

SKINNER

TM



20TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION
WEREWOLF
THE APOCALYPSE

SKINNER

Family quarrels are bitter things. They don't go according to any rules. They're not like aches or wounds, they're more like splits in the skin that won't heal because there's not enough material.

— F. Scott Fitzgerald

A flayed body is found in a landfill. This is no cadaver of a helpless victim, though — the corpse is Garou.

The People remember. A man killed werewolves, taking their skins. A blasphemous rite bound the skins of Garou to the body of a Kinfolk, creating a new werewolf. A Skin Dancer.

The Skinner is dead, though. Samuel Haight tried for too much power and was obliterated forever. The children of his legacy are few and outnumbered. They wouldn't be so bold as to invite the wrath of the Garou Nation. They're not as driven as Haight was, and he's dead and gone.

Isn't he?



STORYTELLING ADVENTURE SYSTEM

SCENES
10

MENTAL
PHYSICAL
SOCIAL

XP LEVEL
30-50



Credits

Creative and Art Director: Rich Thomas

Written and Developed by: Ethan Skemp

Editor: Michelle Lyons

Book Design: Aileen E. Miles

Werewolf 20th Anniversary Edition Logo: Craig Grant

Cover Art: Andrew Trabbold

Interior Art: Chris Bivins, James Denton, Brian LeBlanc,
Richard Thomas

Werewolf: The Apocalypse Creators Sam Chupp, Andrew Greenberg, Wes Harris, Robert Hatch, Geoff Pass, Mark Rein Hagen, William Spencer-Hale, Rich Thomas, Josh Timbrook, Stewart Wieck, Travis L. Williams, Samuel Witt



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

Check out White Wolf online at <http://www.white-wolf.com>

Check out Onyx Path online at <http://www.theonyxpath.com>



Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	4
<i>Background and Set-Up</i>	6
<i>New Elements</i>	8
<i>The Cast</i>	9
<i>Opening Hostilities [Optional]</i>	19
<i>Scene: Skin and Bones</i>	22
<i>Scene: Second Skin</i>	24
<i>Scene: Turncoat</i>	26
<i>Scene: Trophy Hunting</i>	28
<i>Scene: Closed Casket Funeral</i>	30
<i>Scene: Tick's Bargain</i>	32
<i>Scene: Minotaur's Labyrinth</i>	36
<i>Scene: Raging Bull</i>	38
<i>Scene: The Skinner Reborn</i>	40
<i>Aftermath</i>	43





Introduction

One of the most notorious bogeymen ever to haunt the Garou, Sam “the Skinner” Haight was unlike any son of a bitch that came before him or after him. He was a near-impossibility: a Kinfolk who became a serial killer, preying on the Garou themselves. He flayed his victims and took their pelts as if they were mere wolves. It wasn’t just for show, either. Sam Haight had learned a vile ritual from the distant past that allowed him to put those skins to good use... for a certain interpretation of “good.” The Skinner ritually bound them to his body and it made him a werewolf in his own right — the first of the Skin Dancers.

Haight’s deeds were the stuff of urban legend, even in the surreal supernatural corners of the World of Darkness. They say he drank vampire blood for the power, stole the power of a coven of magi, and went after a dark god that lay sleeping under Mexico City. All the stories grew in the telling. The Garou Nation gave a collective sigh of relief when the news came that he’d been consumed in one of his mad plots for power. It wasn’t entirely over — he’d taught the Rite of Sacred Rebirth to others before his death. The legacy of the Skin Dancers still remained, but the story of Haight himself was at last at an end.

Or maybe not.

This story is about the Skinner’s return — figurative, mostly, unless the players fail to prevent it from becoming something more. One of Haight’s disciples has gotten his hands on a grisly relic and fallen in with a cunning spirit with sinister ambitions. Acting together, the two of them lead a pack of Skin Dancers to resurrect the legend of Sam Haight. They want the Garou to fear The Skinner again. In the process, they may win new power and status for the patchwork Skin Dancer pseudo-tribe or they may be damned — or both.

What Is Inside

This product uses bookmarks to help you immediately move from one page to the one you’re after. Most PDF readers list the file’s bookmark links in an easily accessed part of the interface. Check your program’s documentation for more.

This story kit breaks down into three basic sections:

The **Introduction** is an overview of the story. Here we go over the background events that lead up to the scenario and the personalities involved. We take a look at what the major players want and how they plan to get

it. We also put together a loose framework for how the story may play out and offer advice on changing details or adapting to player-directed change in play.

The **Scenes** are the core elements that make up the story. The players’ actions will influence the results of each scene they experience, which in turn influence the next scenes likely to play out. They’re designed to provide a solid concept of what may happen next, but also allow you to alter and improvise when needed.

The **Scene Cards** mark the beginning of the section of story-specific resources. Scene cards can be printed out, cut apart and used to track the essentials of every scene. Character sheets for major players are also found in this section.

ABOUT THE STORYTELLING ADVENTURE SYSTEM

If this is your first Storytelling Adventure System (SAS) product, you’ve chosen a fine place to start. To keep this story kit lean and focused, though, we haven’t included a lot of the core premises and Storyteller suggestions that are at the heart of the SAS. Whether you’re a new Storyteller or an old hand, be sure to read the free SAS Guide, found at the SAS website:

www.white-wolf.com/sas

Here are some of the features available in Skinner:

- **Interactive links.** Clicking on anything in blue will take you directly to the section referenced, or to an appropriate character sheet or prop. It may also take you to an external website that could be useful.
- **Scenes.** Clicking on a scene name in the scene flowchart or the page number in the scene card will take you to the full write-up of the scene.
- **Bookmarks.** This PDF is fully bookmarked, so you can jump to major sections at any time when the file is open.

Background and Set-Up

Many Garou know the story of Samuel “The Skinner” Haight. For several years, he was a bogeyman like no other. A mortal Kinfolk strong and cunning enough to kill werewolves and take their skins. With a blasphemous ritual he made himself into a werewolf, becoming even stronger. He taught other Kinfolk the rite and founded a small pseudo-tribe of would-be werewolves who called themselves the Skin Dancers, even as he continued his hunt to possess all the power he possibly could.

Stories abound of Haight’s exploits. Nothing’s provable, but they say he stole the power of vampiric blood. Some say, a more impressive tale, that he even stole true magick before he finally met his end. Some say he died in Mexico City, awakening an evil even he couldn’t devour. Some say he never died at all.

The Skin Dancers were careful to lie low after Haight’s death. They knew the Garou Nation would be swift to hold them accountable for his crimes — to say nothing of their own. They still recruited new members by collecting skins when they could, but they were always careful to dispose of the bodies afterwards. No one wanted the Thirteen Tribes to know they were still out there, building their strength. A few nursed their hatred toward the Garou further, blaming them for the death of the man who had shown them the path to genuine empowerment.

Unbeknownst to anyone, something survived of Haight — a single scrap of skin, torn from his elbow to his wrist. Nobody involved in The Skinner’s last stand noticed or paid attention, but a scavenger did. The spirit Tick was drawn to the torn remnant, sensing that if any aspect of the legendary Skin Dancer was left to call upon, it would be in his skin. Tick had an ambition of becoming elevated through the reverence of Garou, rising in power like the tribal totems had done. With such a gift, the Skin Dancers might well become potential followers — preferably channeled through a new messiah. Tick chose Nicholas Carver, probably Sam Haight’s most fervent disciple. She gave him the skin; she implanted it into the patchwork coat he’d gained from the Rite of Sacred Birth. Then she showed him how to feed and water it — how to make it grow.

The events of **Skinner** play out as a result of the twin ambitions of these two: Nicholas Carver — now calling himself “Samson” — and the potent spirit Tick. Carver’s Skin Dancer pack, the Vulture Walkers, strives to empower the remnant of Samuel Haight’s spirit that still lingers in Samson’s skin. To do that, they need to feed it with blood and memory. Specifically, they’ve

chosen to feed it with the memory of Samuel Haight’s murders and the fear they inspired in the Garou Nation.

To that end, they’ve begun killing Garou they’re able to catch alone (with the help of treacherous Kin-folk attached to the local sept) and leaving the victims’ flayed corpses where the rest of the sept will find them. The clues they leave behind are meant to imply that Samuel Haight isn’t as dead as everyone thinks he is — The Skinner walks again. In a manner of speaking, the implications are accurate. If the remnant of Haight is fed sufficiently, they’ll be even more so.

Tick is playing a longer game. She’s attempting to usurp Minotaur as the patron saint of the Skin Dancers, and to do that she needs two things: increased power and Minotaur out of the way. The latter goal is already in motion; Minotaur’s hatred and fury have left him open to Wyrmish influence. Tick whispered rumors in Minotaur’s ear to feed these negative impulses, and the bull-headed Skin Dancer totem is beginning the slide into corruption. His labyrinth has always overlapped slightly with the Black Labyrinth itself and now the walls between the two are beginning to come down.

Tick’s other ambition, an increase in power, is a little trickier. She intends to feed on the blood of an Incarna, specifically one of the Garou Nation’s tribal totems. She hopes that once Samson comes into his full power as a reincarnation of Haight’s will, he’ll be able to assist her in that ambition. She’s also watching for other opportunities, however, and the player characters’ pack may just be the one she’s been hoping for.

Chain of Events

Skinner is a story with a fairly loose structure and fluid pathways between scenes. The characters might choose some events as critical for them to oppose while letting others go as a lower priority. There is no specific climax to the story itself: we’ve provided different possible scenes that each could serve as the tipping point, depending on what your players find most important. **Skinner** doesn’t neatly fit into a structure of acts, but there is a general pattern of escalation.

For starters, you can choose to open with a bang: a battle against Black Spiral Dancers that draws the Vulture Walkers pack to scavenge the remains. This fight is perhaps the most useful way to link the story into an existing chronicle, though it can provide a vivid “in media res” start. The first true scene of the story, though, is when someone finds the first flayed Garou body and the whispers of The Skinner start. This triggers

an investigation period, as another body turns up and the player characters are the ones charged with putting the pieces together.

The action picks up as the characters' actions run into against the Vulture Walkers' activities. The players' pack may move to protect another possible victim, uncover who is behind the betrayal, or finally take the fight to the vengeful Skin Dancer pack.

The story reaches boiling point as three different climactic events begin to take shape. The player characters are likely to begin by confronting the trickster-spirit Tick to stop her machinations. From there they have a choice: delve into Minotaur's labyrinth in order to prevent the totem from falling to the Wyrm or move against the "Son of Sam" to prevent him from becoming The Skinner's new incarnation.

Adapting the Story

- In an ongoing chronicle, the events of **Skinner** may work best broken up and spread out over a period of time, its scenes occurring during or between other stories occupying the players' attention. Sam Haight's reputation is that of a serial killer. He's a hunter and stalker rather than an apocalyptic warlord, striding onto a battlefield challenging all comers. You may find that the slow burn works best, giving the players extra time to worry about what's really going on before they reach the next revelation. This story is written with a slow burn in mind, but you could condense events so that they occur more quickly, escalating the conflicts with Minotaur, Tick and the Vulture Walkers.
- **Skinner** is written for characters in a mid-tier power level. If the player characters are notably above or below this, you may want to scale the antagonists accordingly.
- Depending on when you first started playing **Werewolf**, you may have already run a game involving the events of **Chaos Factor**. Perhaps your group interacted with Haight and put him six feet under in a story of your own crafting. If this is the case, things are likely to get very personal. Samson and his pack probably know your players' characters by name and reputation and will tailor their plans to account for them in particular. Feel free to adopt their tactics to account for your player characters' favorite strategies; if your player have earned a lot of Renown for their deeds, then it's quite possible the Vulture Walkers may have heard of those deeds themselves.
- Of all the ways to get the players immediately involved on an emotional level, one that isn't entirely off the table is killing a player character. This works best if one of your players has been looking to change

characters for a while. You may want to approach the player privately about such a hook — being murdered by Skin Dancers is not a particularly glorious end for a Garou, even if it may motivate the pack immensely.

- The Vulture Walkers have assistance from a Kinfolk associated with the players' sept. Having a known and potentially trusted Kinfolk act as the traitor is sure to get the players' attention, as long as you can properly justify the switch in loyalties. If you want the traitor to be an existing Storyteller character, the betrayal will be all the more potent if the players understand the motivation behind it. A Kinfolk who's lost a loved one recently or has been called on to make a sacrifice is optimal. A Kin who has a personal grudge against the player characters (or the victims in question) will be very plausible, but less surprising.

What's The Rest of the Sept Doing?

Depending on how large the player characters' sept is, it's likely that you'll need to explain why the player characters are the ones dealing with such a potentially serious turn of events as the return of the Skinner. If sept affairs are otherwise under control, the players may rightfully assume that they could call on other packs to aid them in their hunt.

The most likely scenario (and the one treated as default) is that the Vulture Walkers begin making their play while the sept is involved in an ongoing war with a large number of Black Spiral Dancers. With most of the sept defending against the enemy they know is out there, it's up to the player characters to delve into the plans of the enemy nobody anticipated. (If using the optional "Opening Hostilities" scene, this works doubly well since that scene helps reinforce the pervasive conflict occupying the sept's attention.) The diverted attention of the sept means that the Vulture Walkers are bold enough to strike while they know the sept can't devote all their resources to tracking them down. It also emboldens their Kinfolk contact, who feels more secure about his betrayal going unnoticed.

Other distractions can work fairly well as long as they're of an appropriate scale. If the player characters don't hold sept positions, it's easy to have the leaders of the sept assign them to track down the killers. On the other hand, the players may be the movers and shakers of their sept. If so, then the Vulture Walkers' victims should almost certainly be werewolves to whom the players feel a strong connection in order to encourage them to get personally involved while they deputize other Garou to handle sept business.

New Elements

Fetish: Remembering Remnant

Level One (special), Gnosis 8

A remembering remnant is a portion of a werewolf's (or rarely, another shapechanger's) skin, preserved through spiritual power. Anyone capable of using a fetish can activate the remembering remnant; the fetish then grants a temporary boost to the Ancestors Background of one point per success.

