic exterior and might serve as a healing focus if used in the construction of a fetish. The Gift lasts for one scene.

Intermediate Gifts

- **Mind to Mind** — As the Galliard Gift: *Mindspeak*; see *Laws of the Wild*.

- **Mind Sight** — The Gurahl uses this Gift to read the surface thoughts of an individual. The targeted creature must possess an intelligence greater than that of an animal in order for the Gift to function. The Gurahl may not unearth secrets that the target wishes to keep hidden or probe too deeply into the target’s mind. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Mental Challenge (retest with *Empathy*) against the target, who must then reveal (out of character) the thoughts closest to the surface of her mind. The target has no knowledge that anyone has probed his thoughts. Supernatural creatures such as vampires, mages, changelings or other Changing Breeds may resist the effects of this Gift by spending a Willpower Trait. This Gift lasts for one scene.

- **Probe Thoughts** — A more powerful version of the Gift: *Mind Sight* (see above), Gurahl may use this Gift to probe information hidden in the mind of the target. This Gift undoubtedly serves as the basis for the belief by many tribal people that bears have the ability to read minds. The Gurahl expends two Gnosis Traits and wins a Mental Challenge (retest with



Empathy) against the target, who must then reveal (out of character) one of the following pieces of information — Nature, one Flaw, any derangements, one Negative Trait (player's choice). This Gift lasts for a single scene.

- **Shadows by the Fire Light** — As the Galliard Gift; see *Laws of the Wild*.

Advanced Gifts


- **Aversion Therapy** — Gurahl use this Gift to rehabilitate chronic offenders or to force wrongdoers to cease their harmful activity. By tapping into the individual's deepest emotions and linking one or more of them with the thought of carrying out the forbidden deed, the Gurahl establishes a link between action and emotion. For example, an abusive spouse may be wracked with incapacitating guilt and feelings of violation if he ever thinks about hurting his wife. This link, when established, lasts for a year and a day (in game time). The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Static Mental Challenge (retest with *Empathy*) against the target's Willpower. Gurahl using this Gift on a supernatural creature must expend a Willpower Trait as well.

- **Prophetic Vision** — Lorekeepers of the Gurahl claim that this Gift once gave them early warning of the War of Rage. This Gift allows a Gurahl to enter a deep trancelike state to cross the barriers between present and future, thus receiving warnings or images of what lies ahead. These images, while often vivid and cinematic, need interpretation, since they frequently employ dream imagery. Many Gurahl who use this Gift do not always understand what they have seen or heard until the events have come to pass. Lately, this Gift has presented Gurahl with very disturbing images which lorekeepers believe portend the imminence of the Apocalypse. To activate this Gift, the player must spend 15 minutes out of game as her Gurahl character enters a meditative state. After the time has elapsed, the Gurahl must spend a Gnosis Trait and win a Static Mental Challenge (retest with *Enigmas*) against nine Traits. Spending additional Gnosis Traits adds depth and detail to the vision. A Storyteller or Spirit Keeper should describe the vision the Gurahl receives, making use of symbols, dreamscapes and other cryptic images. If a Gurahl wishes to interpret the vision, she must engage the Storyteller in a Static Mental Challenge against seven Traits (retest with *Enigmas* or *Occult*).

Kieh

Basic Gifts

- **Diagnose** — This Gift enables the Gurahl to determine the general state of health of an individual, often allowing him to identify diseases or other ailments present. After concentrating on his target for one minute, the Gurahl must win a Mental Challenge (retest with *Medicine*). Success allows him to ascertain specific diseases — including lung disorders, stomach ailments or infectious diseases. This Gift lasts for one scene.



• **Refresh** — The Gurahl may use this Gift in battle to give an ally a second wind, allowing the target to ignore wounds long enough to continue fighting — and, perhaps, surviving. This serves as the equivalent of “battlefield medicine,” providing a stopgap measure until further healing can take place. By touching her target, spending a Gnosis Trait and winning a Mental Challenge (retest with *Medicine*), the Gurahl temporarily restores up two health levels of damage, even aggravated, for the rest of the combat scene. When the combat is over, the damage returns unless healed by Gifts or medical care.

- **Sense the Unnatural** — As the Lupus Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Spirit Speech** — As the Theurge Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Intermediate Gifts

- **Exorcism** — As the Theurge Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Name the Spirit** — As the Lupus Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Spirit Healing** — As Gaia’s healers, the Gurahl serve not only as healers of physical creatures but of spirits as well. This Gift allows a Gurahl in the Umbra to replenish a wounded spirit’s Power. By entering the Umbra and winning a Social Challenge against the spirit, the Gurahl may convert one of his own Gnosis Traits into five points of Power and give it to a damaged spirit. The Gurahl may spend additional Gnosis Traits on a one to five point basis if he so desires without any further challenges. Any additions to a spirit’s Power last until depleted by normal means.

- **Spirit Shape** — This Gift allows the Gurahl to assume the appearance of a creature native to the Umbra, thus appearing to spirits as one of their own kind. This Gift allows Gurahl to travel in parts of the Umbra that might otherwise prove hostile or inimical to them. The Gurahl must enter the Umbra, spend a Gnosis Trait and win a Static Social Challenge versus six Traits (retest with *Enigmas*). Success allows the Gurahl to take on the appearance of an Umbral creature. For example, a Gurahl may assume the form of a Pattern Spider when in a part of the Umbra ruled by the Tapestry Maker. If the Gurahl loses the test, she runs the risk of alerting hostile spirits to her presence unless she leaves the Umbra quickly. This Gift lasts until the Gurahl leaves the Umbra.

Advanced Gifts

- **Image of the Sky Bear** — The Gurahl calls down the power of Ursa Major, the Great She-Bear, to amplify his own mystical abilities. The Gurahl’s body glows with seven points of light that mirror the stars in the constellation Ursa Major. The Gurahl spends a point of Gnosis to invoke this Gift. Once the Gift has come into play, the Gurahl may use the seven “points” of borrowed light as if he had seven extra Traits or seven extra health levels or seven actions to heal wounds (choose one option when the Gift is invoked). Each time the Gurahl uses one of these extra Traits, one of the lights blinks out. The Gift ends when all the lights have darkened, indicating that the Gurahl has used the borrowed power of Ursa Major. A Gurahl may not use this Gift more than once in any given session. The extra Traits he receives remain until lost through being expended or from losing a challenge or until



the end of the session; extra health levels are lost before regular ones and are not replenished. Healing is permanent until more damage is incurred.

- **Restore Sanity** — With this Gift, a Gurahl may completely restore the mind of an individual affected by an unexpected catastrophe, mental trauma or deliberately induced insanity. Unlike *Ease the Fevered Mind* (below), this Gift cannot remove derangements or pre-existing mental problems; it simply restores a traumatized mind to its pre-trauma state. The Gurahl must spend a Gnosis Trait and win a Mental Challenge (retest with *Empathy*) against the target. Success brings the target back from a state of induced insanity or trauma. This Gift may not heal a metis's madness (if that is his deformity), a Malkavian vampire's primary derangement or permanent forms of insanity. This Gift may be used to treat Harano (with a Static Mental Challenge against eight Traits and the expenditure of three Gnosis). The Storyteller should act as the final judge as to whether or not a particular mental problem falls within the parameters of this Gift. The effects of this Gift are permanent until something occurs to change them. The Gurahl may not treat another individual without re-invoking the Gift.

Rishi

Basic Gifts

- **Befriend** — This Gift enables the Gurahl to alter the emotions of a potentially hostile individual so that the target exhibits a friendlier attitude toward the Gurahl than she previously demonstrated. The Gurahl assumes a non-threatening physical posture and wins a Social Challenge against the target (retest with *Empathy*), who then responds more favorably to the Gurahl than the original response. For example, a hostile target might regard the Gurahl with a wary neutrality, while a noncommittal individual would warm considerably. The effect of the Gift lasts for one scene, although the Gurahl may use the improved atmosphere as a means of using personal charisma and natural persuasion to cause a permanent change in attitude. This Gift does not affect creatures naturally inimical to the Gurahl, such as Wyrmspirits, poachers, etc.


- **Compel Truth** — This Gift enables the Gurahl to force another individual to speak only the truth, at least as that person perceives it. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and engages the target in a Mental Challenge. If the Gurahl wins, the target must speak only the truth as she knows it for the next 10 minutes.

- **Presence of the Great Bear** — As the Philodox Gift: *King of the Beasts* in *Laws of the Wild*, except that the Gurahl exercises his control over any bears in the vicinity.

- **Truth of Gaia** — As the Philodox Gift; see *Laws of the Wild*.

Intermediate Gifts

- **Bestow Ursa's Blessing** — The Gurahl use this Gift to bestow some favor from the Great Bear upon an individual of their choosing. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Mental Challenge while describing the exact nature of the blessing. The boon should be something tangible or some piece of good fortune, such as an additional Attribute Trait, a free retest, a



temporary addition to an Influence or a Background Trait (the Storyteller has the final say on what form the blessing may take). If the Gurahl wishes to make the *Blessing* a permanent one, she must sacrifice a permanent Gnosis Trait to do so. The Gurahl may use this Gift only once per story.

- **Quell Mob Rage** — This Gift allows the Gurahl to dispel the anger of a crowd, break up lynch mobs or quell a riot before it begins by speaking quietly and calmly to the would-be participants. The Gurahl spends a Willpower Trait and engages in a Static Social Challenge against the highest Willpower in the group (retest with *Leadership*). If the Gurahl wins, the crowd must disperse and may not assemble again for the same purpose (though nothing prevents them from finding something else to anger them). This Gift lasts for one scene.

- **Waken** — Gurahl may use this Gift to waken another creature from an unnatural slumber or some form of supernatural sleep. With this Gift, a werebear may rouse a vampire from torpor, bring another Gurahl out of Bhernocht-induced sleep or even waken a creature affected by *Rite of the Long Sleep*. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Static Mental Challenge against the target's Willpower. Success allows the Gurahl to touch the target, causing that individual to awaken from whatever slumber has claimed him. To counter the effects of *Rite of the Long Sleep*, the Gurahl must spend a Willpower Trait. Those affected by this Gift may not appreciate being awakened and may react appropriately. The creature awakened by the Gift remains awake, subject only to its natural sleep cycles.

- **Ways of the Tapestry** — Gurahl use this Gift to gain some insight into how something that puzzles them fits into the larger picture. This Gift may also indicate how an event fits into a Gurahl's past, present or, possibly, future. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Static Mental Challenge versus eight Traits (retest with *Enigmas*). If the Gurahl succeeds, the Storyteller should give the Gurahl an important fact or two about a current dilemma or problem. Like all divinations, the results should be shrouded in mystery but not indecipherable.

Advanced Gifts

- **Oath of the Great Bear** — As the Philodox Gift: *Geas*; see *Laws of the Wild*.


- **Words of Doom** — The Gurahl, through this Gift, places a curse upon an individual (or an allied group of up to five persons) as a punishment for some gross misdeed. Gurahl use this Gift sparingly, since doing so places the invoker in danger of becoming a tool of the Pattern Breaker, bringing additional darkness to the spirit of the person or persons cursed. The Gurahl states the terms of the curse, spends a Gnosis Trait and engages the target or targets in a Mental Challenge (mob scene rules apply). The words used must exactly describe the terms of the curse along with the means of lifting it. ("May you and your packmates never know a night's rest until you restore the fetish you took from me.") The Storyteller may require the Gurahl to expend more than one Gnosis Trait for a particularly baleful or detrimental curse. The Gift ends with the pronouncement of the curse, but the effects may endure for much longer.



Gurahl Gifts

Basic Gifts

- **Calm** — As the Children of Gaia Gift; see *Laws of the Wild*.
- **Fiddlefish** — By using this Gift and scooping her paw (or hand) into a river, stream or other body of fresh or salt water, a Gurahl can guarantee herself a filling and nutritious dinner consisting of a fish large enough to satisfy her hunger. Overuse of this Gift, particularly if a Gurahl consistently uses the same area to sate her appetite, results in Gaia's displeasure and a failure of the Gift to produce any food. The Gurahl wins a Simple Test to acquire a single fish using this Gift. While more than one Gurahl may use this Gift in the same location, the same Gurahl may not snare more than one fish at a time from the same spot. The Storyteller should determine if a Gurahl is overusing this Gift and, if this is the case, should deny the Gift's efficacy regardless of the outcome of the Simple Test. This Gift lasts for one scene (or one fish).
- **Grisly Aspect** — This Gift endows the Gurahl with an aura and appearance so frightening that it can dishearten opponents enough to cause them to flee before engaging in combat. While this Gift does not actually make the Gurahl any stronger, it causes an increase in height and mass. In addition, the Gift enhances the ferocity of the Gurahl's appearance — particularly in Crinos form. While under the effects of this Gift, the Gurahl also emits a pheromone which incites panic among herbivores and invokes a sense of dread in even the fiercest carnivores. The Gurahl makes a Social Challenge to evoke this Gift (retest with *Intimidation*). Normal humans flee from the Gurahl as if suffering from the Delirium (it's a great big snarling bear, folks). Some humans have been known to suffer heart failure upon seeing Gurahl use this Gift in Crinos. Supernatural creatures must spend a Willpower Trait and then engage the Gurahl in a Social Challenge to attempt to resist the effects of this Gift. For purposes of this Gift, the Gurahl possesses *Intimidating* x 4. (These Traits only last as long as the Gift is in effect.) The Gift lasts for one scene.
- **Healing Tongue** — As the Theurge Gift: *Mother's Touch* in *Laws of the Wild*.
- **Ignore Wounds** — As the Philodox Gift: *Resist Pain* in *Laws of the Wild*.
- **Nature's Plenty** — This Gift allows the Gurahl to locate sufficient food or healing herbs to tend to a creature in need of assistance. Regardless of the season, the Gurahl can find and retrieve enough of the necessary herbs or plants, even if they are buried in snow or grow in normally inaccessible places. The Gurahl must succeed in a Static Mental Challenge against seven Traits to achieve the benefits of this Gift (retest with *Primal-Urge*). The Storyteller should describe the materials the Gurahl may locate. This Gift lasts for one scene.
- **Sense Pattern Breaker** — As the Metis Gift: *Sense Wyrn*; see *Laws of the Wild*.



• **Sentinel's Warning** — This Gift provides the Gurahl with an awareness of threats, hostile forces or other dangerous elements in his protected lands. The Gift manifests as a sense of unease or discomfort. Unlike the Merit: *Danger Sense*, which is always "on," this Gift requires conscious effort to activate it. The Gurahl spends a point of Gnosis and must succeed in a Mental Challenge. The Storyteller then informs the Gurahl of any enemies — natural or supernatural — in his vicinity, thus giving him the opportunity to act first in a combat situation or take steps to neutralize the threat. This Gift lasts for one scene.

• **Treeshake** — This Gift allows the Gurahl to obtain ample food for several individuals by grasping the trunk of a tree and shaking acorns or other edible tree-fruits from it. The tree does not need to be a fruit-bearing tree nor does it need to be in season for the Gift to extract nutritious food from it. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Simple Test. The Storyteller should determine the quantity and kind of fruit found. The Gurahl may feed up to five persons with one use of this Gift.

• **Ursa's Cleansing** — As the Fianna Gift: *Resist Toxin*; see *Laws of the Wild*.

Intermediate Gifts

• **Dreams of the Buri-Jaan** — This Gift allows the Gurahl to send out a series of dream visions or spirit callings to a cub she has chosen to mentor. The dreams act as a summons and a homing beacon, allowing the cub to find her teacher (if she heeds her dreams). The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and wins a Static Mental Challenge against seven Traits (adjustable based on the distance between the Gurahl and the cub). After describing the content of the dream or dreams to the Storyteller, the Gurahl waits while the Storyteller relays the information to the chosen target, who may resist with Willpower or follow the visions to find her Buri-Jaan. This Gift becomes most useful in ongoing chronicles to work new players into the story.

• **Ease the Fevered Mind** — This Gift enables the Gurahl to treat victims of extreme spiritual or emotional trauma, including post-traumatic stress disorder, social avoidance disorder and other serious mental or emotional disturbances. The use of this Gift can temporarily remove or alleviate the symptoms of many derangements. The Gurahl spends a Willpower Trait and engages the patient in a Mental Challenge (retest with *Medicine*). The patient may not relent, but must undergo the challenge, since some individuals are resistant to treatment — even with the help of the Great Bear. The Gurahl may repeat the Mental Challenges until he loses. When the Gurahl loses, he must make two Simple Tests — failing both results in the target's derangement being inflicted on the Gurahl. For every successful challenge, the Gurahl removes the effect of the trauma or derangement for a scene. Repeated and regular applications of the Gift, coupled with the expenditure of permanent Willpower, can make the treatment permanent — with the approval of the Storyteller. However, if the source of the problem is not removed, the trauma will reoccur in time.



• **Masking the Hunted** — The Gurahl may, with this Gift, use the terrain around her to create a safe haven for creatures or individuals pursued by hunters. Under the effects of this Gift, the land responds to the needs of the prey — bushes cluster together to form impassable barriers; grasses conceal tracks or else form the appearance of false paths. Odors contribute to the Gift's effects as well, leaving false scent trails or masking true scents to confuse creatures who hunt by scent. The Gurahl spends a Gnosis Trait and makes a Static Social Challenge against the hunter's Mental Traits to invoke this Gift. While this Gift does not last more than one scene, it usually provides enough time for the hunted individuals to escape. The Gurahl may hide up to 12 human or large mammal-sized individuals or twice as many smaller creatures.

• **Survival of the Bear** — As the Silent Strider Gift: *Adaptation*; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Advanced Gifts

• **Gaia's Breath** — Some Gurahl believe that the desires of other Changing Breeds (particularly the Garou) to possess the knowledge of this Gift formed a direct cause of the War of Rage. This Gift, known only to the wisest and eldest of the Gurahl, remains the werebears' most closely guarded secret. Through the use of this Gift, a Gurahl may return the departed spirit to a dead werecreature, bringing it back from death. In ancient times, Gurahl rewarded those among them who sacrificed their lives to provide food for their human Kin or who died in the protection of others. The Gurahl must spend a permanent Gnosis Trait and a permanent Willpower Trait before engaging in a Static Social Challenge versus nine Traits. Success means that the departed spirit returns to its body, returning the creature to life. The recipient awakens as Incapacitated and must receive healing from other Gifts in order to gain strength and restore additional health levels. Missing body parts are not restored through this Gift, though other supernatural means may, if known, be used to regrow limbs. This Gift only succeeds in restoring life to a victim who has died recently (i.e., within the last four hours of game time). A Gurahl who attempts the use of this Gift on an individual who has been dead longer than four hours risks not only failure but the possibility of summoning a Wyrms-creature (such as a Bane) into the corpse. Only one attempt may be made on a single creature at any time. *Ever*.

• **Great Grandfather's Summons** — This Gift allows the Great Grandfather or Great Grandmother (or Ancient One) to issue a summons to all Gurahl, gathering them together in a time of great need. The call is so powerful that it even wakens hibernating Gurahl and reaches into the Umbra. Gurahl who heed the summons gather together healing items, fetishes, weapons and food and travel to the place where the summoner waits for them. Lorekeepers among the Gurahl credit this Gift with the mass awakening of Gurahl in the 19th century to combat the Storm Eater in the Umbra of the American West. This Gift requires the sacrifice of three Gnosis and one Rage Trait in order to activate it. No test is required.



Rites

By their very nature, Gurahl enjoy participation in rites, rituals and other forms of ceremonial behavior. Gurahl originated many of the rites now practiced by the Garou (and often claimed by them), particularly those rites involved with purification or healing. As Gurahl age, they find themselves more and more concerned with rituals, spending much of their time performing old rites and creating new ones. In general, Storytellers may allow Gurahl to learn and use any Garou rite (with appropriate modifications), though the most common of these shared rites fall under the categories of Accord, Death, Mystic and Seasonal.

In general, Gurahl rites follow the same rules for rites outlined in **Laws of the Wild**, except that in most cases, only a single Gurahl is absolutely necessary for the performance of the rite. The Gurahl must know the rite well enough to act as ritemaster (and sole participant). In addition, the Gurahl must either possess the minimum number of Traits necessary for the performance of the rite or else must expect to spend a greater amount of time performing the rite.

Rites of the Gurahl

Since Gurahl tend to be solitary creatures, most of their rites require only one individual to enact them. A few rites, such as *Rites of Greeting and Leave-taking*, involve interactions between two Gurahl. Others derive more benefits from an increase in the number of participants. The following rites are specific to Gurahl and reflect their unique relationships to the world, the Umbra and each other. Any variations from the rules set forth in **Laws of the Wild** appear in the description of the rite itself.

Basic Rites

Rites of Greeting and Leave-taking (Accord) — These simple rites consist of formal acknowledgements of the presence of another Gurahl, particularly when a werewolf enters or leaves the protected lands of another of her kind. The basic rite for first-time meetings between Gurahl consist of language and body gestures that tender mutual respect. Variations take into account such qualities as age, Rank and other marks of status. The rite used when a Gurahl of higher Rank enters or leaves the territory of a Gurahl of lower Rank differs slightly but significantly from the one employed with a Gurahl of lower Rank petitions to enter or depart from the territory of a Gurahl of higher Rank. Unlike many Gurahl rites, these require at least two Gurahl. Failure to perform these rites may result in the loss of an Honor Renown Trait. At the Storyteller's discretion, a Gurahl who faithfully performs these simple yet elegantly polite rites may receive an additional Honor Renown Trait as a reward for good roleplaying.

Rite of Rending the Gauntlet (Mystical) — Gurahl use this rite to enter the Umbra since they do not step sideways as Garou do. The werewolves




have such a close tie to the physical world that they must physically rip a hole in the Gauntlet to enable themselves to enter the Umbra. To accomplish this feat, the Gurahl transforms into Bjornen form, tears an opening into the Umbral plane and steps through the "hole in the world." The opening seals itself immediately after the Gurahl has passed through it. This action invokes the Delirium in any creature normally subject to it who happens to witness the Gurahl stepping through a rent in the world. The Gurahl makes a Static Gnosis Challenge against half the local Gauntlet rating (*Enigmas* and *Primal-Urge* allow retests) in order to successfully complete this rite. The Gurahl may spend Gnosis points on a one-for-one basis to take others into the Umbra along with him. The Gurahl must make physical contact with anyone he brings with him into the Umbra, although groups may join hands with only one of them actually holding the hand of the Gurahl.

This action constitutes a rite rather than a Gift because any Gurahl, regardless of Rank or auspice, may learn how to rend the Gauntlet. In fact, a Gurahl does not leave her Buri-Jaan until she knows this simple but extremely vital rite. Only Gurahl with the *Umbral Affinity* Merit may enter the Umbra in any other fashion.

Rite of the Changing Moon (Mystical) — This rite marks the Gurahl's passage from one auspice to another. The subject of the rite undertakes a process of ritual cleansing, including a ceremonial bath and a day-long fast. At the end of the period of purification, he burns an item that symbolizes his old auspice — such as a toy for Arcas or a wooden knife for Uzmati. The Gurahl then adorns himself in clothing and face paint representative of his new auspice. To complete the rite, the Gurahl presents himself to any other participants (who may have entered his territory specifically to take part in this rite), formally stating his name and (new) auspice. The other participants return his greeting, again using his name and new auspice title. This completes the formal portion of the rite. A celebration of some sort usually follows. This rite obviously takes more than a few minutes to complete. No Traits are risked and no challenges are required, but this rite should be played out as fully as time and playing environment permit. The Storyteller may rule that the Gurahl needs to absent himself from the game for a period of time to indicate his preparations, or he may allow the Gurahl to undertake the ritual cleansing between sessions. Storyteller and player should work together to make this rite a meaningful one.

Rite of the Healing Winds (Accord) — Gurahl use this ceremony to cleanse the land of toxic poisons or other noxious substances, whether in gaseous or liquid form. This rite also counteracts airborne viruses and biological agents. The Gurahl enters the Umbra (using *Rend the Gauntlet*), where she summons and binds a Chinook-spirit. The Gurahl sends that spirit to the affected place, where the spirit's purifying cold scours clean the land, water, air and any creatures or vegetation found in the targeted location, ridding them of any toxins that might have infected them. The Chinook-



spirit's presence drops the temperature in the affected area up to 10 degrees; this effect lasts no more than 24 hours and causes no permanent harm to local animals and vegetation. The Ice Stalkers often gather in groups in the Umbra, where they summon and bind Chinook-spirits to send to other Gurahl whose lands require purification. The offering of the proper chiminage to the spirit becomes part of the enactment of the rite. The rite takes as long to complete as is necessary for the Gurahl to enter the Umbra, summon and bind the spirit and dispatch it to the needy land.

Rite of the River-Portent (Mystical) — Gurahl use this rite for predicting the future. Using his claws, a Gurahl snags a fish from a stream, splits open the fish's belly and reads the omens contained within the fish's entrails. The information gleaned from this rite usually pertains to the Gurahl enacting the rite and involves events in the immediate future. The Gurahl may not obtain the fish through the use of *Fiddlefish*, but must catch the fish by normal means while in Ursine or Bjornen form. The Gurahl must win a Static Physical Challenge to determine if he can catch a fish, then a Static Mental Challenge against eight Traits (retest with *Enigmas*) in order to "read" the omens. The Storyteller should inform the player of some event involving the character that is likely to occur within the next 15 minutes of play.

Rite of True Mating (Mystical) — Gurahl use this rite to find a suitable mate from among Kinfolk. Only Gurahl who have reached full adulthood (i.e., have passed from their Arcas auspice) may learn this rite, since werebears frown on casual acts of procreation. To enact the rite, the Gurahl fashions a small bag. Into this bag she places a drop of her own blood and a cutting of hair. The Gurahl wears this bag around her neck for three days and nights. After this period of time has elapsed, the bag acts as a homing beacon, pulling the Gurahl in the direction of a Kinfolk suitable for mating purposes. (Of course, once the Gurahl finds the selected individual, she must woo the targeted Kinfolk by normal means.) The Gurahl invests a Gnosis Trait in the making of the bag.

Rite of Replenishment (Mystical) — This simple rite, while it takes some time to perform, enables participating Gurahl to replace lost Gnosis. The Gurahl involved in the rite must find a suitable place — either in the Umbra or in the physical world — in which to conduct the rite. For every 15 minutes spent dancing and intoning chants to Gaia and the Great Bear, each participant regains one Gnosis Trait. No challenges are necessary, but the rite must fulfill the necessary conditions of time and place in order to be effective.

Intermediate Rites

Rite of Finding the Ancient Cache (Mystical) — With this rite, Gurahl may locate hidden sites containing ancient treasures of their people. Before the Gurahl withdrew during the War of Rage, they secreted many of their treasures and pieces of lore deep within the earth. Sometimes these Gurahl set powerful bound spirits to guard these places; other treasures lie under the protection of hibernating Gurahl elders. Enacting this rite gives the partici-



pating Gurahl a sense of the location of the hidden cache. Successive performances of this rite clarify the original pull. Eventually, the rite draws the Gurahl to the exact location and opens a gateway or passage to the cache's hiding place. If the cache lies in an Umbral hiding place, the Gurahl must *Rend the Gauntlet* in order to gain access to it. Once the Gurahl discovers the location of the cache and goes to the spot, she must then discover how to open the locks or break the seals or dispel the wards that prevent the actual treasure from falling into the hands of intruders. The form of this rite consists of a long, slow and intricately choreographed dance containing movements and steps that recreate the actions of a search party.

The participating Gurahl must spend enough Gnosis Traits to enact the rite (as set out in **Laws of the Wild**) each time they perform it. (Fewer Traits result in a longer period of time and a lesser advancement toward learning the location of the cache.) When the cache is located, the Gurahl may need to win a series of challenges in order to unlock the secret of the hiding place.

Rite of the Pure Land (Accord) — Gurahl use this rite as a means of purifying a specific area, ridding it of pollution, sickness, the results of natural disasters such as brushfires and earthquakes or Wyrms-taint. This rite re-establishes any broken connections between Gaia and the distressed piece of land. The Gurahl must mix her blood with a handful of soil from the land needing purification. (Naturally, the player need only describe her action to the Storyteller; no actual blood is shed!) The Gurahl uses the paste made from the blood and dirt to draw a line around the perimeter of the area. A Gurahl may use this rite to cleanse as large an area as she wishes, but she takes damage to herself from blood loss in proportion to the amount of blood she spills to make enough paste for the blighted area. For each square mile the Gurahl purifies, she takes one health level of damage. A group of Gurahl may perform this rite and cleanse larger areas with less damage to themselves. Ritual dances and healing prayers to Gaia and spirits of purification or cleansing (spoken in the Gurahl tongue) accompany the drawing of the line and serve as a means of focusing Gaia's power. If a Gurahl acquires more than two health levels of damage while performing this rite, the Storyteller may require a Physical Challenge from the character in order for the rite to continue.

Rite of the Ban (Accord) — This rite, when enacted, prevents the spread of secrets that might cause harm to the Gurahl or their Kinfolk. The rite serves as a mental deterrent by blocking the target from communicating specific information in any way. The most common usage of this rite prevents humans who have witnessed a Gurahl change forms or who have benefited from the Gurahl's magical healing abilities or who have been brought into a Gurahl's Den from telling anyone of their experiences. The Ban prevents the subject from writing, speaking or otherwise imparting their knowledge to anyone. The rite does not remove the information from the target's mind unless coercion is used at a later date to force an individual to overcome the



Ban. The power of the rite is strong enough such that it actively removes the sensitive pieces of knowledge from the target's mind, becoming a mystical self-destruct mechanism.

Gurahl often willingly undergo this rite if they plan to spend long periods of time among non-Gurahl or around Garou in order to prevent them from unwittingly giving away secrets of the breed. In ancient times, when Gurahl acted as teachers for the other Changing Breeds, the *Rite of the Ban* was not necessary. Since the War of Rage, however, few Gurahl have gone into the world without having the rite performed on them to prevent them from revealing information that might harm them or be harmful in the wrong hands.

To perform the rite, the Ritemaster must intone a hypnotic chant, stating the nature of the information affected by the Ban. The soothing chant lulls the targeted individual into a state of near-slumber (similar to a hypnotic trance) from which she awakens refreshed and unaffected — except for the inner prohibition placed by the Ban. At the end of the rite, the Gurahl must spend a Willpower Trait and win a Mental Challenge against the target, unless the target relents (as Gurahl asking for the Ban usually do).

Rite of the Freed Spirit (Mystical) — This dangerous and powerful rite enables a Gurahl (or several Gurahl) to sever the bond between a Bane and a fomor, thus returning the possessed individual to his original, untainted state. Most Gurahl are reluctant to perform this rite, which places the ritemaster in a position of grave danger. When friends, lovers or companions have fallen prey to this hideous transformation, however, Gurahl who know this rite may decide to risk themselves in order to rescue the victim. A fomor usually comes to this rite unwillingly, a prisoner of the Gurahl who wishes to save him. The rite takes place in the Umbra, where the Bane inhabiting the targeted creature is clearly visible. The Gurahl must trace a mystical pattern in the air above the bound body of the target using a dagger consecrated to Gaia. The action of the rite severs the connection that binds the Bane to the human form. The Gurahl sacrifices a permanent Gnosis Trait and a Willpower Trait to this rite, then engages in a Static Mental Challenge versus nine Traits. If the Gurahl succeeds, the separation is accomplished and the individual returns to her pre-fomori state. The Bane leaves the vicinity for a period of 24 hours and may not re-inhabit its former host. The dangerous nature of the rite manifests if the Gurahl does not successfully perform it (i.e., if the player fails the challenge and any retests). Failure either results in the death of both the Gurahl and the fomor or in the death of the fomor and the transfer of the Bane into the body of the Gurahl who performed the rite. The Storyteller should determine which of these events happens if the rite fails.



Advanced Rites

Rite of the Long Sleep (Mystical) — The Gurahl use this rite to place an individual into a state that resembles suspended animation or hibernation. While in this state of being, the targeted creature does not age. Her bodily functions slow down almost to a standstill, respiration and heartbeat drop to the absolute minimum necessary to sustain life, and the subject does not need sustenance. In this fashion, it is possible to sustain Incapacitated individuals indefinitely, preserving their life force until they can receive natural or magical healing to restore them to full functionality. Gurahl have used this rite on numerous occasions to save the lives of other Changing Breeds (including the Garou), as well as humans who have undergone massive trauma to their bodies and cannot receive immediate attention. The use of this rite on a vampire places that creature into torpor. The Gurahl must set the conditions that determine the length of the target's stasis during the performance of the rite. Phrases like "Do not awaken until the next hard frost" or "Rise when the moon next reaches its fullest phase" provide a time frame for the length of time encompassed by the rite. If the target of the rite is Incapacitated, no challenge is necessary to effect the rite, though the Gurahl must spend a permanent Gnosis Trait. If the target is conscious and unwilling (often the case with vampires), the Gurahl must succeed in a Mental Challenge in order to effect the rite.

Rite of Fighting the Death Bear (Mystical) — This extremely powerful and seldom performed ritual allows — if successfully carried out — a Gurahl to return a departed soul to its body if the individual has been dead too long for the Gurahl to use the Gift: *Gaia's Breath*. This rite actually wrests the spirit from the realm of the dead and brings it back to the world of the living. To perform this rite, the Gurahl must first enter the Umbra through the *Rite of Rending the Gauntlet*. Once in the Umbra, the Gurahl calls upon Mangi the Death Bear using the appropriate forms of chiminage before issuing a challenge to the Incarna for the soul of the departed individual.

