

The neon signs flicker on, one after the other, advertising cheap beer. They wink to each other like oversized, gaudy fireflies, and then they stay lit, beckoning the people in from the outside.

In the basement of the bar, a rat wanders into the gap between worlds. Water rises around it, and it vanishes, consumed by the river.

Behind the bar, a woman runs her fingers over a series of carvings in the wood. They are already becoming worn and smooth. Tomorrow night, she will deepen them with a special knife. The carvings remind the spirit of the river of its bargain. They remind the spirit of the building of its job. They remind the pack that runs the bar of the importance of its territory.

She tenses. The spirit of the building is behind her. She shuts her eyes tight, and for a moment, gives in to the urge it creates in her. "Sometimes I think about eating someone," she whispers. "Changing, chasing someone down, and eating him in an alley."

"I know," says the spirit. "I won't tell."

A wolf wearing the form of a man flips the "closed" sign around. *Ghy's Kill* is open for business.

# COLLECTION

# OF

# HORRORS

# GOOD FOR THE SOUL

## A Storytelling Adventure System anthology for Hunter: The Vigil

WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING, INC.  
2075 WEST PARK PLACE  
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STONE MOUNTAIN, GA 30087

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Special thanks to our voice actors for giving up a Saturday to help us out:  
Anna Albano, Nathan Binder, David Bounds, Natasha Bryant-Raible, Priscilla Kim, Vincent Lombardo, Orrin Loria, Weston Reid, Rich Thomas, Michelle Webb



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# Good for the Soul

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL ••

SOCIAL •••

## Overview

Shy's Kill is a bar sitting on the bank of the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (though it can be located anywhere you need it to be for your chronicle). The bar's name is a play on the river's name, though the river is usually pronounced "SKOO-kull." It's been around for about 10 years, but recently came under new management, and was closed for renovations for several months. When it reopened, regular patrons noted that very little had changed, except for the different staff, an odd, fishy odor (which made sense, given the proximity to the river, but people swore it was never this strong before) and a strange dip in temperature.

These changes came about because of the new owners and the modifications they made. A pack of werewolves took over the bar when they discovered the presence of the spiritual nexus in the basement. This nexus doesn't figure into this scene, and so isn't described, but it allows the werewolves and spirits in the area to draw energy from it — such sites are extremely valuable to lycanthropes. The pack also needed to facilitate a bargain with the spirit of the Schuylkill River itself; once every year, the river demands that a human being be drowned in its waters. This particular pack of werewolves isn't always responsible for performing this grisly task (the Old Wolf of North Philly has taken the burden before; more on this character can be found on p. 353 of **Hunter: The Vigil**), but with the numbers of werewolves in the city dwindling, the River's Secret Pack decided that it would shoulder the responsibility of keeping the river-spirit sated until such time as another pack could do so. They bought the bar and made a hole in the basement floor leading to the river (this is the source of the odor and the cold air).

Like most werewolf packs, the River's Secret Pack has a totem spirit, an ephemeral being that acts as an emblem and a source of purpose and power for the members. The pack's totem is a spirit that it nicknamed "Priest," and Priest has taken to hanging out at the bar and sometimes possessing the bartender to learn the secrets of the patrons.

On any given night, the pack might be at the bar, down in the basement, keeping the books or tending the bar. But just as often, the werewolves are out in the city, running as wolves and hunting whatever prey has caught their attention. Priest, however, never leaves, and this scene is meant to occur when the characters enter the bar and encounter the spirit. As such, no details are provided for the pack of werewolves. Storytellers that wish to simulate the River's Secret Pack can do so using the rules provided in **Hunter: The Vigil** or **Spirit Slayers** (or, if they wish, **Werewolf: The Forsaken**).

In this scene, the characters enter Shy's Kill and encounter Priest, though unless they possess some means of identifying spirits, they probably don't know what they are dealing with. The characters might enter the bar for any number of reasons. The characters might be investigating the disappearance of a Lucifuge cell in Philadelphia or looking into the death of Bill Beck (see pp. 209-226 of the **Horror Recognition Guide** for more information). The characters might have heard rumors about disappearances near the bar and want to question the regulars or employees, or have tracked a werewolf back to Shy's Kill. Or they might just want to grab a beer.