The remnant is much more useful in the hands of a Skin Dancer — or to be more precise, in his skin. A shapechanger created by the Rite of Sacred Rebirth can choose to bind the remnant into his body when attuning to it. The scrap of skin is absorbed into the user's own hide, becoming part of him as if it were one of the skins used in the Rite of Sacred Rebirth. For instance, a Skin Dancer attuning a pale white scrap of Silver Fang pelt into his shoulder would always have the skin over his shoulder look like the skin of the remnant's original owner. In Homid form, it would resemble the skin tone of the original donor; in hybrid or wolf forms, it would be a patch of white fur.

Once absorbed, the remembering remnant grants the Skin Dancer an effective point of the Ancestors Background; it allows him to channel the spirit of the deceased skinchanger. The Skin Dancer may increase its power by strengthening the ancestor-spirit, typically with offerings of blood and memory. In game terms, this is simulated using experience points to buy extra dots in Ancestors at 1.5 x the usual cost, with the roleplaying requirement that the owner works to enhance the legend of the original donor. Each dot of Ancestors gained increases the fetish's effective level by one, to a maximum of five. The difficulty to activate these Ancestors dice is always 8 since the player always reaches a specific "ancestor" spirit, but the fetish is limited to the Abilities possessed by that one donor.

Increasing the fetish's power is not without risk. The stronger the remnant becomes, the more it spreads — a Level Three remembering remnant, for instance, might make the Skin Dancer's entire arm and part of his torso resemble that of his implanted "ancestor." If sufficiently fed, the remnant may overwhelm its host.

Fetish: Supplicant's Compass

Level Four, Gnosis 7

The supplicant's compass is a fetish that takes the form of a small iron needle with a length of cord tied around its middle. If the needle is moistened with the blood of a shapechanger, it will point out an Umbral path to the spirit world lair of that shapechanger's patron totem (tribal, personal or pack). These fetishes are rare as few totems take well to being called upon without warning.

Tick (Totem of Cunning)

Background Cost: 4

Tick is a parasite, but tougher than her size might lead you to expect. Her creed is that you do what you have to in order to survive, no matter how distasteful others might find your actions. She is more of a trickster than a warrior, stealing her food from others and using sickness as a weapon instead of provoking a fair fight.

Individual Traits: Tick's children gain an extra soak die versus bashing damage.

Pack Traits: Tick's packs can call on three dots of Survival and two points of Willpower per story.

Ban: Tick requires regular tithes of blood. Her pack must offer her a health level's worth of blood (theirs or someone else's) per packmate roughly once per week (at the night of the purest new moon, half moon and full moon). She also doesn't permit her Garou children to kill ticks or remove them once they're attached and feeding on a host.

The Cast

The Vulture Walkers

The Skin Dancer pack responsible for the murders that start this story are a veteran pack called the Vulture Walkers. They're some of the most experienced Skin Dancers in the world; their leader, a Theurge going by the nickname of "Samson," learned the Rite of Sacred Rebirth from Samuel Haight himself before Haight's death. They've lost members over the years but the survivors are veterans with plenty of expertise in avoiding attention and fighting against other Garou. At any given time they may have one or more new recruits, relatively fresh from the Rite of Sacred Rebirth. Their pack totem is Tick; she requested to not be mentioned in their pack name, however.

The Vulture Walkers play a fairly straightforward role of antagonist in this story, killing at least two Garou as their introduction. However, they aren't meant to be wholly unsympathetic. Player characters might find something to pity in their tales, if they ever stop to negotiate; it's even possible that the pack could try to redeem one or more of the Skin Dancers that they take a shine to. Use this level of ambiguity as you see fit — the Vulture Walkers have seen a lot of tragedy in their time, as many Kinfolk and Garou do; it can be a powerful story element to go up against enemies whom might have been allies, had things turned out differently.

All Vulture Walkers are faintly perceptible to Sense Wyrm; the Rite of Sacred Rebirth has given them a minor touch of Wyrm-taint that they cannot scrub away. This taint does not apply to things that surround them, though; it is only noticeable in person.

Nicholas "Samson" Carver

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Theurge

Tribe: Skin Dancers

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

(3/4/5/5), Stamina 4 (6/7/7/6), Charisma 4, Manipulation 3 (2/0/0/0), Appearance 3 (2/0/3/3), Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Expression 3, Intimidation 1, Leadership 3, Primal-Urges 2; Drive 2, Etiquette 2, Firearms 1, Melee 1, Stealth 2, Survival 2; Academics 2, Computer 2, Enigmas 3, Investigation 4, Medicine 2, Occult 4, Rituals 5, Science 1, Technology 2

Backgrounds: Allies 2 (other Skin Dancer packs), Ancestors 4*, Contacts 4, Fetish 10/14** (5-point remembering remnant, Grand Klaive *Thunderous Howl* (W20 p. 226), supplicant's compass**), Resources 3, Rites 5, Totem 4

Gifts: (1) Aura of Confidence, Scent of Running Water, Spirit Speech, Umbral Tether; (2) Command Spirit, Name the Spirit, Sense the Unnatural; (3) Pulse of the Invisible, Rending the Craft, Umbral Camouflage; (4) Spirit Ward

Rage 7, Gnosis 7, Willpower 6

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Difficulty	Dice Pool	Damage Pool
Grand Klaive	7	5 (Crinos)	12 aggravated (Crinos)*
Claw	6	6 (Crinos)	8 aggravated

*Samson's Ancestors rating reflects the power of his remembering remnant fetish.

**Samson does not always carry the supplicant's compass with him.

Quotes: *"If we make a mistake, they'll find us and finish us. If we do nothing, we die out. The only way to endure is to gather strength and recruit. It's justice. It's survival."*

(when Haight is growing strong) "I've... been here before. I know you. I remember hating you."

(defeated) "...So it was all for nothing. You grind out those who weren't born like you... as easily as if the universe had demanded it. If the world wants... monsters like you on top, then what's... the point of living in it?"

Image: Samson has a lean build, but what mass he has is raw muscle. He sports the kind of physique that comes from not having known any luxuries for a long, long time. His chest and arms are marked with a variety of tattoos, repeating the motifs of severed wolf heads and broken chains. He bears a distinct "family resemblance" to Samuel Haight. Those who have met The Skinner might take him for a blood relative. In his Garou and wolf forms, he has a distinctly particolored pelt, mostly gray and dark brown with patches of lighter fawn. His gaze has the unsettling clarity of a fanatic's; it's clear to most people who spend any time around Samson that he has turned his back on the concept of doubt.

The Grand Klaive he wields is another gift of Tick's. Called *Thunderous Howl*, it's a former Shadow Lord weapon that Tick managed to salvage from the Abyss. Its last wielder, Commands-the-Storm, was a mighty Ahroun who was lost on a quest deep into the Umbra. Returning this blade to the Shadow Lords would be a worthy deed.

Roleplaying Notes: Since taking on the name "Samson," Nicholas has become even more intense, even more... Haight-ish. He speaks mostly in a cold, deadly serious tone, but sometimes a contemptuous sneer creeps



into his conversation. He has odd memories now and again, senses of *déjà vu* when meeting someone that Sam Haight recognized. Rather than reject them, he's started to trust them. He has a remarkable presence for someone his age and acts with the kind of complete confidence that inspires great loyalty in his pack.

Samson's motivations are tied to the big picture. He looks after his pack because they help him recruit more Skin Dancers. He recruits more Skin Dancers to advance the glory of the tribe. He advances the glory of the tribe to celebrate the legacy of Haight. He's heard plenty of talk about honor and glory from the Garou—and he intends to prove just what glory can come to those willing to take it.

History: Some Garou love their Kin and treat them as best they're able, given the limitations of duty and Rage. Some don't. Nicholas was one of the unlucky Kinfolk, born to a domineering, abusive Glass Walker father who always resented not having a "proper heir." Worse, his mother would take his father's side; she'd sooner see her own son suffer than watch her husband grow any angrier. But for all that, Nicholas was still trusted with knowledge of the Garou's existence and their secret war. His father needed someone to run the network of connections and brokers that funneled resources to the sept. He set that duty on Nicholas' shoulders, and was painfully clear—very painfully—about the importance of getting the job done right.

When word came that his father had been killed in action, Nicholas realized he was free. He also realized that he hadn't gotten any closure out of the deal: the family had never even seen the body. He wanted to know what his father's death had been like. He wanted to know if there'd been any doubt, any regret for what he'd done. So he started using the network to learn more about his father's killer. Soon he learned about the legend of The Skinner and set out to meet this hunter—not for revenge, of course, but to thank him and to ask him questions.

Nicholas wound up becoming one of the first Kinfolk that Haight entrusted with the Rite of Sacred Rebirth. He would have followed Haight on his various errands of power but The Skinner wouldn't have any of it. Sam Haight told him instead to spread the word—teach the Rite to Kinfolk who've suffered. Give them a reason to stand up for themselves and a tool to even the odds. Nicholas took the word as gospel. When he heard about The Skinner's death, he wasn't even mournful: he still had work to do.

Over the years, Nicholas has been an influential figure who helped get the Skin Dancers established as an actual movement rather than a local irregularity. He was present for the first rite that called Minotaur and his high status among the Skin Dancers helped him come to Tick's attention. When she called to him and offered him a relic of his dead mentor's body and drive, he enthusiastically accepted. The scrap of Haight's skin that Tick produced was in effect a fetish, one that became part of Carver's body much as a fetish tattoo would. Within it was a spirit of memory, bound to feed upon, strengthen and assume the identity of the remnants of Haight's spirit.

This fetish, a remembering remnant, has brought him closer to the will of his mentor. These days he's taken the deed name of "Samson," claiming to inherit the will of Samuel Haight along with a portion of Haight's skin. The more blood he offers it and the more he stirs fear of The Skinner, the louder Sam's voice gets.

Monica Perez

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Ahroun

Tribe: Skin Dancers

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

(3/4/5/5), Stamina 4 (6/7/7/6), Charisma 3, Manipulation 2 (1/0/0/0), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2), Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 1, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Intimidation 2, Primal-Urg 1, Streetwise 1; Crafts 2, Drive 2, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Stealth 3, Survival 3; Academics 2, Computer 1, Medicine 2, Technology 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 1, Resources 1, Totem 3, Rituals 5

Gifts: (1) Hare's Leap, Razor Claws, Scent of Running Water; (2) Bloody Feast, Spirit of the Fray, (3) Cow-ing the Bullet, Song of Rage; (4) Clenched Jaw Rage 7, Gnosis 4, Willpower 7

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Difficulty	Dice Pool	Damage Pool
Claw	6/5*	8 (Crinos)	9/11* aggravated (Crinos)
Bite	5	9 (Hispo)	8 aggravated

*If Razor Claws active

Quotes: "I gave those bastards everything. Everything. They don't get to take any more. Now they get to give back." (combat, growling) "Rhia."

(defeated) "For fuck's sake, you think you're being merciful? I look at you and all I see is the people who sent my baby girl off to die. Knowing I failed, knowing you keep to get doing that to other people's sons and daughters... it's just twisting the knife."

Image: Monica is somewhere around fifty; she's in good enough shape that she could pass for several years younger, save for her eyes. A regimen of grueling exercise, stepped up shortly after she underwent the Rite, has given her a strong, dense build without much body fat left. She has a cold, empty stare that lingers a little too long and gives the impression of many more years of weight. She dresses in practical survivalist's gear most of the time.

Roleplaying Notes: Monica wants revenge on the Garou — not for herself, but for her daughter. She hates them for sending her baby girl into a war she couldn't have won, a war that was destined to kill her sooner or later. She's cold and silent in battle; the most any opponent is able to get out of her is a growl of the name "Rhia," spoken like a promise. She is openly contemptuous of the virtues of the Garou's warrior culture, "glory" in particular. Any player character with a reputation for glorious deeds or fine boasts will be her special target.

Of late, Monica is trying not to think about their most recent kills. The opportunity to take more skins has meant that they've preyed on someone that was fairly like her own daughter. Fighting werewolves with the player characters' veteran status will be cathartic for her.

History: Monica wanted to be a good daughter. She loved and respected her parents. She went through an arranged marriage and, although she wasn't in love with her husband, he was a good enough man and she wanted to be a good wife. When their daughter Rhia was born, she fell completely for the small child. When her daughter vanished, only to come back later full of stories about the Change and the new war, Monica was terrified, but ultimately glad that her daughter was safe. She began to learn more about what it was to be Kin, to support Garou like her child.

Then her baby girl fell in battle. It was the crack that broke the dam. All the resentment at duty and sacrifice



she'd felt over the years came pouring out as anger. When she exploded at the Garou who gave her the news of Rhia's death, he almost killed her for it. That was the end for Monica. She sold what she could for traveling money, left her husband, and swore she'd have nothing to do with the Garou ever again. Not too much later, Samson and Caldwell were able to convince her otherwise.

Jerrick

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Ragabash

Tribe: Skin Dancers

Attributes: Strength 2 (4/6/5/3), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5), Charisma 2, Manipulation 4 (3/1/1/1), Appearance 3 (2/0/3/3), Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 1, Brawl 2, Expression 1, Primal Urge 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 3; Crafts 1, Drive 1, Firearms 2, Larceny 3, Melee 1, Stealth 4, Survival 3; Academics 1, Investigation 3, Medicine 1, Occult 2, Rituals 5, Technology 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Rites 5, Totem 3

Gifts: (1) Blur of the Milky Eye, Primal Anger, Scent of Running Water, Speed of Thought; (2) Curse of Hatred, Taking the Forgotten; (3) Laugh of the Hyena



Rage 4, Gnosis 4, Willpower 6

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Difficulty	Dice Pool	Damage Pool
Claw	6	7 (Crinos)	7 aggravated (Crinos)

Quotes: “I’m just sorry we don’t have as much opportunity to hunt the older ones. Killing the ones who’ve just Changed is mercy. Killing the older ones would be justice.”

(combat) “Get away from us! We don’t have to take your shit any more!”

(defeated) “Look, I’ll do whatever you want. Doesn’t matter. Just don’t take me back. Don’t bring me back to all of them.”