The second part of the rite involves Umbral combat with the Death Bear. In order to retrieve the lost spirit, the Gurahl must defeat Mangi. If the Gurahl loses, the rite fails and the Gurahl is cast out of the Umbra. If the Gurahl should die in battle, Mangi occasionally claims the spirit of the Gurahl instead of the target of the rite, allowing the deceased spirit to return to its body as if the Gurahl had succeeded in the performance of this rite.

Because the risk is so great, Gurahl rarely perform this rite — and then only on other Gurahl. The Gurahl must engage the Death Bear in combat in the Umbra, using the rules for Umbral combat given in **Laws of the Wild**. The Storyteller should use appropriate stats for Mangi, remembering that this spirit is an Incarna. The Gurahl should have a reasonable chance of defeating the Death Bear (who, after all, simply reconstitutes itself when it "dies"). This rite automatically fails if used on an individual eligible for



Gaia's Breath and is not intended for use on anyone who has failed to respond to the use of *Gaia's Breath*. It simply offers an alternative for a werewolf who has been dead too long for *Gaia's Breath* to affect him. Only one attempt may ever be made on an individual.

Merits and Flaws

Gurahl may select Merits and Flaws according to the guidelines given in **Laws of the Wild**. Characters may have any Merits or Flaws available to Garou characters, with the following exceptions:

Aptitudes: *Ambidextrous*, *Daredevil*

Awareness: *Pulse of the City*

Gurahl Ties (instead of Garou Ties): *Social Outcast*, *Unworthy*

Human Society: No restrictions

Mental: *Weak-Willed*

Physical: **Strict Carnivore*, other Merits or Flaws may need modification in order to apply to Gurahl

Psychological: **Pack Mentality*

Supernatural: **Banned Transformation*, ** Forced Transformation*, ** Gaia's Fury*, **Limited Affinity to Gaia*, **Moon Bound*, **Natural Channel*, **Sign of the Wolf*, **Slip Sideways*, **Taint of Corruption*

Items preceded with an asterisk (*) are forbidden to Gurahl. Others are merely uncommon.

Early Maturation (3 Trait Supernatural Merit)

Due to circumstances occurring before your First Change, you emerged as an auspice other than Arcas. Perhaps you experienced your First Change late in life and had left your "childhood" years behind. Perhaps your early life contained so many stresses and traumas that you grew up before your time, never experiencing the simple pleasures and carefree activities of childhood — thrusting you into an auspice associated with a later stage in life. Whatever the specifics, you begin play as any auspice other than Arcas, whether Uzmati, Kojubat, Kieh or Rishi. This Merit differs from the *Rip Van Winkle* Merit in that the Gurahl is not one of the newly awakened Gurahl from the past but a recent addition to the Gurahl population. The character must choose her beginning Auspice Gift from the auspice she begins play with. Thus, if a Gurahl with this Merit begins as a Rishi, she should choose a Level One Rishi Gift as her auspice Gift rather than the Level One Gifts available to the Arcas (or any other) auspice.

Garou Companion (3 Trait Supernatural Merit)

Despite the long history of hatred between Gurahl and Garou, you have managed to acquire a werewolf's friendship. Both of you have to work hard to keep this relationship quiet lest your peers (and the Garou's packmates) learn of your association and censure you for it — or worse. You value your friendship for the insights you receive about the volatile, hot-tempered race of Garou and



for the steadfast loyalty of your friend. Your Garou companion may come from any of the tribes, even those normally hostile to the Gurahl. You see each other rarely and only occasionally travel together, but you feel that this bond you share is an important step toward healing the damage done by the War of Rage. Your Storyteller will work out the details of your companion.

Umbral Affinity (3 Trait Supernatural Merit)

This Merit allows you to enter the Umbra in the same manner as Garou, without having to rend the Gauntlet physically. You need only concentrate on a reflective surface in order to "step sideways" (using the rules detailed in *Laws of the Wild*).

Rip Van Winkle (3-6 Trait Supernatural Merit)

You woke from a long slumber and now you find yourself a true stranger in a world you no longer recognize. Maybe you slept for decades; maybe your sleep encompassed more than a century. In any case, you have much to learn about the modern world. On the one hand, you are not a total innocent: Chances are, you have passed your childhood and perhaps have even attained the maturity of middle age, so your mindset tends toward a greater sense of wisdom and sensibility. On the other hand, you have lost many of your memories of who you were and what you knew. You know that you are a Gurahl, and you remember some of the Gifts you once leaned, but so much lies buried in the fog of the past. In general, however, this new world elates and surprises you. It seems that Gaia or the Great Bear has decided to give you a second chance at making your way in the world and doing what you were placed here to do. Maybe this time, you can avoid the mistakes of the past — you're sure there must have been some.

Gurahl who begin the game with this Merit may choose an auspice other than Arcas as their initial auspice. This Merit also enables a beginning Gurahl a broader choice of Gifts, although he must still comply with the limitations in the number of Gifts he may choose as a starting character. This Merit requires the permission of the Storyteller since it may present problems in the chronicle to have a character with memories from the Middle Ages, pre-Colombian times or the early 19th century. Characters with this Merit should also pay attention to their initial Abilities, since few slumberers have modern skills such as *Computer*, *Drive*, *Firearms* or *Streetwise*.

The Trait cost for this Merit determines the beginning auspice for the Gurahl who possesses it.

3 Traits The Gurahl begins as an Uzmati and may choose her beginning auspice Gift from either the Arcas or Uzmati categories.

4 Traits The Gurahl begins as a Kojubat and may choose her beginning auspice Gift from the Arcas, Uzmati or Kojubat lists.

5 Traits The Gurahl begins as a Kieh and may select her beginning auspice Gift from the Arcas, Uzmati, Kojubat or Kieh categories.

6 Traits The Gurahl begins as a Rishi and may choose her beginning auspice Gift from any of the auspice lists of Level One Gifts.



Dancing Fool (1 Trait Psychological Flaw)

Despite the stigma the Gurahl attach to public displays of dancing, you can't help but respond to music. Your feet start tapping, you sway to the rhythms, and before you know it, there you are, out on the floor. You regularly go club-hopping, seek out square dances — you name it, you're there! You're aware that other Gurahl look down on you for giving in to your urge. The symbolic reminder of the cruel treatment of bears by humans grates too much on their sensibilities. Their disapproval, however, doesn't stop you from indulging yourself. You are one Trait down on all Social Challenges against other Gurahl who know of your weakness.

Attracted to Humans (2 Trait Psychological Flaw)

Humans and their society fascinate you. You enjoy watching their activities, listening in on their conversations and trying to fathom their motives. In Homid form, this fascination does not pose a problem for you. If, however, you are in Ursus or Bjornen form, humans generally react in a strongly negative manner to your appearance in their midst. Unfortunately, the pull of human company is so compelling that you frequently forget to shift into Homid (or Arthren) form to speak with them. Whenever you are in Ursus or Bjornen form, you must win a Mental Challenge in order to remember to shift into a more human-friendly form in order to join a group of humans. This Flaw is particularly appropriate for ursine Gurahl.

Clawless (3 Trait Physical Flaw)

The claws of a bear serve as more than just weapons. They assist in balance, provide traction when traveling on slick or uneven surfaces and serve as scoops for snagging pawfuls of tasty grubs from rotten logs or spearing fish in a river. For some reason, your Crinos, Bjornen and Ursus forms do not come with claws attached. You're not sure why, but this is how Gaia (or Great Ursa) made you and you just have to live with it. You are down a Physical Trait in any maneuver involving movement or grasping when in a form that would normally possess claws. Furthermore, you are down two Traits in all combats in which you would normally use "natural weaponry." Needless to say, you cannot do aggravated damage with your non-existent claws. You cannot leave messages in trees or on logs unless you carve them with a knife — and you need hands, not paws, in order to accomplish this task. (This Flaw is the closest to a "metis" disfigurement that exists in Gurahl society.) Fortunately, you retain normal fingernails and toenails in Homid and Arthren form.

Abandoned Cub (4 Trait Social Flaw)

Although you experienced your First Change alone, like many Gurahl, unlike other werebears, you never received a summons to lead you to a mentor. Your lack of a Buri-Jaan forced you to learn about your strange new "self" on your own, coming to terms with your newfound "curse" (or "blessing") without recourse to outside help. Perhaps you went insane for a time; you may have even required temporary institutionalization until you



realized that you were not going crazy. Maybe you ran away from civilization entirely, trying to hide your deformity in the wilderness. Eventually, you made contact with Gurahl society and found other werebears willing to take you under their wing and teach you the facts of life as a Gurahl. Now you know what you are, but the knowledge came at great cost and too late for you to avoid some of the psychological hang-ups caused by your early traumatic experiences as a Gurahl cub. If you choose this Flaw, you may not begin the game with the knowledge of any rites or rituals. You may not start out with the *Rites Background* or *Rituals Ability*. You may acquire knowledge of rituals during the course of play or through buying them with experience gained from play. Your Storyteller may allow you to acquire a Buri-Jaan (or some other mentor figure) once you have become part of Gurahl society.

Fetishes and Talens

Though Gurahl do not have the innate need to accumulate possessions, they do sometimes fashion useful fetishes and talens. Since many werebears are naturally inclined toward beauty and creativity, Gurahl fetishes often please the eye as well as serve as functional houses for the spirits bound within them. Follow the guidelines in **Laws of the Wild** for attuning and using fetishes and talens.

Talen

Talens are one-use items. One Fetish Trait may allow a Gurahl character to have several talens, dependent on the Spirit Keeper's decision. For the most part, Gurahl have access to the talens described in **Laws of the Wild**. In addition, the following talen is unique (though not necessarily exclusive) to their species.

Ursa's Healing Balm

Fetish Trait Cost: 1 for two applications **Gnosis:** 3 **Spirit Affinity:** Healing, Honey, Bee.

This sweet-smelling paste looks and feels like honey. Spread on a wound, the paste heals up to three health levels of damage (including lethal and aggravated). The substance also seals bleeding wounds, acts as an antiseptic to prevent infection and lowers fevers.

Fetishes

Unless otherwise indicated or prohibited by the Storyteller or Spirit Keeper, Gurahl may possess and use any fetishes normally available to Garou (see **Laws of the Wild**). The following fetishes are especially appropriate for Gurahl, though Storytellers or Spirit Keepers may allow other Changing Breeds to acquire them as well.



Claws of the Cave Bear

Fetish Trait Cost: 3 **Gnosis:** 4 **Spirit Affinity:** Bear Spirits (particularly Cave Bear), War

These daggers contain slivers of fossilized bone from prehistoric cave bears. Used by a Gurahl, these fetish weapons inflict aggravated damage on their opponents, though they do not do any more damage than a normal dagger. When in the presence of a Wyrm-creature, these daggers give off a soft warning growl, making it difficult for the Pattern Breaker or its minions to surprise anyone who carries one of these weapons. While these daggers do not have the same status as Garou klaives, Gurahl privileged to possess one of the Claws of the Cave Bear do not lightly lend it to another. Loss of one of these weapons incurs no Renown penalty unless the specific circumstances dictate otherwise.

Mother Tongues

Fetish Trait Cost: 4 **Gnosis:** 5 **Spirit Affinity:** Appropriate Changing Breed Totems (see description below)

Intricately carved stones that resemble the fetish animals popularized by the recent interest in shamanism, these stones are unique fetishes. Each of the "tongues" allows the user to understand and speak the secret language of the Changing Breeds it represents. (Physical limitations may restrict the speaker's ability to form the words, thus causing her to speak a sometimes heavily accented version of the language.) Only a handful of these stones still exist. The Gurahl hold them in trust against the day when they feel they can once more trust the other Changing Breeds enough to share their knowledge with them. Currently, the Gurahl hold in their possession (safely stored with their most respected elders or carefully loaned out to worthy bearers) Tongues that allow them to speak and understand the languages of the Bastet, Corax, Garou, Nuwisha, Ratkin and, it is rumored, Mokolé. Gurahl elders still debate whether or not Mother Tongues exist which enable knowledge of the secret languages of the Rokea, Ananasi or Nagah.

Soul Brush

Fetish Trait Cost: 4 **Gnosis:** 5 **Spirit Affinity:** Tree, Beauty, Truth

Looking like a slender twig slightly frayed at one end, this fetish, when used by a Gurahl artist, serves as a paint brush with which to paint a portrait of a subject's true nature as in the Gift: *Eyes of the Soul*. Supposedly conceived of and created by Turgiv Bruzov, a noted Gurahl artist who smuggled perhaps half a dozen of these fetishes out of Russia following World War II, these brushes are rarities — highly prized by Gurahl despite their usual disavowal of material possessions. During the period in which Eastern Europe's Changing Breeds were cut off from the rest of the world, Bruzov disappeared and, with him, the knowledge of how to make these fetishes. Some Gurahl speak of questing for him in the Umbra in order to recover the secret of making these priceless fetishes.



Net of Stars.

Fetish Trait Cost: 4 **Gnosis:** 5 **Spirit Affinity:** Bear Spirits, Star Spirits

This finely woven net appears similar in appearance to a fishing seine. When activated, it casts a silvery glow that resembles starlight. If cast upon the water, this fetish net fills with enough fish to feed up to 20 normal bears or several Gurahl in Crinos form (with the appropriate appetite). When successfully thrown at an enemy in combat, the Net traps its victim in an almost unbreakable hold, requiring the person or creature trapped to win three successive Static Challenges involving Strength related Attributes in order to break free. Otherwise, movement is impossible until the Gurahl using the Net releases the victim. If a Gurahl uses the Net to troll a contaminated river, pond, lake or other finite body of water (i.e., not the ocean), the Net has a purifying effect on the water.





Mokolé

The Wisdom of Gaia

Sun sees you, child, and welcome. Please come in, and be comfortable. The day is very hot, and I can see you're thinking about a cool spot rather than listening to me. Perhaps we can find a way to make those dovetail, but first, let us make greetings.

Who am I, and how do I know you, you ask? To answer the first part, you may call me Annika Warding the Clutch of Yemassee Reach. To answer the second part, I remember you. You came to me once before, likewise young and confused about the strange changes that had upended your so-settled life. You heard the Kings call across the centuries to something in your blood — your very soul — and something answered back. You knew how to find your way here without thinking, perhaps, except for this unusual feeling of remembrance?

Ah, forgive me. Memory, even Gaia's, must occasionally be jogged. Come in, and you shall understand.

When We Were Kings

Breathe deeply, and let the smoke carry memory. This is what we call Mnesis — the great memory that all our kind can reach. This is where our time begins. This is the time of Kings, what is Was.

We were called many things in those days — Dinosaur Kings, Lizard Kings, Dragon Kings, Yilané and words that human tongues cannot say. We were the first upon Gaia, caring for Her and our Kin. You would call them dinosaurs. I can sometimes recall days spent in debate in the House of Qortilch, watching the hatchlings playing games that were old when I knew them, seeing the herds of hornfaces moving across the plains. There were



others who could change their shape in those days — bird-folk, shark-folk and some who became strange, hairy things that carried their eggs inside them. We call them mammals today. We lived and thrived and cared for Gaia for 150 million years, a civilization of the Mesozoic.

The time of the Kings ended with the coming of a mighty WonderWork spawned by the Dissolver. No one knows quite what happened, and this is why Memory fails us here. Those who saw it did not live to pass on the memory to the rest, and perhaps it is for the best — I for one would not want to see whatever it was that could be powerful enough to wipe life clean from the Mother. Why it happened is likewise lost to us. Perhaps it was simply time to clear things away as the Dissolver has always done. Perhaps it was something more. We do know that such a thing happened before the time of the Kings, one even greater, that left Mother nearly barren. Some of us did survive, with our Kin, and the People were born again, but never again would there be a time like the time of the Kings.

First and Last Times

Humans came — scabbling mammals, more like rats to our senses than the apes that the schoolbooks teach. Our job was not teach them nor guard them nor be anything to them. They simply existed, although the foolish ones quickly became good eating. We had no human Kin then; we were still breeding with the reptile Kin that the WonderWork had not destroyed. As far we were concerned, the humans had to prove themselves, learn how to make and use tools, show that they were more than simply furry creatures of living need. And when they did, one of the last Kings, Two Thumbs, stole the shape of a human and sought a mate among the humans. From her and her mate, Lightning Crashes, came seven children — seven Mokolé that renewed us after the loss of the Kings. The greatest of these was Mokolé-Mbembe; one of our tribes still bears his name. Some say that he still lives in the heart of Entoban — Africa in human words.

Gaia washed Her face with ice four times to cleanse it of the Dissolver's taint. We moved with our human Kin to find warmer weather — even today, we prefer the warmer climes. During that time, some of the breeds among the Mokolé divided and spread, losing Mnesis in exchange for different gifts from the mother. One group, who bore feathers, remained with Sun, giving up their Mnesis for the wonders of the spirit world. They became the Corax, the wereravens, who serve as Gaia's messengers. Another, the limbless ones, gave up their memory and became Gaia's judges, with the power to gaze into the hearts of the other changers and punish the wicked. These, called Nagah, are closest to us in heart and mind.

For so long, we lived in peace with the other shifting creatures. Our Shrouded Suns explained to each shifter the purpose that Gaia meant for them — to shelter humans, to carry Her messages, to clean and groom Her form, to be Her eyes and ears. So much happened then — my teacher refused



to tell much of this, and I suppose I can't blame him. For those who lived this time, or who remember it, the situation of now makes the hurt all the greater.

Humans have a saying — all good things must come to an end. This time did end when the Designer went insane, trapping the Dissolver in her webs. The act sent the world spiraling out of balance. Without the Dissolver to clear away the old, the new could not exist. Not only did it unbalance Gaia's creation, but the shifters went a little mad as well. What came next would affect us all forever.

War of Rage, War of Shame


The difficult thing about memory is that we must remember the bad alongside the good, else how do we prevent the bad from returning? Who shall sing to honor the fallen ones if there are none who remember they ever existed? Keep that thought in mind as I show you this next.

How the first War of Rage began, we do not know. The Garou blame the Gurahl, the Bastet blame the Garou, and the Nagah blamed themselves. As Nagah Kin, we also blame ourselves. Was there something that we should have seen coming, something that would have warned us, long before the Garou started to smash our eggs and destroy our wallows? The plot and counterplot that led to slaughter will be forever beyond us: It is a path of Mnesis we are forbidden by Gaia to look upon.

The Garou brought misery untold to us during their War. They encouraged humans to take up "slaying the dragon," and sent their disguised Kin into our wallows as spies. They set fire to our forests and jungles when we would not be enticed out, their mystics poisoned the waters and bribed spirits to sabotage our magic. Worst of all, the Garou slipped into the spirit world, where we could not follow, and attacked us from behind. Some say that the Garou even started calling the Dissolver "the Wyrn" as an insult to us and pointed us out as the image of the Dissolver. The word is still used today, I am told.

The other Bête fared little better than we. Other shifters died out completely, leaving only our memories of them that they ever existed. The Gurahl, the Nagah, the Grondr, the Camazotz, the Apis — it is a sad litany of the lost. Some of us retain them in Mnesis. Should you be so fortunate, hold tightly to it, and know that this is all that remains of these children of Gaia.

The wars severed many of our connections with our streams — our tribes, if you like. You and I are Mokolé-mbembe, and both of us were born here in North America, but did you know that you have Kin in Africa, in Australia, or the East? That is a result of the war: We could not take the chance of alerting the wolves to our presence or to the location of wallows. You will see this when you meet one of our brethren of the East. Without our dreams to remember, they dreamed new forms for themselves, created themselves into entirely new and different images.



Those of us who had fled to the East found no haven there. The blood-devils of the East tricked the Changing Breeds into attacking each other, and all suffered equally. A truce finally ended that war, but the damage had already been done. Still, with the Beast Courts at peace now, the changers came together to save Gaia, and such peace brought other shifters to find homes and Kin among the people. I am told that the Zhong Lung, the Mokolé of the East, are very close to the Same-Bito, shark-changers and warriors who swim the vast Pacific Ocean. In fact, the Breeds may be clutchmates sometimes, and the Same-Bito serve the Zhong Lung as guards in exchange for tutelage.

During the war, many Mokolé-mbembe fled Africa to the west, swimming in our varna or dragon shapes to find shelter. We arrived to find lands plentiful with game in warm climates, much as we liked, and native worshippers of Turtle who were friendly to us. Over time, we became Kin to them and to one of the varna of wolves, called the Croatan. A new varna even came about when our people bred with the native Gila monster of the Southwest.

Such beautiful times could not last. The Garou came again, and brought their greedy Kin with them. Even worse, their activities awakened a dread Dissolver-beast called Eater-of-Souls. The Croatan, fearing that nothing could stop the monster, made a terrible sacrifice. All of them — men, women, young, old, children, elders — enacted a great rite that sent Eater-of-Souls out of this world. It was done, but at such terrible price. All that is left of them is a word carved on a tree and what we remember of them.

Here, child, don't weep so. Yes, Memory can be very painful and sad. It is both blessing and burden from Gaia. Without it, how much would be lost to time? Would you have their sacrifice be in vain, that none remember what they did? Then hold close those memories, no matter how they hurt, and realize that Gaia has given us great responsibility, not only to Her, but to Her other children as well.

The Duties

How is it we understand each other, you ask. Listen to yourself, hatchling, you're not speaking English. We speak in the Dragon's Tongue, the language of the Kings. You recall it through your Memory. When I awoke your Memory to show you the past, you heard the Dragon's Tongue again after many years. With Memory jogged, you find it easy to take up again. Yes, like riding a bicycle.

I spoke of responsibility earlier. It's more than just having Memory. We have a responsibility to use that Memory wisely. Further, we have responsibility in how we live and work so that our wallows can thrive and our race can survive. These are the important things, hatchling. Even if you listen to nothing else, listen now. Each of us has duties that are named to us by Lord Sun, but we must all follow them, not just pick and choose what suits us. Failing these is a sure ticket to reprimands, loss of status, even punishment.

The Rising Sun says Cull the Fallen, those who have turned away from Mother Cow and Sun. This can mean vampires, fomori, Dissolver-creatures,



humans who wreck Gaia with their machines or Mokolé who have fallen to the Dissolver. We must also avoid unlawful prey, to make sure we don't overhunt an area, or provoke attack by hunting other shapeshifters. These days, we cannot kill every human who sins against Gaia, or we'll lose a dozen reptile Kin for every dead human. So many of us were killed by the Garou that we don't have the manpower for big Dissolver-hunts these days.

The Noonday Sun says *Let No Shade Accuse You*. Be fair and balanced in your judgements and avoid wasteful killing, whether that's in war or duels. We don't have enough of our own to waste in useless fighting. Above all, avoid mating with another Mokolé and creating misshapen offspring; these help neither Dragon nor us. We have enough rites to ensure that you can find a suitable mating partner.

The Setting Sun says *Guard the Wallow*. I am of this auspice, and this is my Duty, first and foremost. I must be sure that our children, our Kin, our aged and sick, and our sacred things are protected from any harm. I must shelter those who need help, especially a female who is with child, and respect the territory of our relatives like the Corax. It used to be that clutches would get into rivalries and scraps, and then there'd be killing. It's not that way anymore, thankfully, mostly because it's been drilled into everyone's heads that we're too few to waste. Unfortunately, there are still some Mokolé who go insane or fall to the Dissolver or who knows what else and kill a clutchmate. Be assured that they'll find punishment later, and it's almost always death. Guarding the wallow once simply meant fighting and foraging, but nowadays, I spend my time on the phone making sure that our wallow's land stays ours and that our reptile Kin are protected.

The Shrouded Sun says *The Veil Must Not Be Lifted*. This is common sense, child. Don't show your Dragon-form to those who don't need to see it, or they'll be hunting us before sundown! Rumors of dragons bring the hunters, whether they're crackpot humans or crackpot Garou. Perhaps it's for the best that the other Changers think we're just as extinct as the Kings.

Test the Clutch, says the Midnight Sun. The tricksters make sure that we're always on our toes; complacency is the enemy. It also ensures that we're ready for any challenge, and that we consider many paths and solutions, from traditional to unconventional. I suppose they're helpful in their way, but some of their pranks have nearly turned my scutes white.

The Decorated Sun says *All are of Gaia*. This sounds like a simple principle, but you'd be amazed how complex it can be. Everyone and everything on Gaia is of Her, and just you respect Mother Cow, you must respect Her creations. Everything has a purpose and is here for a reason, from the Kinfolk who help us survive to the humans to the other Awakened creatures. Respect your leaders and listen when someone has something to tell you. If someone needs help, help them or find someone who can, whether they're sick, troubled, wounded or dying. I think that much of our modern attitude comes from the very lack of true Mokolé. Many clutches don't have Crowned, and some of ours have a "clutch" of Kinfolk who maintain the



wallow and wait decades for the true ones to be born. Many of the places where our Kin are found — Africa, the Deep South, Central America, China, India — are stricken with deep poverty, and the social inequalities make it worse. Some Mokolé might be disinclined to follow this, except that Mnesis pricks them to remember their Kin by that which they themselves have lived. I have very vivid memories of being lashed by an overseer's whip, of being hungry. Since Mnesis doesn't distinguish between genders, males may have Memory of childbirth and females have Memory of genocide. It ensures that we cannot claim not to see the other person's side of things. I can't ignore my Kin's suffering, not when I've experienced what they have.

The Eclipsed Sun says Remember. Sun and Gaia made us Mokolé for a reason. We must practice this, or it's all for nothing. While we're often fighting for our lives, we still follow this Duty without too much trouble.

Gathers

No, we're not all duty and responsibility. We like to kick back and have fun once in a while like any other creature. That's what gathers are for. It's how we meet and get to know each other. As few as we are, we may go for months without seeing another of our kind — I know that I certainly feel like I'm on another planet sometimes when I haven't seen Mokolé or Kin for too long.

We learn of gathers happening through Mnesis and messages and how to handle ourselves by watching past events through Mnesis. Most have not changed all that much in the last, oh, five centuries or so. We tend to hold them before wars, during the solstices, when a Crowning takes office and a few other occasions. The solstices, which focus on the sun, tend to be a little more festive than most — both to celebrate Sun's longest day on the summer and to hasten his return in the winter.

A gather usually starts rather slow and solemn, with a lot of bowing and speeches and the like. When we begin to speak in meetings, or to introduce ourselves, we announce our full names. Most times we like the gathers to have all the aspects represented, but in these days, we're not always lucky. Some elders act in their stead, especially when we have no Crowned. The Decorated Suns make sure that we are not disturbed and coordinate events so we have what we need.

Gathers coordinate with the aspects, with something happening that represents each aspect at its time, starting at sunrise with the Rising Suns. The eldest tells us about new hatchlings, newly Changed Mokolé (yes, this would be the part where they talk about you), war plans if necessary, and anything else new. This is the time to look ahead to the future.

As Sun reaches his height, the Noonday Suns sit in judgement over any cases that require their authority, such as Kinfolk matters or violation of the Duties. The eldest Noonday Sun makes the rulings, but only when a consensus is reached among the other judges. If there is an impasse (a rare



thing, but it happens), they appeal to the Crowned. This is the time of the present, when the now is considered.

Now Sun sets and the time of Was, the past, approaches. The Setting Suns tell tales of the glories of the clutch, of the race, of the Kings. Honor is granted to those who have done great deeds, and we recognize those who have progressed in Rank. As evening sets in, the Midnight Suns perform a kind of storytelling called inwitting, where the tale-tellers bring us directly into the Memory of the Kings. It is difficult to describe to another who has only begun to taste Memory — as trite as it sounds, you'll really have to see it to believe it!

Those who are Shrouded Suns perform rituals to summon spirits and restore spiritual energy. They do this when Sun shows them the right time. If his face is hidden when we would begin, then the gather opens with rituals. If the day is sunny and bright throughout, then a canopy is brought to cover the Shrouded in the afternoon. If the whole day is cloudy, then the Shrouded are very busy indeed and see this as an ominous sign of much to do.

Night brings the Midnight Suns, and does it get crazy! We have songs and stories, food and drink, and much celebrating. During this time, the Midnight Suns turn things upside down, bringing the high down low and the reverse. By tradition, no reprisal can be taken for deeds done during this time, especially important if someone insults a Crowned or mocks the Duties. They pull some pretty strange pranks, and I prefer to sit some parts out myself. I guess that means I'm getting old.

As the sky reddens and Sun returns, so must we return to our lives. Another gather is over, and we go home to recover and await the next.

When you make your Rite of Passage and start coming to gathers, you will gain a new name, one you will speak in the Dragon's Tongue and give when you are asked at the gathers. You may call yourself something from your past — which one? very funny — or perhaps from the ethnic heritage you bear. This is followed by your auspice and your clutch name. With only these three things, most Mokolé can tell a little something about you and where you're from.

The Clutch

The clutch is that which holds Mokolé society together, more than where Sun stood when you were born or anything else. It goes back to the notion that clutches are created in the nest (sometimes from the same batch of eggs), that eggs are safer in the nest, and nests are safer when guarded. If you have no clutch, you have no one to help you learn or work rites. Not every Mokolé *must* join a clutch — some prefer to be solitary, like the grumpy old gators they are, and we leave them at that, and sometimes, there's not enough food in one area to support a clutch. It's just that a clutch will always be there for you, will always have your back, and, even if you don't love your clutchmates, they will stick by you.



Clutches can be of any amount from 2 to 30 Mokolé and Kin who number from the dozens to the hundreds. Yemassee Reach clutch has only about 10 Mokolé — we're a bit small, but we have large numbers of Kin, a few of them descendants of the original Yemassee tribe. We're not all from the same group of eggs, but it seems that way because of Mnesis and the structure of the clutch. Yemassee Reach was founded after our Mokolé-mbembe ancestors found the land made for a good wallow. Since then, many descendants have passed through, and all of the same clutch, because this was where our ancestors sank their roots in. It wouldn't matter where I was born — I would still be one of Yemassee Reach because my ancestors came from there and when they passed their Mnesis to me, I learned where I needed to be. You have that same Mnesis, where you and I remember meeting each other before. You have ancestors that came from this clutch and passed their Mnesis to you, and you returned. In this way, clutches can last for centuries, even longer. I hear that the Australian Mokolé, the Gumagan, have clutches that may date back to the Kings through Mnesis.

Camps

We don't have sects or groups within us, per se. We have the clutch, and that's usually enough. Occasionally, some smaller groups will emerge with very special purposes in mind. I tell you of them in the event that you get approached by someone claiming to be of a camp.

The Army of the Aten is a clutch of Rising Suns dedicated to preserving Sun. They mostly spend their time in the Umbra and are required to prove themselves in battle before they can join. There's maybe a dozen at one time — I've never counted. They're always on the lookout for the Dissolver and his works or artifacts in the spirit world that could help their fight. They've also destroyed vampires and werewolves who have fallen to the Dissolver. If they think a Corax or Mokolé is getting too cozy with the Dissolver, they'll deal with her and permanently.

The Nomads of Time I have only heard rumors of, and frankly I don't believe them, but the story is certainly interesting. It's said that they're Mokolé and Kin led by those who know *Sleep of the Dragon* and *Rite of the Sleeping Dragon*. They're supposed to be out in the tropics, in a few secret wallows. At any rate, they use *Sleep of the Dragon* to wait out time itself. They put their Kin and children into Dragon Sleep to ensure they have mates and children. They sleep while their human Kin work on plans. What sorts of plans, I don't know, but nor can I imagine why anyone would do this in the first place. I imagine the homids of recent years must think this is a dandy way to wait for investments to mature.

Of Breeding and Innocents

It must seem like I'm always nattering about breeding and children, and you're probably right. We have very few Dragon-folk now, so we must keep



up the breeding to ensure that we will still be here in the future, ready to remember what is coming. It has forever puzzled me why some Changers treat their Kin so poorly — why would you harm the very thing that can make or break you as a race? We revere our Kin greatly, if you haven't already figured this out. Many times, they are the only clutchmates an isolated Mokolé may have, or they may maintain the wallow while waiting for more true Mokolé to be born. We call our Kin the Eighth Sun, in honor of their role in our lives.

We have a number of rites and magical means to ensure that Mokolé can find appropriate mates. Of course, once they're found, the Mokolé still has to woo the prospective mate: You can't just barge in with a bouquet of flowers and call it a done deal. The Zhong Lung and some of the Makara have elevated mating to an art form. They call it the "play of clouds and rain," and have all sorts of books and pictures about the arts of love — pillow books, they call them. All this to ensure that mating is done with the right mate, at the right time, and produces either more Kin or a true Mokolé. So precious are our children to us that even Mother Gaia blesses our fertility.

But there is one mating which must never, ever take place. It brings only death and misery, and increases the troubles of Dragon's children as a whole. I speak of when one Mokolé mates with another. The result of this is a monster, what we call an Innocent. If it is a human child, it often tears its way through its mother and dies soon after reaching Sun's light. If it is from a reptile mother, it will be one of a clutch of deformed eggs. We fear these angry spirits because they find their way into the spirit-world where they harry us constantly if we attempt to enter — punishment for the parents' sins.

We're not saying that clutchmates can't be close or that two Mokolé may not care for each other deeply: Redwing and I have been friends since we were hatchlings. But never would we be mad enough to bring an Innocent into this world. If ever I fall that far, I would hope that the Unshading would deal with me very swiftly.

Gaia's Other Children

You have heard me talk of other shifters in passing. Mother Gaia made other children to fill the other duties that needed taking care of. Some to watch, some to listen, some to fight, some to teach — all had a purpose. In these days, however, it seems our greatest duty is to remember the fallen more than to remember the living.

Garou

There is little I can say about the wolf-kind without clenching my teeth. They have, in their arrogance, unbalanced the fight against the Dissolver by slaying their lawful brethren. As with any generality, some within their set have a grasp of their Duty while some presume to know other tasks that Gaia intends for them.