The description below assumes that the bar is mostly empty when the characters arrive, but if your story would benefit from the place being raucous and crowded, perhaps crammed with folks watching an Eagles game on TV, feel free to make the necessary changes. The spirit presently possesses the bartender.

## Description

Walking into the bar, the first thing that strikes you is the smell. Beer, smoke, the usual scents - but underneath that, a rotten, wet smell. The river. It's not thirty yards from where you're standing, and yet you didn't notice the scent until you walked in here.

The door to Shy's Kill opens into a tiny entranceway, which in turn opens into the main room. The floor is wooden and sticky from spilled beer. The tables are new from the remodeling, but already accumulating wads of gum. A second room to your left boasts a pool table and a music machine, and at the opposite end of this room is the bar itself. A bartender stands behind it, listening with a look of polite concern to a customer spill his life story.

## Storyteller Goals

This scene should serve two purposes. First, it introduces Shy's Kill as a mysterious location. The scent of the river and the cold air should clue the characters in that something odd is going on. The conversation with Priest should serve to cement it — Shy's Kill is more than a seedy neighborhood bar.

Second, though, this scene should establish Priest as a contact for the characters. He can't tell any secrets that he learns, so he can't be a source of information per se, but he can provide the characters with a safe place to tell their stories. If confession is good for the soul, then a spirit born of secret revelation might be the best choice for confessor.

## Character Goals

In this scene, the players should learn that something strange and probably supernatural is happening at Shy's Kill. Depending on the characters' goals and capabilities, the specifics of what they learn can vary. For instance, a tier one cell might simply learn something odd is happening, and the bartender knows more than he says. A tier two cell might discover that the bartender knows what is happening, and may be involved. A tier three cell might realize that the bartender is compromised by the supernatural, but is apparently not hostile.

Nothing in this scene should be a direct, physical threat to the characters. While Priest's actions might set off the cell's suspicions because of how at-ease he makes people feel, he is disarming rather than intimidating. This scene is a test of the characters' perception and social acumen.

## Actions

The action in the scene begins when the characters order a drink from Priest. He makes conversation using any "in" that he can (but most of the time, he doesn't have to — inquisitive folks quite rightly assume that the bartender knows what's going on, and ask him for help). Characters might try to press Priest for information about whatever they happen to be investigating, but he expertly steers the conversation toward the characters instead. He *prefers* to talk to people one-on-one, but he's not adverse to group confessions.

Characters in this scene might question other patrons, play a round of pool or just drink for a while and discuss other matters. They might also attempt to sneak into other parts of the bar without the bartender knowing (this is impossible because Priest is the bar in a sense, but he won't stop them— have the players make some Stealth rolls and "contest" them with a roll for Priest, but whatever the result, Priest pretends he doesn't see them). Probably the most important action that takes place during this scene is the conversation between Priest and the character(s) as he attempts to induce them to confess.

## Resisting the Urge to Confess

**Dice Pool:** Composure + Subterfuge vs. Priest's Power + Finesse

**Action:** Extended and contested

You and the player each make the appropriate roll each turn and accumulate successes. If Priest accumulates a number of successes equal to the character's Willpower rating before the character accumulates successes equal to Priest's Power + Finesse rating, the character feels compelled to confess something. This confession is usually only embarrassing or socially damning — a character who has committed murder won't necessarily feel compelled to admit it. In any event, once Priest hears the confession, he looks at the character with that same look of polite concern, and says, "I won't tell."

**Hindrances:** Characters has fallen victim to Priest's In Vino Veritas Numen, described below (variable penalty); character is intoxicated (-1 to -3, depending on how intoxicated); character has succeeded in resisting degeneration within the last week (-2).

**Help:** Bar is crowded and noisy (+2); character has failed to resist degeneration within the last week (+2); more than one character making the attempt (use the Teamwork rules found on p. 134 of the *World of Darkness Rulebook*)

Note that the modifiers associated with degeneration play into the notion that a successful degeneration roll indicates that the character understands he has committed a wrong and feels guilty, or at the very least conflicted, about what he has done. This feeling of guilt creates another layer of resistance to Priest's blandishments.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** If you roll a dramatic failure for Priest, his nature shows through for just a moment. His eyes become large, black and fast-moving like a bird's, and a single brown feather falls from his hair. The target character knows the Priest was trying to get information out of her. If the player rolls a dramatic failure, the character loses all accumulated successes and immediately confesses to Priest.