Image: Jerrick is just past twenty and seems almost hollowed out by his experiences. He’d be past thin and into skinny if it weren’t for the layer of dense muscle he’s added on in his time with the Skin Dancers. He dresses to avoid notice when among humans, preferring looser clothes and hoodies. He has a low, intense voice and a stare devoid of any form of warmth. In wolf and hybrid forms, his pelt is the usual rag-tag mix of colors common to Skin Dancers, but he has a very distinctive white slash-shaped patch over his left eye.

Roleplaying Notes: It’s all about making them pay. Jerrick is one of the unfortunate abused who becomes an abuser, and the world is rich with targets. He’s still a little afraid of other Garou, though, as much as he exults in a

chance to safely kill them now and again. Given the opportunity, he’ll take out some of his vendetta on Kinfolk as well. In his eyes, anyone who sides with the Garou is deliberately aiding and abetting the worst of the worst.

He’s never told his pack his surname. In fact, he’s been working to forget it himself.

History: Jerrick had it bad from an early age. His mother gave birth to only one child before she was badly wounded in a fight and left with battle scars that meant she’d bear no more children. He grew up never really understanding the abuse he received at her hands — she claimed to love and adore him as her only child, but she also had that terrible Rage, and she was plenty angry that her only heir wasn’t Garou as well. The mix of love and anger was toxic. Jerrick lived in terror of the nights when she came back home to see her “precious little boy.”

The Skin Dancers recognized Jerrick as potentially one of their own almost immediately. He remembers perfectly the day that Sam Haight killed and skinned his mother. Jerrick begged that he be the one to receive her skin, and he was granted that wish. Now he always has a part of her over his heart. It’s not nearly as therapeutic as he had thought it’d be.

Chloe “Savage-Heart” Andreas

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Philodox

Tribe: Skin Dancers

Attributes: Strength 3 (5/7/6/4), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/5), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5), Charisma 2, Manipulation 2 (1/0/0/0), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2), Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3 (Keen Hearing), Athletics 4 (Tireless), Brawl 4 (Bite), Intimidation 2, Primal-Urg 3; Animal Ken 1, Crafts 1, Etiquette 1, Melee 2, Stealth 4 (Lupus Form), Survival 4 (Hunting); Enigmas 1, Law 3, Medicine 2, Occult 2, Rituals 5

Backgrounds: Contacts 1, Rites 5, Totem 3

Gifts: (1) City Running, Hare’s Leap, Heightened Senses, Resist Pain, Scent of Running Water; (2) Axis Mundi, King of the Beasts, Strength of Purpose; (3) Strength of Gaia, Weak Arm

Rage 5, Gnosis 5, Willpower 6

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Difficulty	Dice Pool	Damage Pool
Bite	5	9 (Hispo)	6 aggravated

Quotes: “This is the skin I should have been born with! I’m not happy that I had to take it from someone else, but that’s just the way it is.”

“Back off! I don’t run with the apes anymore.”

(defeated) “Can you blame me? Can you even imagine any more what it’s like to be stuck in a weak skin, half-blind, sick all the time?”

Image: Savage-Heart is in her early twenties, though her age is somewhat obscured by the layers of filth on her body. She cares little for human adornments and treats her clothes badly; some would take her for a homeless woman, or at least a Bone Gnawer. Her wolf-coat is mostly black and grey.

Roleplaying Notes: Chloe doesn’t answer to her human name any more; she insists her pack use her new name of “Savage-Heart.” She has succumbed entirely to her romantic image of what a werewolf should be. She spends as much time as she can in Lupus form (and has focused on learning lupus Gifts in particular), and only grudgingly interacts with humans.

In her more contemplative moments, she sometimes wonders about her totem. While she gave up on any loyalties to Pegasus long ago, she isn’t comfortable around Minotaur and his aspects. His predator nature seems to come more from his man half than his bull half, and his spirit labyrinths seem unclean compared to the open forest or plain. Her doubt in Minotaur is the likeliest weak point for anyone trying to sway her sensibilities.

History: The daughter of a Black Fury, Chloe learned about the sanctity of the wild places and the blessing of wolf form at her mother’s knee. But these were things that would never be hers. She’d never know what it was to taste the blood of prey — or enemies — with a wolf’s

tongue. She’d never know the exultation of the moon. The more she longed for the gifts of her mother’s spirituality, the worse it hurt. She was doomed to a sad shadow of a life, probably given over to some similarly weak and blind Kinfolk mate. She wanted much, much more. It was the Vulture Walkers who offered it to her: a wolf’s skin, a bond with a totem, the chance to be the wild beast she’d always wanted to be. She couldn’t dream of saying no. Even if it meant other werewolves would have to die — how could she ever become a predator without the willingness to kill?

Anthony Caldwell

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Galliard

Tribe: Skin Dancers

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

(3/4/5/5), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5), Charisma 4, Manipulation 4 (3/1/1/1), Appearance 4 (3/0/4/4), Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Empathy 2, Expression 4 (Persuasion), Intimidation 3, Leadership 3, Subterfuge 3; Drive 1, Etiquette 3, Firearms 1, Melee 3, Performance 3; Academics 2, Enigmas 1, Law 3, Occult 1, Rituals 5, Technology 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 4, Fetish 3 (fang dagger, W20 p. 224), Resources 3, Rites 5, Totem 3

Gifts: (1) Fatal Flaw, Mindspeak, Persuasion, Scent of Running Water; (2) Luna’s Armor, Speech of the World, Staredown; (3) Disquiet, Eye of the Cobra Rage 4, Gnosis 5, Willpower 7

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Difficulty	Dice Pool	Damage Pool
Fang dagger	4	7 (Crinos)	7 aggravated (Crinos)*
Bite	5	8 (Hispo)	6 aggravated

Quotes: “Call us unjust? Justice is irrelevant. Fairness has nothing to do with anything. If things were fair not one of us would have had a reason to take the offer in the first place.”

(recruitment) “You are no less deserving than they are. We are all equals in worth — just not in power. And that’s the very thing we can amend: making you an equal in power.”

(beaten) “Of course I’ll make a deal. I didn’t set out on this road because I was suicidal. That doesn’t mean I can give you everything — but I’ll make a deal.”

Image: Caldwell has the look and bearing of a Silver Fang, at least in his Homid form. He’s a good-looking man in his late 30s with fine bone structure, hair that’s gone prematurely silver in a flattering way, and a good measure of poise in his posture and speech. The effect is unfortunately spoiled when he shifts form; his wolf-form pelt is mottled from pure white to dirty gray in patches, with a few splashes of dark brown.



Roleplaying Notes: Commanding and insightful, Caldwell would probably be the leader of the Vulture Walkers if he didn't defer to Samson. Caldwell believes that merit is the only justification for power. He sees his pack leader as possessing more merit, being the true inheritor of Haight's will. Anthony approaches most problems in a meticulous fashion, or at least as much as he can with a werewolf's Rage burning in his breast. He doesn't hate Garou Nation loyalists so much as he sees them as relics clinging to a belief system that'll be the end of them sooner or later.

History: Caldwell could have been a major leader of the Garou Nation, had things been different. He was clearly intelligent, charismatic and robust from an early age, eluding the problems that sometimes settled on his Silver Fang bloodline. Unfortunately, he had also eluded any chance of prestige — not only was he born Kin rather than Garou, but his Pure Breed was somewhat lacking. It didn't take him long to become dissatisfied with his family's predilection to exalt their members based on accidents of birth rather than actual merit. He was easily drawn to the promise of the Skin Dance, the opportunity to hold the power he felt he'd already earned.

Caldwell acts as the face of the Vulture Walkers. He's the one to approach potential Kinfolk recruits or to talk his way past potentially susceptible enemies. He has plenty of experience by now in making a good argument for why

Kinfolk don't need to take the abuse they so often do, and why the Garou they hunt are, appropriately enough, wastes of skin soon to be put to better use.

Veteran Werewolf

This abbreviated stat block can be used to flesh out the Vulture Walkers pack or for the Black Spiral Dancer enemies in the optional scene beginning the story. Some suggested Gifts are offered; feel free to swap these around.

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

(3/4/5/5), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5), Charisma 2, Manipulation 3 (2/0/0/0), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2), Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Initiative: 6 dice

Brawl: 7 dice (8 in Crinos, 9 in Hispo/Lupus)

Dodge: 6 dice (7 in Crinos, 8 in Hispo/Lupus)

Gifts: (1) City Running or Primal Anger, Resist Pain or Spur Claws, Mindspeak, Razor Claws, Shroud; (2) Staredown or Curse of Hatred, Howls in the Night or Spirit of the Fray, Wyrm Hide or Horns of the Impaler; (3) Disquiet or Eyes of the Cat, Foaming Fury or Laugh of the Hyena

Rank: 3

Rage 6, Gnosis 5, Willpower 6

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Difficulty	Dice Pool	Damage Pool
Bite	5	9 (Hispo)	8 (Hispo)
Claw	6	8 (Crinos)	8 (Crinos)
Fetish Knife	4	8 (Crinos)	8 (Crinos)

Vulture Walker Recruit

The following abbreviated stat block can be used for the average new recruit to the pack, and likely to Garou life as a whole. The Vulture Walkers usually have one or two at any given time; you can adjust this number as need be, particularly if they manage to recruit additional members over the course of the story.

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

(3/4/5/5), Stamina 3 (5/6/6/5), Charisma 2, Manipulation 2 (1/0/0/0), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2), Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Initiative: 4 dice

Brawl: 5 dice (6 in Crinos, 7 in Hispo/Lupus)

Dodge: 5 dice (6 in Crinos, 7 in Hispo/Lupus)

Gifts: One or two Level One Gifts

Rage 3, Gnosis 2, Willpower 5

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Difficulty	Dice Pool	Damage Pool
Bite	5	7 (Hispo)	8 (Hispo)
Claw	6	6 (Crinos)	8 (Crinos)

OTHER VULTURE WALKERS

You may find that you need the Vulture Walkers to be a larger pack to challenge your players, depending on their numbers or relative power level. If running this story as part of a larger chronicle, you can of course have some existing Kinfolk “convert” to new recruits over the course of the story. Certain failures at key scenes may slow the player characters’ investigation sufficiently that the Vulture Walkers have an opportunity to recruit, for instance.

The following thumbnail personality sketches can also be used to flesh out the pack further. Use them in conjunction with the Veteran Werewolf or Vulture Walker Recruit, depending on your needs. Each one has a signature Gift that can be used with the Recruit statistics or added to the Veteran Werewolf list. Like most Skin Dancers, all had extensive knowledge of the Garou before they turned, giving them a head start on the Rituals requirement.

- **Emmett Blake:** A scarred military veteran who came back from deployment in Afghanistan to find no prospects and not much support from his Garou relatives. He suffers from PTSD, and is at -1 difficulty to frenzy. **Signature Gift:** Razor Claws
- **Rachel Fawkes:** The middle-aged would-be matriarch of an extended Kin family. She was relegated to a maiden aunt position when she proved to be barren. She has extensive knowledge of herblore and folk remedies. **Signature Gift:** Mother’s Touch
- **Amanda Norrin:** The younger sister of a Theurge who fell in love with the same woman her brother would eventually claim. Personally dislikes bloodshed and represses her Rage, but is particularly vicious when frenzying. She has strong training in Occult. **Signature Gift:** Spirit Speech
- **Russell Hart:** A formerly wealthy investor who lost everything in a financial crash. His Garou relatives who’d previously benefited from his money management offered him some support, but only at a meager fraction of what he’d previously had. Poor street-level skills, but excellent political insights. **Signature Gift:** Desperate Strength



The Skinner Reborn

In the events of “The Skinner Reborn,” Samson gives himself entirely over to the fragment of Samuel Haight within him. The result is a werewolf with Samson’s body, Haight’s skin, and much of the power that Haight had at the moment of death — fused with some of Samson’s own.

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Theurge

Tribe: Skin Dancers

Attributes: Strength 5 (7/9/8/6), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 5 (7/8/8/7), Charisma 5, Manipulation 4 (3/1/1/1), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2), Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 4, Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Expression 2, Intimidation 5, Leadership 5, Primal-Urg 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 4; Animal Ken 3, Drive 2, Etiquette 2, Firearms 5, Melee 4, Stealth 4, Survival 5; Academics 2, Computer 2, Enigmas 4, Investigation 4, Occult 5, Rituals 5, Science 1, Technology 3

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Ancestors 5*, Fetish 5, Resources 5

Gifts: (1) Aura of Confidence, Bane Protector, Heightened Senses, Inspiration, Razor Claws,

Scent of Running Water, Spirit Speech, Umbral Tether; (2) Command Spirit, Curse of Aeolus, Name the Spirit, Sense the Unnatural, Wyrm Hide; (3) Faerie Kin (Unseelie), Pulse of the Invisible, Rending the Craft, Umbral Camouflage, Visceral Agony; (4) Open Wounds, Spirit Ward; (5) Thieving Talons of the Magpie

Rage 10, Gnosis 8, Willpower 9

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Difficulty	Dice Pool	Damage Pool
Grand Klaive	7	9 (Crinos)	11 aggravated (Crinos)
Bite	5	9 (Hispo)	9 (Hispo)
Claw	6/5*	8 (Crinos)	10/12*(Crinos)

*If Razor Claws active

Quotes: “I’ll admit it. I’m feelin’ a little strange. Been asleep too long, right? Clothes don’t fit right. But I feel good, too. Strong. Come and see.”

“That hide of yours is kind of tempting. But I’d just as soon take it in pieces, one at a time.”

(wounding an enemy) “I ain’t got time to play too long. Lie down and die, it’ll be quick. Or maybe just lose a leg, distract your friends for me.”

(on the ropes) “GODDAMMIT! Not again! I’ll find a way, you bastards! I’m not letting you win again!”