A clutchmate of mine, Redwing, recently fought beside their warriors and told me that while they are valiant in battle, they are unable to function while split into so many sets and subsets. As a whole, the wolves are not to be trusted, but each must be judged for her place in Today, not for an egg-smashing ancestor in Was. There is much we can learn from their internal conflicts as we regard the differences in our streams.

Ananasi

The spider-kind — a breed lost forever to the Dissolver. These diseased creatures were born of the Designer and brought to low purposes in the madness of the Unmaker. I pity their fate, but we must rebuke them for their failure, and by all means, kill them if you encounter them at the Dissolver's task.

Ratkin

Some who have known them call the rat-kind contemptible creatures living off the misfortune on humans... the rat-kind are succored by the Designer. They were placed in charge of keeping the human numbers in line. My memories call them neither friend nor foe; but I wonder: Did they lose sight of their Duty or are they just poor performers? On Gendasi, they are plentiful. Watch in one place long enough and they will appear. Their purpose is known to me only in memory; like many of the Bête, their actions of late seem without cause.

Bastet

Clearly, the cat-kind never lost the way. They continue to live true to the land and have similar goals to our own. I say, let them approach and leave our swamps cautiously. If they serve Gaia's ends, let them leave satisfied that they have friends in the marsh.

Nuwisha

I hear tales of coyote-kind so good at looking like Garou that we cannot tell them apart. I have never met one, at least to my knowledge — who knows, if they're really as clever as some claim. I understand that they are complicated personalities and accomplished tricksters, much like our Shining. They must be tolerated for their place and admonished when they fail Duty.

Gurahl

The healers, the bear-kind — the Gurahl were fierce warriors we never knew well. We taught them the *Sleep of the Dragon*, and they taught us new means of healing. We did not venture into their cold lands much, but our time with them was productive. They were slaughtered to extinction in the War of Rage over a matter of pride. I would like to believe that perhaps one or two are merely sleeping, not dead, but the passing of time holds little hope. With their absence, the Mother Cow may not heal.



Kitsune

The Kitsune are clever beasts. I have known a few, but mostly from the past. Sometimes we have understanding and happy encounters; most of the time, we avoid each other's path from mutual respect. They must share some connection with the Nuwisha, but I do not see it in my memory.

Corax

The bird-kind messengers of Mother are our cousins. Yes, birds are related to dinosaurs: Even the human scientists know what we've known for centuries. They choose to become guardians of the skies and follow their own Duty, passing news of the world onto Gaia. They're clever sorts, ready to talk your ear off at any provocation. The last time I met one, I think I managed to get in a dozen words at most.

Nagah

The Nagah were Gaia's lawbringers, the Unshading of all the Bête, the closest of all the Mother's creations to ourselves. They sprang from the Makara of India, I think — they gave up the Memory to be Gaia's lawgivers. They were another of the Changing Breeds lost during the wars. Perhaps their loss accounts for why so many of the Bête seemed to have lost their Duty.

Rokea

The shark-kind of the ocean. Much like we are, but perhaps a bit more less patient with the world. They protect the sea from the Dissolver and keep Mother's mysteries intact. Our relations are neutral. We may encounter each other briefly to indicate safe waters or good hunting, but little else. They have the sea, after all.

Vampires

The blood-devils are real. They are instruments of the Dissolver, consumers of human blood and given to unspeakable atrocities when hunger strikes. They drove us from our homelands in Khem, what the humans call Egypt. They interfered with the humans with cities and breeding. It was their work that drove the Beast Courts to war with each other. What greater proof do we need that the blood-devils are damned than that they cannot turn their faces to Sun? It is our duty to bring them to his light.

Wizards

Sunu, the spook-men, the Dreamspeakers, the Bata'a, who worship many gods to hedge their fates in the afterlife. Many once shared the land us on Entoban, on occasion in Gendasi and the island between that humans call Jamaica. The Hem-Ka Sobk once served many of our number with devoted worship in Africa. What remains of them, the Kheri Heb Ashau, continues this practice in distant lands. For every shaman or *houngan* that honors us and befriends us, there are twice as many sorcerers who are full of pride and arrogance and have no thought to any other way but their own.



Mummies

The mummies, I hope, are still around, but I see them only in distant Memory. They live forever and fight the Dissolver, and I'm certain they're still fighting somewhere. When one lives forever, what else can there be to do? Our memories have been helpful for their own remembrances when we have encountered each other, but lately our paths have not crossed. Perhaps they have forgotten us, along with their pasts.

Faeries

I've seen precious little of the fae and know even less. I saw a couple of goat-leggers, and once I saw a blue-skinned devil. There are these traveling kind, from Africa, called eshu. I hear they tell a good tale or two, and that's all I've ever heard about them. Memory speaks of them more like dreams than truth.

Ghosts

Yes, the stories of ghosts are very real and deadly serious. They say bad energy expelled in life can become something in the Umbra, not unlike animals passing into the Umbra as spirits. These spirits are unhappy ones and jealous of us because we have Sun's warmth.

The Lost Ones

We of all the Bete can recall those Changing Breeds that were lost to Garou slaughter during the Wars of Rage. Some like to joke about weremegatheriums and weresloths and the like as being the only fallen, but there are several breeds that exist only in memory now — those that we name “the Unchanging” or “The Lost.” In older days, before the Wars of Rage, we shared Kin with many Changing Breeds or ceremonially exchanged mates with them, and because of this, we have Mnesis of the Lost. Unfortunately, the memories will always be fragmented and hard to understand since non-Mokolé minds experienced them. I have seen them only briefly, though inwitting at a gather, and while it was fascinating, I was likewise baffled by the sensations of grass-eating and different ideas of Sun. Accessing these memories too often may lead to Harano: The loss of the Unchanging hurts even more deeply to those when you can remember *being* one of them. As for attempting to learn the Unchanging's Gifts of Gaia, few have ever tried it, and from the results, our elders agree it's an invitation to insanity.

The Grondr, also called boar-skins, were the cleaners and groomers of Gaia. They used their Gifts and rites to keep Mother Cow's body cleansed and beautiful, rooting in the woods and swamps, seeking out taint and parasites. They knew three breeds: homid, suid (wild boar) and metis. Grondr metis were warriors and questers; since they could not breed, they had nothing to lose if they died. Their sounders (similar to the clutches) were led by Kings or Queens who sought their titles by sparring matches. They had five forms:



human, a near-human with huge tusks, a battle-form that stood seven or eight feet tall with slashing hoof-hands, a near-boar shape with inch-thick armored hide and a wild pig. When the Gurahl were attacked during the War of Rage, the Grondr went to help them and slaughtered many Garou in return. But when the Gurahl departed in death or to sleep, the Grondr fell to the Garou. Humans of the First City enslaved the Grondr's human Kin and broke their beast Kin, breeding them into domestic pigs. The last Grondr Kin fell to the Dissolver and were changed into the loathsome Skull Pigs.

The Apis ("moon-bulls") were peaceful matchmakers and sages of Mother Cow, who grazed and meditated on Sun and Moon and the best ways to bring plans to fruition. They were Kin to the wild cattle called aurochs and had three forms: human, aurochs and a minotaur-like battle-shape, which had sharp teeth and a fondness for eating foolish humans who hunted them. While their Gifts might work slowly, their results came with the fullness of the time. I recall how peaceful it was to munch grass, and think slowly and carefully upon things, with nothing to rush me, waiting for my task to finish itself with the end of day. Such meditations brought wisdom, and we recall the Apis' wise insights and sayings today. When they weren't meditating, they advised in mating and marriages. Mokolé-mbembe revere them, claiming that their sacrifice against the Garou prevented the ravaging of Entoban. The last memory of the Apis that any have found claims that a Kin gave birth to one in Crete.

The Camazotz werebats were the messengers of the night, taking up when the Corax could no longer fly. While the Corax stayed in the north, the Camazotz covered the south, aided by Gifts of hearing, night and stealth. They fell to the Garou during the War of Rage. The only ones to survive were those in Central America. These last ones fell to the European Garou who arrived with the conquistadors. So little is known about them today, perhaps because those who carried their Mnesis fell to Garou as well.

(These memories are available only to those Mokolé with the Merit *Mnesis of the Lost Ones*.)

Lexicon

The following words and terms are common to the Mokolé.

Age of Sleep — The Tertiary period; 60 million years between the destruction of the Dinosaur Kings and the arrival of man.

Ambalasokey — South America.

Ancestors — Gumagan ancestors that first walked the deserts.

Archid — The in-between form of a Mokolé, often resembling a dinosaur; each form is unique to a Mokolé.

Bandaiyan — Australia.

Bata'a — Afro-Caribbean magicians, kin to the Dreamspeakers.



Bête — From the French for “beasts”; all of the Changing Breeds outside of the Mokolé.

Big — An excessively large Archid form or dinosaur.

Blood-devil — Vampires; the Damned.

Buaya — A pleasure-seeking Mokolé (typically Zhong Lung) fixated on mating beyond Duty (insult).

Callsinger — A duck-beaked Archid form.

Champsia — Varna of the Nile crocodile.

Clutch — A family band of Mokolé, usually based around a wallow.

Designer — The universal force of Pattern, also called the Weaver.

Devisor — The unbound spiritual manifestation of creation and chaos, also called the Wyld.

Dinosaur Kings — The creatures of the Paleozoic period commonly called dinosaurs; Mokolé of a past age.

Dissolver — The spiritual embodiment of entropy and corruption, also called the Wyrn.

Drachid — The lizard-man form common to all Mokolé prior to the WonderWork.

Dragon Kings — Ancestor-spirits of the Mokolé, found in Pangaea, who give their shape to the Archid forms of Mokolé.

Dreamtime — The Umbra.

Dream Hunter — A nightmare made real in Mnesis.

Egg-smasher — Commonly referred to as Garou; within the Breed, a terrible insult.

Entoban — Africa, the cradle of civilization.

Eshu — African fae-folk known to many clutches of Entoban.

Farm Boy — A suchid Mokolé raised by homids on an alligator farm

Gendasi — North America.

Gharial — Varna of the Indian gavial.

Gumagan — One of the four streams of the Mokolé, known primarily as explorers of the Umbra.

Halpatee — Varna of the American alligator.

Homid — The human form of Mokolé; Mokolé born to a human or homid mother.

Innocents — The result of Mokolé pairings with other Mokolé; stillborn children who become wraith-like spirits of the Dissolver in the Umbra, haunting the parents.

Inwitting — The craft of telling a story that places the listener in the events with the aid of a Gift and Mnesis.

Jati — Human caste of the Makara.

Karna — Varna of saltwater crocodiles.



Last Times — The end of the age of dinosaurs and the beginning of the age of shapeshifters, including the Impergium and the War of Rage.

Lineage — The family tree of a Mokolé, where Mnesis has passed from member to member through the ages.

Ma'afa — Slavery in the Age of Exploration.

Makara — One of the four streams of the Mokolé; varna of mugger crocodiles of India.

Mancala — A game based on the way a Mokolé cow tracks her eggs.

Matre — Strong maternal instinct in Mokolé that empowers a cow to protect her young.

Mnesis — Ancestral memory of the Mokolé, instinctive to the breed.

Mokolé — The Dragon Breed; shapeshifters joined of man and reptiles, such as crocodiles and alligators.

Mokolé-Mbembe — Ancestral Dinosaur King of Entoban.

Mokolé-mbembe — One of the four streams of the Mokolé; the descendants of Mokolé-Mbembe.

Monster of the Deep Shadows — The Dissolver.

Mother Cow — Gaia.

Olodumare — The Sun.

Ora — Varna of the monitor lizards of Indonesia.

Perenty — A relative of the monitor lizard, with similar traits.

Perfect Clutch — A clutch fortunate to have a member of each solar auspice.

Piasa — Varna of the American crocodile.

Proudest Monkey — Human.

Rats — Any mammals. Used by elders.

River Pact — A treaty of non-aggression between Crocodile's children, both Garou (Silent Striders, or any Garou who holds Crocodile as a totem) and Mokolé.

Ruler-Of-The-Tides — Luna.

Salty — Saltwater crocodiles.

Sharptooth — A Mokolé bearing features of dinosaurs such as Tyrannosaurus Rex, Deinonychus, Velociraptor, Allosaurus and Eustreptospondylus (bipedal-walking, meat-eating, small-limbed predator).

Songlines — Paths in the Umbra, blazed with songs in the Dragon Tongue and Mnesis.

Stream — The four prominent lineages of the Mokolé through the ages, common to certain areas of the world.

Suchid — The reptile form of the Mokolé; Mokolé born to reptilian mothers.

Sun — The spirit of the sun; a celestial host, much like Luna.

Sun bridge — A Moon bridge used in daylight through the rings of the sun.

Syrta — Varna of the caiman



Tenrec — Ancient ratlike mammal, a “living fossil” surviving on the isle of Madagascar.

Today — The present; often a concept that eludes elder Mokolé.

Two-legs — Human.

Unktehi — Varna of the Gila monster, of the Southwestern United States.

Varna — The species of reptile that comprises the Mokolé’s animal form.

Wallow — The home of Suchid Mokolé and their Kin; usually a wet marsh or swamplands.

Wanderer — A tale-teller Mokolé, moving from wallow to wallow passing along tales and important Mnesis; a position within a clutch of traveling to other clutches.

Wani — The Dragon Kings of the East.

Was — The past; as Mokolé have prolonged lives and see many things, some live in Was.

Within, the (also “Great Within”) — The Umbra-like realm of consciousness found in every Mokolé’s Mnesis.

WonderWork of the Wyrn — The Dissolver-spawned event that led to extinction of plants, sea creatures, and animals including the Dinosaur Kings, 65 million years ago.

Zhong Guo (“chung kuo”) — The Middle Kingdom; Asians countries.

Zhong Lung (“chung lung”) — One of the four streams of the Mokolé, native to Asia.

Character Creation

Breed

• **Homid:** Born as humans, homids tend to be daydreamers and preoccupied with ideas of transformation. As Mnesis gives them visions of their ancestral past, they know instinctively what they are and what they will soon become. Reptile skills such as swimming and hunting are learned, rather than instinctual, and it takes them some time to get their bearings in Suchid.

Restricted Abilities: *Primal-Urge*

Initial Gnosis: 2

• **Suchid:** Born into one of the reptile forms, suchids have trouble understanding the need for tools, writing and leisure. Duty-driven and focused on doing their part, the suchids are simpler, typically more spiritual and have a better capacity to accept their first change, giving them a head start on their homid counterparts.

Restricted Abilities: *Academics, Bureaucracy, Computer, Drive, Etiquette, Finance, Firearms, Law, Medicine, Politics, Repair, Science and Security.*

Restricted Backgrounds: *Allies, Contacts, Influences, Resources*

Initial Gnosis: 4



Character Creation Process

- **Step One: Character Concept** — Who and what are you?
 - Choose a breed
 - Choose a stream and varna
 - Choose a solar auspice (if Mokolé-Mbembe or Gumagan) or seasonal auspice (if Makara or Zhong Lung)
 - Choose Nature and Demeanor
- **Step Two: Select Attributes** — What are your basic capabilities?
 - Prioritize Trait Attributes
 - Choose Traits
- **Step Three: Select Advantages** — What do you know and what can you do?
 - Choose Abilities
 - Choose Basic Gifts (one Mokolé Gift and one auspice Gift)
 - Choose Backgrounds
 - Note Renown
- **Step Four: Finishing Touches** — Fill in the details.
 - Record Rage (by varna), Gnosis (by breed), Willpower (by stream for Gumagan, by auspice/aspect for others) and Rank (Hatchling)
 - Choose Negative Traits (if any)
 - Spend Free Traits
 - Select Merits and/or Flaws, if desired
- **Step Five: Spark of Life** — Narrative descriptions and other details
 - Choose Archid Traits

Varna

Varna represents the different reptiles Mokolé manifest in Suchid form. Varnas cover a wide range of four-legged reptiles and are usually determined by stream and location.

• **Halpatee/Piasa:** The American alligator (Halpatee) and the American crocodile (Piasa) share much in common, having scutes for protection and excellent swimming speed. Both move at their normal speed while swimming, but their running speed is halved while on land. They receive three extra Traits in biting attacks.

Initial Rage: 4

• **Ora:** The monitor lizard, while not having the armor of the crocodilians, can move lightning fast on land or water. They move at normal speeds



on either land or water, and may occasionally sprint at higher speeds. Their bite attack gains an extra Trait.

Initial Rage: 5

• **Unktehi:** The Gila monsters of the American Southwest cannot swim in this form and move at only half speed on land. The Unktehi gain the Archid Trait: *Poison Sacs*, and their bite is both painful and poisonous. Human-sized creatures bitten by Unktehi may attempt to resist the venom with appropriate supernatural powers (or two Simple Tests); failure means the victim drops to Wounded and remains there until the poison runs its course or the victim is healed. At Storyteller discretion, smaller creatures could be killed by the venom, while larger creatures might take less damage or be unaffected.

Initial Rage: 5

• **Karna/Champsas:** The Karna (saltwater crocodile) and Champsas (Nile crocodile) share basic characteristics. Like the Piasa, they can move at normal speed when swimming, but their running speed is halved, and they cannot run for more than five consecutive turns. These varna are the largest of the Mokolé, occasionally reaching lengths of 20 feet or more. They receive three extra Traits for biting attacks.

Initial Rage: 2

• **Gharial/Syrta:** The gharial (Gharial), caiman (Syrta) and Chinese alligator are smaller than most varna. They halve their running speed but may swim at normal speed. Their biting attacks receive an extra two Traits.

Initial Rage: 3

• **Makara:** The mugger crocodile of India is only slightly smaller than a saltwater croc. As with the others, they move at half normal speed on land and at normal speed in the water; they are two Traits up on biting attacks.

Initial Rage: 4

Gifts

Beginning Mokolé characters receive one auspice Gift and one general Mokolé Gift. Complete descriptions of all Mokolé Gifts are listed on page 156.

Renown Traits

Glory: *Bold, Brash, Brave, Courageous, Daring, Exalted, Feared, Fearless, Fierce, Glorious, Imposing, Impressive, Spirited, Superb*

Honor: *Admirable, Commendable, Dutiful, Eminent, Esteemed, Fair, Honorable, Impartial, Just, Noble, Objective, Proud, Reputable, Trusted, Virtuous*

Wisdom: *Clever, Crafty, Inspired, Inventive, Pragmatic, Profound, Respected, Revered, Sacred, Scholarly, Spiritual, Venerable, Wise*



Natures and Demeanors

For complete descriptions, see **Laws of the Wild**.

Alpha, Bravo, Builder, Bureaucrat, Caregiver, Competitor, Confidant, Conformist, Conniver, Cub, Curmudgeon, Deviant, Director, Explorer, Fanatic, Follower, Gallant, Hedonist, Jester, Judge, Martyr, Predator, Rebel, Reluctant Mokolé, Show-Off, Survivor, Traditionalist, Visionary

Attributes

For complete Trait descriptions, see **Laws of the Wild**.

Physical: *Brawny, Brutal, Dexterous, Enduring, Energetic, Ferocious, Graceful, Lithe, Nimble, Quick, Resilient, Robust, Rugged, Stalwart, Steady, Tenacious, Tireless, Tough, Vigorous, Wiry*

Social: *Alluring, Beguiling, Charismatic, Charming, Commanding, Compassionate, Dignified, Diplomatic, Elegant, Eloquent, Empathetic, Expressive, Friendly, Genial, Gorgeous, Ingratiating, Intimidating, Magnetic, Persuasive, Seductive, Witty*

Mental: *Alert, Attentive, Calm, Clever, Creative, Cunning, Dedicated, Determined, Discerning, Disciplined, Insightful, Intuitive, Knowledgeable, Observant, Patient, Rational, Reflective, Shrewd, Vigilant, Wily, Wise*

Abilities

For complete Ability descriptions, see **Laws of the Wild**.

Academics, Animal Ken, Athletics, Awareness, Brawl, Computer, Crafts, Dodge, Drive, Empathy, Enigmas, Etiquette, Expression, Finance, Firearms, Hobby/Professional/Expert Ability, Intimidation, Investigation, Law, Leadership, Linguistics, Medicine, Meditation, Melee, Occult, Performance, Politics, Primal Urge, Repair, Science, Scrounge, Security, Streetwise, Subterfuge, Survival



Tribes

Backgrounds

Mokolé cannot take a mammal Totem at character creation. Mokolé may begin play with any of the Backgrounds presented in *Laws of the Wild*. For complete Background descriptions, see *Laws of the Wild*.

Allies, Contacts, Fetish, Influence, Kinfolk, Mnesis, Resources, Rites, Totem, Wallow

The Four Streams

The lineage that began with the Kings has parted into four paths of development, called "streams." They are not separate tribes with competing interests and will still work together when their common destinies cross, but are divided into geographic segments of the world and have minimal contact due to distance. They might not completely understand each other's ways, but have learned to trust each other with the Duties. They bring different tools and skills to the struggle, and on occasion, one stream will seek out the tools of another.

Each stream has a different path of Mnesis, different varna and Kinfolk, depending on the land they dwell in.

Negative Traits

For complete descriptions of these Traits, see *Laws of the Wild*.

Physical Negative Traits: *Clumsy, Cowardly, Decrepit, Delicate, Docile, Flabby, Lane, Lethargic, Puny, Sickly.*

Social Negative Traits: *Callous, Condescending, Dull, Naïve, Obnoxious, Paranoid, Repugnant, Shy, Tactless, Untrustworthy*

Mental Negative Traits: *Forgetful, Gullible, Ignorant, Impatient, Oblivious, Predictable, Shortsighted, Submissive, Witless.*



Gumagan : Stream of Fire

The Gumagan are the indigenous Mokolé of Australia. Of the four streams, the Gumagan are the one that is commonly found apart from water, often living in deserts. They are the Umbral questers, Mnesis voyagers, and the mystics among the Mokolé, revering both Sun and Moon in equal measure. It's remembered that the progenitor of the Gumagan, Gadimargara, tracked the Dreamtime with songlines, which are still used and further explored to this day by his descendants. The Dreamtime remains central to their lives, and they work with the elders and wise men and women of the Aborigines to understand it further.

For ages, they shared the land with the Bunyip, knowing nothing of the War of Rage fought in other lands, not knowing to mistrust the Garou. Their number greatly dwindled after vampires reached their shores with the Europeans. The War of Rage came eventually and took its own toll; the Gumagan tried to protect and preserve their Bunyip friends but could do little as the Garou slaughtered them with silver weapons. The Gumagan retreated at the loss of the Bunyip, and the Garou of Australia believe them extinct.

Breeds, Forms and Territories: Gumagan homids are born to the indigenous tribes of Australia and its surrounding islands, and their Suchid form is either a saltwater crocodile or a perenty. A small number of Gumagan show racial characteristics usually attributed to Zhong Lung.

Their Archid forms reflect the Sharptooth and Megalania lizards of Bandaiyan. Common markings include thorns and ridges, with earth-tone patterns for their skin. Gumagan have no Innocents; when such a child is born, the mother eats it, absorbing it back into her own body.

Suchids are born to Karna or Ora, and take on the racial aspects of the humans closest to the nesting ground.

Gumagan are known to live in the deserts of Bandaiyan, Ulugan (Arnhem Land), Tsalats (New Guinea) and the Torres Straits Islands. They may also be found in isolated groups on smaller Pacific islands.

Initial Willpower: 3

Auspices: All Gumagan follow the solar aspects as the Mokolé-mbembe do. The sole exception are the Eclipsed Suns; Gumagan Crowned are considered directors of life and ritual, and are so sanctified by their Duty that they are often considered *tabu*. They participate little in the idea of government. They may purchase Abilities and Backgrounds as indicated by their breed, with a few exceptions:

- Few Gumagan would ever have need or desire to develop *Resources* as they live in harmony with the land.
- They cannot take non-Australian *Totems*.
- Their increased skill with the Umbra lowers the experience cost for any Umbra-related gift by one point.

Mnesis: Gumagan Mnesis tends to center on the following events.



- One Trait Many lifetimes of aboriginal life
- Two Traits Since the arrival of Europeans in Australia
- Three Traits The time of the Ancestors
- Four Traits The time before the Bunyip came
- Five Traits The Kings

Makara: Stream of the Wind

Mokolé of the Indian subcontinent are called Makara; two of their number are recorded in the Bhagavad-Gita. They are the stream of the wind, the monsoon that brings death and destruction, but also the rains to make the land fertile. They see themselves as Gaia's living thinkers and preservers of such, not merely recorders of memory.

Of the streams, theirs is the most in balance with their forms and at harmony with humans. Neither the homids nor the suchids consider their birth to be evidence of superiority: Makara believe that they have been both reptile and human in their many past lives, and both breeds accept each other's presence and share company. The disappearance of crocodiles from India has led to a difficult time for the Makara as they realize losing Mokolé could mean the end to their lineage.

Initial Willpower: According to auspice.

Breeds, Forms and Territories: The Makara are ethnic Indian in their Homid form. They follow the Hindu caste system in both their regular lives and in their aspect and Duties. Most are assumed to be of the Shudra caste, the most common, or other low castes. It is very rare to find a high-caste Changer; most high-caste Kin were slaughtered in the War of Rage. Human caste is mostly ignored when seeking out a mate.

Their Archid forms take on the characteristics of the Wani, the ancient Dragon Princes. Others dream of ancient crocodiles, gigantic water beasts, serpents or even Eastern dragons.

The most common varna of their Suchid is the Makara, followed by the Gharial and Karna.

Auspices: Makara view their auspices according to the sun and the season, rather than the time of day.

Hemanta are rogues and rascals of the Makara. Born in winter, they are like the Shining, crafty and eccentric. They are two Traits up on any challenge made when facing overwhelming odds (Storyteller's discretion what constitutes overwhelming odds). They begin with two Willpower Traits.

Zarad are the occultists and spiritualists of the Makara. Born in autumn, they seem to be akin to the Concealing. They are two Traits up on all challenges involving *Stealth* or *Subterfuge*. They begin with three Willpower Traits.



Jati: the Castes of India

Shudra — Commoner caste, neither lowly or elevated. They serve the warriors, priests and merchants.

Dalit — The Untouchables, the lowest caste; they suffer great prejudice and frequently must take up jobs the other castes are forbidden from, such as undertaking or butchering.

Vaishya — “Working” caste, of respected craftsmen, farmers or merchants.

Kshatriya — Warrior caste, honored for their strength.

Brahmin — Priestly caste; the highest of all castes and most revered.

Grisma are the judges and lawmakers, a rigorous duty in a society as tradition-bound as theirs. They are born in summer and are most akin to the Gathering. They are two Traits up on tests when they direct their efforts to further the Mokolé as a whole. They begin with four Willpower Traits.

Vasanta — The warriors are born in spring and share similarities to the Striking. They are also the most traveled of the Makara. They receive a two-Trait bonus to all challenges they initiate. They begin with five Willpower Traits.

Mokolé-mbembe : *The Stream of Earth*

They are the first stream and the most prolific of all the streams. They claim to have shepherded humanity to sentience by eating the stupid. When the Bête think of Mokolé, they most likely think of these mighty ones. The varna hails Mokolé-Mbembe, the Crowned son of Two-Thumbs, as its forefather. Mokolé-Mbembe and his siblings reigned many years in the Congo at Lake Tele through life-sustaining Gifts and the *Sleep of the Dragon*. He saw the rise of Egypt, Sumer, Rome and the arrival of the Dissolver-bringing white men. When his wardings could no longer protect Lake Tele, he and his clutch removed Lake Tele into the Umbra. So thin is the Gauntlet in the swamp that some claim human travelers have seen the great King walking.

Known for their rage and prowess in battle by other saurians, they were driven to near extinction in the War of Rage. They saw the Grondr, the Apis and the Khara die. A few fled to the Americas, and eventually, so many Mokolé were dead, asleep or fled that the Garou gave up the war.

Initial Willpower: According to auspice.

Breeds, Forms and Territories — The Mokolé-mbembe are the most racially diverse of the streams. Africans, Native Americans, biracial and multi-racial people fill the ranks. They are the most likely to have whites among them, since they have territory in North America.



In Suchid, they are caimans (Syrta), American alligators (Halpatee), South American crocodiles (Piasa), Nile crocodiles (Champsia) and even Gila monsters (Unktehi). As Archids, the Mokolé-mbembe are amalgamated dinosaurs, dragons and prehistoric reptiles too varied to name.

• **Entoban (Africa)**

The great ark of humanity is also home to the oldest stream of Mokolé. They saw the rise of the pharaohs at Egypt and the creeping plague of the bloodsuckers called the Followers of Set. They were the allies of the Bubasti werecats' struggle against the Setites and remain on good terms with the werecats today. With the triumph of the bloodsuckers, most of the Mokolé went upriver. A few remain in the Sudd, an immense tropical swamp in Sudan, where they make continual forays against the Followers of Set.

In Nigeria, sacred crocodiles are revered by local cults, in truth small clutches of Mokolé and loyal Kin. Other temple clutches are found in Angola, Tanzania and Uganda. In the Congo, the clutch founded by Mokolé-Mbembe continues to thrive, and rumors claim that the mighty King still walks in the Umbral swamps. Africa's political troubles worry them, and they remain alert for Dissolver-agents or bloodsuckers seeking misery to feed upon.

• **Gendasi (North America)**

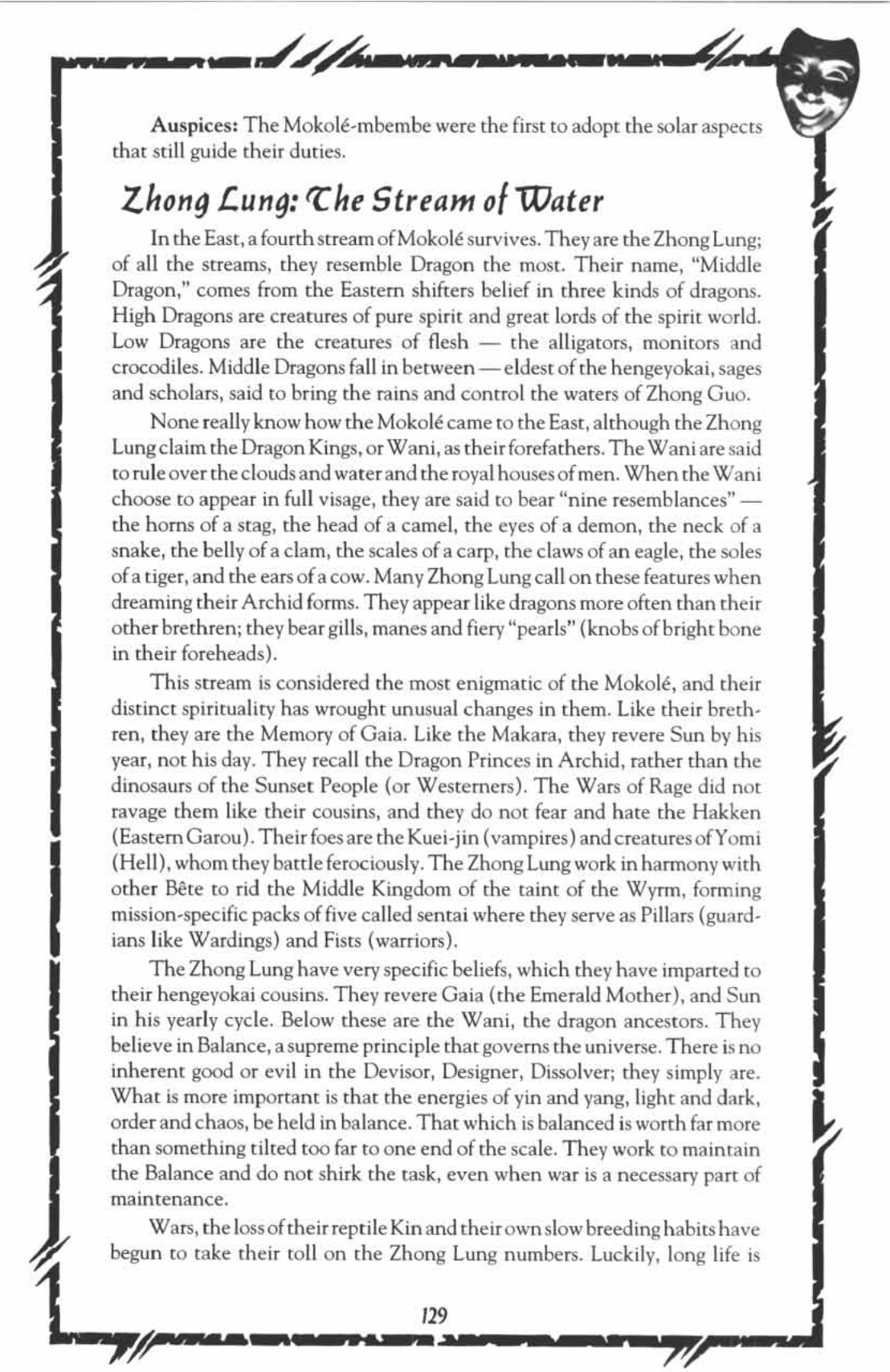
The Mokolé found Gendasi after swimming the ocean, fleeing the War of Rage. Only the swamps and bayous of what is now the southern US were appealing to them, so they chose to settle and breed with the local Native American tribes. Some went west and bred with the native humans and reptiles, creating the Unktehi varna of Gila monsters. When the Croatan, Wendigo and Uktena entered the continent, only the Croatan were interested in the swampy lands that the Mokolé favored. They followed the totem Turtle and became friendly with the local Mokolé. The two groups lived peacefully and shared Kin for many years. The loss of the Croatan to Storm Eater was a tremendous sorrow that many Mokolé still grieve over.