**Failure:** No successes are accumulated toward the total.

**Success:** Successes are accumulated toward the total. If the player accumulates the target number first, the character doesn't feel compelled to confess anything to Priest, but doesn't necessarily think anything untoward is going on, either (Priest appears detached and genial, just as a bartender should be). If you accumulate the target number first, the character feels an uncontrollable desire to get something off her chest. The weight of the secret



# SPIRITS AND GHOSTS

Priest is given traits based on the rules for ghosts, found on pp. 208-216 of the World of Darkness Rulebook. He is not, however, the ghost of a departed human being, but is a spirit of secrets. His true name, should it become necessary (perhaps one of the characters hears a werewolf refer to him by it) is Gestha-Buzur, which roughly translates to "Secret that No One Should Know."

Gestha-Buzur's traits while possessing the bartender can be found on p. 4.

His spirit traits are:

Power: 2

Finesse: 6

Resistance: 4

Morality: N/A

Initiative: 10

Defense: 6

Speed: 16 (flight only)

Size: 1

Corpus: 5

Numina: See below

If you have access to Werewolf: The Forsaken or World of Darkness: Book of Spirits, add the following traits to Priest:

Influences: Trust 1, Secrets 1

Numina: Living Fetter, Material Vision

is simply too much, and, without thinking, she talks to Priest. She doesn't have to confess anything that would cause her to be arrested, attacked, fired and so on, but the secret needs to be one that she has kept to this point.

**Exceptional Success:** The player or the Storyteller makes considerable progress toward the goal. If the player reaches the goal with five extra successes, the character realizes that Priest is deliberately trying to bait her into telling a secret. Priest's intentions don't seem malicious, but the character is free to draw her own conclusions. If you reach Priest's goal with five extra successes, the character confesses the deepest, most damning secret she has to Priest. She can wait until she is out of earshot of other characters, but must confess as soon as possible.

## Consequences

If one or more of the characters confess to Priest, the only immediate consequence is whatever guilt or regret the character might feel about it. Priest does not tell the secrets he learns (because he isn't capable of doing so), and if the characters give him a confession, he doesn't inform on them to the werewolf pack, even if they do something like sneaking downstairs. If they don't, or if they are hostile to him, he tells the pack about the characters, down to minute details. He might even have imprints of the characters' credit cards, depending on how they paid for drinks.

## Priest, Spirit of Secrets

**Quotes:** "What can I get you?"

"Yep, I've heard that before. That's a damn shame."

"You want to talk about it? Happy to listen, man."

**Virtue:** Temperance. Priest is not a very powerful spirit in the scheme of things, and knows that being unobtrusive can be a life-saving trait.

**Vice:** Greed. When the chance to learn something new or taboo arises, Priest has a hard time containing himself.



Since the pack took over the bar, Priest's mannerisms have become more recognizably human, and he's learning bar lingo and customs. His spirit form might change as he grows more powerful — a little bird works well for flitting around the city, listening in, but in a bar, a human form would be more appropriate. For now, he contents himself with possessing the bartenders.

**Numina: Possession** (As described on p. 212 of the World of Darkness Rulebook.),  
**In Vino Veritas** (Priest can loosen the lips of potential targets by serving them alcohol and reflexively using this power. Roll Priest's Power + Finesse – the target's Resolve. Successes on this roll subtract from the Composure + Subterfuge roll that the target makes to resist telling Priest a secret later. This Numen can only be used once per scene per target, and only if the target orders a drink from Priest.)  
**Ban:** Like demons (see p. 284 of Hunter: The Vigil), spirits have bans. Priest's ban is that he cannot reveal a secret given to him in confidence, no matter what the consequence.



## Flyer for Shy's Kill

Visitors Welcome



Shy's Kill  
4623 Main Street  
Philadelphia, Pa 19127



**GRAND REOPENING**



*DID YOU MISS US?  
WE'VE BEEN CLOSED FOR REMODELING,  
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\$1 PITCHER NIGHT!**



**COME GET WINGED ON FRIDAY  
HALF OFF BASKETS OF HOT WINGS!**

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RIGHT BY THE WATER. COME JOIN THE FUN!**



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