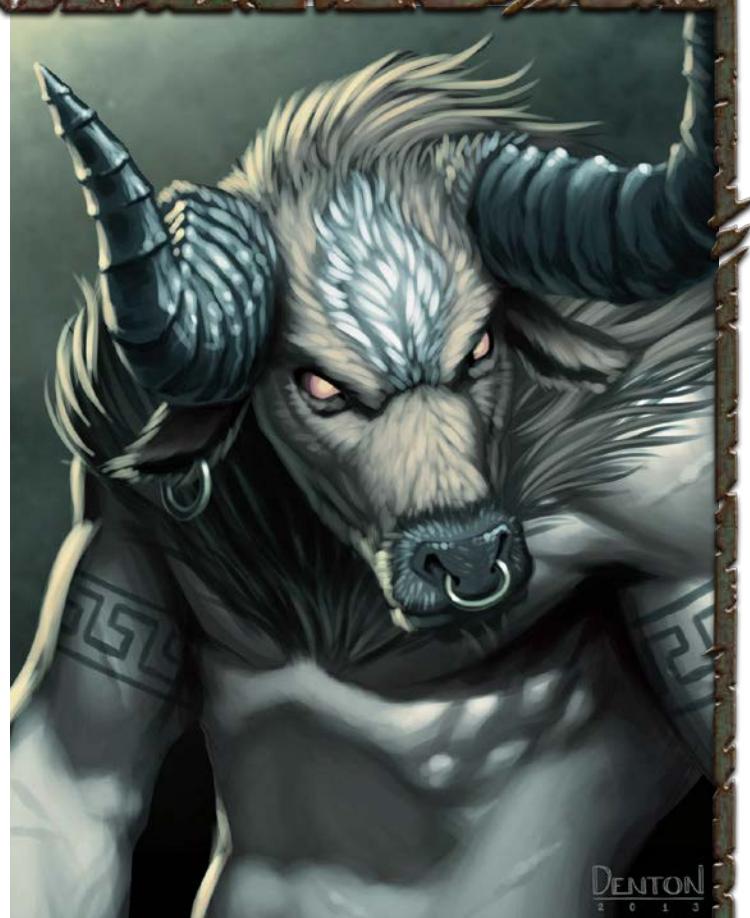
Image: The blood and hide of Samuel Haight have taken Nicholas over entirely. His build’s not as massive as Haight’s was at his peak, but his presence makes up for it. He has a mess of scars, particularly around his right eye — Sam had lost that eye, but the possession hasn’t rewritten organs beyond the skin. His hair has gone brown, shaggy and shot through with gray — his coat in wolf and hybrid forms is very similar — and he’s developed a hateful grin. Even his posture and scent have changed. He now holds the Grand Klaive *Thunderous Howl* (W20 p. 226) easily and moves as if he’s itching to use it.

Roleplaying Notes: What’s left of the original Nicholas Carver is now just a few glimmers of memory buried in the reconstructed fragments of Sam Haight’s persona. The Skinner’s running on hate for his enemies, despair at his failed bid for overwhelming power, and a cold, cunning ambition to keep trying. He’s mad, but he’s *lucid*: he may not have total mastery of the situation, but that just means he’s determined to play it safe until he’s back in control.

The Spirits

Minotaur

During the events of this story, Minotaur has been besieged by the Wyrm for some time. His labyrinth realm has always had the possibility of overlapping with the Black Labyrinth — its geometries are mortared with anger and isolation, two properties that sing to things of the



Wyrm. There are certain parallels in both that call to each other. Now that Tick has sabotaged his mazy realm, Minotaur’s fury and hatred are sending out a siren call that draws in the influence of Beast-of-War. He is very close to a fall. Already a furious, short-tempered mix of bestial aggression and human arrogance, he is now also constantly on the brink of berserker rage.

Minotaur is not an active participant in the story’s events — he is distracted by the Wyrmish influence that threatens to overwhelm him. But if the players’ pack navigates his labyrinth to find him, their influence will be what determines whether he stands or falls. Minotaur’s fate will influence that of the Skin Dancers going forward.

Rage 10, Gnosis 7, Willpower 4*, Essence 50*

*Represents his weakened state as of “Raging Bull.”

Charms: Armor, Create Fires, Incite Frenzy, Tracking, Umbrakquake

Quotes: “Children, the wrath you feel is good! It is a beautiful fire in your hearts, a fire that heats your bones and feeds your blood. Do not envy the cold and the sick, the brittle cowards who hide behind their jealous curses and charms. They should envy you, for you know that fury is life!”

(delirious) “Brittle breaking splinters! Wet warm splashes! Splinters and splashes in my fists, under my hooves! Stand before me, slivers of meat!”

(cleansed) “I don’t understand... I was weak? But... all I wanted was more strength. I... I need to think.”

Tick

The trickster-spirit Tick is a potent Jagglings, and one with ambitions. She's never been revered; she has no legion of followers. But she's pretty certain that if that were to change, then she could move up to Incarna status. Becoming a tribal totem, taking her place among Rat and Cockroach — the thought makes her salivate.

The events of Skinner are set in motion by Tick's ambition. She's drawn to the Skin Dancers because she sees a likely set of followers just waiting for some guidance. Their current patron, Minotaur, is a disaster waiting to happen. And the "skin" motif they're bound by has its charms.

Tick has a particular spirit ban: she dislikes vinegar and kerosene. Thorough research may uncover this ban between scenes in the story.

Rage 9, Gnosis 9, Willpower 10, Essence 70

Charms: Blast (blood spit), Healing, Illness*, Tracking, Umbraquake

- **Illness:** The spirit can infect a target with a wasting spiritual sickness. The spirit spends a point of Essence and rolls Gnosis, resisted by the target's Stamina. Success means that the target loses a point of Stamina, and all wound penalties increase by 1 (including at the Bruised health level, which effectively becomes a -1 penalty). The effects last for a day if the target

can regenerate, or until supernaturally cured if the target can't.

Quotes: "My darlings, you know I'm no warrior. I wouldn't threaten you. I haven't the strength. I'm interested in mutual benefit."

"Serve the Wyrm? Me? Surely that's a joke. I'm no destroyer-spirit. I take what I need to thrive and help my children thrive. Certainly you understand."

(angry) "Why must you be so hurtful? So incautious? It leaves a sour taste in my mouth."

The Traitor

As noted elsewhere, it may be more effective to use an existing Storyteller character in an ongoing chronicle if you have one that's suitable. However, Walter Foss should be suitable for stand-alones and ongoing games alike.

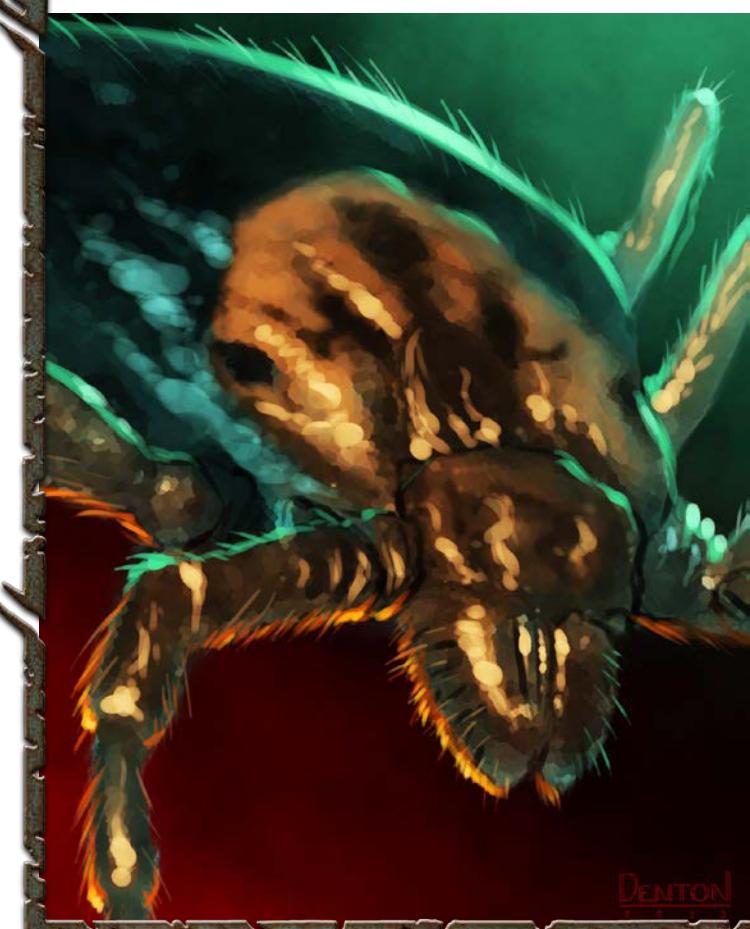
Walter Foss

Like most Kin who know what they are, Walter felt the pressure to contribute to the Garou's struggle. You either make yourself useful to the monsters you're related to or you take your chances with their goodwill. In his case, he took to learning all the survival techniques he could and teaching them to anyone, Kin or Garou, willing to listen.

Most ordinary people might think Walter's one of those just-close-to-unhinged survivalist types, the sort who sees an apocalypse coming. They're right enough. He's heard too many stories about the war and the Apocalypse to think he's going to live long enough to die peacefully. He's actually terrified about the prospect. Walter spends long nights wondering if he's going to be able to help Marie and the kids live through the horrors that are coming. This fear feeds his doubt — he's not sure that the Garou are going to be able to help, either, or even that they want to. He falls to the Vulture Walkers' temptations precisely because of this doubt — he feels too helpless to have faith in the Garou.

Walter's a decent combatant, but he's spent too long around Garou to think he has a chance. He won't fight against a werewolf, much less multiple werewolves, unless it's clear there's no other way to live.

Survivalist (7 dice) — Walter's spent years teaching other Kinfolk and the occasional Garou cub the basics of tool-based survival techniques — the things you rely on when hunting as a wolf doesn't get you everything you need. He's an expert at scrounging food, locating clean water, navigating in the wilderness, caching, building shelters, and other such skills. He's also a skilled trapper, and can lay some nasty surprises both for prey animals and for pursuers.





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Quotes: “Yeah, someone that’s got the full wolf within ‘em doesn’t need to know this kind of stuff as much as an ordinary Joe like me does. But don’t take chances. You may still need to know it.”

“You gotta think about the future. It’s grim. Even knowing all I do, I don’t know how many people I can save. I don’t even know if trying to help my wife and kids will be the thing that does me in.”

(surrendering) “Wait! Please, stop! I won’t fight. I know I don’t stand a chance!”

Motivations and Goals

Any good story can go off the rails at a moment’s notice. This is a good thing. It’s the strength of roleplaying games — story is founded on the personalities and actions of the player characters, not on scripts. The core of the story is not a mandatory sequence of events, but a probable sequence of events based on various characters pursuing their goals. If things start lurching in an unexpected direction, remind yourself of what the principal Storyteller characters in this story want and

how they plan to get it. This technique helps keep events consistent even when they’re reactions to unplanned player decisions.

- The Vulture Walkers want to increase their ranks. Most don’t mind the idea of getting some payback from the Garou at the same time. They plan to achieve this by gathering more skins, preferably under a common moon, and by recruiting more disaffected Kinfolk who might be able to learn the Rite of Sacred Rebirth.
- Samson’s original goal was similar to that of his pack’s, but he has increasingly inherited the goals of Samuel Haight as the vestige of The Skinner has grown more powerful. Now he wants the Garou to fear the return of The Skinner and to complete his transformation. He plans to achieve this by recreating the murders Haight committed, leaving clues that imply Sam’s back.
- Tick wants the power that comes with being a tribal totem, and feels she has a chance at replacing Minotaur. She has already given Samson the remnant of Haight’s skin and the secret of grafting it, and intends to have him be her high priest. She is currently plotting to remove Minotaur from his position as patron of the Skin Dancers by increasing his contact with the Wyrm such that eventually he will fall entirely and the Skin Dancers will be forced to repudiate him. At the same time, she’s set her sights on drinking the blood of one of the existing tribal totems — preferably Pegasus. Minotaur has long hated Pegasus and her tribe, and he seems to be just the blunt instrument Tick could use.
- Minotaur has fallen under the sway of Tick’s advice; Tick has been counseling him that he *should* be angry at his lot and his children’s lot, and thus increasing Minotaur’s susceptibility to the whispers of Beast-of-War. At present Minotaur wants his children to cut their own path in the world, but the intervention of the players may make him realize that survival is a superior ambition.
- The last piece of the puzzle is the Kinfolk of the sept who is willing to betray the Garou he knows to the Vulture Walkers and Samson’s plan. Whether using an existing Kin from your chronicle or the provided personality of Walter Foss, this Kin has the motivation of becoming a Skin Dancer. He plans to achieve this by doing as Samson and his packmates bid. First and foremost, however, he wants to survive. If things start going to hell, he may have to do whatever it takes to preserve his own hide.