A few African Mokolé came seeking Kin who had been taken by slavers and found southern North America already buzzing with native Mokolé and their Kin. Their arrival further swelled Gendasi's Mokolé population, and it remains one of the largest groups in the world.

• **Ambalasokey (South America)**

The Mokolé fled here to escape the War of Rage, and this was their brave new world for many years. The abundant prey and ideal climate made the rainforest seem like a paradise. Many African Kin who survived the Middle Passage often escaped to here with Mokolé help, living in African-style villages and wallows.

The destruction of the Amazon rainforest has awakened them to the horror of Pentex and Gaia's encroaching demise. The Mokolé fight continually against Pentex, which has poisoned an important wallow and driven the dragons to consider allying with the Garou.



Auspices: The Mokolé-mbembe were the first to adopt the solar aspects that still guide their duties.

Zhong Lung: The Stream of Water

In the East, a fourth stream of Mokolé survives. They are the Zhong Lung; of all the streams, they resemble Dragon the most. Their name, “Middle Dragon,” comes from the Eastern shifter belief in three kinds of dragons. High Dragons are creatures of pure spirit and great lords of the spirit world. Low Dragons are the creatures of flesh — the alligators, monitors and crocodiles. Middle Dragons fall in between — eldest of the hengeyokai, sages and scholars, said to bring the rains and control the waters of Zhong Guo.

None really know how the Mokolé came to the East, although the Zhong Lung claim the Dragon Kings, or Wani, as their forefathers. The Wani are said to rule over the clouds and water and the royal houses of men. When the Wani choose to appear in full visage, they are said to bear “nine resemblances” — the horns of a stag, the head of a camel, the eyes of a demon, the neck of a snake, the belly of a clam, the scales of a carp, the claws of an eagle, the soles of a tiger, and the ears of a cow. Many Zhong Lung call on these features when dreaming their Archid forms. They appear like dragons more often than their other brethren; they bear gills, manes and fiery “pearls” (knobs of bright bone in their foreheads).

This stream is considered the most enigmatic of the Mokolé, and their distinct spirituality has wrought unusual changes in them. Like their brethren, they are the Memory of Gaia. Like the Makara, they revere Sun by his year, not his day. They recall the Dragon Princes in Archid, rather than the dinosaurs of the Sunset People (or Westerners). The Wars of Rage did not ravage them like their cousins, and they do not fear and hate the Hakken (Eastern Garou). Their foes are the Kuei-jin (vampires) and creatures of Yomi (Hell), whom they battle ferociously. The Zhong Lung work in harmony with other Bête to rid the Middle Kingdom of the taint of the Wyrms, forming mission-specific packs of five called sentai where they serve as Pillars (guardians like Wardings) and Fists (warriors).

The Zhong Lung have very specific beliefs, which they have imparted to their hengeyokai cousins. They revere Gaia (the Emerald Mother), and Sun in his yearly cycle. Below these are the Wani, the dragon ancestors. They believe in Balance, a supreme principle that governs the universe. There is no inherent good or evil in the Devisor, Designer, Dissolver; they simply are. What is more important is that the energies of yin and yang, light and dark, order and chaos, be held in balance. That which is balanced is worth far more than something tilted too far to one end of the scale. They work to maintain the Balance and do not shirk the task, even when war is a necessary part of maintenance.

Wars, the loss of their reptile Kin and their own slow breeding habits have begun to take their toll on the Zhong Lung numbers. Luckily, long life is



common among the dragons. Zhong Lung eggs can enter the *Sleep of the Dragon* before birth and may incubate for centuries. Some Zhong Lung enter *Sleep of the Dragon* while others imbibe elixirs to perfect the balance of their own bodily humors and prolong their lives. Rituals allow the dragons to even shed old skin and bones, allowing them to live centuries.

Initial Willpower: 4

Breeds, Form and Territories: Born to Kinfolk indigenous to East Asia (in nations such as China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Tibet and Vietnam), homids take on the racial characteristics of their parents; Zhong Lung select partners who represent the common clay of the East, avoiding the people of the city and nobles. The suchids are born from Karna, Ora and Syrta varnas, including the rare Chinese alligator.

Their Archid forms resemble Eastern dragons more than the Dinosaur Kings, and Traits like *Dragon Masque*, *Fiery Pearl*, *Long Neck* and *Wings* are very common, with their birth-season often dictating their colors and markings. Chinese Mokolé are particularly distinctive. K'iulung (male dragons) are usually splendidly maned and whiskered, bearing a fiery pearl under their chins. Their sisters, the chi'lung, bear long snouts, crests of colored feathers that rise and fall by their moods, and strong tails. Their sinuous grace ensures they suffer no penalties to movement in Archid.

Presently, the Zhong Lung avoid the cities when they can. In China, they live in communes along the Yangtze River populated entirely with Kin and dragons. Solitary elders often retreat to the mountains for contemplation. The purges and horrors of the 20th century have not left the Chinese Mokolé untouched. The Rape of Nanking and the Cultural Revolution brought great losses of Kinfolk. China's environment is suffering, and the Chinese alligator is nearly extinct. Many matchmakers must travel far to find reptile mates for the hatchlings; the varna is quite specific or there is no guarantee the new hatchling will hold a Zhong Lung spirit.

Japan and Korea have very few Zhong Lung. The lack of native reptiles in these nations have caused many clutches there to "lose the dragon." Indonesia remains a stronghold, but recent political upheavals have sent some clutches fleeing. The Philippines are another haven for Zhong Lung and their Kin.

Auspices: Like the Makara, the Zhong Lung do not follow solar aspects; they instead look to the season of the Mokolé's birth. Each seasonal auspice has a Wind spirit that reminds them of Duty and a color that invades their dreaming (most Zhong Lung Archid forms have patterns or markings displaying the color of their seasonal auspice).

Tung Chun — These Middle Dragons, warriors and lovers, are born in spring and identify with the Rising Suns. They are allied to the colors blue and green, favored by the east wind, and receive a two-Trait bonus to all challenges they initiate. They begin with four Willpower Traits.



Nam Hsia — The Nam Hsia act as the judges and lawmakers of the Zhong Lung. They are born in summer and are most akin to the Noonday Suns. They are in harmony with the color yellow, aided by the south wind and are two Traits up on tests when they direct their efforts to further the Mokolé as a whole. They begin with three Willpower Traits.

Sai Chau — The Sai Chau are the oracles and occultists of the Zhong Lung. They are born in autumn and closely resemble Shrouded Suns. They usually remain in their wallows all the time. Their color is white, they are aided by the west wind and are two Traits up on all challenges involving *Stealth* or *Subterfuge*. They begin with two Willpower Traits.

Pei Tung — The Pei Tung are the rascals and tricksters. Born in winter, they are like the Midnight Suns — a series of constant contradictions. They ally with the color black and the north wind, and are two Traits up on any challenge made when facing overwhelming odds (Storyteller's discretion on what constitutes overwhelming odds). They begin with one Willpower Trait.

Mnesis: Zhong Lung Mnesis tends to center on the following events.

One Trait The Fifth Age, human history

Two Traits The last of the Fourth Age, and the Wars of Shame

Three Traits The Fourth Age, and the time before the Wars

Four Traits The Third Age, and the great wars

Five Traits The Second Age, the time of the Wan Xian and the dawn of the shapeshifters

(For more about the Beast Courts and other shapeshifters of the East, see *Hengeyokai*. For more about the Kuei-jin vampires, see *Laws of the East*.)

The Mandates of Earth

The Mokolé of the East — the Makara and the Zhong Lung — follow different precepts than the Duties of western Mokolé. These are the Mandates of the Emerald Mother, the law of the Eastern shapeshifters.

Shirk Not the Tasks That Have Been Given You — The task of the Dragon Breed is to be the Mother's Memory. Period. Their special powers are compensation for their duty, and deserting the Way to live ordinary lives is selfish. Different kinds of service are permitted (everyone does their job a bit differently), but such tasks should be taken in addition to, not instead of, the Memory.

Guard the Wheel That It May Turn in Fullness — Those who are half human and half beast are keepers of Balance by their very natures. They must aid the progress of the Mother through the Ages of time, even if moving forward brings death and sorrow.

Honor Your Territory in All Things — This Mandate requires respect for the land and all things, including Kinfolk, and guarding the land from despoiling. Makara and Zhong Lung cherish both homid and suchid Kin, whose help allows them to care for the land.



Let Mercy Guide You in Our August Mother's Court — Eastern Mokolé must avoid killing allies or potential allies (which is usually other *hengeyokai*). Other Awakened creatures are not protected by this, however.

Honor Your Ancestors and Your Elders — *Mnesis*, and cultural strictures, ensures that the *Makara* and *Zhong Lung* honor this precept well. Unfortunately, this can sometimes devolve into blind obedience, which leads to inflexibility. This Mandate leads to a second precept: There must be someone to live after you when you die. Consequently, breeding is treated with great reverence.

Honor the Pacts with the Spirit World — Mokolé must regular perform rites and rituals to ensure that the spirit world does not become distant. As bloodlines have died and *Mnesis* has been stretched or broken, the Wall between the spirit world and flesh world has become harder to pass. Serious trouble now plagues the Breed because of it.

War Not Upon Human or Beast — This forbids excessive hunting and fighting with the intent of genocide upon a nation or tribe.

Let No One or Nothing Violate the Sacred Nests — Wallows and dragon nests (places of intense spiritual power) are worth the lives of the warriors who guard them, although any Mokolé would do the same for a wallow.

The Blessings of Dragon

The Mokolé, as a breed, have similar advantages and disadvantages to the other breeds. Sun and Dragon combine to grant them some remarkable gifts, and some balancing disadvantages.

Regeneration

Mokolé are very much like the *Garou* in the manner in which they heal damage taken. Mokolé heal a health level of damage for each five minutes of undisturbed rest (unless the damage is aggravated). Like *Garou*, they can pull themselves back from Incapacitated by spending a *Rage Trait* and making a *Rage Challenge* with the *Storyteller*; this may well earn them battle scars no differently than *Garou*. Only supernatural diseases affect them.

The Umbra

The Umbra is closed to Mokolé without the use of special Gifts or Rites. The *Gumagan* in particular explore the Umbra with Gifts that allow them access to it at an early age. Those few Mokolé who do cross the Gauntlet are more likely to be found in the High Umbra than in the Middle Umbra.

The Dragon's Tongue

The Mokolé have a language that paints broad canvases with few words. It is the Dragon's Tongue, the language of the Kings, and it conveys meanings, minute details and vast ideas with expressive sounds and gestures. In the time of the Kings, all Awakened beings spoke it. Most elder or tradition-minded Mokolé call it "the Speech," and find non-Mokolé talk (especially homid) to be mere "rat's chitter." All Mokolé inherit knowledge of this language, even



if they have no other Mnesis, unless they have the Flaw: *Mute*. It is also the language of Mokolé in Archid or Suchid form, although Suchid Speech is limited to halting phrases. When a new Mokolé dreams her Archid shape, her Mnesis also brings the Dragon's Tongue. She can understand what she's hearing, but speaking may come more slowly if she's encountering the language for the first time.

Dragon's Tongue does have a written form: It can be written phonetically, or, more often, using a claw-print script similar to the one used by Garou in their Silver Record. Loremasters tell that the original form of the Speech was actually a dance, with hand and body movements silently conveying reams of meaning, much like the Hawai'ian hula. These movements, called the Language of Claws, must be learned separately. Dragon's Tongue is filled with idioms and figures of speech, such as "His scales are true" (meaning, "His lineage is good") or "She has dug her nest" ("Her mind is made up, with great finality.")

Teaching the Dragon's Tongue to the Bête is an arduous task as Mokolé themselves know it in their Mnesis but don't actually learn it — plus it's difficult to understand. A few rare Corax, Nagah and Bastet (usually long-time allies) may learn some phrases (especially battle commands), but they will never be completely fluent. Mokolé Kin often learn it, but then they usually have enough time.

Rage and Gnosis

The Mokolé also use Rage in much the same manner as the Garou do — they may frenzy, gain extra actions, change forms instantly, recover from stunning or make Rage rolls to remain active when critically wounded. They regain it in similar fashion (first wounding, anger, humiliation or between sessions), except that the moon does not figure into regaining Rage as prominently for the Mokolé as Sun does. Furthermore, Mokolé regain Rage the first time that they see Sun during the day, such as at sunrise. The amount recovered depends on how bright Sun is.

Any Mokolé seeing her sun auspice gets back all Rage; Midnight Suns get back Rage from seeing the moon and stars instead. No-Suns recover Rage when viewing the empty sky, and Many-Suns recover Rage when they see the stars. Each auspice must see their view; obstructions such as city lights or clouds will prevent a clear view.

Each day that the Zhong Lung and Makara (who are on their own seasonal auspice wheels) first see the sun, they may regain all their Rage, but only during their season. When out of their season, they have to earn it back the hard way (see above chart).

Gnosis is regained in the same manner Garou regain it: meditation, resting in wallows or bargaining with spirits (when in the Umbra, which is rarer for Mokolé). Naturally, Mokolé can regain Gnosis between game sessions as the Garou do. Mokolé may not regain Gnosis when cut off from Sun, except during *Sleep of the Dragon*. The less they see Sun, the more time Mokolé must spend meditating in his light.



Rage Regained	Light Conditions
None	Sun is completely obscured by mountains, buildings, etc.; the Mokolé is indoors.
1	Sun is obscured by clouds or is seen through tinted UV windows.
2	Sun is peeking through clouds or fog.
3	Sun is low or dim
4	Sun is bright on a clear day
5	Sun is blazing directly overhead

Gold and Silver

Both gold and silver affect the Mokolé in the same manner that silver affects Garou — gold by their bond with Sun, and silver thanks to their Rage, which is Luna's gift. These metals inflict one level of aggravated damage per turn of physical contact (unless the Mokolé is in her breed form, or in Homid form, although a weapon will do normal damage). Mokolé carrying items of gold or silver lose one Gnosis Trait per item per day.

Gold need not be 24k to do damage, but gold-plating (or gold-leaf or other gilding) does nothing beyond making a Mokolé itch a little. If a gold-plated weapon strikes a Mokolé, the plating comes off and inflicts no more damage than a normal weapon. It's possible to strike a Mokolé with a fist dripping with gold rings or wrapped with golden chains, but it will inflict only one health level of damage. Gold weapons cannot be purchased; they must be made. Gold generally costs between \$800-\$1000 *per ounce* (depending on market rates), which makes weapons like swords and machetes tremendously expensive. The metal is extremely soft, and will be dull after battle (at half damage until it is reworked by a goldsmith; at Storyteller discretion, a gold weapon not serviced after each battle may break during the next combat). Even gold bullets will cost about three per \$1000. Once they're fired, they're gone. Only someone with a specialization in *Goldsmithing* can craft gold weapons. Obviously a request for 20 gold bullets looks very strange to a jeweler or goldsmith, and might arouse some suspicions.

The Three Forms

The Mokolé have three forms — enough to get the job done, in their opinion. They must perform a test to shift forms, as per **Laws of the Wild**, but shifting to Suchid is much easier than shifting to Lupus.

- **Homid:** The Homid form is an ordinary human. Her ethnicity depends on her stream.



• **Archid:** The battle-shape of the Mokolé comes from a dream during the *Rite of Passage*. During the experience, the Mokolé relives his ancestors' lives, and his Archid form rises from their shapes. This form usually resembles a dinosaur or dragon, although there are sea-serpent and pterodactyl Mokolé. The combination of parts on the Mokolé need not correspond strictly to real-life creatures — these are the forms of dreams, not science. The Storyteller has final approval of the Archid form. This form induces the Delirium.

Trait Adjustments: *Brawny* x 2, *Brutal*, *Ferocious* x 3, *Enduring* x 2, *Resilient* x 2, *Tireless*, *Tough* x 2, *Vigorous* x 3; *Bestial* x 3, *Feral* x 3. No Manipulation or Appearance-related Traits.

Roleplaying: Human speech is extremely difficult or impossible with certain Archid Traits (such as *Long Teeth* or *Duckbill*). The Storyteller may require a Willpower Test for an Archid to deliver human speech. Archids can converse with each other in Dragonspeech. Archid Traits determine how large this form is, whether the Mokolé can walk bipedally or if she can use weapons or special attacks.

• **Suchid:** The reptilian form of the Mokolé, based on varna. This looks like a normal specimen of the reptile varna. The Rage differs between the varna because of the varied body types.

Trait Adjustments:

Halpatee/Piasa: *Ferocious* x 2, *Enduring* x 2, *Rugged*, *Tough* x 2; *Bestial*, *Feral* x 2. No Manipulation-related Traits.

Ora: *Rugged*, *Tough* x 2; *Bestial* x 2, *Feral* x 2. No Manipulation-related Traits.

Unktehi: *Enduring* and *Tough*; *Bestial* x 2, *Feral*. No Manipulation-related Traits.

Karna/Champs: *Ferocious* x 2, *Resilient*, *Tireless* x 2, *Tough*, *Wiry*; *Feral* x 2. No Manipulation-related Traits.

Gharial/Syrta: *Tough*, *Enduring*, *Tireless*; *Bestial*, *Feral* x 2. No Manipulation-related Traits. (These adjustments also apply to the Chinese alligator varna)

Makara: *Brawny*, *Ferocious*, *Enduring*, *Rugged* x 2; *Bestial*, *Feral* x 2. No Manipulation-related Traits.

Aspects of the Sun

Instead of the Luna-based auspices of the Garou, the streams of Mokolé (except the Zhong Lung and Makara, who answer to the Mandates of Earth) receive their duties by the sun's position, called aspects. Although one aspect tends to follow a certain duty more closely, these are the laws of the Mokolé, and all must obey. Like Garou society, acting outside one's auspice too frequently is considered highly disrespectful.



Striking: The Rising Sun

Born between sunrise and noon, the Striking are the aspect most involved with present day. They are the fiercest warriors among the Mokolé — the doers, the seekers, the questers, the hunters.

Duty: The Rising Sun says *Cull the Fallen*. They are charged with hunting the creatures of the Dissolver. This includes those Mokolé who fall to the Wyrn, fomori, Banes, vampires and humans who damage earth in their arrogance. The Striking rarely go on large-scale Dissolver hunts anymore, both because of their smaller numbers and fear of Garou attacks. The corollary to this is to avoid unlawful prey; Mokolé avoid wantonly hunting other shapeshifters and their Kin.

Sun Trait: Striking Mokolé receive a two-Trait bonus to all challenges they initiate. Follow-up or defending challenges proceed as normal.

Initial Willpower: 3

Unshading: The Noonday Sun

When a Mokolé is born as the sun is directly above, she is Unshading, also known as Shadowless. Like the Philodox, the Unshading judge and enforce Olodumare's will.

Duty: The Noonday Sun says *Let No Shade Accuse You*. Mokolé must be fair in judgment, accept surrender when and where they can, remember the cost in lives when making war and have the judgment not to enter war with anger ruling the heart. Above all, Mokolé must not mate with other Mokolé.

Sun Trait: Unshading can cancel the retests of any one creature related to the dark (including vampires, fomori, Black Spiral Dancers, Banes, Nephandi, Spectres) once per scene.

Initial Willpower: 5

Warding: The Setting Sun

The Warding are born in the dying light of day before Olodumare departs. They are the guardians of the wallows, the caretakers of children and the healers of their kind.

Duty: The Setting Sun says *Guard the Wallow*. Mokolé are to protect children, Kin, the aged, the sick, the sacred sites and objects, and above all, guard the wallows with their lives. They must respect the territory of others — both wallow and Memory — including those of the Nagah and Corax. They leave the Garou alone and don't go looking for fights. They demand respect for each other — killing a clutchmate is the ultimate horror.

Sun Traits: Warding Mokolé are two Traits up on all challenges when defending others from harm or following others.

Initial Willpower: 3



Concealing : The Shrouded Sun

The Concealing are born to a overcast sun. They are the mystic occultists of the Mokolé, the most skilled at Gifts or magic. They are teachers and keepers of secrets and spirit lore among the Breed. They have been known to associate with human shamans freely and are often on very good terms with spirits.

Duty: The Shrouded Sun says *The Veil Must Not Be Lifted*. Mokolé are not allowed to reveal themselves to humans, as the results could be catastrophic to the entire breed. They reveal as little as possible to the Bête and keep the Memory within Gaia's own.

Sun Traits: Concealing Mokolé are two Traits up on all challenges involving *Stealth* or *Subterfuge*.

Initial Willpower: 4

Shining : The Midnight Sun

Pranksters, artists, poets and riddle-makers of the Mokolé, the Shining are born at night, with the sky dark and the moon reflecting Sun's light. The Shining divide themselves into three groups. The Night-Suns are born under Luna, whom they call the Sun of night, and they occasionally seek Gifts of the moon to better honor her. The Many-Suns are born under the stars, which they claim to be many small Suns, and they frequently get into trouble for espousing strange ideas or seeking other truths. The No-Suns are born under a lightless sky and are considered the most mysterious. They draw their knowledge from the spaces between the stars; many Unshading fear the No-Suns are the most likely to fall to the Dissolver.

Duty: The Midnight Sun says *Test the Clutch*. They should use pranks, tales and dances to teach their fellow Mokolé valuable lessons, to prepare them for the unexpected and to look for unusual solutions when the orthodox would fail. For Midnight Suns, the best way to prepare their clutchmates for the unexpected is to *be* the unexpected.

Sun Traits: Shining are two Traits up on any challenge made when facing overwhelming odds (Storyteller's discretion what constitutes overwhelming odds).

Initial Willpower: 4

Gathering : The Decorated Sun

The Gathering are born as the sun is accompanied in the sky by pulses or corona rings. They are the matchmakers, workers, busybodies and organizers among the Mokolé, the ones who really get things done.

Duty: The Decorated Sun says *All Are of Gaia*. All creatures (except the Dissolver) are Gaia's children, they have a reason to be here and they must be respected. Know your place and respect others for their own function in Gaia.



Sun Traits: Gathering Mokolé are two Traits up on tests when they direct their efforts to further the Mokolé as a whole (Storyteller's discretion what constitutes such efforts).

Initial Willpower: 5

Crowning : Solar Eclipse

Born during a solar eclipse, the Crowning are the leaders among the Mokolé. They are rare creatures, and all other Mokolé defer to them, but they know that Mokolé tyrants have no followers. They draw upon the unique strengths of each auspice to lead the way. There are four different aspects of the Crowning. The Jewel-Crowned are born under a total eclipse and are the Sun-priests among the Kings. Crescent-Crowned Mokolé are born during a partial eclipse and are the warrior-kings. Ring-Crowned Mokolé are Unity Kings, bringing together the diverse clutches of the Mokolé, often having a Midas touch for wealth, and are born during an annular eclipse. Moon-Crowned Mokolé, born to a lunar eclipse, are suspiciously similar to the Shining, having a backward view of everything; nevertheless, the Moon-Crowned have a strange talent for winning the day through unconventional means.

Duty: The Eclipsed Sun says **Remember**. The Mokolé's purpose in Gaia is instinctive, and it is the solemn duty of every Mokolé to strive to retain the memory of Gaia.

Sun Trait: Jewel-Crowned Mokolé are two Traits up on all challenges when they are under the shining sun. Crescent-Crowned Mokolé are two Traits up on challenges when making war. Ring-Crowned Mokolé are two Traits up on tests involving interaction with Berê and other creatures or when dealing with *Finance*. Moon-Crowned Mokolé are two Traits up on all challenges when implementing odd solutions to problems (Storyteller's discretion).

Initial Willpower: 5

Kinfolk : The Eighth Sun

Compared to the Garou's Kinfolk, Mokolé Kin have a better experience with their shapechangers. As Mokolé have long avoided direct contact with humans, they are usually the indigenous people of uncivilized or rural areas; in Today, more and more of the Mokolé Kin of North America find themselves inching toward the city, with one hand in tradition and one in progress.

Like true Mokolé, Kin gain honorifics for breeding that produces a Mokolé. A father gains Siring, while a female bears his seed; a mother is called Carrying (Suchid) or Bearing (Homid) for her pregnancy, followed by the clutch name. While fathers can make more true Mokolé, the work of bearing them is with the mothers, so both are honored. They can also receive Matre for parenting True Mokolé, although they call upon it instinctively. Matches



are arranged very carefully (successful matchmakers are honored among Mokolé) to ensure happiness and many children. Kin assist with everything, including taking care of the wallow, going on missions to the city, studying natural healing and speaking at gathers when an event concerns them.

Kin lack true Mnesis, and as they are not true Mokolé, they are denied the *Rite of Passage*. At Storyteller discretion, though, they may have occasional dreams of ancestral memories. Some occasionally manifest and can perform Basic Gifts and Rites. There have been cases where a Kinfolk possessed magical ability, following one of the tropical crafts like the Bata'a; these rare Kin are usually accepted as true Mokolé in wallows and called by a sun auspice. With Mokolé becoming rarer, it's not unusual to use such Kin to fill a clutch.

The Southeastern US has the largest Kin population; here, they plan, build and work (or live) on alligator farms. Non-Kin alligators and crocodiles also live on the farms and are used to repopulate areas where their numbers dwindle or stock zoos. These farms are not for raising food or skins, but true wallows for homids and suchids. While some have true Mokolé as guides, none of these has yet managed a complete clutch.

New Backgrounds

Mnesis

Mnesis is the instinctive memory of the Mokolé, containing memories as old as the age of dinosaurs. They can quest into their memories to retrieve lost knowledge or sage advice on how to counter a problem in the present. Each Trait represents an increased connection to the memories of the ages. Mnesis is often necessary to progress in studying Memory or in spiritual matters, and may occasionally be used in challenges to recall things from Memory.

One Trait — Within the last century; numerous wars, the signs of the second WonderWork.

Two Traits — Back to the beginning of the second millennium; plagues in Europe, the Age of Exploration, the loss of the Croatan.

Three Traits — Approximately 5,000 years ago; The Impergium, the beginning of human civilization, the War of Rage.

Four Traits — Two million years ago; witness to the fall of the dinosaurs in the first WonderWork.

Five Traits — 250 million years ago; the time of the Kings.

Wallow

The *Wallow* is the clutch to which a Mokolé belongs and her sacred connection to Gaia. This is where she can perform rites, meditate to regain Gnosis in Sun's light and hold gathers. For homids, this may be a village or homestead, perhaps even an isolated island in the Pacific Rim. For suchids, a wallow may mean an alligator farm, zoo, swamp or even a sacred temple.



One Trait — A simple wallow with little protection from invaders and with almost no other Mokolé and few Kin.

Two Traits — Small, but containing a few Mokolé and their Kin, with excellent sun.

Three Traits — Lots of land or places to live with good resources (maybe a national park).

Four Traits — A nice place, with a village, a lake or swamplands that are easy to defend.

Five Traits — Your own alligator farm or temple.

Archid Traits: Dreaming Big

To be Archid is to dream of the Dinosaur Kings of the past and to be them in the present. A Mokolé remembers those traits and assumes them as he grows and transforms. Such changes are permanent parts of the Mokolé's development.

The immediate price to buy the "framework" of the Archid form, its typical benefits and drawbacks, is determined by the character's Gnosis at the time of her Rite of Passage; thus a character with four Gnosis Traits can select four Archid Traits. Some characteristics can be purchased more than once, increasing the value of the Trait. The form the Mokolé dreams at her coming of age is hers for life. Gnosis bought with experience cannot be used to buy more features, nor can additional features be bought later.

Some of the Traits described can potentially affect the balance of a story. Players should work with a Storyteller when choosing characteristics.

- **Air Sacs** — These sacs can be filled with air to intimidate an enemy; the sight of a creature growing its mass suddenly is enough to frighten anyone. While the Mokolé has air sacs filled, opponents who do not have *Lore: Mokolé* react at one level lower on the Delirium chart. The Mokolé can also swell himself into tight places to keep others from passing. This also ensures the Mokolé is unsinkable when swimming. The chuckwalla provides this memory.

- **Armor** — There are many types of natural protection to select from memory.

- **Back Sail** — This long fin catches the sun's rays while protecting the Mokolé from attack. The Mokolé gains the *Stalwart* Trait when defending against rear attacks and the Merit: *Temperature Control* at no extra cost while in Archid form. The memory of ouranosaurus contains this feature.

- **Binocular Vision** — These double-eyes, capable of seeing minute details and at great distances, grants two Traits on Perception-related tasks. This Trait is returned through the remembrance of the wide-eyed troodon.

- **Color Change** — When in a setting with coverage, the Mokolé can blend the hue of her skin into her background (like the chameleon, whose memory supplies this aspect), effectively camouflaging herself from casual notice. This Trait grants a free retest on any attempt to detect the concealed Mokolé.



Mnesis and Storytelling

Perhaps the most interesting element Mokolé bring to your chronicle isn't giant dinosaurs causing Delirium-panics or the chance to destroy wayward vampires. The best part of the Mokolé is their Mnesis. To keep players interested in this side of their characters, you'll need to know more about the characters' progression than the players do. Mnesis is a wonderful way for the Storyteller to break out of the typical "scrap and brawl" scenes and help develop characters with tales from their deepest memories. Mnesis should be featured at least once during the game, and always as a focus of downtime events.

Be proactive about giving your players something interesting without giving away all the secrets of the game. Here are a few good habits to get into when storytelling for a Mokolé character with Mnesis:

- Write up some short memories associated with the character's Mnesis, an ancestral line based on current Mnesis and some possible future Mnesis (if the player raises Mnesis with in-game development).
- Remember that the memories should be almost always from a Mokolé's point of view, and Mokolé do not tend to be standing in the middle of a medieval court, watching a vampire prince seize a city or a monarch's beheading at the hands of an angry mob. Rarely, a memory might have been stolen from a supernatural with a Bowl of Mnesis (see page 191), but exercise careful judgment in what you put in a character's Mnesis.
- Look up history timelines on the Internet or at your local library and find out about different time periods and how people got along. There are excellent books about traditional life in world cultures before the Age of Exploration for your research. Consult the books in **The Dark Ages** series for references on supernatural activity in the 12th century and political structure in Europe, and the **White Wolf** library for the history and location of the different supernatural races over the centuries. If you have a history question you simply can't answer, call the reference desk at your local library; they can probably get you on the right path.
- Keep your Mnesis ideas handy (a pocket-sized notebook or even a PDA can be very helpful for this) so you'll have them when you want them.



Armored feature	Trait advantage	Ancestral progenitor
Bony Plated	<i>Rugged, Tough</i>	Saltasaurus
Neck Frill	<i>Stalwart x 2</i> (frontal attacks only)	Protoceratops
Rough Hide	<i>Enduring, Rugged</i>	Carnotaurus
Scaly skin	<i>Enduring, Stalwart</i>	Baryonyx
Scutes	<i>Tough x 2</i>	

• **Contact Venom** — Just as dangerous as venom injected during a bite, *Contact Venom* paralyzes the bodies of living creatures. As the name suggests, physical (skin-to-skin) contact is all that is required for this virulent poison to begin affecting its victim. The Mokolé must first make physical contact with the target. If contact is made, the target must win a Static Physical Test with the Mokolé or become paralyzed at the end of the turn. The bite of an enemy is still deadly, but there's sure to be consequences for putting one's mouth on contact poison....

If not treated with anti-venom or healed in a supernatural manner (with *Mother's Touch* or a healing talen or fetish), the potent venom will continue to harm the victim, who loses one Physical Trait every 10 minutes if she does not succeed on the Static Physical Test. Three successes are enough to break down the poison; falling below Incapacitated means death (or torpor). If this venom comes in contact with the bloodstream of the undead (mummies, vampires, corporeal wraiths), it would not cause paralysis, but would require the victim to spend Stamina-related Traits on an even number with the Mokolé to overcome the poison's effects. If the vampire runs out of Stamina-related Traits, she loses health levels in subsequent rounds until cured or placed in torpor.

Although activated at will, this power can be just as dangerous to allies as it is to the Mokolé's enemies, and would make interaction with other Mokolé potentially dangerous. This Trait is a heritage of the poison toad.

• **Constricting Coils** — Coils are the long, tubular form of snakes and serpents and can be used as a grappling attack; the Mokolé gains *Brutal x 2* for any grappling attack and will continue to inflict damage to the captured prey until it succeeds in a Physical Challenge. For any Garou witnessing a Mokolé with *Coils*, this is the very image of the Wyrms — long coils that crush enemies, which Thunderwyrms possess; this Trait comes from the recollection of protoserpents.

• **Crop** — Like the gryposaurus, the Mokolé has a sac for food storage and the ability to produce crop milk to feed her young or the sick without fear of the food spoiling or being taken by another predator. The Mokolé can bring back as much food as she cares to eat as crop milk.



- **Deep Lung** — This memory of the mosasaurus allows the Mokolé to swim underwater for up to an hour or to hold his breath during combat for five minutes.

- **Disarticulating Jaw** — Whether the all-swallowing mouth of a large snake or the huge expandable jaws of a tyrannosaurus rex, this Trait grants a Mokolé the ability to swallow prey whole. Any creature swallowed must escape within a number of turns equal to his Stamina-related Traits or suffocate and be digested. Once swallowed, the victim must succeed in inflicting three levels of aggravated damage to tear through the gullet and escape.

- **Dragon Masque** — The Archid face of the Mokolé was inspired by Dragon himself and is terrible to behold. A snarl from the face of such a beast is enough to back down almost anything. The Mokolé gains an extra Trait on any terror-inducing Gifts or rites or *Intimidation* challenges if the target can see her face. She also gains one Trait when dealing with ancient reptile totems (such as Dragon).