Opening Hostilities [Optional]

Mental • Physical ••• Social —

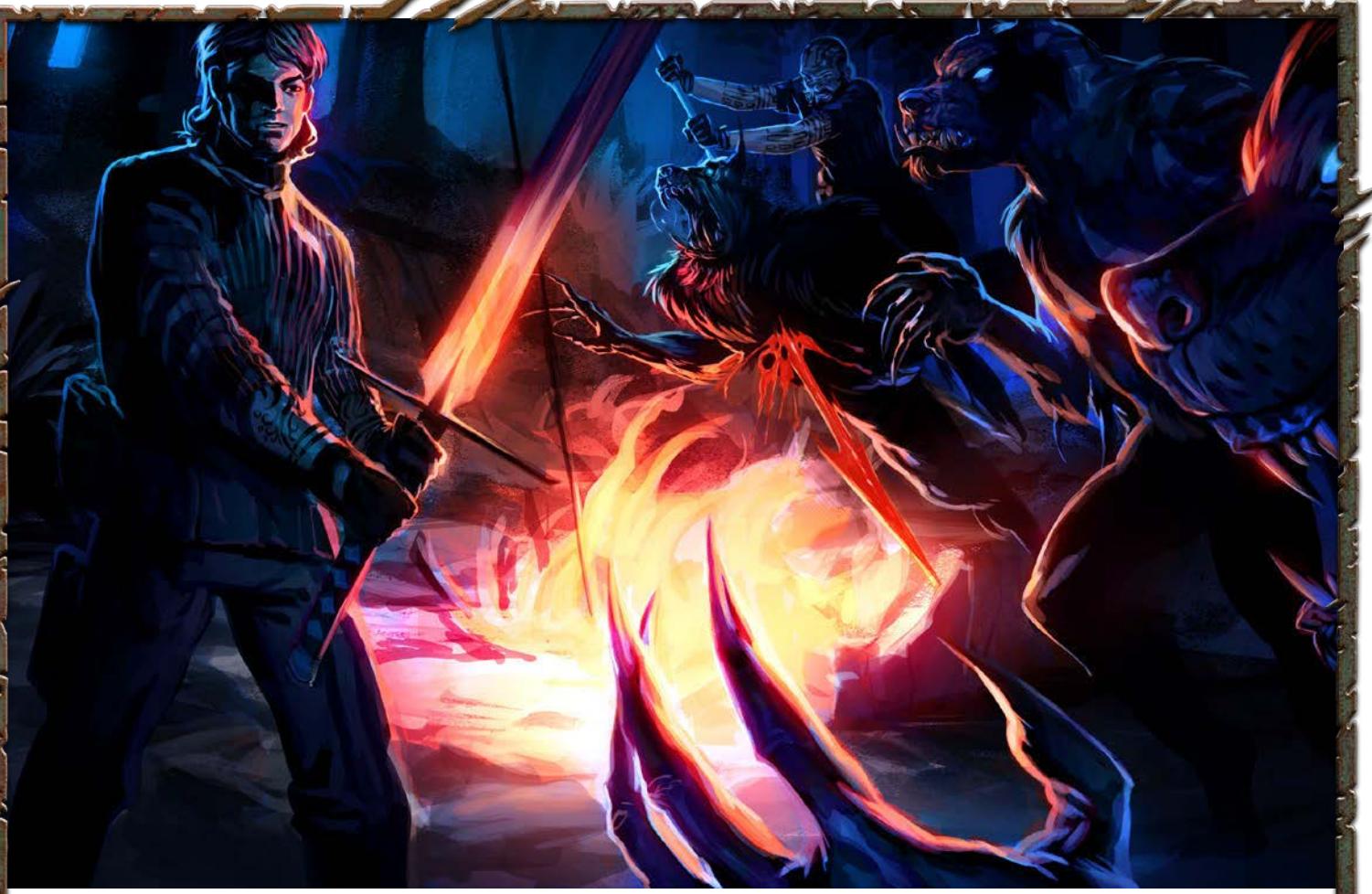
Overview: The Vulture Walkers are drawn by the prospect of plentiful werewolf corpses to skin, and the aftermath of a battle between two Garou factions is ideal for them. An option for beginning this story is to play out such a skirmish with a pack of Black Spiral Dancers. This will likely be most effective in an ongoing chronicle where the fight against the Dancers has more foreshadowing and existing context. Establishing a long struggle against Black Spiral Dancers also helps establish the player characters as the dominant protagonists in this story (see “What’s the Rest of the Sept Doing,” above). If you have such a running plot already in motion, all the better. When running this story as a stand-alone, you may prefer to skip this scene if you feel the players are more likely to suspect it’s significant for reasons other than the Black Spiral Dancer conflict.

This scene should feel like a natural part of the game. It shouldn’t feel gratuitous — the Dancers should have a valid plan of attack and the stakes should be things that the player characters naturally care about. There need to be consequences for losing here as there would be for any other fight. The main difference is that this fight is secretly also the first chance for the Vulture Walkers to cross the player characters’ paths and start affecting events at the sept.

Description: This is a vicious battle. The Black Spiral Dancers are hellbent on killing the players’ characters and presumably the feeling is mutual. The skirmish takes place in an isolated neutral ground on the edge of the sept territory. By default, the fight plays out in a wooded area away from civilization, but it can be adapted to whatever arena you require. The ideal location for this story is one where humans are unlikely to visit for several days. The players therefore won’t feel a need to clean up their enemies’ bodies immediately.

The Black Spiral Dancers attacking the players should be taken seriously. Their plan is to create a false flanking maneuver by sending in some expendable troops (specifically, Spiral Kinfolk) to encourage the characters to spread out, then make a concentrated rush down the middle to overwhelm the center. They dispatch two small groups of Kin, a mix of human and wolf relatives so that the characters will be more likely to mistake the flankers for werewolves and overcommit their resources.

The other aspect of this scene is the post-battle approach of the Vulture Walkers. If one or more of the player characters stay on guard, they have a chance to notice the Ragabash Jerrick attempting to creep up on the fringes and survey the situation.



If the Vulture Walkers get a chance to drag away the bodies of fallen Garou — presumably Black Spiral Dancers, since victorious players are more likely to focus first on carrying away their own dead — they'll do so as long as it doesn't look too dangerous. They will avoid picking fights if two or more Garou are watching over the battleground or seeing to body disposal, but they might try to quickly kill a single werewolf sentry.

Things get more complicated if the players or the sept dispatch some Kinfolk to take care of the cleanup. If that happens, the Vulture Walkers will watch carefully to see if there are any Kin who might make possible recruits. They have some sympathy to other Kinfolk and their struggles. If the rewards are just too great to pass up (three or more skinnable corpses), the Vulture Walkers are not above "disappearing" a small group of fellow Kin in order to achieve their goals.

Storyteller Goals: If using this scene as a prelude to the events of **Skinner**, the goals are fairly simple: let the players get a taste for the sort of battle that's common to their kind and give the Vulture Walkers a reason to begin prowling around the edges of the sept. It establishes a context for the events that will play out.

Character Goals: The character goals are fairly simple: defeat their enemies.

Action: This scene is all about combat. The Black Spiral Dancers send in their Kin as the pincers first, heedless of whether their relatives live or die. They try to encourage the enemy to spread out far enough that it takes at least a couple of turns to get from the edge of the battlefield to the center. When they lunge as a pack toward the center, they are utterly ferocious. They don't fight to the last if it's clear they have no chance of so much as felling a single enemy, but they fight without regard for their safety until reduced to half numbers. If they feel they still have a chance of tearing one or more of the Gaians apart, they'll continue to the end.

Black Spiral Kin

The first wave of attackers are a mix of human and wolf Kin to the Dancers. They aren't much of a threat to Garou — the Black Spiral Dancers haven't even bothered to arm the humans particularly well, suspecting that their Kin might turn any silver weaponry on them to repay old abuses. They're not wrong.

Human Kin:

Initiative: 4 dice

Dodge: 4 dice

Soak: 3 dice (bashing and lethal only)

Willpower 4

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Range	Dice Pool	Damage Pool
Shotgun	20	5	8

Wolf Kin:

Initiative: 5 dice

Dodge: 5 dice

Soak: 3 dice (bashing and lethal only)

Willpower 3

Weapons/Attacks

Type	Difficulty	Dice Pool	Damage Pool
Bite	6	5	4

Sample Black Spiral Dancers

The following quick-start personalities can be used to flesh out a pack of Black Spiral Dancers for the scene if you don't have a pack already designed. Use the "Veteran Werewolf" stat block in the character sheets section. Select Gifts and preferred weapons or attacks from the stat block above for each.

Eurghak'll: Lupus Ahroun. Has a nasty cough and spits up blood, but is still quite hale and strong. Venerates and emulates the Beast-of-War; -1 difficulty to frenzy, but +1 to Strength when frenzying.

Oth: Homid Theurge. Behaves as though constantly frightened; he shivers ceaselessly and his teeth chatter when he talks. Wears strings of bones and teeth as totem jewelry.

Scab: Metis Philodox. Blood clots incredibly quickly; skin is covered with scabs and old scars. Slightly lame due to blood clots in his veins; -1 to movement, +1 to soak rolls.

Song-of-Agony: Metis Galliard. Sadistic; mimics the cries of her victims in sing-song voice. Bat-eared. Blind but uses echolocation to find targets.

Virulence: Homid Ragabash. Practiced at passing for human or Gaian Garou. Dresses in punkish street clothes, elaborate tattoos of the Four Horsemen across her body; she shaves portions of her Crinos pelt so her tattoos are still visible in war form.



Scene: Skin and Bones

Mental •• Physical – Social •

Overview: Someone's discovered the body of a werewolf ally — the corpse has been flayed and the skin is missing. The characters have first crack at investigating the scene to look for potential clues.

Description: The sept, like many others, has contacts who aren't afraid to get their hands and feet dirty. Word comes in from those contacts at a nearby landfill (Bone Gnawers, Kinfolk, possibly Ratkin) that a mutilated body has been found — and it smells like a Garou. When the sept officials review the ranks, they note that one of the youngest werewolves hasn't been heard from in a couple of days. The body seems to be the right age, gender and build, but it's hard to tell for sure — according to the contacts, the corpse is missing its skin.

By default, the corpse is Noah Harliss, a young male homid slated to take his Rite of Passage on the next full moon. He was still training in combat and survival, but making good progress. If you choose to kill off an existing Storyteller character, pick someone who's not only expendable for your purposes, but who would have credible reason to trust the Kinfolk traitor in the ranks. The pack's relationship with the character will determine their reactions. If loved, he'll be sorely missed; if hated, the players may find themselves with interestingly mixed feelings. If he's simply a background character they never bonded with, they may be inclined to downplay the severity of the situation. All three approaches may result in interesting roleplay.

Here's what happened: The Vulture Walkers killed Noah by ambush, catching him in a stretch of woods at night. He had been working on a scavenger hunt as part of his survival training — a "safe spot" he'd learned of from Walter Foss. Foss let the Skin Dancers know where Noah would be and that

he'd be alone. The Ragabash Jerrick took him by surprise, held him down and cut his throat with a silver knife. Jerrick loaded Noah's corpse into a minivan and drove it to the Bromfeld and Sons funeral home, where they drained him of blood and took his skin. After that, they wrapped the carcass in a sheet, drove it to the landfill, and dumped it in the dead of night. They didn't keep the body wrapped up, though; it was their leader's plan that the sept would find the skinned corpse and be reminded of The Skinner. It's up to the players to uncover as much as they can of this backstory.

The players' pack is asked to investigate. Other packs may be distracted by the ongoing conflict with Black Spiral Dancers. The player characters are either the best choice given who's available, or perhaps the obvious choice due to priorities with the deceased.

The contacts leave the pack alone at the side of the landfill, running interference from anyone who might stumble across the scene. The stink of the place is distracting. The victim wasn't found near any of his belongings. The pack has carte blanche to study the body where it was found, move it elsewhere, and ultimately decide what to do with it.

Storyteller Goals: This is where you set the initial hook out to snare the players' imaginations. This scene should invoke "Savage Horror;" the flayed corpse of a Garou sends a very clear message. The horrific aspect of Samuel Haight's legacy is that it's not about war — it's about murder, pure and simple.

The players should have the opportunity to learn a goodly amount from investigating the scene. Obviously, you want to have the tension that comes from unanswered questions: Who

did this? Why? Who else is at risk? You can let the players deduce a number of things about the killer without giving away the entire game. Ultimately, however, this isn't a whodunit: the climax will come not when the players have all the answers, but when they must act on what they've learned.

Character Goals: Discover as many details as possible about the murder. The murder scene is initially unknown, but the pack may be able to find out where Noah was last seen. The killers have gone to great lengths to cover most of the evidence, short of disposing of the body more effectively. But everyone makes mistakes.

Action: Gathering clues from the body requires a Perception + Investigation roll, difficulty 7. The Gift: Heightened Senses lowers the difficulty to 5. The players should feel free to ask questions about the body; answer them to the best of your ability, based on their successes or failures.

- Noah died from the wound to his throat, which has the telltale sear of a silver blade. There's no other serious trauma to his body. (This is obvious and requires no roll.)
- Whoever made the kill and skinned the victim had no scent of their own. Players may well deduce that this implies a Ragabash or other Garou with access to the Gift: Scent of Running Water; if they don't, though, success doesn't fill in the blanks for them.
- His body was wrapped in a sheet before it was dumped in the landfill. The murderers unwound the sheet and dropped his carcass naked, taking the sheet with them; a successful search roll (difficulty 8) will discover a few bits of thread

clinging to the body. They smell obviously of blood, but Garou using the Heightened Senses Gift will also pick up a faint smell of formaldehyde.

Finding out where Noah was last seen takes a few hours of asking around the sept and his known hangouts, as well as a successful Wits + Streetwise roll (difficulty 8). Once the patch of woods is found, the players can follow Noah's scent to the murder scene.

- Obviously, there's a lot of blood on the ground. All of it seems to be Noah's.
- Though there are still no scents of other attackers and Jerrick tried to hide his tracks, a successful Perception + Primal-Urge roll (difficulty 8) will turn up some visible tracks Jerrick failed to obscure. From these tracks the players can determine that he was attacked by a Garou who then took Glabro form, presumably to carry away the body.
- Successfully tracking Jerrick from the murder site requires an extended Perception + Primal-Urge roll, difficulty 9. If the players gain 12 successes without botching, they find that Noah's body was carried to the roadside, where it was presumably loaded into a vehicle.

Consequences: While there probably aren't enough clues for the pack to solve this mystery, they should have enough information to ask around further. If the players already begin suspecting that Noah's activity was betrayed by someone in the sept, then you can move to the "Turncoat" scene. Otherwise, they may move on to "Second Skin," when another body is found.





Scene: Second Skin

Mental •• Physical – Social •

Overview: A second corpse has been found — and this one has been more prominently placed. This time, the killer seems to be sending a direct message to the local Garou. The player characters investigate, searching for ties between this gruesome death and the one previous.

Description: The default victim for this murder was Smokepaw, a young female lupus who'd had a recent bitter argument with her packmates and needed some time alone to get her emotions in order. If substituting existing Storyteller characters, this victim should also be a Garou who would have good reason to trust the traitor Kinfolk, and optimally a lupus who has no contacts in the outside world.

Smokepaw died at night on a stretch of lonely road. She wasn't there on assignment from Foss, but he knew she liked to wander the area to get used to the smell of humans in small doses. The Vulture Walkers moved in to ambush her, but she was able to perceive them before they struck. They pursued her for over a mile before catching and killing her; Monica went into Crinos form and broke her neck, then they cut her throat with a silver knife. They carried her body a full half-mile back to their vehicle, covering their tracks as best they could, then took her to the funeral home to skin and drain her. Finally, they dropped her body along the edge of sept territory a little before dawn, this time meaning to overtly unnerve the local Garou.

Unless the players have taken precautions that would reasonably prevent humans from discovering the corpse, they may learn about the second victim from a local news broadcast.

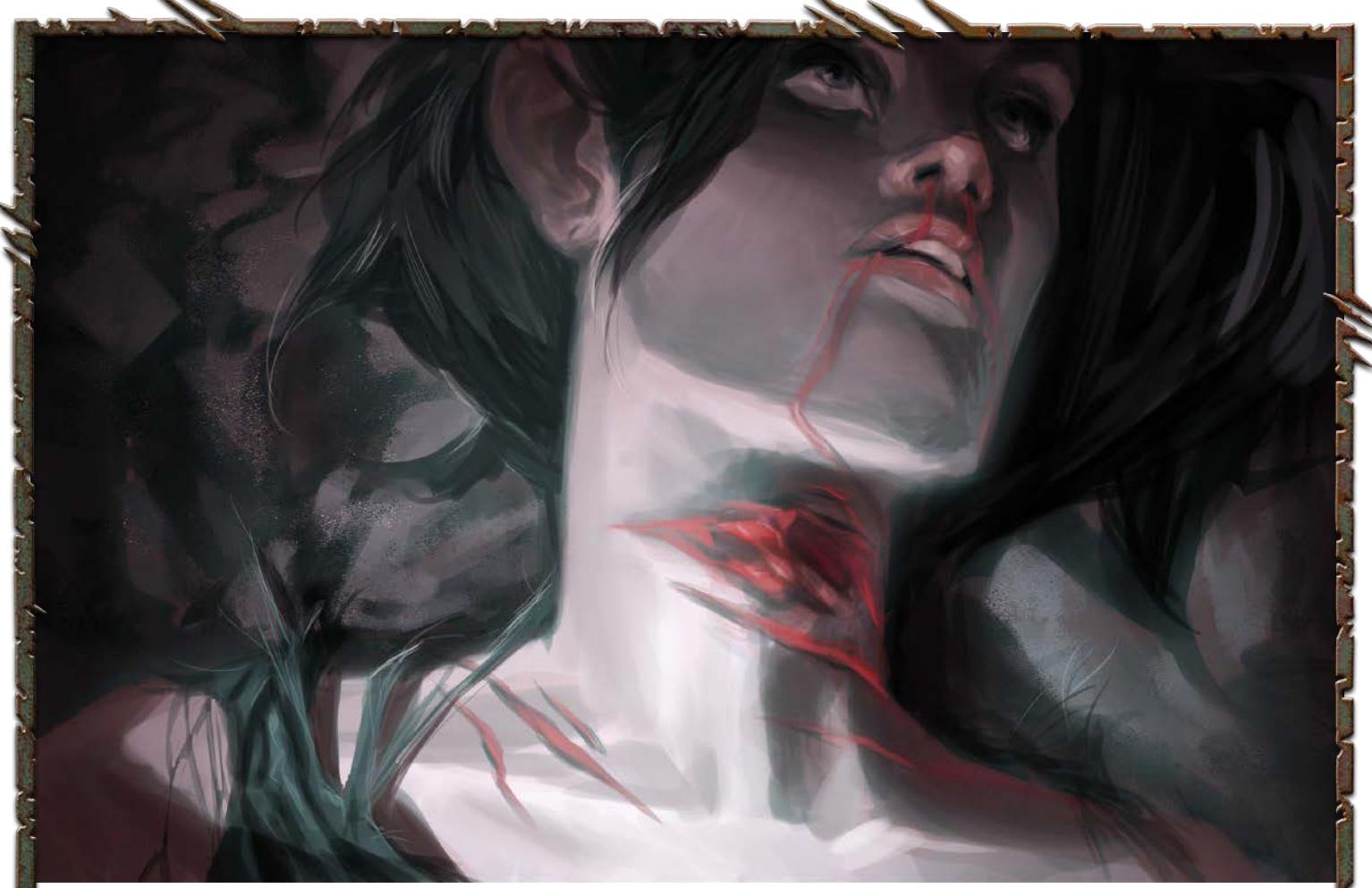
The news plays up the discovery of “a skinned dog carcass” as a mysterious and disturbing prank or possibly a threat. It’s a relatively simple matter to track the body through the public works channels; ultimately its destination is the landfill. Unless provoked by some outside force, the workers responsible for picking up and disposing of the body won’t even look closely enough at the body to realize it’s a wolf and not a dog.

Storyteller Goals: Things are getting worse. The sense of escalation should be clear. One werewolf murdered and flayed is a grim problem — two is a pattern. This scene, like the previous one, grants more hints about the killers, but is also about showcasing the increasing dread at the sept.

If you’re running **Skinner** alongside other events in an ongoing chronicle, you may want to place a scene or two from an unrelated story between “Skin and Bones” and “Second Skin.” Running the two without interruption keeps the focus and tension high, but moving into other affairs before the Skin Dancers strike again will emphasize the unpredictability of the killers.

This scene shouldn’t be a bottleneck. The player characters’ investigation may lead them to the idea that someone is informing on the Garou from within the sept, but if they don’t come to that conclusion on their own, another character can nudge things along.

Character Goals: As with the previous scene, the characters are attempting to gather clues that might point them toward the killers. In particular, any clues that imply a pattern with the previous murder will be useful.



Action: Again, gathering clues from Smokepaw's body requires a Perception + Investigation roll, difficulty 7 (5 with Heightened Senses).

- Smokepaw suffered a broken neck and there are a few cuts on her body that imply claws. The killing blow was a silver knife, just like with Noah.
- As with the previous victim, the body was wrapped in a sheet with a faint scent of formaldehyde before it was dumped off.
- Smokepaw died under a different moon phase than Noah did. Those who know about the Rite of Sacred Rebirth may realize that a would-be Skin Dancer must harvest all the skins he needs under the same moon phase. Some might interpret this as an honest return of The Skinner, collecting pelts not because he needs them, but because he can. (The truth is that the Vulture Walkers are accumulating skins as the opportunity arises rather than planning a specific transformation.)
- One thing that Smokepaw had in common with Noah was that she was also still in training, not yet ready for her Rite of Passage.

Investigating the murder scene turns up a few clues. Again, the murder scene is not immediately obvious; it takes a Manipulation + Streetwise roll (difficulty 7) to learn that Smokepaw had a penchant for that particular back road. But in this case, only members of the sept can help out — Smokepaw had no human contacts who would remember her or know her habits.

- Smokepaw's lack of contacts outside the sept is itself a clue, though not one you should explicitly call to the players' attention.
- Smokepaw was pursued in wolf form for over a mile. Unlike with Noah's death, it seems there were multiple wolves or wolf-form Garou chasing her.

Consequences: With two bodies found and potentially two murder scenes investigated, the pack should be able to start making connections between the two killings.

The next most likely scenes are "Turncoat," to determine the identity of the traitor Kin or to track him down if the pack has enough clues; or "Trophy Hunting" if they have determined a potential next victim. They might also choose to formulate a plan to set out bait and ambush the hunters when they show up. If the players are coming up dry, then have a day or two pass while the sept mulls over the possibilities; a Storyteller character can suggest the possibility of a traitor within the sept, triggering the road to "Turncoat." However, if this happens then the mood within the sept darkens further, which may affect the investigation.

Whatever happens, now the Garou of the sept are starting to become nervous. The legends of the Skinner begin to surface again, and the name Haight is heard around the fires. The revelation that there were multiple wolves or werewolves involved in the death will stir up the sept against the Black Spiral Dancers, and many packs will be delegated to pursuing any leads on the rivals.

Scene: Turncoat

Mental •• Physical – Social ••

Overview: The player characters have learned, or at least begun to suspect, that the Skin Dancers have some sort of inner knowledge of sept workings. They have to determine where they're getting the information and then decide how to handle any punishment — making a grotesque example of Kinfolk may wind up furthering the Vulture Walkers' cause among other Kin.

Description: The death of Smokepaw indicates that the killer — now killers — are either spying on the sept with exceptional skill or getting information from someone. Some of the sept members want to rove outward and find something to tear apart. They're looking for targets, but not necessarily in the right place.

Asking around the sept about Noah and Smokepaw can trigger this scene. Young werewolves before their First Change need instruction. When they were training with Garou, those who intended to be their sponsors, neither cub was left to roam much. It was the delegated training with Kinfolk where they had a little more freedom to roam (even if they sometimes got in trouble for it).

This scene can be as elaborate and drawn-out as you like; if you have a stock of existing Storyteller characters that the players enjoy interacting with, this is a fine opportunity for some social roleplay discussing the tensions hanging over the sept. If your players are ready for some more action, they can more quickly pick up on the common link that is Walter Foss.

Once Foss finds out the player characters are talking with the sept Kinfolk, he'll immediately expect that they're going to find out about him. He retreats to the cabin where he does some of his training, gathering some of his most important things. He hasn't yet earned his place among the Skin Dancers, though, and he realizes he has nowhere to run.

Storyteller Goals: This scene showcases one of the recurring themes surrounding the Skin Dancers: the starkly unequal relationship between the Garou and their Kinfolk. Some of the Kin will gladly help the player characters however they can, but even there you can hint at the subtle tensions as the pack's loved ones are particularly careful not to anger them. Other Kinfolk prove less than helpful — not through defiance, but through sullen and obsequious declarations of "not knowing anything." The player characters should become quite aware that in negotiating with other Kinfolk about a possible traitor, they're acting as the Man, even if benevolent. It's easy to stir up the sort of emotions that would tempt Kinfolk to the path of the Skin Dancer even without playing the heavy. To many or even most Kin, anything out of a Garou's mouth is "pulling rank," which fills the relationship with dangerous stresses.

Character Goals: The characters need to find and interrogate the person who's been betraying the sept cubs. His connection to the killers can provide valuable

information: who they are, where they lair, and who their next target might be.

Action: The first portion of this scene is largely social; the player characters spend some time asking around about the dead Garou: who they'd been training with and who saw them last. The other werewolves in the sept can't account for what would have sent the young ones out to the places where they died.

Canvassing the Kinfolk

The sept Kinfolk are generally cooperative, though they don't necessarily want to tell the Garou everything they know. Some aren't very forthcoming precisely because they're so afraid of punishment, even if they haven't done anything the pack might dislike.

Dice Pool: Wits + Intimidation or Manipulation + Persuasion, difficulty 7

Action: Extended (12 successes)

Obstacles: Bad pre-existing relationships (-1); word has gotten around the sept of a possible traitor (-1)

Assets: Good pre-existing relationships (+1), Truth of Gaia Gift (+1)

Roll Results

Botch: All successes are lost. The pack aggrieves or intimidates one of the Kin severely, damaging their reputation among the rest. Good pre-existing relationships temporarily lose their die roll bonus. If the pack had a neutral reputation among the Kinfolk, that drops to the "bad pre-existing relationships" obstacle for the rest of this extended action. These penalties can be gained only once, even if the players wind up alienating many Kin.

Failure: No successes are gained.

Success: Successes are gained. If the pack has reached 12 successes, one of the Kin steps forward to admit that both the dead Garou were training in various survival techniques under Walter Foss. Foss encouraged them to practice what he'd shown them in isolated places away from the sept. It's also fairly common knowledge that he worries a lot about the coming Apocalypse, and he's been known to fret aloud about whether he'll be strong enough to save his immediate family.

The Minefield

The next step is finding Walter. His family hasn't seen him for 12 hours; it seems likely he's retreated to his cabin shelter again.

Foss knows he's no match for a Garou pack. He has a few tricks, however, to try keeping them at bay. He's seeded the woods with explosive devices, concealing them as best he can and often placing their triggers around dummy tripwires and false pitfalls.

As the pack moves through the woods surrounding Foss' cabin, they may stumble into some of his devices. The characters must be actively looking out for such traps — they don't have to scour every square meter for tripwires, but they can't expect to just off-handedly pick out these concealed devices without paying real attention.

Spotting one of the devices is a Perception + Alertness or Perception + Survival roll, difficulty 8. Failure indicates that one of the characters accidentally activates one; determine randomly or pick whoever's on point. Foss has left five of these devices out, but the pack is likely to run across only two on any given approach to the cabin.

Any mine that gets detonated does 10 dice of aggravated damage to the person triggering it. The damage is largely impact and incendiary; for all that he's done, Foss hasn't yet crossed the line to using silver against the Garou.

Questioning the Turncoat

Once he's been pinned down, interrogating Foss isn't difficult. He's a tough and stubborn man, but nowhere close to a match for a furious werewolf — or five. He leads by attempting to cut some sort of deal for his safety (or that of his family), but doesn't push his luck. The enormity of what he's done sinks back in during the confrontation. He'll break into tears and tell the pack whatever they want to know.

Foss knows the following key bits of information:

- He was contacted by a white-haired man named Caldwell who represented a pack of Skin Dancers called the Vulture Walkers.
- Caldwell did most of the talking, though he did meet Samson, who he can vaguely describe. "God, he was terrifying. I wanted to be that terrifying, too."
- The Vulture Walkers set up a dead-drop where he could leave messages for them. His next message was expected in two days. He can name the dead-drop's location: under the door of a rest room at a closed gas station in one of the less prosperous parts of town (use the generic name of "Southlake," or choose something appropriate for your chronicle's home town).

Consequences: Successfully interrogating Foss gives the pack enough of a lead to intercept the Skin Dancers during their hunt, moving to the "Trophy Hunting" scene. Alternately, they may convince him to use the dead-drop to set up a target, or else stake out the dead-drop after he leaves a message in order to trail whoever shows up (leading to "Closed Casket Funeral"). Failure to get enough information out of him means the Vulture Walkers will be able to strike again, though probably not without Foss' help.