- **Duck Bill** — The Duck Bill, a remembrance of hadrosaurus, adds two Traits to any *Expression*-related Social Challenge but excludes the Mokolé from having sharp teeth of any kind; the Mokolé's bite does bashing damage instead of aggravated.

- **Extra Limbs** — The Mokolé has an extra limb, as does Dragon before him (who has four legs and wings). The limb functions normally, but cannot enhance function as much more than a "spare" without the presence of a *Sacral Plexus*. If he wishes the limbs to have claws or have other abilities, he must purchase those abilities separately. Extra limbs may more legs or arms, or a set of non-functioning wings. Bear in mind that multiple limbs are a common characteristic in fomori, and Bête will likely think this is the influence of the Dissolver. Even other Mokolé are known to react badly to this Trait.

- **Eye Cones** — These large, cone-mounted eyes can roll and turn for a complete 360 degrees view of the surrounding area. Chameleon's lineage provides this feature. As with the Merit: *Danger Sense*, surprise attacks have little chance to succeed without the aid of Gifts or Fetishes.

- **Feathers** — These bright feathers, remembered of Dinosaur Kings like the sinornithosaurus, grant the Archid Mokolé the Social Traits *Alluring* x 2 and *Gorgeous*. If the Mokolé also has *Wings*, *Feathers* adds two Traits to contests related to flying.

- **Fiery Pearl** — Often found in the Archid forms of the Zhong Lung, this large, shining bone is a reminder of Dragon's fire. The pearl places the Mokolé two Traits up on *Intimidation* challenges with creatures of darkness (vampires, Kuei-jin, fomori, etc.).

- **Fins** — As with the ichthyosaurus, the Mokolé possesses large fins for her front and rear feet and can double her swimming speed (player can make seven steps per turn when representing travel in water). The Mokolé cannot use claws once this Trait is taken.



• **Food Storage** — Depositing fat in special reserves (fat sacs beneath the skin, a camel's hump), the Mokolé can live many seasons off a single, large kill. Grievous injuries would be an exception, requiring more food to help facilitate the healing process. The Mokolé must gorge to refill her reserves. The Gila monster remembers this ability through his line.

• **Fur** — Like the mighty Mastodon, long, thin hair covers and protects the Mokolé in cold climates. This is an extremely rare Trait in Mokolé.

• **Gecko Pads** — The lineage of the gecko offers special gripping cups on the Mokolé's hands and feet that allow her to climb sheer surfaces (provided they can bear her weight). For obvious reasons, this cannot be taken with *Huge Size*.

• **Gills** — Another aspect of the protoserpents, these slits on the neck of the Mokolé allows him to breathe water.

• **Grasping Hands** — Like the iguanodon, the Mokolé's hands are fully capable of gripping/articulating tools and weapons in her Archid form.

• **Hard Skull** — Through the memories of the hardheaded pachycephalosaurus, the Mokolé gains three bonus Traits when defending against attacks to the head or ramming his head in a charge. This Trait cannot be taken with *Horns*.

• **Hollow Bones** — The Mokolé has the same hollow bone structure as the pteradon before her, allowing her to dodge and chase with uncanny accuracy. The Mokolé is three Traits up on *Dodge*, *Athletics* and *Flying* (if she has *Wings*); she is *Delicate* in her Archid form and cannot take *Huge Size* or *Armor*.

• **Horn** — This natural weapon recalls the triceratops. It puts the Mokolé two Traits up on ramming attacks and inflicts aggravated damage; each additional time it is taken, it grants an extra Trait advantage for comparisons of ties (to a maximum of five Traits).

• **Huge Size** — The Mokolé is big, having a broad body capable of withstanding terrible attacks. The memory of allosaurus grants the Trait *Tough*, the Negative Physical trait *Lethargic* and an extra health level, adding an additional 250 pounds to his bulk. This Trait requires one additional *Lethargic* each time it is taken. *Huge Size* can be taken a maximum of three times.

Note: Very large creatures often have trouble moving quickly in combat, and should be required to make a Simple Test for their movement each turn.

• **Jacobson's Organ** — The Mokolé has a gland, called Jacobson's organ, with which he can detect heat around him like his cousin the snake. With a quick flick of the tongue to sample the surrounding atmosphere, the Mokolé "sees" around him by sense of smell, making it possible to function normally in little or no light (no vision penalties for low light or darkness). These glands are usually located at the back of the nostrils.

• **Long Neck** — The Mokolé has the long neck of diplodocus, and gets a bird's eye view of much around her. This can add to Perception contests (at



Storyteller discretion). This also allows her to bite from a distance, although she does not cause more damage than usual.

- **Long Teeth** — Through the memory of tyrannosaurus rex, the Mokolé gains long, deadly teeth, which grant an additional two Traits on bite attacks. Should the bite attack succeed, the target takes an additional level of damage. The damage is always aggravated.

- **Long Tongue** — The Mokolé's tongue is as long as her Archid form, like a snake or a chameleon's; as a ranged striking weapon, it does bashing damage. This can be taken multiple times, granting a one-Trait advantage on attacks with the tongue each time it is taken; combined with *Jacobson's Organ*, the Mokolé can see a great deal more of his surroundings in the dark. The tongue is covered with sticky goo, allowing the Mokolé to snag objects or people with the same Dexterity as his Archid form.

- **Multiple Heads** — Two heads rest on the Mokolé's shoulders, like the Hydra. They can perform simultaneous bite attacks without purchasing *Sacral Plexus*. For each head to have Traits like *Horn* or *Long Teeth*, they must be purchased separately for each head. This Trait does not add to the Mokolé's Mental Traits. Many times, each head has a distinct personality of its own. Mokolé with this Trait will most certainly be attacked as fomori.

- **Neck Frill** — Triceratops grants his descendants a bony neck frill, which can grant two Traits when defending against frontal attacks.

- **Nictitating Membrane** — A common feature of the alligator grants the Mokolé a second set of thin, translucent eyelids, which allow her to see normally underwater.

- **Poison Sacs** — The Mokolé, like the Gila monster or snake before him, has a powerful venom within his bite that does two levels of aggravated damage (in addition to any damage done by the bite itself). The Mokolé may choose to specify that the venom is assigned to another part of the body and dip his claws into it. This Trait may be purchased two more times, granting an additional health level of damage each time (to a maximum of four levels of aggravated damage).

- **Prehensile Tail** — The Mokolé's tail can be used for simple grasping of objects or people with the same strength as her arms or legs (but without fingers to articulate tools). If the Mokolé purchases *Sacral Plexus*, she may add the *Sacral Plexus* benefits to her tail's Attributes. This is remembered of the diplodocus.

- **Regeneration** — Like his cousin, the salamander, the Mokolé can regrow a lost body part or limb over a long period of time by spending a permanent Gnosis Trait. This is a grueling, painful process for the Mokolé, not a simple distraction; regrowing a lost limb should be roleplayed with as much dramatic emphasis as the near-death experience of losing the limb. Remember, in most Mokolé, being without a limb is the loss of movement. The Storyteller has the final say on whether a limb may regrow, how long it will take and what special care is required (food, rest, special baths, etc.).



• **Royal Crest** — This bony, colorful growth on the nose, courtesy of the oviraptor, places the Mokolé two Traits up on any Social Challenges with other Mokolé or the Nagah.

• **Sacral Plexus** — Like the stegosaurus before her, the Mokolé has a second brain located in her spinal cord that can handle physical tasks separate from the primary brain. As a result, the first brain is free to handle higher functions — like solving a riddle, activating a Gift or concentrating on a target — leaving the second brain free to engage in a simple physical function, such as *Brawl*, *Dodge* or the like. Although this method of functioning causes the physical tasks to be two Traits down in comparison of ties, the Mokolé is effectively doing two things at once. If both brains work together on a task, the Mokolé is two Traits up, as long as both brains work cooperatively.

• **Snorkel** — The Mokolé can remain underwater indefinitely with only a small bump of his head exposed on the surface, so long as his *Snorkel* remains clear. This also makes him extremely difficult to spot in the water. The memory of the brachiosaurus grants this advantage.

• **Spitter** — The lineage of the dilophosaurus allows a Mokolé to attack at range with poison (one yard for each permanent Rage Trait he has). This Trait must be purchased with *Poison Sacs* (and cannot be used with *Contact Venom*).

• **Tail Blades/Spikes** — This natural weaponry recalls the Kings such as stegosaurus and sauropelta. All Mokolé with either feature are two Traits up on attacks with these huge tail-mounted blades (aggravated damage).

• **Tail Club** — The ankylosaurus had a tail with a heavy club-shaped growth at the end; those who dream of it are three Traits up on attacks. This heavy, blunt club does bashing damage.

• **Terrible Claws** — The memory of deinonychus reveals her dangerous middle foot claw and hooked finger claws, making her formidable even for her small size. The Mokolé who dreams of *Terrible Claws* is three Traits up on attacks with claws (instead of normal two Traits) and inflicts an extra level of aggravated damage.

• **Thorns** — These protective spikes, from the memory of the thorny devil, do two levels of aggravated damage to anyone striking barehanded (including claws or other natural weaponry).

• **Throat Sacs and Wattles** — The predecessor to birdsong, the dragons knew songs of their own. Some were barks across the plains, others were roars from valley to valley. Some creatures, like the suchomimus, expressed themselves completely with depressed air sacs on their necks. When they sang, the sac filled, allowing them to sing a long string of musical ideas (“I’m hungry,” “I’m hurt,” “Come and lay down with me”) with rare eloquence. This Trait puts the Mokolé two Traits up on Trait comparisons for all Social contests involving *Expression*, and grants two extra Traits when used with the Gift: *Bellow*. This memory comes from the chuckwalla.



- **Upright Walking** — Like cousin goanna, the Mokolé can stand upright in his Archid form. This Trait allows for the use of tools in Archid form.

- **Webbed Feet** — The “webbings” — thin membranes of skin between the toes and fingers — enable the Mokolé to swim with speed and ferocity of his hadrosaur forefathers. The player may take five steps to represent movement in water, but is reduced to two steps on land.

- **Wings** — The Mokolé has wings. These are not birdlike wings, unless *Feathers* are present, and cannot allow for more than short-term flight and gliding. These *Wings* replace the normal forearms, removing the use of claws; a dragonlike set of wings would require the purchase of two *Extra Limbs*. If *Huge Size* or any type of *Armor* or heavy body defense is taken, the Mokolé cannot fly; these wings will probably become a hindrance to the movement of the arms. She can fly at about 20 mph.

Remember, a tyrannosaurus rex has relatively small arms to its body mass, and it will serve no use to put *Wings* on one; the same goes for a triceratops body or a brontosaurus. Without a bird-hipped frame, *Wings* are largely for decoration. Further, a flying Mokolé requires a pygostyle of the lower vertebrae that make up his tail, meaning the Mokolé will never be able to use tail lashing maneuvers or possess features like *Tail Club*, *Tail Plates/Spikes* or a *Prehensile Tail*.

With *Hollow Bones*, the Mokolé can fly like a crane, and if the Mokolé has *Feathers* to complement *Hollow Bones*, she can fly at amazing speeds and perform the kind of insane aerial stunts a falcon can. She can also soar for hours. Those without *Hollow Bones* can fly for one hour per Stamina-related Trait, then must rest for the night. *Terrible Claws* can be taken with *Wings*, but cannot be used during flight except to grapple; it is unlikely that a flying creature will do more than crash when it tries to dig claws into the stationary flesh of an earth-bound creature. *Wings* harken back to the most ancient of birds, the archaeopteryx.

Merits and Flaws

Listed below are special Mokolé-specific Merits and Flaws. Mokolé may choose Merits and Flaws from **Laws of the Wild**, but may not take any Traits that relate to stepping sideways.

The following Merits and Flaws are found exclusively within the Mokolé.

Bird-spirit Companion (1 Trait Merit)

A bird-spirit favors you, materializing in the Tellurian after you feed to clean teeth and pass on rumors, news and the like. This obviously requires a live kill, and you must be in Suchid or Archid form: A Mokolé in Homid form devouring a Thanksgiving turkey will not attract the companion.



Manshape (1 Trait Merit)

Your Archid form has a humanoid shape with reptilian characteristics. The Archid Traits *Upright Walking* and *Grasping Hands* must be purchased with this Merit, but you can use any number of tools and operate complex machines just as in Homid with no extra difficulty.

Mnesis of the Lost Ones (1 Trait Merit)

Buried within your Mnesis line lies the memories of one of the lost Bête races. You may have come by this through cross-breeding, sharing of mates or an ancestor performing the Rite of Anamnesis. However it happened, you can remember extinct Changing Breeds like the Grondr, Apis, Camazotz or the Khara (sabertooth Bastet). The memories are often fragmented and difficult to understand. The Storyteller will convey what the memory contains.

Terrible Footsteps (1 Trait Merit)

When you shift to Archid, you can spend Gnosis to recall the thundering arrival of the Dinosaur Kings, making the ground tremble as if in an earthquake, scaring birds and animals nearby. This is not connected to the Delirium or Veil.

Yathamaya (1 Trait Merit)

You know one of the realms of memory from Mnesis and can find it (if you possess any of the Gifts that allow Mokolé to enter the Umbra). This realm is located in the High Umbra (see Orunmila, page 189)

Bite of the Monitor (1-5 Trait Merit)

Your bite is vicious in the extreme, shredding muscle tissue in such a way as to cause recurring damage in your victims. The Storyteller should determine the location of the bite based on the damage and record the levels of damage made. The wound will reopen a number of times determined by your permanent Gnosis at the time of the bite, doing the same damage as in the initial attack (the Storyteller decides when and where this will happen). The frequency of the wound's opening depends on the intensity of the Merit.

- Once a year (1 Trait)
- Once a season (2 Traits)
- Once a month (3 Traits)
- Once a week (4 Traits)
- Once a day (5 Traits)

Retain Eggs (2 Trait Merit)

The Merit allows you to delay labor or laying eggs for a few days by spending Gnosis. This can grant you time to find a safe, secluded place to lay eggs or give birth. In a few rare cases, a Mokolé cow has been known to take her eggs to term within her own body, like a mammal. This Merit is only available to female Mokolé.

Retain Seed (2 Trait Merit)

With this Merit, you can retain the seed of a male inside your body for a number of years equal to your permanent Gnosis. With the expenditure of a



permanent Gnosis Trait, you can use the seed to fertilize eggs, producing a clutch of eggs (for suchids) or a baby (for homids) as in normal breeding. This Merit is only available to female Mokolé.

Temperature Control (2 Trait Merit)

You can control your body temperature at will, raising or lowering it as needed between 65 and 115 degrees Fahrenheit (but never lower or higher). Illness derived from extraordinary temperatures will not affect you (except in the most extreme cases), and weather-altering Gifts such as *Chill of the Early Frost* and *Heat Wave* have no effect. With a great deal of concentration, you can also block out detection by thermal vision cameras and heat sensors.

Farm Ties (3 Trait Merit)

You have a place on an alligator farm, gaining food, shelter and medical supplies in exchange for breeding. Although Kinfolk work on this farm, gaining favors from them requires buying the *Kinfolk* Background separately (as caring for the alligators at the farm is a full-time job).

Sacred Crocodile (3 Trait Merit)

You have worshippers who celebrate your Suchid form as divine (although this can be any varna, alligator and crocodile forms are the most common). Although these worshippers are most likely your Kinfolk, they may not know that you are a shapechanger and could be frightened if you start to talk or shapeshift. You receive no money from them (you're a crocodile, after all), but you have food and shelter. You must not harm or offend your followers, or they will turn on you. Unless the worshippers are purchased as a Background (*Allies, Kinfolk*), they won't do much beyond throwing you food and worshipping you.

Supernatural Companion (4 Trait Merit)

You have a supernatural ally who willingly assists you from time to time. Other Mokolé (including the clutch, wallow and beyond) do not know about this creature, and would be extremely upset to learn about your association, particularly if the ally is a Garou or a Wyrn-creature (including vampires). Your Storyteller will create your friend, but will not reveal all the details.

Gold Tolerance (5 Trait Merit)

You have developed a gold tolerance; gold does not tend to injure you as much as it does other Mokolé — every other wound caused by gold is aggravated. If you carry gold weapons, your Gnosis loss is halved. Most Mokolé find this a bit suspicious, and you may be asked to venture into dangerous situations for the good of the clutch. This Merit cannot be purchased with *Silver Tolerance*.

Eiditic Memory (5 Trait Merit)

You remember everything you hear and see with uncanny photographic detail. Once you've seen something (whether in real time or with *Mnesis*), you can always recall it again. The cost to learn anything memory-related is halved, but still take normal practice time. It's advised you keep a notebook handy to record your memories.



Hem-ka Sobk: Worship of the Old Gods

Two distinct cults have been known to build temples to the worship of a crocodile. The African predecessors of the Bata'a once shared the land with Mokolé-mbembe in Africa as occasional allies; most have vanished in Today, or have been brought into the Dreamspeakers. The Hem-Ka Sobk were ancient mages that worshipped the Mokolé of Egypt. Most are gone now; the uninitiated remainder of these worshippers, called the Keri Heb Ashau, have turned to hedge magic and continue to practice magic in the world today. Cults built around the worship of "Animal Fathers" (the Simba, Swara, Rokea and Mokolé) are developing, particularly in Florida and the southeastern United States.

Such a cult could prove to be an interesting focus for a hedge mage game, but Storytellers should exercise caution in allowing a Mokolé character to enter their chronicle; equally, Storytellers supporting Mokolé or Changing Breed games need to reign in any hedge magic that enters their chronicles, particularly in support of a Mokolé character. It is recommended that player character and Narrator character Keri Heb Ashau should be generated from **Laws of the Hunt Player's Guide**, which should be consulted for complete information on hedge magicians and their practices.

Preferred Paths: *Fascination, Hellfire, Shapeshifting, Spirit Calling, Summoning, Totem Link*

Color Change (7 Trait Merit)

Like a chameleon, you can change the color of your skin in both Archid and Suchid forms to earth tones and natural colors (bright spectrum bands, colorful billboards and bright metals are not possible). You are four Traits up on attempts to conceal yourself.

Silver Tolerance (7 Trait Merit)

As with *Gold Tolerance*, this Merit grants you a degree of tolerance to silver's sting. Every other wound caused by silver is aggravated, and if you carry silver weapons, your Gnosis loss is halved. There must be a very good reason to have this Merit, such a powerful supernatural pact. This Merit cannot be purchased with *Gold Tolerance*.

Step Sideways (7 Trait Merit)

Like the Garou, you can enter the Umbra without benefit of a Gift. As this crossing over is done independent of any spirit, there is no telling what is waiting for you behind the Velvet Curtain. This Merit is extremely rare among the Mokolé; it is unlikely that many other Mokolé can follow you into the Umbra should you need help.



Veiled to Garou (7 Trait Merit)

For years, the Kings hunted and slew the Garou and their Kin. Triggering the primal terror in a Garou, you can force any Garou who encounter your Archid form into the blind terror of Delirium. Garou react as per the Delirium chart according to their Rage or Willpower, whichever is higher.

Diurnal (1 Trait Flaw)

You can function in the day, but you must sleep at night. Spend a Willpower point to remain awake after dark.

Migratory Urges (1 Trait Flaw)

You feel compelled by instinct to migrate each year. The Storyteller determines the migration pattern. Usually in mid-spring, you follow instincts and travels by water in Suchid form to a destination in your Mnesis that a prior ancestor took. Once there, the hunt for a mate begins. You can delay the trip for some time, but will lose one Trait on comparison of ties for each day you do not follow instincts. Although this can be untimely, it is rarely looked upon as failing to follow the Duties.

Molt (1 Trait Flaw)

You shed your skin at least once a year, looking tattered in all three forms. The scales, feathers or fur fall from your Archid and Suchid forms, and you lose hair, tattoos, scars and piercings in Homid form. You cannot retest any Appearance-related tests during this time. You itch terribly in all your forms, and must spend a Willpower Trait to stop scratching for one scene. This process takes between a few days to a week, depending on your Suchid hide (longer for rough-skinned varna like crocodiles). Molting may also occur due to stress or toxins. The *Rite of Shedding Hide* becomes easier if you are molting.

Monogamous (1 Trait Flaw)

You mate once and stay with that partner for life. You are incapable of feeling sexual attraction for another while your mate lives or performing any sex act with another. Your mate may be a *True Love*, but there is no guarantee that your mate is equally monogamous. This is considered a Flaw, since Mokolése see no problem in mating with others of their varna to ensure that true Mokolése are born.

Scavenger (1 Trait Flaw)

You have a digestive condition that requires you to eat the decaying carcasses of animals when in Archid form. Although you will always be one Trait down on Social Challenges (due to terrible breath), you can eat rotted meat at any stage of decomposition.

Speechless (1 Trait Flaw)

There's a gap in your Mnesis, and you cannot speak the Dragon's Tongue. You can communicate nothing in Suchid or Archid save for limited body language. In time, you can be taught the Dragon's Tongue and buy off this Flaw, but finding a willing teacher may be difficult.



Slime (1 Trait Flaw)

You ooze, everywhere you go. In Archid and Suchid, you leave a sluglike trail and pollute the water with your musk; you sweat profusely in Homid. It smells and looks unpleasant, and puts you two Traits down on Social Challenges when appearances are important.

Cold-Blooded (2 Trait Flaw)

You have no ability to regulate your body temperature internally in any form, and you must use external means (sunning yourself, seeking shelter from the cold, heavy coats) to regulate your body temperature. Anytime the shift in temperature is beyond spring or fall climes, you are one Trait down on any contest you enter.

Dream Hunter (2 Trait Flaw)

Your Mnesis contains a Dream Hunter, a Dissolver-creature that was so vivid and real when originally encountered that it has found a life of its own in your Mnesis. It fights you whenever stirred, doing its best to harm you or drive you mad. It will lay dormant unless disturbed. Your battles with it take place in Mnesis, using spirit combat rules. It will continue to hunt you and anyone who shares your Mnesis unless you can find its place in Memory and destroy it or erase Mnesis with *Rite of the Burning Library*.

Exclusive Herbivore (2 Trait Flaw)

Your Archid form is an herbivore. You find the taste of blood repellent, and are one Trait down on bite attacks. You are vegan in the extreme, unable to digest *anything* (including milk and eggs) that comes from a living animal.

Stench (2 Trait Flaw)

You stink something awful, and nothing you try gets rid of the smell. Mammals, such as horses or dogs, will act uneasy around you. Your Social Challenges are three Traits down and anything trying to track you has a two-Trait bonus.

Sterile/Barren (2 Trait Flaw)

You are incapable of breeding. Although you can function normally in sex, you cannot ever make or bear progeny. You may buy off this Flaw with a quest or an operation (at Storyteller discretion). Other Mokolé, if they know, consider you diseased or Dissolver-ridden. You may never gain Matre and will be considered an undesirable mate, even for casual intimacy.

Wall Eye (2 Trait Flaw)

Your eyes are at the side of your head, not face forward. You cannot sense depth as well as creatures that flee you, making high-speed chases among trees a treacherous proposition.

Eyes of the Tyrant (3 Trait Flaw)

Your visual acuity is based on the movement of objects in front of you. Without the aid of sensory Gifts, you lose on all ties on Perception-based contests.



Albino (4 Trait Flaw)

You lack pigment in your skin and body, having white skin and pink eyes (in all forms) and white hair (in Homid). Your exposure to the sun must be incredibly limited, and Garou who encounter you are bound to conclude that you are a metis of the race. In human or lizard interactions, you are considered freakish. As a result, you are two Traits down on all Social interactions where your being accepted or respected is key. Gaining Gnosis for you is a difficult process, even if you are a Midnight Sun; you must wait until seeing your sky to regain Gnosis, and exposure to the sun does not return your Rage any quicker. This is common among sacred crocodiles.

Limbless (4 Trait Flaw)

Your Archid form is limbless, like a giant snake, although you may have flippers (like a pleisosaur). You cannot make claw attacks and your land speed is at one-quarter normal.

Great Fossil Lizard (5 Trait Flaw)

Your Archid form came not from Mnesis but the ideas of past generations about the dinosaurs. You believed them to be lumbering, unintelligent creatures, with walnut-sized brains and green reptilian scales. Your dreaming has now made you one. Although your Mental Traits remain the same, you are slow to respond to situations while in this form.

Merits of the Gumagan

Song Owner (1 Trait Merit)

You know one of the mystical songs of the Dreamtime that makes up the songlines and know the ways of these paths as if you first blazed them. This most likely concerns your ancestors and their deeds, and the knowledge of whatever trails, waterholes and wallows they may have encountered. This song ritually belongs to you and any who sing with you; only you and your relatives (who include those who know the song) may sing it. You must eventually pass this on to a niece, nephew, your child or some other heir.

Merits of the Makara

High Caste (1 Trait Merit)

Your family is of the Kshatriya or Brahmin castes, and you gain a two-Trait advantage on Social Challenges with humans of your homeland. (Only homid Makara may select this Merit; see page 127 for information on castes.)

Ghar (3 Trait Merit)

A red spot on your Suchid snout indicates virility; by spending Gnosis, you can guarantee your progeny will be a true Mokolé offspring and have a better time attracting others of your species for mating. This cannot be taken with the *Sterile/Barren Flaw*, and can only be taken by Mokolé of the Gharial varna.



Merits and Flaws of the Zhong Lung

Same-Bito Kin (1 Trait Merit)

You are Kin to Eastern Rokea, who respect you. This does not mean that the Rokea know you now, and the Storyteller may choose to let the opportunity to meet your distant Kin wait for the proper moment, but it is likely you will encounter them in the course of the chronicle.

Fear of Iron (1 Trait Flaw)

Iron is repellent to you, as you have a superstitious fear of it. In the presence of iron, you must succeed in a Willpower test against the bearer of iron to remain, or you will flee at top speed.

Fertile Essence (1 or 4 Trait Flaw)

With any exchange of fluids, your spiritual virility will cause a child to be created who looks like you. A simple kiss, drinking from the same glass or even bathing in the same waters could possibly cause a pregnancy. For a male Mokolé, this is a one-Trait flaw; for a female, it is a four-Trait flaw. Even one who is sterile or barren may become pregnant (at Storyteller discretion). This Flaw does not affect other Mokolé, metis or cause Innocents to be born.

Renown

Like the Garou, Mokolé gain Renown for their accomplishments. These Renown Traits can be given in game by the eldest of a solar aspect or seasonal auspice. The Striking and Warding confer on who should receive Glory, the Unshading and Crowning decide Honor, and the Concealing and Gathering determine Wisdom. The Shining call scandal and the Unshading judge it.



Renown for Gumagan and Mokol - mbembe

Striking and Warding

Rank	Title	Glory	Honor	Wisdom
1	Hatchling	1	1	1
2	Son/Daughter	3	2	2
3	Brother/Sister	6	3	3
4	Father/Mother	9	4	4
5	Grandfather/Grandmother	12	7	5
6	Legend	14	11	6

Unshading and Crowning

Rank	Title	Glory	Honor	Wisdom
1	Hatchling	1	1	1
2	Son/Daughter	2	3	2
3	Brother/Sister	3	6	3
4	Father/Mother	4	9	4
5	Grandfather/Grandmother	5	12	7
6	Legend	6	16	9

Concealing and Gathering

Rank	Title	Glory	Honor	Wisdom
1	Hatchling	1	1	1
2	Son/Daughter	2	2	3
3	Brother/Sister	3	3	6
4	Father/Mother	4	4	9
5	Grandfather/Grandmother	5	8	11
6	Legend	6	11	14

Shining

Rank	Title	AnyCombination
1	Hatchling	3
2	Son/Daughter	7
3	Brother/Sister	12
4	Father/Mother	17
5	Grandfather/Grandmother	24
6	Legend	31



The Makara and Zhong Lung, who are on the seasonal auspice wheel, use a Renown system that corresponds closely to the Garou Renown system (**Laws of the Wild**). The Makara and Zhong Lung relate to the Garou auspices in this manner:

Garou Auspice	Makara	Zhong Lung
Ragabash	Hemanta	Pei Tung
Theurge	Zarad	Sai Chau
Philodox	Grisma	Nam Hsia
Ahroun	Vasanta	Tung Chun

Allow for a few differences from the Renown chart in **Laws of the Wild** when awarding Renown:

- Completing a Mnesis Quest can be awarded in three degrees: minor (something useful saves the day), major (something lost is recovered and the Mokolé are stronger for it) and Dragon-blessed (something important saves Gaia). Note that all successful retrieval of memories from the Sea of Shadows results in Renown.

- The inwitting of a good story is mostly Wisdom, occasionally Honor, but never Glory.

- Awakening a Sleeper in time to see the second WonderWork is typically an Honor.

- Surviving a long *Sleep of the Dragon* (more than a human lifetime) can be any of the three categories.

- Wandering, when a Duty, receives Honor.

- The first mating (for the good of the clutch), and the actual birth of the first child are both awarded; each year of properly mating toward the end of conceiving is Renown-worthy. A wise mating may receive Honor.

- Producing a Mokolé child is always awarded, and almost always Glory (or Honor, if the child is Crowned).

- Mokolé can lose up to four Honor Traits for mating with other Mokolé, and a Wisdom, an Honor, and a Glory if the mating results in an Innocent.

Lying about Renown

One way a Mokolé can increase his Renown is to lie about it. This is a terrible idea. Remember, the Mokolé do not need a Silver Record; they are the record, carrying the memories of past ancestors to their children. To lie about one's deeds is a sure way to harm one's lineage forever.

Gifts

Many of the Gifts of the Mokolé seem to have a common theme: kill all blood-devils. While their Sun-gifts are extremely powerful, it is rare to find an area (outside of Egypt) that is contested by both Mokolé and vampire.

Mokolé can learn the Gifts of other races, too. Keep in mind that Mokolé will rarely find mammal-spirits willing to teach them the gifts of the Garou



and would not want to associate with such spirits anyway. They usually learn gifts through their Mnesis. The spirits do not begrudge this practice, since learning from their Mnesis is learning from a spirit, Orunmila (see page 189 for details).

Mokolé begin with one general Mokolé gift and one from their auspice.

General Gifts

The Mokolé mind is about inclusion of every detail. Mnesis is a way of holding on to everything and using it as needed, and it cuts through every varna, aspect and stream. As such, Mokolé are significantly less fractured than the Bête tribes. As the need for survival brings the clutches together to the common good, the sharing of knowledge and Mnesis between the streams and Aspects has led to the spread of many Gifts. The general Gifts are shared by all Mokolé.

Basic

- **Axis Mundi** — With this Gift, a Mokolé attunes himself to the relation and timing of earth, sky and sun. The Mokolé need only spend a Gnosis point and automatically learns the time of day, season, where on the Earth he is and the direction he is facing.

- **Falling Touch** — As the Ahroun Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Fatal Flaw** — As the Shadow Lord Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Find Land** — With this Gift, a Mokolé can sense and locate a fixed land mass while in the swamp or out at sea on long journeys. The Mokolé makes a Mental Challenge (retest with *Survival*), then spends one Mental Trait to learn the general direction of land, two Traits to determine the distance to reach the land and three Traits for general information about the land's condition (such as the presence of toxins).

- **Find Water** — As the Gift: *Find Land*, save that this Gift allows the Mokolé to find a source of water while on land.

- **Inspiration** — As the Ahroun Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Razor Claws** — As the Ahroun Gift in **Laws of the Wild**; works only in Archid form.

- **Scent of Sweet Nectar** — With this Gift, the Mokolé encourages all manner of vermin to plague a target. She spends a Gnosis point and makes a Mental Challenge. If she succeeds, the target begins to exude a sweet aroma and its skin becomes slightly sticky. This attracts all manner of insects like swarms of gnats, flies and bees. The Storyteller should work out the exact effects, but some include stings and bites, maddening buzzing and a real challenge to one's social life. The Gift lasts for one scene.

- **Scent of the True Form** — As the Lupus Gift: *Scent of the True Form*; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Sense Dissolver** — As the Metis Gift: *Sense Wyrms*; see **Laws of the Wild**.



- **Sense Gold** — As the Ahroun Gift: *Sense Silver*, in **Laws of the Wild**, save that it identifies gold in the area rather than silver.

- **Sense Moon** — With a Mental Challenge, the Mokolé can determine if a nearby creature shares a relationship with Moon (which is all the Bête, with the exception of the Ananasi, Corax and Nuwisha). Risking two Traits will identify the creature's species; four Traits will grant the Mokolé a general sense of the creature's abilities and Rank.

- **Sense Prey** — As the Lupus Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Shed** — With this Gift, a Mokolé can escape the grip of a foe by shedding his skin. With a Physical Challenge (retest with *Brawl*), the Mokolé can automatically escape a grappling attack, or gain a two-Trait bonus on slipping out of chains or bonds.

- **Silver Claws** — As the Ahroun Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Speed of Thought** — As the Silent Strider Gift, in **Laws of the Wild**, except that the Mokolé must spend two Gnosis Traits.

- **Stinking Breath** — The Mokolé with this Gift expels a noxious gas that is so repellent that air-breathing creatures must flee. The cost is one Gnosis point; other Mokolé and Bête may resist, but only by defeating the Gifted Mokolé in a Gnosis Challenge.

- **Tailbiter's Mumble** — When her legs are injured and movement would otherwise be reduced, a Mokolé may bite her tail and roll away as fast as her human form could run. The cost is a Willpower Trait, and the speed will continue for as long as the Mokolé cares to roll. The Mokolé must be in Suchid or Archid form to use this Gift.

- **Talk** — Mokolé normally cannot speak in a human tongue while in Archid or Suchid; this Gift allows the Mokolé to speak any language he knows while in these forms. This becomes part of the Mokolé's nature. With a successful Mental Challenge, the Mokolé may speak any other Bête's language for a scene.