Scene: Trophy Hunting

Mental ••• Physical ••• Social •••

Overview: Samson's Skin Dancer pack is on the hunt, targeting an ally or relative of the player characters — or possibly one of the player characters themselves, if they decide to set a trap for the hunters. The players need to move quickly in order to defend their charge. With success, they may be able to track the Skin Dancers back to their lair.

Description: The Vulture Walkers will be on the move when they get word of another isolated target. Depending on the characters' prior actions, this target might be someone that Foss marked before the player characters discovered his double-dealing, or it may be deliberate bait that they set. The Vulture Walkers aren't able to watch Foss consistently enough to tell if he's been compromised, though they're always cautious when they go on the hunt. Foss will readily set up the Vulture Walkers with false bait, especially if he's promised some leniency for him or his family. (Though even if he isn't, he figures, what choice does he have?)

The third hunt takes place in a trainyard; Foss sends a report to the Vulture Walkers of another young cub who practices parkour there some nights. The various train cars and building provide plenty of cover for both the players' pack and the Vulture Walkers to conceal themselves (+1 to all Stealth dice pools).

The Vulture Walkers arrive in force to the hunt. Jerrick, their Ragabash, takes the lead; Savage-Heart and Monica move into flanking positions, with Caldwell following behind Jerrick. Any additional members you add can be distributed among the lead and flanking positions or covering an exit. Samson watches from a distance; he doesn't plan to show himself (though he may if circumstances warrant), and will give the howl to fall back once it becomes clear it's a trap.

Storyteller Goals: This scene is all about the hunt. Hunting is at the core of the werewolf experience, and the appeal of the Skinner as an antagonist is that he's become a predator himself, one that preys on the Garou. Subtly encourage the tension that comes before battle. The hunt scene entails delicious uncertainties: Which way is the enemy going to come from? Are they already here? How strong are they? How numerous? What if they scent us first?

Character Goals: The characters' goals are twofold: to keep the Skin Dancers from killing their target and to catch the hunting pack or pursue them back to their lair.

Action: The actions in this scene are largely opposed by the Vulture Walkers. If the player characters are first on the scene, they'll be making Stealth checks to conceal themselves around the "bait" and Perception + Aware-

ness checks to scent out the approaching Skin Dancers. If they're trying to catch up to the Vulture Walkers, it'll be more a matter of detecting concealed enemies and flushing them out—or throwing themselves directly into combat if the enemy pack is already making their move.

When it breaks into open combat, the Vulture Walkers fight like cagey hunters, not fanatics. They defend each other and are unwilling to take heavy casualties in order to beat the enemy. Survival's most important to them. They're most likely to stand and fight if they have a clear edge in numbers over the players. Otherwise, they bolt and attempt to elude their pursuers, or else fall in a group on any enemy who gets too far ahead from the rest of his pack.

If the Vulture Walkers flee, the players can attempt to track them back to their lair. If the Skin Dancers make it back to their minivan, they'll try to escape in it, trusting that the player characters can't chase them as wolves once they get into public view again. If separated from their vehicle, they split up and head back on foot to the funeral home, abandoning the vehicle.

Tracking the Skin Dancers by scent is at +2 difficulty owing to their careful sharing of the Scent of Running Water Gift. Running a trace on the van won't be immediately helpful in discovering where they live (the vehicle has out-of-state plates), but if the characters get a good look at the vehicle they receive a +2 bonus to Streetwise checks to find out that it's been seen around the Bromfeld and Sons funeral home. If the characters manage to catch one of the Vulture Walkers, they can attempt to interrogate or negotiate with their prisoner. (See Negotiation and Interrogation in the "Closed Casket Funeral" scene for mechanics.)

Consequences: With success, the player characters have either bested most of the Vulture Walkers in combat or set them up to be tracked back to their lair. The next likely scene is "Closed Casket Funeral."

If the Vulture Walkers manage to take their target down and collect the skin, add another Vulture Walker Recruit to the pack; the Skin Dancers' success has fortified them for future conflicts.



Scene: Closed Casket Funeral

Mental • Physical ••• Social •••

Overview: The player characters have located the temporary den of the Vulture Walkers, cozily nested in a funeral home. The pack moves to confront them and attempts to prevent the Skin Dancers from escaping — or claiming their own hides.

Description: The Bromfeld and Sons Funeral Home is located in a run-down part of town, the sort of place where half the storefronts have weathered “For Lease” signs in their dusty windows. It reflects the fortunes of the neighborhood; its white coat of paint is only somewhat faded, and some bits of grass push through the cracks in the parking lot.

The funeral home is run by the Bromfeld family, though Bromfeld Senior is dead and gone and the two brothers, Isaac and Roger, have had little heart for the business since. When the Vulture Walkers rolled into town and expressed interest in renting out the establishment, the Bromfelds knew that something very suspicious was going on — but the money was better than current profits and neither of them could be bothered to care. As a result, the funeral home hasn’t been accepting business for two weeks and the Bromfelds aren’t present.

The building isn’t very sizable; it has three viewing rooms, a small chapel, a showroom full of coffins and a pair of cramped offices. The mortuary is in the basement level, where the Vulture Walkers have been “treating” their victims’ bodies. The pack has been crashing in various rooms and is spread out throughout the funeral home at any given point. Once the pack enters the building, the Vulture Walkers are forced to immediately decide on fight or flight — and since their secondary rendezvous point

would currently compromise Samson, they decide to fight.

All the Vulture Walkers save Samson are present. The Theurge has gotten a sense of trouble coming on the wind and has withdrawn to a remote location to meditate and sift through his tangle of memories.

Down in the basement of the funeral home, it’s clear that the embalming lab has been used lately. A variety of knives sit by the sink, smelling of blood, fur and musk. The formaldehyde odor is old and faded compared to the fresher scent of raw meat.

In the basement, the pack will find the skins the Vulture Walkers have been gathering. They may find all the skins claimed from Black Spiral Dancer corpses as well as those taken from the recent murders, or some may be missing if the Vulture Walkers had a fresh recruit in their ranks. Gruesomely, the skins reflect the breeds of their owners — there might be the Crinos pelt of a metis Black Spiral Dancer and a lupus’ wolfskin or two, but the cured human skins of homids are most numerous.

Storyteller Goals: This pack-on-pack battle may be the first possible emotional payoff for the players (if they didn’t catch any Skin Dancers in “Trophy Hunting”). This is a good scene to showcase just what it’s like when Garou fights Garou — the mix of bestial fury and human intelligence, the savage grudges, the conflict between desiring revenge and not wanting to see any more of the already too-few Garou dead. Of course, the player characters may want to negotiate instead, in which case you can play up the stark differences between the goals of Gaian werewolves and the formerly Kinfolk Skin Dancers.

The funeral home should be a colorful location for a fight as well. The coffin showroom and chapel are good opportunities to spice up a battle with props and environmental details, from werewolves smashing each other through stained glass to breaking apart and toppling caskets as collateral damage.

As with "Trophy Hunting," this is an ideal place to flesh out the Vulture Walkers with new recruits or additional veterans if you believe it would make a more engaging conflict. You may alternately choose to add some recruited Kinfolk who are awaiting more skins in order to undergo the Rite (using the provided stats for Black Spiral Kinfolk and suggestions for new Vulture Walker personalities).

Character Goals: The characters likely want to see the Vulture Walkers taken down, whether out of revenge for their victims or the conviction that their activities aren't going to lead anywhere good. They may want to take the Walkers alive for punishment or to see if they have a shot at redemption — and they may have set mercy aside and just settled on wanting to see the Skin Dancers dead.

Action: The pack must use Stealth checks to enter the funeral home without being detected; if they just charge up to the door (and there are several), the Vulture Walkers will be alerted immediately. The Skin Dancers don't keep a solid watch, but they're still werewolves and alert enough to notice people openly crossing the parking lot or moving around to the rear entrance.

Most of this scene will be taken up by pure combat. The Vulture Walkers don't try to take any prisoners. If the player characters are similarly lethal, then the scene ends when the last Skin Dancer bleeds out and they search the funeral home for more clues to Samson's activity. However, if they take one or more prisoners in order to learn more — or if they prefer to open with negotiations — then they will have to put some effort into dealing with the recalcitrant fugitives.

Negotiation and Interrogation

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion, Manipulation + Subterfuge or Manipulation + Intimidate versus target's Willpower.

Action: Extended (12 successes)

Obstacles: Asking the pack to betray Samson (-1)

Assets: Pledges of mercy (+1), convincing displays of understanding Kinfolk issues (+1)

Roll Results

Botch: All successes are lost. The target refuses to talk, even if threatened with pain or death. The interrogator likely struck at an old wound, reminding the target of the exact circumstances that drove him to the Skin Dancer Path; for example, botching while questioning Monica may have put

the thought in her head that the questioner was exactly the sort of Garou who got her daughter killed. The target may even frenzy if the line of questioning was particularly aggressive.

Failure: No successes are gained. If the target reaches 12 successes first, the interrogation is over and the target refuses to talk.

Success: Successes are gained. If the player characters reach 12 successes, the target becomes grudgingly cooperative. The Vulture Walkers will provide the following information:

- They all know that Tick's promised to make Samson the second coming of The Skinner, and that she stands to gain something out of it. They don't know the details of her bargain with Samson.
- They will describe the supplicant's compass that the pack used to visit Tick. They know that it can be attuned to any totem that has a tie to the blood donor; a bit of Vulture Walker blood, and the person using the fetish could visit the realm of their pack totem Tick, or that of their "tribal" patron Minotaur.
- If the players do exceptionally well by using the right approach on the right target (for instance, a lupus treating Savage-Heart as if she were the lupus she wishes she were rather than a homid pretender), the Vulture Walker may mention the Sacred Peace cemetery as a place where Samson might have hidden something else, since he frequented the place.

Even without the help of the Skin Dancers, the players can still find the supplicant's compass — it's laid on one of the sink countertops downstairs. (Samson set it there during a skinning session and neglected to reclaim it.) Success on an Intelligence + Occult roll, difficulty 8, recognizes it for what it is. It still bears a bit of Samson's blood on it; if the players activate it without reattuning it, it will point the way to Tick's lair.

Consequences: Assuming that the pack decides to keep at least one of the Vulture Walkers around and successfully interrogates their captive, they will have enough information — including the supplicant's compass — to lead them to either Tick or Minotaur. These would lead them to the "Tick's Bargain" or "Minotaur's Labyrinth" scenes, respectively. If particularly lucky, they may also have found out about the Sacred Peace cemetery, which can lead them to Samson himself. Either way, they have the supplicant's compass for themselves as well as any other spoils of war (such as Caldwell's fang dagger).

On the other hand, if they wipe out the Skin Dancers without asking questions, their options are more limited. The supplicant's compass will guide them to Tick's realm, and the "Tick's Bargain" scene. Even if the players don't recognize it, someone at the sept is sure to — and mistakenly assume that Samson may have fled to his patron's side.

Scene: Tick's Bargain

Mental •••• Physical •••• Social ••••

Overview: The player characters choose to seek Tick out in the Umbra, having learned from the Vulture Walkers that Tick has been the patron of their machinations. There Tick attempts to woo them into aiding her goals. It's up to the pack to decide whether to play along, convince Tick to abandon her ambition, or beat her into submission.

Description: With the supplicant's compass, finding Tick's lair is not a difficult task. It leads the pack on a safe and swift path into the Umbra, where they find her unpleasant domain. Tick's tiny realm is a horrid pocket of the Umbra, a good example of how something might be revolting yet not of the Wyrm.

The small realm appears like a cave in a forested hill: but all the ground is warm, living skin, and all the trees have scaly trunks like hairs. The cavern is deep and warm, the cavern's walls and floor hairless and dry but repulsively smooth and yielding underfoot. Large veins break from the ceiling like roots, and you see blood pulse through them.

To meet with Tick, the pack must descent into the cave itself where she waits. The walls are softly luminescent, like the skin of a hand held over a flashlight.

She crawls into view — a parasite grown to the size of an elephant. Her legs and head are grotesquely dwarfed by the bloated sac of her body, but they pull

her along at remarkable speed. "Hello, my darlings," she croons. "How pleasant to have visitors. How may I assist the Fangs of Gaia?"

Tick is fairly straightforward in her opening negotiations. She's sure of her strength, but also her plan is likely to benefit people other than herself (even if it does benefit her most of all). If the player characters parley with her, she is open about her role in Samson's rise.

"I have no need to lie. Yes, I gave a small rag of skin to an ambitious young man and taught him how to feed it. If he's to cut away the diseased limb from his would-be tribe, he will need a sharp knife. The limb? Why, Minotaur, of course. You must know that he's not well. And the Skin Dancers are likely to suffer from his ills all the way down the Spiral if something's not done."

Storyteller Goals: Tick is an ambiguous figure. She's a totem of Cunning and tricksters are always difficult to trust. But at the same time, tricksters often discover useful new solution to problems that can't be solved in the traditional way. Tick is reasonably revolting (and invoking that sense of mild revulsion in the players is a secondary goal for this scene), but she isn't irredeemably corrupt and her goals may make a certain amount of sense.

For this scene, play up that ambiguity. Portray Tick as honest and forthright; she doesn't hide that she's a

bloodsucking parasite and she doesn't hide her reasoning for the overthrow of Minotaur and patronage of the Skin Dancers. The characters should optimally be disgusted at the thought of bargaining with her, but cognizant that an ugly and parasitic spirit is not necessarily their enemy.

The scene should end decisively, with the players committed to either putting Tick back in her place or accepting her bargain and moving forward. If the players are indecisive and the scene's momentum is fading, Tick can attempt to lay it on thick with the flattery, which may sway them one way or another. She's not going to attack them out of the blue, but neither is she above threatening them or their loved ones if she thinks that's a superior tactic.

Character Goals: By default, the characters' goal is to stop Tick from interfering any further with Samson and Minotaur. She's enabling the Skin Dancers to be just too much of a problem. Whether the players choose to do so by bargaining, invoking spiritual power, or just beating her down is up to them. Depending on the players, they may even consider her proposition to transform the Skin Dancers into the fourteenth tribe of the Garou Nation. This last option is enough to drive most Philodox rabid with its impropriety, but don't forbid the players from taking this route if that's what they want to. They can deal with the fallout later.