- **Tides of Lust** — This Gift uses expression and dance to sway the tides within a person, raising the need for sexual fulfillment and removing inhibitions. The Mokolé performs a dance, and the player makes a Static Social Challenge against eight Traits (add one to the difficulty if the target is in love with someone else; add one if the target is elderly or attracted to partners of the same gender — at Storyteller discretion, each level of *Performance: Dance* may lower the difficulty by one). Success puts the target in a lustful state for one hour; by spending additional Social Traits, the Mokolé may increase the time. Impotence is no longer a factor, and the target becomes fertile if normally sterile. This does not influence the target's views on the Mokolé performing the Gift, save to lower inhibitions and create an opportunity for seduction. This Gift does not work on metis.

- **Waxwork Monster** — This Gift enables the Mokolé to hide in plain sight, transforming her current appearance to look like a mannequin or a scale model. The Mokolé spends a Gnosis Trait and stands rigid. The player bids



a Trait for each hour the Mokolé wishes to remain concealed and performs a Static Social Test versus 10 Traits. The Mokolé will remain frozen as a replica of her current form, for that time. Homids take on the appearance of a mannequin or waxwork; an Archid transforms into a giant dinosaur model (no Delirium reaction); and a Suchid transforms into a life-size figure of her varna. The timing and placement of the statue is key; simply transforming anywhere risks detection since people will want to know how the statue got there.

Intermediate

- **Attunement** — As the Bone Gnawer Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Bark of the Mudpuppy** — This Gift allows the Mokolé to issue a sharp, loud bark at any one person or object, inflicting a single level of aggravated damage within hearing range. This can open wounds, shatter glass, even splinter light wood. There is no cost to activate this Gift.

- **Cocoon** — As the homid Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Dragon's Breath** — With this Gift, a Mokolé can breath fire, like the Dragon Kings. It costs one Rage Trait and inflicts two levels of aggravated damage on a successful Physical Challenge (retest with *Brawl*). The Mokolé may spend additional Rage to inflict extra aggravated damage on a one-for-one basis.

- **Dragonfear** — Just as the Delirium can induce an instinctive fear of Crinos werewolves due to ancestral memory, Mokolé can induce a similar ancestral terror of the night in all creatures (including the Awakened). By spending a Rage Trait, the Mokolé invokes the Delirium on all witnesses for one scene. Even creatures immune to Delirium, like fomori, will still experience it.

- **View the Seed** — With this Gift, a Mokolé can identify the “seed” of something, the element that brought a thing or an idea into existence. The narrower the scope, the simpler the answer; the broader the idea, the more difficult to understand the seed. The Mokolé performs a Static Mental Challenge versus seven Traits to learn simple answers (such as the parents of a child) with greater difficulty for greater scope (12 Traits for determining who controls the drug trade in a particular city). Note that some things result from several “seeds” — a Mokolé looking at America would get a welter of images (early European explorers, the Continental Congress, African slaves arriving via the Middle Passage, the Civil War, Native Americans planting corn...).

- **Walking Between Worlds** — With this Gift, Mokolé can enter the Umbra, typically using water's reflection as opposed to a mirror, testing Gnosis versus the Gauntlet (as Garou do). Once this Gift is learned, the Mokolé step sideways just like Garou, using the same system.

Advanced

- **Grasp the Beyond** — As the Theurge Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.



• **Song of the Great Beast** — As the *Lupus Gift*; see *Laws of the Wild*. This Gift is usually taught only to suchids, and typically, the song calls forth dinosaurs, although Megadon sharks and similar creatures are in the realm of possibility.

Stream Gifts

Gumagan

Basic

• **Songlines** — The Gumagan use this Gift to walk on the Dreamtime songlines of Australia, singing the songs that lie deep in Mnesis. Winning a Static Gnosis Test (versus five Traits in the lands the Gumagan call home, seven in unknown places of Australia, nine in the outside world), the Gumagan halves the travel time with success.

• **Dreamwalk** — This Gift allows the Gumagan to lower the Gauntlet in an area by two Traits by concentrating on the Dreamtime. This lasts for one turn. There is no cost; the Gumagan simply concentrates on the Gauntlet.

Intermediate

• **Bunyip's Boom** — The Mokolé remembers the outraged cry of the lost Bunyip, and performs it, quaking the land. The Mokolé spends a Gnosis and makes a Social Challenge (retest with *Performance*). Any who hear the roaring cry lose a Willpower Trait for the rest of the scene or one hour (whichever comes first). This Gift will affect friend and foe alike — anyone who hears the call may be affected, including spirits and animals.

• **Landspeak** — The Gumagan can speak with earth itself and hear it comment on what is occurring. The Mokolé puts his ear to the ground and makes a Gnosis Test (against seven Traits); success grants the listener the Earth's comments within a five-mile radius of where he stands. If a Mnesis Trait is spent, the *Landspeak* can go into the past and tell the history of the land.

Landspeak is one of the most interesting Gifts a Mokolé player can use in roleplay, but like many, it requires a bit more work from a Storyteller. Speaking to the Earth should not be treated quite the same as a spirit in the Umbra, as the Earth is an elicited speaker, not an anima to be interrogated. Just as the Earth is broad and general, so is its vision, although it will speak mostly of the large area encompassed in the local songlines.

Comments directed from the Earth should reflect how the local nature and wildlife deal with animal overpopulation, human encroachment, pollutants and anything else in the area that the earth might find relevant to comment on; it should not answer questions with regards to immediate specifics.

• **Nightmare Mnesis** — By locking eyes with an enemy, the Gumagan forces Mnesis upon the target, forcing her to remember the suffering of the natives of Australia (human and animal) by invaders. This is a Mnesis versus



current Willpower Challenge. If successful, the victim's mind is flooded with images of a past of rape, defilement and murder. Vampires will remember those they murdered in coming to Botany Bay; Garou will remember the slaughter of the Bunyip. Any relevant memory in the Mokolé's Mnesis will be added to the experience. Often, victims will enter Harano or suicidal depression. The images last for one scene, but the aftereffects linger much longer.

Advanced

- **Billabong Walk** — The Gumagan may spend two Gnosis Traits and travel any distance by diving into suitable waters for his varna; he may emerge from any suitable body of water he has bathed in before, no matter how far away. There is no cost beyond the Gnosis expenditure. This does not include Umbral locations.

- **Bloody-Mindedness** — The Gumagan can point herself at a single goal, which she follows until it is accomplished. Nothing can divert her, and her intensity often frightens others into helping. She spends two Willpower Traits and becomes intently focused on accomplishing this goal, needing neither food nor sleep until her goal is realized. She effectively possesses the Merit: *Iron Will* until the task is complete, and most *Bloody-Minded* Gumagan are on the verge of frenzy every minute. In combat against her life-enemy, she gains one extra attack per round and a one-Trait bonus in Challenges against him. She may not dodge attacks from other combatants, but gains five extra health levels; these phantom health levels absorb any damage first.

Makara

Intermediate

- **The Thousand Arrows** — After the Makara spends both a Rage and a Gnosis Trait, his projectile weapon triples its output with a volley of missiles; arrows become a volley, a bullet becomes a spray, spears split into three, and a machine gun becomes a swarm. The Makara adds five Bonus Traits to the weapon he is using (in addition to whatever normal benefits the weapon provides) for one action.

This Gift can be used more than once in a scene, but the effects are not cumulative.


Advanced

- **Great as a White Hill** — As the Fianna Gift, *Gift of the Spriggan*.

Mokolé-mbembe

Intermediate

- **Beak of the Finch** — As the Mokolé-mbembe move from conflict to conflict, they sometimes find their bodies ill-suited to survive the conditions of the land. With this Gift, the Mokolé-mbembe may adapt and change a body part to suit her surroundings; lungs could become gills to breathe underwater, a nose could develop a Jacobson's organ to track prey by smell, or leathery



armor could soften and sprout hair for cold climates. The Mokolé spends a Gnosis Trait and performs a Simple Test; if she is successful, a single body part transforms as she needs it; the effects last for one scene per Gnosis Trait spent. This Gift cannot create anything new, only modify existing parts.

• **Heat Wave** — By spending a Gnosis Trait and dancing the Steps of the Sun, the Mokolé-mbembe brings the heat of the sun. A Static Mental Challenge is performed, the difficulty depending on the current weather.

- 6 Traits Sunny, hot day
- 9 Traits Warm weather, sun exposed
- 10 Traits Moderate temperatures, cloudy
- 12 Traits Cool, overcast
- 14 Traits Night, cold and wintry

• **Walk into My Eyes** — With this Gift, the Mokolé-mbembe “invites” a target into his memory, seeing images and memories of life as a Mokolé through the ages, from the War of Rage to countless suns in the sky. The Mokolé invokes this Gift by locking eyes with the target and performing a Mental Challenge against the target; the user is two Traits up against the relatives of the Mokolé (Nagah, Corax or Kinfolk); tests normally against Bête, saurians or anyone born human; and is two Traits down against anything else. With success, the target spends one turn reliving memories born of the Mokolé’s Mnesis. The Mokolé can spend Mental Traits to increase the turns spent in Mnesis on a one-for-one basis. The target cannot use any powers or Gifts specific to his kind (vampiric Disciplines, Garou-only Gifts) and will not attack the Mokolé, but will defend itself if attacked.

Zhong Lung

Basic

• **Chi’ih Ming** — Using this Gift, a Mokolé may walk into the air as if walking on solid ground, moving at normal walking speed. The Zhong Lung spends a Gnosis Trait and performs a Simple Test; the Mokolé may walk on air with a win or a tie. This Gift lasts for one scene.

• **Shou** — As the Philodox Gift: *Wisdom of the Ancient Ways*; see *Laws of the Wild*.

Intermediate

• **Serenity** — The Mokolé can quell the Rage in others, even bringing creatures out of frenzies. After the Mokolé spends a Gnosis Trait and succeeds in a Social Challenge against the target, the target becomes incapable of using Rage at all for the rest of the scene. If the target is frenzying, this will pull her out of frenzy. This Gift can be used against any creature capable of frenzy.

Rising Sun (Cung Chun/Vasanta)

Basic

• **Bellow** — With a booming, guttural call, a Mokolé can send invaders and nearby predators fleeing in blind panic. The Mokolé spends a Rage Trait,



then makes a Rage Challenge against his target's Willpower. If successful, hearers react as if suffering the Delirium.

- **Eye of the Raptor** — With this Gift, the Mokolé's eyes can see across great distances. The player must spend two Mental Traits for each mile she wishes to see, although she cannot see through obstacles. This Gift lasts for one turn.

- **Paint the Meadows** — By making the pitiful sounds of a creature in distress, the Mokolé uses this Gift to lure predators to him. The Mokolé typically greets the predators with an ambush. The player makes a Social Challenge against a nearby target. The Gift lasts until the target suffers pain.

- **Sense Silver** — As the Ahroun Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Intermediate

- **Anger of the Wani** — As the Wendigo Gift: *Invoke the Spirits of the Storm* in **Laws of the Wild**. The Mokolé who uses this Gift immediately falls into a deep sleep until the next sunrise.

- **Call the Tides** — With the aid of Luna, the Mokolé can change tidal waters, such as oceans, seas or river inlets, to her will. The player makes a Static Gnosis Test versus eight Traits; her control of the water depends on how much Gnosis she bids.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 1 Trait | The tide comes in or goes out twice as fast as usual. |
| 2 Trait | Tides will make dramatic change in speed, or reverse direction. Lasts for the game session. |
| 3 Traits | High tide or low tide enter or exit in one scene. |
| 4 Traits | Rough waters and unusual tides enter or exit for one scene. |
| 5 Traits | Freakish tides for the area (mountainous waves, riptides, strong) undertows that last for one scene. |

- **Combat Healing** — Before combat, the Mokolé spends two Rage Traits; for the remainder of time he is in combat, his body will heal one non-aggravated health level of damage each turn without needing to pause a turn for healing.

- **Dragon's Tongue** — Spending a Willpower Trait, the Mokolé calls a bolt of lightning down on a target and engages in a Physical Challenge; if successful, the target is struck by lightning and suffers three levels of aggravated damage. For living creatures with a central nervous system, electric shock often causes unconsciousness, temporary paralysis and even death. However, most supernaturals are sturdier than the average human or animal and can compensate for the damage. Storytellers are encouraged to make a Simple Test for those with electrical damage that fall into Wounded to retain consciousness.



• **Hot Ichor** — This Gift allows the Mokolé to build a battery of energy within his own blood, released suddenly in a time of need. For each Rage Trait spent, the Mokolé adds one point to his pool of Ichor Traits; at no time can a Mokolé store more than double his Rage total. These Ichor Traits can be spent in part or in whole to increase Physical Traits. The advantages last for one turn.

• **Might of the Kings** — As the Get of Fenris Gift, *Might of Thor*; see **Laws of the Wild**.

• **Scream of Gaia** — With a leap into a group of foes, a Mokolé can let loose a blood-curdling scream that knocks her foes to the ground. The player spends a number of Rage Traits; for each Trait spent, the player makes a Rage Challenge simultaneously against everyone in a 10-foot radius. Each success inflicts one health level of damage and knocks the target to the ground for one turn. While the targets are down, they can only defend and cannot initiate attacks.

Advanced

• **Jointsnake's Mojo** — With this Gift, a Mokolé can effortlessly reattach a severed limb. By spending a Gnosis Trait, the Mokolé calls the limb back to his body. As long as the limb is nearby (within 10 feet), whole and mostly intact (i.e., not crushed, eaten or being digested), the lost part will spasm and writhe back to the Mokolé to be reattached to the body. This does not heal any health levels and the pain of a severed limb is considerable, but with the expenditure of a second Gnosis Trait, the wound will not scar.

• **Wall of Granite** — As the Philodox Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Noonday Sun (Nam Hsia/ Grisma)

Basic

• **Calm** — As the Children of Gaia Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

• **Gold Claws** — As the Ahroun Gift: *Silver Claws* in **Laws of the Wild**, except the claws become gold.

• **Sight of the True Form** — As the General Gift.

• **Strength of Purpose** — As the Philodox Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

• **Tame Sunbeam** — With this Gift, a Mokolé requests the aid of Olodumare himself to banish darkness, bringing down the sun on an area. The player spends a Gnosis Trait and makes a Mental Challenge, spending additional Gnosis for greater effect. Any vampires in the area take one level of aggravated damage for each turn they are in direct sunlight.

1 Trait The sun can circumnavigate shadows and clouds to illuminate an area.

2 Traits Sunlight pierces through any tinted glass as if no protection exists, and can penetrate into deep waters.

3 Traits Sunbeams may light fires or penetrate solid walls.

4 Traits The sun can shine in the middle of the night.



- **Truth of Olodumare** — As the Philodox Gift: *Truth of Gaia*; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Intermediate

- **Clear Mind** — A Mokolé uses this Gift to sharpen her mental prowess, no matter what the distractions. The Mokolé spends Willpower, with each spent Willpower translating as one Mental Trait she may add to her total. The effects last for the rest of the scene.

- **Dragon's Tongue** — As the Rising Sun Gift; the storyteller may declare a Noonday challenger two Traits up if the victim has failed to fulfill Mokolé duties.

- **Eyes of the Cobra** — As the Galliard Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Raptor's Gaze** — As the Fianna Gift: *Balor's Gaze*; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Serenity** — The Mokolé can quell the Rage in others, even bringing creatures out of frenzies. After the Mokolé spends a Gnosis Trait and succeeds in a Social Challenge against the target, the target becomes incapable of using Rage at all for the rest of the scene. If the target is frenzying, this will pull her out of frenzy. This Gift can be used against any creature capable of frenzy.

- **Strength of the Dominator** — As the Shadow Lord Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Advanced

- **Geas** — As the Philodox Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Sleep of the Dragon** — The Mokolé uses this gift to enter a long-term sleep called estivation; this can be measured in days, months, years or centuries. A waking condition is set ("when the lake fills with water," "for four moons"). He does not age as he sleeps, although he does dream. Most Mokolé bury themselves in mud as they sleep. Touching or moving a dormant Mokolé will immediately awaken him. No test or expenditure is needed — the Mokolé may enter as an act of will.

- **Wisdom of the Seer** — The Mokolé spends an hour gazing into a sunlit sky, then asks a question of the sky and receives an answer. After looking into the sky, the Mokolé spends a Gnosis Trait and make a Mental Challenge. If successful, she may ask a single question of the Storyteller. It is rare to gain a completely straightforward answer from the sky spirits.

Setting Sun (Tung Chun/ Vasanta)

Basic

- **Mother's Touch** — As the Theurge Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Resist Pain** — As the Philodox Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Clap of Thunder** — As the Shadow Lord Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Paint the Meadows** — As the Rising Sun Gift.

- **Spew** — After Swallowing several gallons of water and successfully performing a Static Physical Challenge, the Mokolé spews out a slippery,



oozing slime that hinders a walking predator from digging at an egg-nest. Urine, vomit or other bodily fluids may also be created with this Gift.

The Storyteller should record the Physical Traits of the Mokolé's form and use these as a Static Challenge to anyone attempting to walk in this area; any time movement is attempted in this area — including escape — a test is made. The Mokolé must be in Archid or Suchid forms when performing this Gift.

Intermediate

- **Armor of the Tortoise** — Through the memory of Turtle, a Mokolé grows a hardened exterior shell that repels attacks. The Mokolé makes a Physical Challenge (retest with *Primal-Urge*) and spends a turn in concentration. With success, he gains two extra health levels. This can be added in addition to other armor, but the Gift may only be activated once per scene. This Gift lasts for one scene; changing forms during this time causes the shell to fall apart. This shell will kill a Mokolé in Homid form as it is far too heavy for any human body to carry. It can be used only in Archid or Suchid forms.

- **Clenched Jaw** — As the Ahroun Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Combat Healing** — As the Rising Sun Gift.

- **Hot Ichor** — As the Rising Sun Gift.

- **Might of the Kings** — As the Get of Fenris Gift: *Might of Thor*; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Advanced

- **Halo of the Sun** — As the Children of Gaia Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Fossilize** — This Gift allows a Mokolé to fossilize an enemy by pointing a bone at an enemy and entering a Gnosis Challenge versus the target's Willpower. Each success causes one health level of aggravated damage. If the target dies from the Gift, she turns into a fossil relic.

Midnight Sun (Pei Tung/ Hemanta)

Basic

- **Breaking the Tomorrow Wall** — A Midnight Sun, with a burnt offering of a bird's feather, can see events in the future, signs and omens. The Mokolé spends a Gnosis point and makes a Mental Challenge (retest with Enigmas). With success, she may peer beyond tomorrow and gain one insight (usually vague).

- **Darksight** — By spending a Willpower Trait, the Mokolé can see clearly in darkness (except complete loss of light).

- **Dreamspeak** — As the Galliard Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Glib Tongue** — As the Galliard Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Lambent Flame** — As the Silver Fang Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Sense Sun** — As the General Gift: *Sense Moon*, except that it determines sun-creatures, such as the Mokolé and the Corax.



• **Spirits of Laughter** — Far more potent and direct than nitrous oxide, this Gift causes a target to burst into fits of hysterical laughter with the expenditure of a Gnosis Trait and a successful Gnosis versus Willpower test. The effects are triggered by any comment made after the Gift is performed, which will seem unbelievably funny. The target may take no action other than defending himself due to laughing uncontrollably. The effect lasts for one turn.

- **Talk** — As the General Gift.

Intermediate

• **Become Log** — As the Ragabash Gift: *Blissful Ignorance*, except that the Mokolé must be in an environment suited to her varna.

• **Fool's Luck** — By spending a Gnosis Trait and making a Static Gnosis Test versus eight Traits, the character gains a free Luck retest on any challenge. The results of the second test must stand. When the player chooses to invoke her luck is up to her, but she must use it before the end of the session.

- **Invisibility** — As the Uktena Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

• **Open Sun Bridge** — As the Ragabash Gift: *Open Moon Bridge*; see **Laws of the Wild**.

• **Shadows by the Firelight** — As the Galliard Gift, but in the hands of a Mokolé, it transforms to one of the purest forms of storytelling possible, bringing the tale into the past to watch the story unfold as it does in Mnesis. When this Gift is combined with Mnesis, the result is a unique art called inwitting. The tale-teller and listeners are transported into the story, seeing it all from the firsthand experiences of Mokolé present at the time.

Advanced

- **Sleep of the Dragon** — As the Noonday Sun Gift.

• **Steal Shape** — Just as Mokolé dream their Archid form into being, the Mokolé with this Gift can also dream himself into a new shape by studying the shapes he sees. With long study of the new form (at least a year) and the expense of a *permanent* Gnosis Trait, the Mokolé's form changes permanently to that of another creature. The creature must look something like the old one so that the Mokolé soul will inhabit it (the Storyteller is free to rule on this). This is the shape a Mokolé mother will pass on to her offspring. Some claim this is how a new varna comes to have shapeshifter souls. As few Mokolé with this Gift survived the War of Rage, it is extremely rare and should not be used or taught but in the rarest circumstances. Storytellers may wish to limit the appearance and use of this Gift.

- **Take the True Form** — As the Philodox Gift.

• **Thousand Secret Faces** — Just as *Steal Shape* allows a permanent change to a new form, this Gift allows a Mokolé to cast an illusion of being in a new form. By studying a shape, spending both a Gnosis and a Willpower trait and making a Social Challenge (retest with *Subterfuge*), the Mokolé puts on a false form. The Gift lasts for one day, although the Mokolé may spend



Social Traits to prolong it. Should someone attempt to penetrate this Gift with another, the Mokolé is three Traits up to avoid penetration.

Shrouded Sun (Sai Chau/ Zarad)

Basic

- **Become Log** — As the Midnight Sun Gift.
- **Breaking the Tomorrow Wall** — As the Midnight Sun Gift.
- **Call the Rain** — With this Gift, the Mokolé can bring down rain at will, affecting rainfall from the current weather patterns. This has brought about more than one crocodile cult. Make a Social Challenge and spend Social Traits to bring about the desired effect. If it is already raining when this Gift is invoked, the rain doubles in effort; flooding is a real possibility.

1 Trait	A spatter, enough to mist plants and steam hot ground
2 Traits	A steady drizzle
3 Traits	Average rainfall
4 Traits	Downpour

- **Command Spirit** — As the Theurge Gift; see *Laws of the Wild*.
- **Dream the Matre's Mind** — Mokolé may travel into the Deep Umbra through a form of astral projection. The player makes a Gnosis Test against the Gauntlet rating and the Mokolé enters the Deep Umbra as an astral being from her current location. Her physical body remains behind and unconscious. Losing on a tie means the attempt fails; losing the test outright means becoming lost in the Deep Umbra without a tether.
- **Mother's Touch** — As the Theurge Gift; see *Laws of the Wild*.
- **Send the Dream** — As the Metis Gift: *Mental Speech*; see *Laws of the Wild*.
- **Sense Designer** — As the Metis Gift: *Sense Wyrn* in *Laws of the Wild*, except that it detects the Weaver.
- **Sense Dissolver** — As the Metis Gift: *Sense Wyrn*; see *Laws of the Wild*.
- **Sense Magic** — As the Uktena Gift; see *Laws of the Wild*.
- **Spirit Speech** — As the Theurge Gift; see *Laws of the Wild*.
- **Talk** — As the General Gift.
- **Walking Between Worlds** — As the General Gift

Intermediate

- **Call Water Spirit** — The Mokolé may summon a water spirit to perform a single task for him. He must have a water source available, even as small as a coffee mug full of water. The water spirit may drench a foe, short out a power system or move water before departing. To summon the spirit, the Mokolé spends a Gnosis Trait and makes a Social Challenge.



• **Deeper Lungs** — This Gift allows the Mokolé to hold and reserve air for a time equal to the number of Stamina-related Traits she possesses (hours in the real world, days in the Umbra). When the Gift's duration expires, the Mokolé must be able to breathe air again for five minutes before invoking this Gift again.

- **Exorcism** — As the Theurge Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Grasp the Beyond** — As the Theurge Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Open Sun Bridge** — As the Midnight Sun Gift.

• **Recapitulate** — With this Gift, a Mokolé can send a creature back across its evolutionary growth, to early rodent and reptile forms, all the way down to primordial oozing proteins. The Mokolé shouts out the enemy's name and makes a Social Challenge (retest with *Mnesis*). The Mokolé's level of *Mnesis* determines the result. The effect lasts for one scene.

1 Trait	Homo Erectus
2 Traits	Slothlike tree mammals
3 Traits	Small land reptiles
4 Traits	Fish
5 Traits	Primordial ooze

• **Shadow Wings** — This Gift allows a Mokolé to fly directly through the Umbra on spiritual wings that unfold when needed. With this Gift she may avoid the various paths and tracks for a more direct route (which is no less hazardous). Once the Mokolé knows this Gift, the wings come on command whenever the Mokolé enters the Umbra. The Mokolé must enter the Umbra to invoke this Gift (such as by *Walking Between Worlds*) and must be in a place where flying is possible. These are dragon-style wings, and do not inhibit the arms of the Mokolé.

• **Walk the Matre's Mind** — This allows a Mokolé to enter the Deep Umbra directly as a physical entity (instead of as an astral projection). If she is already present as an astral being, she may remove her silver cord. No challenge is necessary; the Gift becomes automatic when it is learned. This Gift lasts only while the body can withstand the strain of being separated from the spirit (one scene per Stamina-related Trait).

Advanced

• **Gorgon's Gaze** — With this terrifying Gift, the Mokolé can turn her foes to stone with a single glance. Like Medusa's victims, the targets turn to statues where they stand. The Mokolé makes eye contact with her victim and makes a Mental Challenge. With success, the victim turns to stone for a number of turns equal to the Mokolé's Willpower. The Mokolé can double this time by spending a Willpower Trait.



- **Malleable Spirit** — As the Theurge Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Decorated Sun (Nam Hsia/ Grisma)

Basic

- **Call to Duty** — As the Philodox Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Cooking** — As the Bone Gnawer Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Dragon Drill** — This Gift allows the Gathering to organize her clutch into a united work force. She can take an Ability known to one clutchmate and share it with all. She gives a “pep talk” to her clutch, describing the Ability and task, then spends a Gnosis Trait and makes a Social Challenge with each clutch member in turn. With success, the clutchmate gains the Ability at the donor’s level for one scene. This Gift affects Kin as well as Mokolé. Certain Abilities, such as trying to impart *Drive* to suchids, may not succeed (Storyteller discretion). Only Abilities are passed on, not Gifts, rites, Backgrounds or other advantages. The Storyteller has the final say on what Abilities may be passed on.

- **Mother’s Touch** — As the Theurge Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Persuasion** — As the Homid Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.
- **Pilot Snake** — The Mokolé can call on the pilot snake, a helpful creature who will lead the Mokolé to fresh water, shelter, even wallows. The Mokolé must be in an area where pilot snakes are found (such as the southeastern US), and make a Static Gnosis Challenge to draw Pilot Snake to his aid. The difficulty reflects the terrain he is in. Pilot Snake does not speak, and cannot provide guidance to things he does not know about, such as vampire havens.

In the marsh lands	Five Traits
In dry, wooded areas	Six Traits
Among humans	Seven Traits
In a park	Eight Traits
In the city	Nine Traits
Near Dissolver	10 Traits

- **Talk** — As the General Gift.
- **Walking Between Worlds** — As the General Gift.
- **Wind Beneath My Wings** — This Gift allows a group to travel in formation, and bank on the strength of each other. By forming a flocking “V” shape, the Gifted Mokolé spends a Physical Trait for each person in the group. While they remain in their formation, each Mokolé gains the strongest member’s number of permanent Physical Traits (for comparing ties only). This lasts until any member of the group breaks formation or loses consciousness.

Intermediate

- **Infest** — As the Bone Gnawer Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.



- **Long Running** — By spending a Gnosis Trait, the Gathering can greatly reduce travel time on a joined body of land, either on foot or in an automobile. Each Gnosis Trait spent halves the time in motion, closing the distance between the two places where no eyes are watching. The Mokolé must know her destination to use this Gift; this does not allow her to cross oceans.

- **Reshape Object** — As the Homid Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Advanced

- **Calm the Flock** — As the Glass Walker Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Strength of the Dominator** — As the Shadow Lord Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Obedience** — As the Shadow Lord Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Eclipsed Sun

Basic

- **Aura of Confidence** — As the Shadow Lord Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Awe** — As the Silver Fang Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Bellow** — As the General Gift.

- **Dazzle** — As the Children of Gaia Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Lambent Flame** — As the Silver Fang Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Razor Claws** — As the Ahroun Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Walking Between Worlds** — As the General Gift.

Intermediate

- **Eye of the Cobra** — As the Galliard Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Hot Ichor** — As the Rising Sun Gift.

- **Mastery** — As the Silver Fang Gift; see **Laws of the Wild**.

- **Sun Enfleshed** — A Mokolé with this Gift prays to Olodumare and receives the blessing of super-hot flesh as bright as the noonday sun. The Mokolé's skin burns with incredible intensity and her touch will start fires. This Gift costs three Gnosis. All bite, claw and tail attacks inflict an additional level of aggravated damage, and should be treated as gold. Vampires in the presence of the Mokolé react as if looking at the sun: They will suffer two levels of aggravated damage per turn that they remain in the Mokolé's presence, plus Rotschreck.

- **Wrath of the Dragon** — As the Silver Fang Gift: *Wrath of Gaia*; see **Laws of the Wild**.

Advanced

- **Army of the Ancestors** — While in Archid form, the Mokolé using this Gift declares and displays various ancestors who have added to his shape. The Mokolé may make a Static Gnosis Test (versus eight Traits) and call forth an ancestor from memory by declaring and displaying some aspect of its form. These dinosaurs bear the same intelligence as the Mokolé and will usually



cooperate (as long as they are being asked to do something within their abilities). They will return to Mnesis after the scene, unless motivated by something they see to remain.

MET statistics for many appropriate dinosaurs can be found on page 197.

• **Dream Semblance** — This Gift is the most sacred of all Mokolé Gifts, allowing a Mokolé to transform into a True Dragon for one scene. By praying to Dragon, the Mokolé transforms into the great beast itself for one scene per Mnesis Trait she possesses. The Traits of a True Dragon are up to the Storyteller, but they should be extremely powerful in keeping with a creature of legend. This Gift can be invoked only once and may even kill the Mokolé who invoked it once her foes are routed.

• **Stop Continental Drift** — The Mokolé can shorten a journey's length by singing songs in the Dragon's Tongue, reminding the earth of the time when all continents were one. By risking Physical Traits (number depends on how far the Mokolé is traveling) and engaging in a Static Physical Test, the Mokolé and any traveling companions will trek great world distances without crossing an ocean, telelocating the travelers from continent to continent as if the continents had never shifted. The Crowned and his clutchmates must sing and speak in the Dragon's Tongue as they travel.

Rites

The rites included here are specific to the Mokolé, although the Garou and Mokolé share many rites (including *Rite of Accomplishment*, *Hunting Prayers*, *Greet The Sun/Moon*, *Rite of Talisman Dedication*, *Baptism of Fire*, *Rite of Spirit Awakening*, *Rites of Binding* and rites of spirit summoning and fetish creation) as found in **Laws of the Wild**.

Rites of Accord

Basic

Rite of Breeding: With a wild ritual dance, a Mokolé can determine if his intended mate is suitable (fertile/virile, healthy, untainted, Kinfolk) and can identify problems (such as the intended mate being another Mokolé). At the conclusion of the dance, the Mokolé spends a Gnosis. If successful, the Mokolé instinctively knows what he needs to about his partner.

Shedding Hide: This rite allows the Mokolé to shed her skin slowly as a means remove toxins and Dissolver-taint. It usually takes weeks to finish this process; some varna (such as the Halpatee, Piasa, Karna, Champsia, Syrta and Makara) take longer because of their scutes that complicate this process; the other varna have a relatively easy time of it, with the Unktehi taking three days at most. The ritemaster makes a Static Social Challenge (versus six Traits). If successful, this Rite removes one level of taint in a participant for each Trait of Gnosis given freely to the rite. The Mokolé skin itches horribly during the process as old skin sloughs off and new skin appears beneath. Tattoos, scars and markings disappear in the process.



Silence of the Oracles: Sometimes, painful and traumatic memories can do more harm to a person than the trauma that inspired them. This rite allows the Mokolé to seal off the memory of the pain, leaving the full knowledge of what occurred. These memories will no longer haunt the subject or become painful when remembered. This rite is often used for victims of rape, torture or genocide. The ritemaster makes a Social Test; success seals one painful "scene" from memory. When performed on the victim of Harano or derangements, success grants one scene of lucid behavior.

Rites of Death

Basic

Last Communion: This rite grants the Mokolé the ability to share Mnesis between two Mokolé when one is dying (either Mokolé may be the ritemaster). Locking gazes and speaking in the Dragon's Tongue (or concentrating if speech is impossible), the ritemaster must succeed on a Social Challenge with the other Mokolé. If successful, the dying Mokolé shares a memory, passing it on to future generations. Once the memory has been passed, the donor has no more access to it. The Storyteller should determine how much memory is shared before the death of the Mokolé and help the dying character determine which memories are transferred. If the giver is unconscious, the ritemaster may breathe in the giver's last breath, but the Mnesis will be unclear.

Intermediate

Shed the Crocodile's Tears: An unusual rite of death, *Shed the Crocodile's Tears* resolves the killing of a creature and animosity from allies and family of the slain enemy. Before the Mokolé leaves the scene of a battle, he weeps over the corpse of an enemy (or friend) he has killed. The player spends a Gnosis Trait and performs a Simple Test; if successful, the Mokolé learns that the spirit or wraith of the fallen will not seek revenge. By spending a permanent Gnosis, the allies, friends and relatives of the deceased will understand the Mokolé had compassion for the victim but did what he thought was necessary, and will not seek retribution. It's thought that failure to use this Rite in the earliest chapter of the War of Rage led to the destruction of many wallows.

Advanced

The Bones of Time: Through this rite, a Mokolé can gain Mnesis from Mokolé and Kin who have died from ages before. Even fossilized dinosaur bones will tell tales and stories found only within deepest Mnesis. The ritemaster sings the Song of the Bones, a long song of many verses that beckons memories from deep within the bones. A Static Social Challenge is performed versus seven Traits (more if the parts are crushed or damaged). When the song is finished, the ritemaster enters a Mnesis trance for a day. If her challenge was successful, she may gain as many memories from the bones as she has Mnesis Traits. If too many try to retrieve memories from the bones, they will crumble.



Naturally, there are problems for anyone trying to break into a museum to perform this rite or steal bones; a complete T-Rex skeleton is valued in millions of dollars. Someone might be able to get away with offering the bones a song, but as the Dragon's Tongue isn't possible in Homid form, this could certainly present Veil-rendering scenarios. Some bones may end up being sold as alternative medicines, which may present some interesting memories.

Mystic Rites

Intermediate

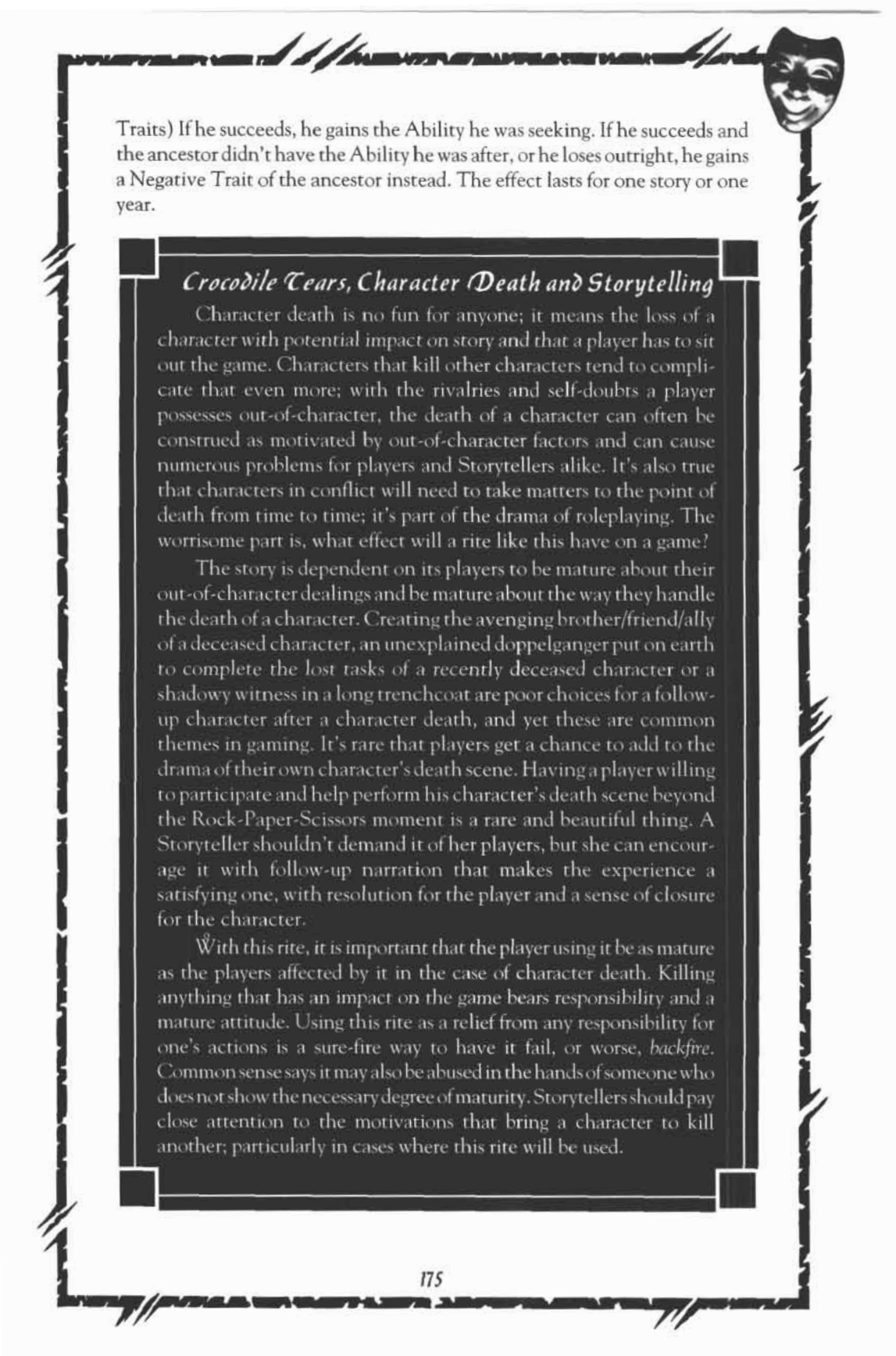
Rite of the Stone: This rite creates a simple talen, a stone imbued with Gnosis that enhances Mental tasks (skull stones) or Physical prowess (belly stones). Belly stones — smoothed, rounded stones — take a great deal of time to find, but are usually shaped by flowing waters. Skull stones — carbuncles, cut to perfection — are costly and even harder to find, requiring a jeweler to create. The ritemaster must fill the stone with Gnosis by meditating in Sun's light (with the resulting Gnosis going to the stone, not the Mokolé). The stone can only hold as much Gnosis as the ritemaster's permanent score. A belly stone is then swallowed, or a skull stone is branded onto the forehead. The Gnosis in either stone may be used on a one-to-one basis during hunting or battle: Belly stones add to Physical Traits while skull stones grant Mental Traits. Either effect lasts for one scene. Once the Gnosis is expended, the stone is absorbed into the body of the Mokolé and a new stone must be found to perform the rite. The Mokolé can only use one of these stones at a time.

Advanced

Boat of the Sun: With this rite, a Mokolé and companions can travel to any destination under the sun. He must be facing the sun at the time with his passengers arranged like oarsmen on a boat; his destination must also be visible in the sun, and he must know the destination as one who has been there (either through personal experience or Mnesis). He may take as many passengers as he has current Gnosis. He then calls out the strokes for the rowers and enacts the rite. The ritemaster makes a Mental Challenge; if successful, he and the crew reach their destination.

Burn the Library: This rite targets and eliminates memories, named for the burning of the Library at Alexandria. The Mokolé names the memory that will be destroyed and speaks words of Unmaking. The Words seek out the memories and destroy them. The ritemaster makes a Static Mental Challenge against seven Traits (retest with *Rituals*) for each memory she wishes to destroy; a success erases the specific memory. If the ritemaster loses the test, she must make two Simple Tests. Failing one erases knowledge of the rite. Failing both results in amnesia.

Walking in Your Footsteps: By locating the footprint of a past Mokolé (from two days to a hundred years to fossilized, so long as it's visible), the ritemaster may use Mnesis to call upon the aid of the ancestor to learn an Ability. The ritemaster makes a Static Mental Challenge (against seven



Traits) If he succeeds, he gains the Ability he was seeking. If he succeeds and the ancestor didn't have the Ability he was after, or he loses outright, he gains a Negative Trait of the ancestor instead. The effect lasts for one story or one year.

Crocodile Tears, Character Death and Storytelling

Character death is no fun for anyone; it means the loss of a character with potential impact on story and that a player has to sit out the game. Characters that kill other characters tend to complicate that even more; with the rivalries and self-doubts a player possesses out-of-character, the death of a character can often be construed as motivated by out-of-character factors and can cause numerous problems for players and Storytellers alike. It's also true that characters in conflict will need to take matters to the point of death from time to time; it's part of the drama of roleplaying. The worrisome part is, what effect will a rite like this have on a game?

The story is dependent on its players to be mature about their out-of-character dealings and be mature about the way they handle the death of a character. Creating the avenging brother/friend/ally of a deceased character, an unexplained doppelganger put on earth to complete the lost tasks of a recently deceased character or a shadowy witness in a long trenchcoat are poor choices for a follow-up character after a character death, and yet these are common themes in gaming. It's rare that players get a chance to add to the drama of their own character's death scene. Having a player willing to participate and help perform his character's death scene beyond the Rock-Paper-Scissors moment is a rare and beautiful thing. A Storyteller shouldn't demand it of her players, but she can encourage it with follow-up narration that makes the experience a satisfying one, with resolution for the player and a sense of closure for the character.

With this rite, it is important that the player using it be as mature as the players affected by it in the case of character death. Killing anything that has an impact on the game bears responsibility and a mature attitude. Using this rite as a relief from any responsibility for one's actions is a sure-fire way to have it fail, or worse, *backfire*. Common sense says it may also be abused in the hands of someone who does not show the necessary degree of maturity. Storytellers should pay close attention to the motivations that bring a character to kill another; particularly in cases where this rite will be used.



Rite of Anamnesis: This rite allows Mokolé to directly communicate Mnesis to another. It passes on thoughts, feelings and visual impressions, although imperfectly. The ritemaster shares a teacher plant (a hallucinogen like pituri or tobacco) with the subject (who takes a health level of damage from the drug). The ritemaster then finds the desired memory and makes a Gnosis Challenge against her subject. She must spend Gnosis to ensure that the memory crosses and to what extent: One Trait means the memory crossed but is very confused, three ensures a mostly clear remembrance and five can grant perfect clarity and vision. While this rite can be performed more than once on the same person, the subject cannot receive the memories of more people than he has Willpower, or he will certainly go insane. If the subject is Mokolé, he may pass on these memories like any other Mnesis.

Rite of the Eidolon: With this rite, memories held deep in Mnesis can take shape and walk the earth for a time. The ritemaster begins by making a Mnesis test to find a particular memory. If successful, he can bring the memory into the tellurian. Depending on the number of Mental Traits spent by the Mokolé, the Eidolon will be a mere shadow if the person or thing drawn from Memory or can react and be just as real as the original subject was when the moment first became Memory. The ritemaster spends a Gnosis to materialize his Mnesis and another Gnosis for each scene the Eidolon remains.

1 Trait	A pale and shadowy representation
2 Traits	A being as reactive as the original; looking very much like the original
3 Traits	For all intents and purposes, the real thing, just as it is remembered, and feels real to the touch

Rite of Lost Dreams: In the most dire of cases, like the destruction of a clutch and the Mnesis it held, a Mokolé will use this rite to send an quester deep into the Sea of Shadows to retrieve the lost memories. The quester need not be Mokolé. Should the quester find what she seeks, she can make the memories a part of her, saving the Mnesis of a clutch from being lost forever. This rite is considered very serious, and never attempted lightly.

The participants begin by summoning spirits of War and Time, who must be persuaded to accompany the traveler through chiminage. The quester is then lowered into the Sea of Shadows, first encountering the Abyss in a free fall. Hopefully the spirits that were summoned earlier will guide and protect her. These terrible creatures will still attempt to claw, threaten and attack the quester. They may attempt to wheedle her from her task with promises or threats, or claim they can protect her better than the spirit-guides with her. There is the risk that something monstrous may climb out of the Abyss and sniff around her (use spirit combat rules for such battles). Lastly, there is a threat of madness from the taint these infernal creatures carry. This is an incredibly dangerous task, one that is always rewarded with Renown. No



Mokolé would attempt such a daunting feat without careful preparation. If you have **Oblivion**, use the rules for Spectres. Otherwise, consider these attackers are Dark Umbra spirits near equal in power to the traveler. If the traveler can pass these spirits, he moves into the Sea of Shadows.

The Sea of Shadows is a waterless, ever-changing place that is literally a morass of memories, emotions and events of the past. Almost anything is findable here, with enough time and effort. However, all sorts of strange creatures prowl here, from monsters that never lived to ghosts to hungry Spectres. If a Mokolé survives this perilous journey, he can find the memories he seeks and incorporate them into himself. Since such memories would otherwise be lost, a successful quest will win a Mokolé many accolades.

For more about the Sea of Shadows, see **Wraith: The Oblivion**.

Rite of the Sleeping Dragon: This rite enables the ritemaster to place someone else in the *Sleep of the Dragon*. He lays the subject down and covers her appropriately (in mud, in a mummy case, etc.) and recites the Chant of the Dragon. An unwilling sleeper may resist with a Willpower Challenge. Like *Sleep of the Dragon*, the sleeper may waken if moved or touched or by a condition set by the ritemaster. The ritemaster may also use this rite on himself.

Seasonal Rites

Intermediate

Rite of Sunreturn: The Mokolé turn the season with this rite, calling to bring Olodumare back in the next season. This rite is engaged during the winter solstice to strengthen Sun when he is at his weakest against the darkness and cold. This rite takes different forms among the different streams. The Makara celebrate the Hindu festival of Diwali, lighting the night with lamps and incense to show Sun the way back. The Gumagan stage mock battles between Sun and Darkness, and their adepts enter the Dreamtime to dare Sun's enemies to show themselves. Mokolé-mbembe light candles and give each other gifts of sweets baked in circular shapes, then watch through the night to ensure Sun shows his face again. The Zhong Lung prefer to meditate, hoping that the Wheel of Seasons will turn without interruption.

The ritemaster must oversee the preparation of the festivities, then participate in them. If successful, each participant gains an extra Trait she may use through the winter. If the rite fails, the Sun Traits of the participant do not return until her Sun Aspect is visible again.

Wallow (Caern) Rites

Basic

Feed the Wallow: With the rite, a relatively small amount of food can be increased to provide for many. The ritemaster blesses the food and divides it while performing the rite. The amount of food used in the rite is doubled each time the ritemaster spends a Mental Trait.

Rite of the Illuminated Wallow: As the Garou rite: *Rite of the Opened Caern*, except that Sun's light must fill the wallow.



Rite of the Nesting Mound: Crocodilians and monitors commonly pile up earth and vegetation to create protective nests for their eggs. This rite grants a Mokolé nest an added level of protection against the elements and provides the warmth of the sun, incubating the eggs snugly. The eggs will either hatch twice as quickly or twice as slowly depending on how the mother built her nest and performed the rite. Additionally, some Mokolé mothers use this rite to attempt to ensure the eggs hatch under a specific auspice.

Save Hatchling: A Mokolé uses this rite to keep track of her hatchlings. If successful, the parent can track the child until maturity. By concentrating for a turn, the parent can determine a hatchling's current state (safe, in danger, wounded, etc.).

Intermediate

The Gator's Burrow: As the Garou rite: *The Badger's Burrow*.

Open Sun Bridge: As the Garou rite: *Open Moon Bridge*, this rite opens a sun bridge between wallows. It is used only twice in the day, at sundown or sunrise.

Advanced

Citadel of the Dragon: A potent means of developing shelters that ward away humans, this rite allows a ritemaster to chisel stone with the visage of the Dragon Kings, causing the Delirium in humans who come across buildings carved appropriately. To enact the ritual, the ritemaster must make a Social Challenge. Any artisans assisting with carving must also make a Social Challenge (retest with *Crafts*). Too many failures means the building does not inflict the Delirium. This kind of intricate construction can take weeks or months, depending on the size of the structure. The effects will last as long as the stones bear their images; in the Congo, Mokolé-mbembe citadels have stood since humanity was young.

Rites of the Gumagan

Basic

Djunggawon: The Gumagan *Rite of Passage* is a spiritual orientation and preparation for the life ahead. The initiate is taken away with those of the same gender in the clutch, regardless of breed (the men initiate the male children, the women initiate the female children). This is a celebration like no other in the Gumagan stream; the initiate receives painting, scarring, circumcision or the removal of a tooth to mark the passage from childhood to adult responsibility. Often, this ritual culminates in the initiate dreaming of the Archid form and the First Change. For Kinfolk, this is considered the passage to adulthood. Even suchids have a variation on this rite, during which they bite their young. Those initiated by this rite are one Trait up on any Social Challenges with the native people of Australia and are eligible to learn the sacred songlines from their elders.

The Oknanikilla: Mokolé cows use this rite to find the oknanikilla, the sacred places where totems first manifest. The ritemaster, a solo expectant female, makes a journey along the songlines to the oknanikilla (which may be a wallow or a former one). This can be dangerous, as a number of old



wallows were usurped by the Garou. After performing the rite and finding the site, the mother-to-be spends one or more Gnosis Traits and then lays eggs or gives birth at the site. She remains there until the eggs hatch or until she is able to walk after the birth (if homid). The spent Gnosis creates a sacred bond between the child and the spirit; for each Gnosis spent, the Mokolé gains an extra Trait when summoning the spirit of the oknanikilla as an adult.

Songs of the Dreamtime: The ritemaster sings a song associated with a place (a songline, a wallow, etc.) or an object (a waiting receptacle, like a tjurunga). This enables her to use the songline for travel or to read the memories of the ancestor, using her stream's Gifts. The ritemaster must inherit the right to learn the ritual; using this rite to access songlines or sacred memories without inheriting a song are considered no better than theft.

Into the Waterhole: This rite frees the spirit of a dead person. By destroying earthly fetters in a blazing fire and calling to the soul, the Gumagan attempts to persuade the soul to enter the waterhole of creation to be reborn. This requires a Social Challenge against the ghost. If successful, the ghost will move on into the next world. If unsuccessful, the ghost will haunt the Mokolé until the rite is successfully performed.

Intermediate

Tjurunga: A Gumagan craftsman can put some of his Mnesis into a carved and painted board, called a tjurunga. The Mnesis can thereafter be accessed by anyone who knows the spirit songs. Gumagan clutches and groups often trade tjurunga to establish alliances and unify their stream. Many owners are quite particular about who handles their tjurunga. Rumors even claim that the Bunyip made tjurunga, although none know where they are now. The ritemaster sacrifices a permanent Gnosis Trait and carves and paints the board. The board is then stored in a sacred cave or similar safe place. Anyone wishing to read the tjurunga must sing and make Social Challenge (retest with *Expression*). With success, the singer may access the memories within.

Rites of the Zhong Lung

Advanced

Shedding Bones: This rite allows the Zhong Lung to lengthen her lifespan by removing old bones and growing new ones. First she must make or acquire a special herbal potion that will restore her balance of yin and yang. She then identifies her oldest, weakest bones and pushes them out through her skin. She must spend a permanent Gnosis Trait to grow a new bone for each old one expelled. Each Gnosis spent to replace a bone returns 5 years of life to the ritemaster.

The Clutch

A clutch comprises of all Mokolé within a given wallow, anywhere between two to 30 Mokolé, and their Kin, who may number upward of a hundred. Each is a part of a community that lives for their progeny, keeping the



cycle of life alive. They share memories, kills, the keep of the wallow and their duties (although Sun's duties come first as Olodumare declares them). The word comes from "a clutch of eggs" and in the Time of Kings, a number of Mokolé would come from one nest. Unlike a pack, a social group that originates from the cooperation of several wolves, a clutch originates at birth. Not all Mokolé belong to clutches — some are solitary by nature, some because the area does not support enough prey for a clutch and still others because no other Mokolé live where they do. Those without clutches are not reviled as strange nor pitied as outcasts, but they do find there is much they cannot accomplish alone.

In the Time of Kings, the Mokolé set great store by the idea of a perfect clutch, one which had a member of each solar auspice. Now, with so few Mokolé being born, such a thing has become increasingly rare. Most clutches have duties shared among what true Mokolé they have, with Kin (especially Awakened Kin) filling in the gaps. Of greatest concern is the lack of Crowning. The eldest of the clutch may fill in, but the lack of leaders among the Mokolé has become a matter of great concern. Small wonder that any children of the clutch are to be cherished and protected above all else.

Typically, a clutch develops around good breeding ground, and in time, becomes a wallow. The structure of a clutch is haphazard and unmilitary rather than organized; Mnesis show the Duties, and Mokolé and their Kin fulfill them. Most wallows are not just randomly chosen; they have provided a suitable breeding ground for millions of years. Mokolé do not map their wallows strategically the way some Garou septs plan their caerns, but they usually know the distance between the most common vampire haunts, the Garou protectorates and their own lands.

Matre

Mokolé reproduction is a truly blessed thing; the Mokolé believe that reproduction harnesses a power of life they call *Matre* (MOTT-ray). For every true Mokolé born to a Mokolé or Kin, the parent gains one extra Attribute Trait, which she may add where she likes. This extra Trait lasts for as long as the offspring is alive. The likelihood of breeding a true Mokolé as a homid is a mere 5%, and the likelihood of hatching one as a suchid (even in a large clutch of eggs) is 10%. A male may gain *Matre* if he directly sires a Mokolé.

Both Mokolé mothers and fathers can gain this advantage, and Kinfolk can also gain *Matre* Traits. Since a Mokolé-Mokolé pairing produces the death of the child and an Innocent, no *Matre* advantages are applicable.

This should not be treated as a fountain of power because it's not meant to be. Players who wish to gain *Matre* must roleplay courtship and guarding the offspring. Mokolé set great store by their children, and their loss is a cause for grief.

Shapeshifting and Reproduction

Although the *Matre* advantage might seem to swing the doors wide open for litters of Mokolé and sudden, sharp increases in experience points for



players involved in childbirthing storylines, think again. It should be noted that, like the Garou, Mokolé births are extremely rare. Even in the egg-clutch of a suchid, Mokolé are one-in-10. There are no reported twin births to a homid mother in Mokolé memory, and incredibly few suchids have ever hatched more than one Mokolé at a time. Since a clutch is usually comprised of a dozen eggs, the chances of more than one child being born to a suchid are better than a homid, but still pretty rare.

Mokolé carry out courtship rites that vary between clutches and streams. Even if mating is carried out every year, children arrive most likely every two or three years. Homids can mate whenever possible for them, while suchids are only interested during their mating seasons. Some varna are affectionate at other times, but most suchids are not. The *Rites of Breeding* ensure that two Mokolé of the opposite sex do not mate; mating without this assurance may result in an Innocent.

Pregnancy has always been a delicate endeavor. There are Gifts and rites that will aid childbirth; it's up to the Storyteller to determine the many possible problems that can come from endeavoring to bring a true Mokolé into the world. A Mokolé who mates with a teenage Kinfolk without performing the *Rite of Breeding* stands a chance of producing a stillborn Mokolé who will haunt both mother and father as an Innocent. (Most Mokolé know if they are true Mokolé, but sometimes adolescents can become confused by the changes in their body — this is particularly true of homids.) Leaving eggs alone is a hazardous enterprise and rarely done. Without *Rite of the Nesting Mound*, simple predators can get into them, let alone the Dissolver-things that may try to enter the wallow and steal eggs while the Setting Suns are distracted. Any Setting Sun charged with guarding the eggs loses Renown if they are destroyed or taken.

Females claim they “know” when they are with child (eggs or a baby): A Gnosis Challenge can find the results quicker than a pregnancy test. A pregnant Mokolé loses her ability to change forms in the course of time. Homids cannot shift to Suchid beyond the first trimester; suchids cannot shift to Homid once their bodies begin to store eggs. A suchid can spend a Willpower Trait to guarantee a transformation, but doing so would crush the eggs inside, sparing only one. A female may shift into Archid, as the larger body shape can contain the child safely.

The mother cannot use Rage without possibly breaking her eggs or killing her homid child. A pregnant Mokolé using Rage must make a Physical Challenge. If she wins, the child or the eggs are safe; if she fails, she goes into early labor and the child is born prematurely, or the eggs are evacuated too soon and destroyed. If the mother is homid, the child will probably not survive unless the mother was past the third trimester at the time of the challenge. If the mother is suchid, the eggs are destroyed. In both cases, the mother loses a health level, all *Matre* and *Renown* associated with the pregnancy and birth and may also lose *Wisdom* for the loss of a child. Anyone who kills a child in Mokolé society is branded a murderer and punished severely. A mother who would kill her own child is considered dangerously insane.



Expectant mothers, whether Kin or Mokolé, are zealously guarded by their clutches. Any Mokolé would consider it his duty to do so. Any Mokolé or Kin are required to shelter a mother with child. Many tales are spun of great heroism and sacrifice surrounding the need to reproduce.

Mokolé and the Umbra

The Mokolé are active in the Umbra, but to a lesser extent than the Garou. As in the Tellurian, the Mokolé rarely enter areas frequented by Garou and mostly concentrate their efforts on the Deep Umbra (sometimes called the High Umbra). Although they must have the Gift: *Walk Between the Worlds* to cross into the Middle Umbra as they can expect to be attacked by any Innocent that sees them step sideways, few Mokolé travel there.

The Middle Umbra

Most Mokolé avoid the Middle Umbra. The Garou prowl there too frequently for safety, and they must know *Walk Between the Worlds* just to enter (through a body of water, not a reflective surface). Between the Garou and the angry Innocents, Mokolé have very little reason to enter.

Some Umbral paths lead to the realms of Pangaea and the Land of the Dinosaurs. Mokolé sages debate the exact location of the Land of the Dinosaurs (some suggest it is actually in the Near Umbra, while others believe it a "lost world") but Pangaea is believed to be "Gaia as She was," and some Mokolé have entered Dragon Sleep there. Some Mokolé also go there to ambush Garou hunting parties, what they call "the most dangerous game" and revel in the challenge of such prey. Most other Umbral realms are either inaccessible to Mokolé or do not interest them.

The Deep Umbra

The Deep Umbra is believed to be the part of the spirit world that reflects the Mind of Gaia. Like the Middle Umbra, it touches the earthly Realm, but the similarities end there. To travel there, one cannot merely step sideways; more magical travel is necessary. Most Mokolé travel astrally, unable to go there physically. The Deep Umbra is said to be home to Gaia's very thoughts and the spirit representations of things from Earth. Many Mokolé dream of sailing into the Deep Umbra to seek out the memories that they have lost but which Gaia has found as all lost things return to Her.

Most Mokolé enter the Deep Umbra through their Mnesis, using Gaia's mind as a conduit. The astral self floats into the Deep Umbra, tethered to the physical body by a silver cord. This is a form of disciplined astral travel developed through Mnesis mastery, where the body has a spiritual representation that can sojourn in the Deep Umbra with great mobility. While in the Umbra, the astral self has no knowledge of what is occurring to the physical body, which is left behind on Earth in a state resembling very deep sleep. The silver cord can assist the traveler in returning to her body.



Astral travelers cannot interact with the physical world except with great difficulty. By spending a Willpower Trait, an astral being can appear briefly in the physical world and even speak, although she'll look more like a ghostly shape than anything solid. Should an astral Mokolé be in Archid form while appearing in the physical world, mortals will react with the Delirium. Should two astral forms meet, they may react to each other as if they were physical — they can speak, touch, even fight. Since they have no physical bodies, astral beings substitute their Mental Traits for Physical, as their attributes are derived from the strength of their minds. Use Willpower Traits to represent health levels, as it is force of Willpower that keeps a traveler on his destination. Those Mokolé who are physically present in the Deep Umbra may fight as normal with their Physical Traits and health levels, suffering any penalties that any Changers normally face in the spirit world.

The only way to do actual harm to an astral being is to attack his silver cord. The loss of all Willpower means the silver cord is severed. A being whose silver cord is severed faces the grim fate of being stranded in the Umbra. His body begins to die at the rate of one day per health level (unless it is being somehow fed or sustained). The astral traveler's nature also begins to change. Over the course of several hours (one hour per health level), the astral being withers into a ghostlike shape, essentially an astral wraith. Over longer periods of time, he forgets his previous life, his loves and ideals, and becomes a mere shell of his old hungers and longings. His astral Traits are all he has.

Byways and portals in the Umbra lead to other regions. In some dark places, which the Mokolé call Depressions, the Umbra touches the Land of the Dead, a place called the Shadowlands. Wraiths skilled in means of spirit travel may take a wrong turn into the Deep Umbra, but more often, foul ghosts seething with hatred and rage called Spectres enter through Depressions. These creatures often seem like Banes to the unwary or may pose as Banes to trick shifters there. Mokolé who are venturing to the lands of the Dead, perhaps to seek the Sea of Shadows, are warned to beware what lurks around a Depression, whether the vicious Spectres or dead mystics who serve some unnameable power at the bottom of the darkness.

Dark places are common, but they are not the only thing to be found in the Umbra. Many Mokolé report shafts of bright light, which they call Ascensions, reaching into the Deep Umbra. These are believed to be temporary places charged with great intellects and powerful thoughts moving straight from Earth and directly into Gaia's mind. Formidable intellectuals, persons of vast imagination or great thinkers might be found in these Ascensions, whether in person (especially if the person is still living) or by some idea that represents them, like a symphony or a scientific theory. The other bright spots found are silver portals, called Eyes, which lead into Lunar shards in the Middle Umbra. These are the most likely spots to meet up with other Deep Umbral travelers.

After leaving the places in Gaia's mind where the physical world still has influence, travelers enter the Deep Umbra proper. Some describe it as like



plunging into the ocean very suddenly. Their silver cords become thin, and those who press on claim that the cords seem to want to draw them back. Most travelers reach the Deep Umbra by passing through portals somewhat like Ascensions. Many reach this point by physically traveling without a silver cord, and some are skilled enough to remove the cord and keep going. It is possible to enter the Deep Umbra with a silver cord, but it's risky. The trip back to the body may abruptly become longer if distances shift without warning, or a portal may close, cutting a traveler's cord and stranding her in the Deep Umbra as her body begins to die. Worse, some entity may use the cord to track a traveler to her current location.

Most Mokolé enter the Deep Umbra to find lost memories, which can take the forms of spiritual ideals or beings in the Umbra. They may also visit the memory realms, which they may enter through dreams or by traversing the Shadow to Deep Umbral locations. Memory realms appear as caves, palaces or even glowing spheres in the sky-ocean of the Shadow. Travelers can see what sort of memory is within by watching the realm — it may be visible through the windows or the bubble's surface. Entering one requires a Mnesis Challenge, but some sorts may be harder to enter than others; familiar memories, or those which are of events that anyone can recognize (such as the American Revolution) are said to be easier to enter than the thoughts of minor or unfamiliar events.

Many spirits in the Deep Umbra recognize Mokolé and respect their duty to Gaia. Some memories have made treaties with the Dragonkind, and a Mokolé encountering one of these may add his Mnesis Traits to his total Social pool when in Social Challenges with these creatures.

Mokolé have walked the Deep Umbra for so long that they have developed waystations for other travelers. The Makara call these Yathamaya ("As Fixed in the Memory"). The Mokolé-mbembe call them "memory palaces" and believe that every single thing within and without — from the stones of the walls, to the chairs, to the gardens — are all memories within the great pattern of things. Whatever Mokolé call them, they are welcome places to rest, heal and contemplate Memory. Yathamaya are always host to libraries of some kind — from a small collection of a dozen texts up to vast collections that would take lifetimes to browse. These books are often memories and contemplations on them, written in the Dragon's Tongue and in dead human languages that only the Mokolé can recall.

The Innocents

The Umbra is a place of hazards enough, but when a Mokolé mates with another Mokolé, they increase that horror for all when they produce an Innocent. Occasionally, by careless accident or by heedless intent, a Mokolé breeds with another Mokolé. The child would normally take the battle-form, except that each Mokolé must dream her Archid form into reality, using Mnesis to design her body's shape, an impossibility for a child in the womb. The resulting child arrives as a deformed fetus if a homid or a clutch of eggs with




shifting obscenities inside from a suchid. In both cases, the Mokolé mother usually shapeshifts to Archid form to avoid being ripped apart by her freakish offspring, who sometimes claw their way to Sun's light through her body.

No Mokolé-Mokolé pairing has ever survived. If the resulting offspring survives the hatching or birthing process itself, it cannot remain in one shape, constantly cycling through the breed of the mother. It dies soon after, destined to become an Innocent. The first Innocent remembered was No-Face, child of Night's-Fire, a ghost without any sense of identity — a raw id wanting and needing. The Innocents can travel from the Shadowlands to the Near Umbra and back, haunting any Mokolé each time they try to enter the Umbra. It is uncertain whether Innocents go to Harrowings or Slumber when dispatched, but some Concealing suggest that Slumber for these souls may indeed be a Harrowing.

Innocents are created with the spirit rules in **Laws of the Wild**, despite their resemblance to wraiths (although they can use some Arcanoi). Most should begin at Gaffling-level; it will take time, but such a dark feeder will eventually surpass its parents. Innocents have a few variations of common Charms, but mostly use their own:

- **Dark Whispers:** The Innocent can speak across the Veil/Shroud to the living.
- **Umbra Passage:** The Innocent can travel from the Dark Umbra to the Middle or Deep Umbra to track a Mokolé, using Depressions.
- **Mnesis Travel:** Allows the Innocent to enter the Mnesis of any Mokolé it encounters.
- **Materialize:** As the spirit Charm.
- **Take Homid Form:** The Innocent can mimic a Homid shape, effectively passing as an ordinary wraith. Typically, this form bears similarities to both parents.
- **Take Suchid Form:** The Innocent can appear as the wraith of a reptile (typically, as the varna of the mother).
- **Give Power:** The Innocent can grant Gnosis to another spirit
- **Take Power:** The Innocent can initiate a Willpower Challenge with another spirit to steal Gnosis.
- **Steal Mnesis:** The Innocent can steal Mnesis away from a Mokolé. The Innocent uses *Mnesis Travel* to enter the Mokolé's Mnesis, then makes a Gnosis Challenge. Success removes one minor memory from the target; subsequent successes blur the great memories. These lost memories are sent to the Sea of Shadows when the spirit is forced into Slumber and can only be retrieved by a successful *Rite of Lost Dreams*.
- **Corrupt Mnesis:** The Innocent changes Mnesis into bad Mnesis, warping the dreams of the Mokolé. The Innocent uses *Mnesis Travel* to enter, and then performs a Gnosis Challenge with the Mokolé. Instead of simply destroying the memory, it is corrupted — an Ability is constantly done wrong (lose all ties), an ally is now an enemy, an honor is now an insult. This is a



subtle, permanent effect that will not register immediately with the Mokolé, until the wrong ideas become clear in the presence of others. The damage can be healed by Gifts, by a Mnesis quest or a journey into the Deep Umbra.

- **Arcanoi:** the Innocents can use the powers of wraiths. Storytellers should consult **The Oblivion** for rules; suggested Arcanoi include *Argos*, *Fascinate*, *Intimation*, *Mnemosynis*, *Moliate* and *Phantasm*.

Dream Hunters

In addition to encountering Innocents in the Umbra, Mokolé can also encounter spirits where they began: in Mnesis. Some memories are so vivid that they can take on a life of their own. The Dream Hunters are immortal creatures that stalk Mokolé through Mnesis, bleeding through a Mokolé's memories and seeking to control their target or weaken it. Instead of fixing on a singular place and time as with normal embers of Mnesis, the Dream Hunters wander into other memories, lying in ambush for a Mokolé to remember. They become part of the memory, taking on the characteristics of a remembered person or thing in order to bring themselves close to their targets.

Rage 7, Willpower 6, Gnosis 4, Power 25

Charms: *Dream Warp*, *Possession*, *Materialize*, *Shapeshift*

- **Dream Warp:** The spirit can corrupt a dream it enters by successfully completing a Gnosis vs. Willpower challenge. Only one success is needed, and the Power cost is 1.

Smrtihara

These spirits are found in the Deep Umbra, with the apparent goal of destroying Gaia's memories. They hunt and attack other memory-spirits of the Deep Umbra and can even reduce things in the Gaia Realm to "never have been" by eating its ideal form in the astral realm. Some Makara believe these to be the Daughters of the Demoness of Sorrow, the embodiment of the suicidal impulse that has plagued Gaia since the Imbalance of the Triat. While defeated spirit-victims eventually enter Slumber and reform, the Smrtihara are still considered very dangerous. The Makara consider it a duty to destroy them.

Rage 8, Willpower 8, Gnosis 6, Power 30

Charms: *Airt Sense*, *Reform*, *Incite Frenzy*, *Eat Mnesis*

- **Eat Mnesis:** The Smrtihara can consume memories directly from the mind of a Mokolé with a successful Gnosis Challenge. These encounters occur during the Mokolé's Mnesis journeying. The memory the Smrtihara seeks to devour must be overcome by successful challenges in order to be eaten; a Mnesis 4 memory, such as the first battle between Garou and Mokolé, requires that the Smrtihara gain four successes. Upon each successful feeding, the Smrtihara gains one Power Trait for each consumed level of Mnesis.



Pratigata

The Pratigata are wraiths of lost memories. They roam in many different places in the Umbra, but are usually found in the High Umbra, seeking their way. Many epic quests have been devoted to finding these lost memories and adding them to Mnesis, but most are frustrating lessons in futility as the Pratigata often prove to be more trouble than they are worth. It's rare that a Mokolé finds one, rarer to get one lucid, rarer still to gain the spirit's cooperation and nearly impossible to reclaim it's knowledge. They appear as a lost elder might, but faded almost to the point of slumber. The Makara call them Pranastajjanika Pratigata, and assert that Pratigata are in fact the memories of a Mokolé who has lost all memory and knowledge, a personal oblivion that they believe to be a living death (such a Mokolé is called Pranastajjanika). Many Makara believe that if the two could be rejoined, the Mokolé's memory and knowledge would be restored.

Rage 2, Willpower 4, Gnosis 5, Power 5

Wanderers

Mnesis is typically passed along family lines from mother to children. Mokolé, by their varna, tend to be sedentary creatures and require only small, local areas to survive, areas they stay in for centuries. The result is Mnesis becoming extremely local. Most clutches know of their own past and little of others. Many elders feared that this would cause the lines of Memory to run apart and the Dragonkind to be splintered into potentially hostile tribes. To prevent this, the office of Wanderer was created. Wanderers first traveled during the Time of Kings, through the Age of Sleep and the Last Times. The War of Rage curtailed Wandering, but since the end of the wars, Wandering has begun again.

Wanderers have three functions. First, they bring news and stories, which pass to the clutch, either as they are told or through the *Rite of Anamnesis* when possible. Second, they breed with fertile Kin when they can, which prevents inbreeding and brings new Mnesis. Lastly, they help forge alliances between clutches.

These roving Mokolé are called North Suns in the northern hemisphere and South Suns in the southern hemisphere, named for traveling in the opposite direction of Sun in those places. The tale-tellers also call them Hook Suns or Cross Suns, for the Hook (Ursa Major) that rules the night sky in the northern hemisphere, or the Southern Cross in the south. All names convey the idea of a sun outside the ecliptic. Wayward Sun is another name for them. Rising Wanderers are the younger set while Setting Wanderers are older. Young Wanderers are usually male, but older ones can be male or females. Clutches they encounter are required to provide them with hospitality for at least one day and to hear their words within a day of arrival. The traditional length of a Wanderer's stay is "more than a day and less than a year."

Wanderers are initiated into their office before they begin their journeys and some learn the *Rite of Anamnesis* to allow them to spread Memory more



easily. Those who do not know the rite may have it performed on them at clutches they visit. The road they travel is a perilous. Many never return home.

Totems

As opposed to the pack totems of the Garou, Mokolé totems are usually associated with a wallow. None of their common totems are mammals, although they do share a number of totems with the Garou (including Anaconda, Chameleon, Crocodile, Fog, Quetzal, Rain, Raven, Shark, Turtle, Twister and the Five Winds); Dragon remains the most common Totem among the Mokolé.

Dragon

Cost: 5

Dragon is the Sharptooth's Sharptooth, the fiery, powerful aspect of the 150 million years when the Great Beasts walked the planet. Dragon scourges the earth of all who oppose him with his deadly breath. He asks that his children protect his progeny (reptiles and birds) and continue to pass the memories of the Dinosaur Kings along to future generations. Dragon gifts his children with *Dragon's Breath*. In desperate hours, he may teach his most dutiful children *Dream Semblance*.

Dragon has never yet accepted Garou as his children.

Ban: Dragon's children must never dishonor him. This can have many meanings, but betrayals to the Mokolé and violations of the Duties would be sure bets.

Finch

Cost: 5

Finch, a Totem of Respect, is a survivor, because he *adapts*, changing his beak to suit his needs and the environment he belongs to. He gifts his children with *Beak of the Finch* and three Willpower Traits.

Ban: Finch's children must adapt to suit their surroundings and must not alter their existing environment to suit their needs.

Horseshoe Crab

Cost: 4

Set in his ways, Horseshoe Crab is a conservative, holding to the tried and true. His progeny have not changed in 200 hundred million years and will most likely outlive the Apocalypse. He teaches the Gift: *Become Log* and grants his children an extra point of Willpower. To his favorites, he sometimes grants an extra Mnesia Trait.

Ban: Horseshoe Crab's children must oppose change and innovation. He tends to attract craftsmen who labor over their work, and it is a rare homid that finds a place in Horseshoe Crab's heart.

Scarab

Cost: 5



Scarab's duty is to Sun, and every day, she rolls Sun across the sky. She attract and succors children who honor sun greatly in their ideas and actions. She gifts children with the power to borrow Sun Traits from each other. A Gathering, for example, would gain the sun benefits of his Warding clutchmate when defending another. In a Perfect Clutch, this becomes a powerful advantage indeed. Scarab clutches tend to have few internal conflicts. Mokolé-mbembe are the most common among her children.

Ban: Scarabs asks that all of her children be buried when they die and not left to decompose in the open (or in the belly of a beast). Scarab's children must actively seek to reclaim any partial remains and lay the spirit to rest properly with the *Gathering for the Departed*.

Snake Doctor

Cost: 6

A dragonfly-spirit of the Southern US, Snake Doctor "sews the wounds" of injured Mokolé and Nagah with his long tail. Snake Doctor has a strong dislike for all other shapeshifters and is given to "sewing up their ears" (deafening them) if offended by their presence. He grants each child his healing touch once per game session (if he can reach them) and three Willpower Traits.

Ban: Snake Doctor requires that the swampy marshes he calls home remain perfectly untouched by invading interlopers, like humanity (or the Dissolver).


Orunmila

Cost: 7

Orunmila, the daughter of Gaia and Olodumare (sister to Selene), is the very essence of memory. She resides in Yathamaya, reportedly in a glorious palace of soapstone and flowing waters. None but her most ardent followers know how to find her, and only a rare few spirits in the Umbra even know she exists. Orunmila is remembered differently by separate cultures, and usually only those who develop a respect of memory as a strength over writing and recording. The Greeks knew her in a different incarnation and called her Mnemosyne. It is said by some Gumagan of the Shrouded Sun that a songline of memory occasionally crosses a babbling brook of forgetfulness, and in this union lies the path to Orunmila.

She is described as a silhouette of a woman, a shadow of rainbow-shifting colors. She recalls any memory of anyone who is living, but has no ability to reconcile their meanings, merely observing images passively. It is she who gives the names of all things. She grants her children *Eidetic Memory* and can tell them the true name of anything or anyone they can show her (through memory — Orunmila is angered by photographs and drawing brought into her palace). Orunmila does not give her children an avatar as she already knows anything they remember; if they have need of her, they must travel to her place in Yathamaya.

A few with Mnesis are said to remember a clutch in Northeast Africa that belonged to her long ago, but none can remember why she left.



Ban: Orunmila's children can never write or record what must be remembered. They cannot perform Rites that require drawing or pictures and cannot enjoy tattoos or other markings. They must abandon drawing and writing and do all their storytelling through Mnesis and with their powers of expression. They cannot own printed media of any kind (a fetish with an inscription or glyph, a book of recipes, a pen) or write down any information (including glyphs) or videotape themselves. Violating this ban usually leads to a loss of Orunmila's boons; since she does not communicate, the Mokolé must journey to her realm and apologize in person, offering chiminage to again receive her favor.

Whiptail Lizard

Cost: 7

The Whiptail Lizard is female and has no male counterpart; she conceives of herself and makes a genetic copy, effectively cloning herself to continue the species. Whiptail Lizard takes fiercely independent and strong-willed females as her daughters, never accepting males. She gifts her daughters with *Whiptail's Clutch*, which allows a daughter to procreate, producing a perfect duplicate of herself with no male interaction. (This costs three permanent Gnosis.) Each of her daughters gains the *Enigmas* and *Survival Abilities*.

Ban: Whiptail's daughters must never surrender to the rule of man. Despite the fact that these clutches are all female and produce females born to be Whiptail's daughters, their wallows and their self rule is respected within the Mokolé nation. After all, what better way to learn to survive the second WonderWork than thriving with one gender present?

Fetishes

Although the Mokolé are accomplished fetish-makers, few bladed weapons and klaives have appeared over the years. Some of the standard Garou fetishes were originated by the Mokolé, including the Monkey Puzzle (instantly fossilizing amber is a specialty of Setting Sun fetish-makers). Some believe the Stone of Wealth was originally a Zhong Lung Fetish. Gnostic Bags are rare but not unheard of.

Dragon Crystal

Fetish Trait Cost: 1 **Gnosis** 6

Spirit Affinity: Sun, Insect

This is a piece of amber or other clear semi-precious stone shaped into a lens or disc and placed in a setting. When activated, it allows the user to discern a Mokolé's Archid form, despite whatever form he currently uses (or magic he casts against detection). The Dragon Crystal itself is not subtle; any Mokolé skilled in fetishes will know he is being detected. When in contact with the skin of a Mokolé, the crystal shines brightly, making them valued ornaments for gathers.

Hatchling's Tail

Fetish Trait Cost: 1 **Gnosis** 3
Palolo Worm, Father

Spirit Affinity: Glass Snake,



This fetish appears to be little more than a dried lizard's tail. A Mokolé attaches this fetish to his belt and grows a second tail while in Archid. Swimming increases to five steps of movement while the tail is active (as long as the Mokolé keeps the fetish attached to his belt and remains in Archid). He may also gain two Traits any time he makes a tail attack in combat. Most Mokolé tend to "grow out of" these and pass them on to young hatchlings.

Tray of the Teachers

Fetish Trait Cost: 1 **Gnosis:** 5 **Spirit Affinity:** Visions

This wooden tray is decorated with the death masks of Crowning and inlaid with bones and gems. When used as a receptacle for teacher-plants, the plants' potency is increased by one level for each level the user has in *Rituals*.

Egg Basket

Fetish Trait Cost: 2 **Gnosis:** 3 **Spirit Affinity:** Weaverbird, Oriole

This tiny reed basket, barely larger than a single egg, stores an entire clutch of Mokolé eggs. This keeps the eggs fairly warm: They lose 5% of their heat every hour. This measure is a temporary one, not a permanent incubator for eggs; the basket is extraordinarily fragile, and an accident would wipe out an entire clutch of Mokolé. Most Mokolé mothers use the rite *Save Hatchling* on the basket.

Spirit Jar

Fetish Trait Cost: 2 **Gnosis:** 5 **Spirit Affinity:** various

This small, handcrafted pottery jar is the receptacle for a spirit who is bound to the jar by glyphs drawn on the outside. The user coaxes the spirit with rewards (grant Gnosis, possession of a medium, setting it free) to do favors for the Mokolé (use a Charm, talk to an alien spirit). The spirit should be strong enough to affect charms while in captivity, but not so strong it can free itself and seek a pound of flesh from the fetish-maker.

Use of this fetish creates Notoriety among the spirits. The Storyteller and player should work together to create the spirit that resides in the jar; obviously a spirit with the power of a totem avatar is inappropriate. Typical charms include *Healing*, *Steal Gnosis*, *Flood*, *Create Fires* and *Information Link*.

Mirror of Amaterasu Omikami

Fetish Trait Cost: 3 **Gnosis:** 4 **Spirit Affinity:** Sun

Made from a shard of the very mirror used to coax Sun from hiding long ago, this mirror stores Sun's light (with an equal expenditure of Gnosis per hour). Once activated, each Gnosis level is one turn of direct sunlight shining from the mirror (maximum 4 Gnosis).

Bowl of Mnesis

Fetish Trait Cost: 4 **Gnosis:** 5 **Spirit Affinity:** Ancestor

An adobe bowl, fired in an oven, the Bowl of Mnesis allows a Mokolé to gain memories of a dead supernatural being. Placing the intact brain of the creature into the bowl filled with the water of an untainted wallow, the user sets the bowl in sunlight for one day. (If the creature was a vampire or a Kuei-



jin, the brain dissolves into the water, until only the water remains.) As the sun sets on the bowl, the Mokolé drinks deep of the water and gains the Mnesis of the creature.

The player makes a Static Mental Challenge versus a number of Traits dependent on the type of fallen creature. Each successful test grants memories of the target. In other Mokolé, this can mean raising the caster's permanent Mnesis if the success is great; with mummies and fae, this can awaken remembrance and thousands of years of forgotten stories; in vampires and creatures of the Dissolver, any number of private secrets may be divulged, but at the risk of Harano or even corruption by the Wurm. (One really doesn't want to remember dancing the Spiral, after all.)

Mokolé	8
Mokolé Kin, Corax, Nagah	10
Other Bête, mortal, changeling	12
Mummy or True Fae	14
Vampire, Bane, Kuei-jin, Dissolver-Beasat	16

Edge of the Sun

Fetish Trait Cost: 4 **Gnosis:** 6 **Spirit Affinity:** War

Melee Bonus Traits: 3

The Edge of the Sun is an extremely rare weapon carried by Noonday Suns for ritual duels and executions as part of their office. It is a gold machete with a teakwood hilt adorned with gems. It inflicts aggravated damage on anything it strikes. Like Garou klaives, it must have a War-spirit bound into it, and it causes the Mokolé who carries it to lose one Gnosis per day. The expense in creating one of these weapons is tremendous — it requires *Resources* x 4 to have enough disposable cash to put to something that may cost over \$50,000 to create. Using a Sun's Edge without the sanction of Duty is a serious offense. Noonday Suns do not dare use them outside of the Duties for fear of losing Dragon's acceptance.

Spirit Tether

Fetish Trait Cost: 4 **Gnosis:** 6 **Spirit Affinity:** Awakened

Created from a mummified umbilical cord, a spirit tether is a primal connection between mind and body, giving the mind a second grip on the body while traveling astrally. When traveling in Mnesis, the Mokolé ties one end to himself and the other to something in the present (anything made within his lifetime will do). The tether allows the Mokolé to travel deep in Mnesis without fear of getting lost and eliminates the usual confusion that occurs at the end of such journeys. The tether may also be used in the *Rite of Lost Dreams*. The subject being lowered into Sea of Shadows ties one end to herself and gives the other end to the other participants. If she runs into



trouble, she can tug on the tether to call for help and be pulled out by the ritemaster before things get bad.

The tether must be used only by the Mokolé whom it was a part of, which makes it most useful for homids. Using someone else's tether is a risky proposition.

Blade of Kings

Fetish Trait Cost: 5 **Gnosis** 6 **Spirit Affinity:** Butterfly, Octopus

This is an edged weapon (sword, halberd, spear, axe, etc.) from older times. The weapon inflicts aggravated damage and usually bears a silver edge. It can shift to match if its wielder changes to Archid; the Mokolé may use it if he has *Grasping Hands* in Archid form. When the spirit is bound into the weapon during creation, the maker must call the spirit's name with each blow that shapes the weapon. Some elders are said to enter *Sleep of the Dragon* with these weapons at their sides. Losing or abusing such a weapon would surely cost a Mokolé a loss of status.

Blowpipe of Anamnesis

Fetish Trait Cost: 5 **Gnosis:** 7 **Spirit Affinity:** Poison

This long pipe made of ceiba wood, harvested without killing the tree and carved with glyphs of the Kings. It is used to blow a fine dust of teacher plants into a participant, one nostril at a time, increasing the chances of a successful *Rite of Anamnesis*.

Fetishes of the Gumagan

Lungin

Fetish Trait Cost: 1 **Gnosis** 5 **Spirit Affinity:** Fire

This is a wooden smoking pipe used for tobacco or tobacco and pituri. A Fire-spirit must be coaxed to enter with chiminage unless the Gumagan is a frequent smoker. Use of the pipe puts the user one Trait up on all Gumagan rites for a scene. The user may also smoke Awakened tobacco or pituri and receive twice as much effect.

Pearlshell of Healing

Fetish Trait Cost: 1 **Gnosis** 4 **Spirit Affinity:** Fish

This Australian pearlshell allows the user to determine the cause of an illness in a person. The shell is held over the body of a sick person and the medicine-man or woman makes a Mental Challenge. With success, the pearlshell can identify the illness, and if it is contagious or fatal (more information may be available with further tests, at the Storyteller's discretion).

Kurdaitcha

Fetish Trait Cost: 2 **Gnosis** 5 **Spirit Affinity:** Tokampini the devil-bird

These shoes are made of emu feathers knotted with human hair and held together with one health level of the user's blood. When activated, the shoes



silence the steps of the Mokolé. The Mokolé is two Traits up on all *Stealth* challenges while the fetish is active.

Rangga

Fetish Trait Cost: 2 **Gnosis** 5 **Spirit Affinity:** Perenty

This is a small clay or wax figurine used in hunting magic, representing the target of the hunt (animal, Garou, human); a Perenty-spirit is bound into it. The hunter activates it by speaking his target's name, and receives a free retest on any contest related to the hunt.

Tokoyanga

Fetish Trait Cost: 3 **Gnosis** 6 **Spirit Affinity:** Bird

This ball of goose down, worn about the neck, relieves grief and depression. Biting down on the ball causes the wearer to be unable to cry. It also prevents Suchid-form Mokolé and other large reptiles from hearing anything spoken by the wielder. At the Storyteller's discretion, activating this fetish may relieve Harano for one scene.

Warshell

Fetish Trait Cost: 3 **Gnosis** 6 **Spirit Affinity:** Snake

A warshell is a piece of shell shaped into a triangle and sharpened. With successful activation, it can strike an enemy from a distance, up to 10 yards away. The user makes a Physical Challenge against his target. With success, the warshell inflicts two aggravated health levels of damage.

Bret

Fetish Trait Cost: 4 **Gnosis** 7 **Spirit Affinity:** Wraith

This grisly fetish is a pair of hands or paws from a dead sentient being, such as human, Garou, Mokolé or the like, with a piece of the dead person's soul bound in them. The hands are wrapped in grass, dried and worn about the neck. The bret grants its holder as much Perception as the hands' owner had, both Perception-related Mental Traits and Perception-related Gifts like *Sense Wym*. Obviously, wearing these in most social settings would be a gross faux pas, not to mention there will be angry relatives of the dead person trying to get the hands back to release the spirit.

Fetishes of the Makara

Beggar's Mantle

Fetish Trait Cost: 3 **Gnosis** 7 **Spirit Affinity:** Snake

This garment of snakeskin woven on tattered clothing allows the Makara to avoid the notice of creatures of darkness. Vampires, Banes, fallen shapeshifters, fomori and other Dissolver-creatures fail to see the Makara once this fetish has been activated: They simply overlook him as ordinary or uninteresting. For obvious reasons, this fetish cannot hide a Mokolé in Archid or Suchid form as both forms will draw attention. This fetish is quite fragile and can be easily damaged.



Mace of the Winds

Fetish Trait Cost: 4 Gnosis 8

Spirit Affinity: War

Melee Bonus Traits: 3

This is a weapon unique to the Makara and appears to be a rounded mace made of brass-inlaid iron. When activated and wielded as a weapon, it inflicts aggravated damage. When the wielder is in Archid form, the mace fights at range, floating in the air and striking opponents as the Makara directs it. It requires one turn to activate the fetish, one turn to direct the mace's attack and a Physical Challenge on the next turn. Like most weapon fetishes, the mace requires high metalworking skills.

Fetishes of the Mokole-mbembe

Mask of Mnante

Fetish Trait Cost: 1 Gnosis 5

Spirit Affinity: Chameleon,

Mirror

This is a carved mask that may be of any size — large enough to be worn on the face down to small enough to place on a necklace. It deceives the senses, making it impossible to tell the Mokolé's Breed through Perception-related Gifts such as *Scent of the True Form*. The perceiver believes the Mokolé to be a member of her own kind. This was devised during the Wars of Rage and may have helped the Mokolé survive slaughter.

Fetishes of the Zhong Lung

Box of Rice

Fetish Trait Cost: 1 Gnosis 3

Spirit Affinity: Snake

This wooden box of rice replenishes daily, feeding as many people as the number written on top. This number can be changed daily by simply writing a new number. This fills with rice only once a day. If the box is broken, there will be no more rice.

Dragon Skin

Fetish Trait Cost: 2 Gnosis 4

Spirit Affinity: Sun

This skin, shed from a Zhong Lung, is crafted by a professional leatherworker and bound with a Sun-spirit; it grants the wielder armor equivalent to the Gift: *Armor of the Tortoise*. The skin glows softly with five-colored light, and there is prestige in owning a fine skin (as some Eastern magic-users know).

Pearls of Flood and Ebb Tide

Fetish Trait Cost: 5 Gnosis 9

Spirit Affinity: Luna

These precious pearls, a naturally occurring fetish and a highly sought treasure (this fetish cannot be created by a ritemaster), control the tides through Luna's influence. They grant the wielder the Gift: *Call the Tide*



Talens

The Mokolé know the way to make a Bane Arrow and a variation of Clear Water using natural fungus, but few know how to craft any other of the Garou talens.

Arrows of the Sun

Gnosis 5 Spirit Affinity: Sun

These arrows are decorated with gold and contain the very essence of Sun. When shot from a bow (or jabbed like a spear), these arrows inflict aggravated damage; vampires struck by one are affected by full daylight for one turn. Once the arrow strikes a target, it immolates, destroying itself completely.

Cacao Moon's Chocolate

Gnosis 6 Spirit Affinity: Awakened cocoa beans

These rare cocoa beans are grown only in a small area of Guatemala near the wallow of a Mayan Mokolé. Anyone brewing Aztec-style chocolate from them may share it with another. Any Gifts, rites or Abilities are learned in half the time while under this chocolate's influence. Aztec-style chocolate is far less sweet than regular hot chocolate, and the beans are Awakened as they are harvested. Attempting to Awaken brand-name chocolate (no matter how tasty) will not have the same effect.

Matre Medicine

Gnosis 3 Spirit Affinity: Fertility

Made from the essence of crocodiles mating, this salve ensures conception and raises the chances of creating a true Mokolé.

Quipu of the Amautas

Gnosis 5 Spirit Affinity: Memory

The amautas served a similar function as the Mokolé as memory-carriers in the Incan empire. A quipu is a bundle of knotted cords which carries a Mnesis message. When a cord is tied in knots by a Mokolé-mbembe with the proper skill and expending a Gnosis Trait, one memory can be bound into the cord. The quipu may be dyed or stained to further retain memory. When the recipient "reads" the knots by handling them, the memory passes into her mind. Similar forms exist for other streams.

Snake Herbs

Gnosis 4 Spirit Affinity: Awakened

This is a bunch of herbs from Australia (similar varieties are found elsewhere) with the ability to counteract snakebites or other poisons. Each bowl of herbs eaten or brewed as a tea will restore one health level of Dissolver-taint or poisoning.

Talens of the Gumagan

Bloodstone

Gnosis 7

This talen is created by magically extracting blood from a human and preserving it in a hollow tree. Over a year's time, the blood congeals into a



stonelike substance, which may be rubbed into the skin or eaten. For each Blood Trait of bloodstone used (most usually contain three), the user may gain either a Mental Trait or a level of *Primal-Urge* for one scene.

Message Stick

Gnosis 4 Spirit Affinity: Mynah-bird

This carved and painted stick travels from one place to another, bearing a message. For each Gnosis Trait the Mokolé ritemaster has, he can imbue the stick with a word. The stick then travels from the ritemaster's hand to the recipient's hand. The recipient must make a Gnosis Challenge to understand the message and know who sent it. As the message is delivered, the spirit is freed.

Pituri

Gnosis 3 Spirit Affinity: Awakened

This narcotic plant is native to Australia. When un-Awakened, it induces a mild euphoria and suppressed hunger and thirst. When Awakened, it adds one health level to healing rituals, as well as relieving the need for food, water or rest for a day.

Talens of the Makara

Thunder Dart

Gnosis 6 Spirit Affinity: Thunder, rain

Binding a spirit into a carved oversize dart, about the size of a lawn dart, the fetish-maker can craft an incredibly deadly weapon that release the fury of a thunderbolt in a single strike. The results are devastating; a successful strike does seven levels of aggravated damage instantly. This is crafted from the bone of a monster and fletched with peacock feathers.

Talens of the Zhong Lung

Dragon's Spittle

Gnosis 4 Spirit Affinity: Dragon

The spittle of a Zhong Lung, when aided by a Dragon-spirit, becomes a conductor for magic, aiding in rites and rituals. It adds one Gnosis to each ritual. If mixed into ink or paint for drawings, add one extra Gnosis for the work.

The Dinosaur Kings

These mighty creatures are still found as spirits in Pangaea, and occasionally brought to the Realm through Gifts and Rites. Here follow some sample statistics for their spirit forms. In living form, they possess no Gnosis.


Herrerasaurus

2 Gnosis, 8 Rage, 4 Willpower

Attributes: 17 Physical, 9 Social, 14 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 3, *Fishing* x 2, *Survival* x 2

Archid Traits: *Grasping Hands*, *Great Speed*, *Long Teeth*



Although smaller than raptor theropods, the Herrerasaurus is a fast-moving scavenger. He hunts for food in groups with his brothers and sisters, feeding primarily on kills taken down by larger theropods — kills too large to protect from other hungry dinosaurs once taken down. His bright colors paint him for war; as such, larger dinosaurs would know to keep their distance when alone.

Ceratosaurus

2 Gnosis, 8 Rage, 4 Willpower

Attributes: 18 Physical, 14 Social, 8 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 3, *Survival* x 2

Archid Traits: *Armor: Scutes, Armor: Rough Hide, Long Teeth, Royal Crest*

Ceratosaurus was small for a sharp-tooth, but capable. He had better armor than most, and could potentially chase down much larger prey.

Tyrannosaurus Rex

5 Gnosis, 8 Rage, 4 Willpower

Attributes: 22 Physical, 11 Social, 7 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 5, *Intimidation* x 5, *Survival* x 5

Archid Traits: *Armor: Rough Hide, Disarticulating Jaw, Huge Size* x 2, *Long Teeth*

His name means “tyrant king,” and with good reason. T-rex has a powerful body and a vicious bite that can devour many other creatures whole. As sharp-tooths go, the T-Rex is feared above most.

Baryonyx

3 Gnosis, 3 Rage, 3 Willpower

Attributes: 16 Physical, 10 Social, 14 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 2, *Fishing* x 2, *Survival* x 2

Archid Traits: *Huge Size, Rough Hide, Terrible Claws (Thumbs)*

Baryonyx looked like a bipedal crocodilian, with the same long snout. Although it was a carnivore, it primarily ate small prey, like fish.

Oviraptor

1 Gnosis, 8 Rage, 4 Willpower

Attributes: 22 Physical, 11 Social, 7 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 2, *Fishing* x 2, *Survival* x 2

Archid Traits: *Beak, Bipedal Walking, Claw Feet, Feathers, Grappling Hands*

Oviraptor was a scavenger who preyed on unguarded nests, eating egg-clutches for survival.



Troodon

2 Gnosis, 8 Rage, 4 Willpower

Attributes: 22 Physical, 11 Social, 7 Mental

Abilities: *Athletics* x 1, *Brawl* x 1, *Fishing* x 1, *Survival* x 3

Archid Traits: *Binocular Vision, Grasping Hands, Terrible Claws*

Troodon stood upright and scavenged after bigger dinosaurs. Its most impressive feature were its eyes — huge globes that could see at distance.

Deinonychus

6 Gnosis, 7 Rage, 5 Willpower

Attributes: 18 Physical, 9 Social, 13 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 5, *Intimidation* x 2, *Survival* x 2

Archid Traits: *Long Teeth, Armor: Rough Hide, Hollow Bones, Terrible Claw, Feathers, Wings*

Deinonychus is a fearsome hunter. His form is typical sharp-tooth: The balancing tail, the striped markings of a hunter, the vicious claws and teeth. A sickle claw, called the "Terrible Claw" (literally, Deinonychus' name) rests at the center-toe position, and is used to gouge open prey for a quick feeding.

Velociraptor

5 Gnosis, 7 Rage, 5 Willpower

Attributes: 18 Physical, 7 Social, 15 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 5, *Athletics* x 3, *Intimidation* x 4, *Survival* x 3

Archid Traits: *Color Change, Feathers, Rough Hide, Terrible Claws, Wings*

This fierce pack-hunter is equally formidable going solo. Much like deinonychus, velociraptor has a swing-blade claw on his foot and small patagialike wings at the space between his arms and shoulders. His form is apparent in many lizards today. Many of the "raptor"-type of dinosaurs can be built from this model.

Archaeopteryx

1 Gnosis, 7 Rage, 5 Willpower

Attributes: 18 Physical, 7 Social, 15 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 1, *Fishing* x 1, *Flight* x 5, *Survival* x 1

Archid Traits: *Bipedal Walking, Feathers, Long Neck, Wings, Throat Sacs and Wattles*

This creature is approximately the size of a large chicken, but can fly at incredible speeds. Its plumage can occasionally develop a *Regal Crest*, and its eyes are sometimes set forward, giving the creature a wide visual range.

Stegosaurus

4 Gnosis, 8 Rage, 4 Willpower



Attributes: 22 Physical, 11 Social, 7 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 2, *Fishing* x 2, *Intimidation* x 2, *Survival* x 2

Archid Traits: *Beak, Bony-Plated Skin, Huge Size, Plate Armored, Sacral Plexus, Spikes on Tail*

The lumbering Stegosaur had two brains and better-than-average defenses on its body.

Pachycephalosaur

1 Gnosis, 8 Rage, 4 Willpower

Attributes: 22 Physical, 11 Social, 7 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 4, *Dodge* x 1, *Intimidation* x 4, *Survival* x 2

Archid Traits: *Armored Skull, Bipedal Walking, Rough Hide*

The armored skull of this dinosaur made him formidable when cornered; as a herbivore, he wasn't much of a hunter.

Triceratops

4 Gnosis, 8 Rage, 4 Willpower

Attributes: 22 Physical, 11 Social, 7 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 4, *Intimidation* x 2, *Survival* x 2

Archid Traits: *Armored Skull, Beak, Bony-Plate Skin, Horn* x 3, *Scutes*

Triceratops had three large horns on the center of his head, and was well defended.

Pteranodon

5 Gnosis, 8 Rage, 4 Willpower

Attributes: 22 Physical, 11 Social, 7 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 2, *Flight* x 4, *Survival* x 2

Archid Traits: *Beak, Huge Jaws, Huge Size* x 2, *Long Neck, Rough Hide, Wings* x 3

This flying creature folded his wings together like a bat, and had an enormous wingspan when flying. He preyed on fish and small mammals.

Sarcosuchus

6 Gnosis, 8 Rage, 4 Willpower

Attributes: 22 Physical, 11 Social, 7 Mental

Abilities: *Brawl* x 4 (Specialization: water combat), *Fishing* x 1, *Intimidation* x 3, *Survival* x 3

Archid Traits: *Armor, Huge Jaws, Huge Size* x 2, *Long Teeth*

Sarcosuchus was a giant crocodilian. Walking on four legs and reaching length of over 30 feet, he ate voraciously.