Action: There are three potential ways for the players to have Tick accede to their wishes. First, they can attempt to negotiate with her on a social basis. Second, they can use brute force; if they can beat her down, she will capitulate. Finally, they might use rituals, Gifts, or other tricks of the Theurge's trade to bind her as they might another spirit.

Social: Bloodsucker's Bargain

The pack can simply attempt to argue with Tick, pointing out the flaws in her scheme and calling on her to put an end to it before it becomes something she can't handle. Tick is stubborn, but not so clever that she can't be shown she's wrong. Plus, she's an opportunist and will be happy to bargain in perfectly good faith. Tick sees the player characters as another opportunity to get what she wants. Her bargaining points to convince the pack of her plan's advantages include:

- She believes she could be the totem that brings the Skin Dancers to more prominence, even into the Garou Nation. Of course, some rebranding may be necessary. *"Perhaps too much bad blood with the Skin Dancer name. And I don't care for bad blood."* Tick rather likes the idea of a tribe called the Blood Hunters, though she's open to other suggestions.

- Minotaur is much less likely to bring the Skin Dancers into the Nation due to his old grudges, particularly against Pegasus and the Black Furies. *"And the old bull is headed for a fall at any rate. His temper will lead him to the darker parts of his maze before it shows him an exit."*
- Despite the Skin Dancers' unfortunate attacks on the Gaian Garou, Tick isn't siding with the Wyrm. Too dangerous. *"Sweetlings, if I wanted to see your people fall, I could have brought Samson and his rite to the Black Spiral Dancers. I would have had fine rewards for that, but I do not want a position in that hierarchy."*
- If the characters were responsible for bringing the Fourteenth Tribe into the Garou Nation, they could be heroes. *"To lead a tribe out of shadow and into the firelight of your people... how much renown would you win for being the saviors of these lost cubs?"*
- The Rite of Sacred Rebirth can be used with Black Spiral Dancer skins. Tick proposes this could be a tool of war, not of murder. *"So few of you now, so many of them. Wouldn't it be worth it to find a way to replenish your numbers even as you slay your enemies?"*
- If the characters seem prone to ignore her words and attack her, she'll try threatening to send her brood after their loved ones. *"Such soft, delicious skins they must have. Think of your darlings."* This may infuriate the characters further, but it's not the first gamble Tick's made of late.

What she wants in return is the opportunity to establish herself as the new tribal totem of the Skin Dancers. She has multiple possible tasks she can ask of the players. If the pack seems more interested in loyalty or honor, she'll ask for something more conservative, such as opposing Minotaur; if they seem pragmatic or ambitious, then she may get more brazen.

- If Tick's to be the Skin Dancers' new patron, Minotaur has to go. Whether he's beaten to submission, destroyed, or simply falls to the Wyrm — it doesn't matter to Tick, so long as he doesn't take his followers with him.
- The other thing Tick needs is an opportunity to feast on the blood of a tribal totem, transferring some of its power — and potentially its status — to her. She is likely to suggest a totem that doesn't seem represented among the pack. For instance, if the pack has no Silver Fangs but a Shadow Lord or two, she might suggest that Falcon would be an ideal candidate.

The actual task of persuading Tick is an extended action. The players will need to accumulate 20 successes before she will abandon her plans. These can involve a wide variety of possible social actions: the tasks of credibility, fast-talk, oration and performance are all

possible and rest at a base difficulty of 8. Intimidating her is trickier, as it implies their argument's sufficiently weak that they have to rely on fear (difficulty 9).

- Arguments appealing to Tick's "enlightened self-interest" are effective. She is more effectively cajoled by soft persuasion that she's on a dangerous course than she is intimidated by outright threats. (-1 difficulty to the related roll)
- Tick can be flattered, though the flatterer must be able to keep a straight face when praising her swollen beauty or insinuative intelligence. (-1 difficulty to the related roll if the player can also succeed on a Wits + Etiquette roll as a free action; +1 difficulty if the player fails said roll)

If the roll botches and all successes are lost, Tick grows irritated with the pack. They can try one more time, but the base difficulties rise by one point. If this second chance at an extended roll also loses all its successes to a botch, Tick angrily cuts off negotiations. The players must rely on spiritual prowess or sheer might now.

Mental: Binding the Parasite

The pack may attempt to bind Tick by leashing her with spirit magic. Using Gifts or rites to compel her obedience doesn't please her, of course, but she is as bound to obey as any other spirit would be. This may involve

some physical struggle, depending on the methods chosen; some rites require a spirit to be subdued first.

Alternately, the player characters may have really done their research before coming to confront Tick. If the pack sought out knowledge about Tick, by use of Gifts or just generally consulting other spirits, there's a chance they may have learned one of her secret bans. Tick detests vinegar and kerosene; a mix of the stuff is completely repellent to her. If poured in a line, she loses 10 Essence each time she crosses it until it's absorbed into the living floor (two turns later). If used as a component in a rite, it adds two dice to relevant dice pools.

Physical: Bloodshed

Of course, the players may just choose to confront Tick with fang and claw. Beating spirits into dominance is a tried and true tactic. Tick is willing to oblige; she feels confident in her lair, particularly as she has the option of feasting on one of the blood vessels pulsing in the walls for a quick recharge.

Tick is fond of using Umbraquake (when she hammers her bloated abdomen on the ground) or biting her opponents (using Rage as a standard melee attack). She can spend an action to drink from one of the blood vessels in her lair; this restores 15 Essence to her, but she loses a die from all dice pools for her next turn due to



the heady rush. If a werewolf manages to trick her into drinking vinegar or kerosene (such as lacing the blood vessels with the stuff), she instead loses 15 Essence and loses two dice from all dice pools for two turns.

If beaten down to 10 or less Essence, Tick quickly capitulates.

The bloated spirit vomits out a stream of befouled blood across the floor. Her mass deflates like a balloon, and she quickly shrinks to the size of a manhole cover. She waves three of her forelegs pathetically at you.

"Enough. Enough, please."

Consequences: If the characters reject Tick's bargain and persuade or compel her to back away from her plans for the Skin Dancers, then at the very least she will remove her interference. She will warn them that none of Minotaur's children are likely to understand the danger he's in. If they interrogate her fully, they may learn that Samson is on his way to becoming a very workable copy of Samuel Haight, as well as where his hiding place is. This

opens up the path to the scenes "Minotaur's Labyrinth" and possibly "The Skinner Reborn."

If the characters accept Tick's bargain and agree to help with the removal of Minotaur, then she will gladly show them the way to his labyrinth. The story continues with "Minotaur's Labyrinth."

If the characters accept Tick's bargain to get her the blood of a tribal totem, things may become interesting for an ongoing chronicle. Unfortunately, the many potential paths this could take are beyond the scope of this story. Most likely, Tick will ask the players to get some blood from a tribal totem for her (through persuasion or subterfuge, most likely), or if they're feeling particularly wily, setting up a way for her to quietly attach herself, unnoticed, to a tribal totem as a new host. This is the stuff of an entirely new story. However, the players may still indulge in "Minotaur's Labyrinth" or "The Skinner Reborn" if dealing with either Minotaur or Samson is still part of their agenda.



Scene: Minotaur's Labyrinth

Mental ••• Physical ••• Social —

Overview: The characters have learned that Minotaur is teetering on the edge of a fall to the Wyrm, thanks to Tick's machinations. To prevent that fall, or perhaps to eliminate the Skin Dancer totem entirely, they must navigate his Umbral labyrinth to the center. However, Minotaur's realm is being subsumed by the Black Labyrinth, however, making the journey even more treacherous.

Description: Whether guided by Tick or the supplicant's compass, the players are able to pass through the Umbra to the mazy sub-realm where Minotaur dwells. Minotaur's domain is, thankfully, not a tortuously maddening and ever-shifting nightmare on par with the Black Labyrinth. (Few things are.) It runs the risk of becoming one though. The Black Labyrinth has begun to infect the walls of Minotaur's realm, spreading like a cancer. The characters must find their way to the center of the maze and locate Minotaur without falling prey to the ever-growing hazards.

You step onto cool stone. Neatly placed blocks form the walls, floor and ceiling of the corridors that stretch out into dusk before you. They might have looked like sandstone in a warmer light; now they seem less familiar. Columns and archways of unknown design seem crafted long ago by a civilization that never was, or one that is remembered only by Minotaur.

One of the nearby arches leads into grey darkness — but as you watch, the darkness turns a deep void-black. It seeps into the joins of the archway like tainted blood pushing into veins. As you watch, the eroded stones fall away into nothingness. No, not nothingness... something worse.

It's quickly evident that the Wyrm's influence is beginning to absorb Minotaur's labyrinth. Not destroy it — the walls that collapse are replaced by new walls pushing in. Minotaur is certain to go with it unless something happens to make the realm's architect strong and sane again.

Storyteller Goals: The labyrinth should seem forbidding and dangerous to the players. Empty stone halls stretching into darkness convey a sense of isolation; run this scene to emphasize the solitude of the players. Their shouts and howls echo down into darkness, with nobody to hear. Yet they're pursued by the corruption of the Black Labyrinth, which devours portions of the realm like a living thing would. Use the damage to the stones around them to emphasize the sense of urgency. Supernatural mazes also convey a sense of unreality and unreason, dealing with architecture that serves no good function and spaces that seem hostile to more rational minds — perfect for this Umbral realm, which is decaying as the werewolves watch.

Character Goals: The characters need to find Minotaur without falling prey to the various hazards of the labyrinth. They can oppose some of the corruptive forces laying siege to the place, but must be careful that their efforts bring more stability to the structure instead of hastening its collapse.

Action: The Garou have two specific challenges to face once within: navigating their way through to find Minotaur at the center, and avoiding or surviving the various environmental hazards that erupt as the Black Labyrinth eats its way further into the realm.

In addition, Banes are beginning to slink their way into the labyrinth. Most will be too hesitant to challenge the pack, but if you're interested in giving the characters a combat challenge, select a few lower-power Banes from the *Werewolf* rulebook bold enough to crawl from the shadows, such as Wyrm Elementals or Scrags.

Navigating the Maze

Finding one's way through the labyrinth is more like a visual riddle than navigating a terrestrial obstacle. It's a matter of logic and careful observation, like analyzing an Escher piece.

Dice Pool: Perception + Enigmas, difficulty 8

Action: Extended (15 successes)

Obstacles: Possess no portable light sources (-1)

Assets: Axis Mundi Gift (+2), portable goodlight (+1)

Roll Results

Botch: All successes are lost: the pack makes a dire wrong turn. A particularly large deadfall imperils the entire pack.

Failure: No successes are accumulated. The pack encounters an intrusion, which targets one of the characters at random.

Success: Successes are gained. The pack encounters an intrusion, but they are better prepared to bypass it.

Intrusions

The corrupting touch of the Black Labyrinth causes environmental hazards for the characters as they go. Each turn, a portion of floor falls away into the darkness, a column collapses in a rush of blackened stone, or a cold wind stinking of Balefire howls down the corridor.

For every roll made on the extended navigation roll, an intrusion erupts — the longer it takes the player characters to find their way to the heart, the more danger they must face.

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Athletics, difficulty 8

Action: Standard

Obstacles: Encountered with failed navigation roll (-1)

Assets: Encountered with successful navigation roll (+1)

Roll Results

Botch: The character goes exactly the wrong way at the wrong time. The portion of the labyrinth he's dodged to falls away into darkness. Unless he or the nearest packmate succeeds on a reflexive Dexterity + Athletics roll, the character is lost to the Black Labyrinth.

Failure: The character takes damage from the environmental hazard. The strike does five dice of aggravated damage.

Success: The character eludes the environmental hazard.

Consequences: The speed with which the players navigate the labyrinth and the extent to which they're damaged or weakened by the effort will influence their ability to deal with Minotaur. If badly injured by the intrusions or Banes, they'll have a harder time pacifying him physically. However, if they make it through without anyone being wounded, each character regains a Willpower point for their sterling success.



Scene: Raging Bull

Mental •• Physical ••• Social •••

Overview: Having reached the heart of the labyrinth, the pack now faces a Minotaur that's already seeded with corruption. It's up to them whether to try cleansing the blight from him, push him over the edge, or put him out of his misery.

Description: The heart of the maze is a wide chamber with a ceiling eighty feet above, supported by concentric rings of tall pillars. The pillars are beginning to erode, and portions of the ceiling have given way, revealing the painful dark of the Black Labyrinth beyond.

Hooves strike the stone like falling iron and the sound of labored breathing is like an immense bellows. A massive hulk, part naked olive flesh and part ruddy fur, paces slowly around the in

most ring of columns. He nearly walks on all fours, as if the weight of his immense bull head and monstrously thick neck and shoulders is becoming too much. Then that massive head looks up and stares at you with watering, milky eyes.

Minotaur is not himself. The player characters will quickly be able to deduce why — long tendrils of manifested corruption have extended out from the cracks in the walls, and have attached to him like lampreys. His walk is almost like a shackled prisoner's. Drawing close to Minotaur or the tendrils fills a character's nostrils with the reek of Rage. The influence of Beast-of-War is feeding the Skin Dancer totem.

Storyteller Goals: When the pack wins their way into the labyrinth's heart, it should be clear that they are effectively trapped in an enclosed space with a sick, maddened beast. Minotaur still has his intellect, but it's obscured by the delirious flashes of rage that keep pulsing away in his mind. The

poisoned wrath of Minotaur should feel unsettlingly familiar to the Garou. Where usually they're the ones feared as near-rabid beasts, now they can experience what others experience in their presence.

It's important to be impartial in this scene. Even on the best of days Minotaur is an angry totem with a brutal hyper-masculine aspect; he commands his children to injure and kill Black Furies partly out of a rivalry and partly out of sheer hate. Cleansing and possibly redeeming Minotaur shouldn't be the "obvious" way to proceed — putting him out of his misery should be tempting, too.

Character Goals: The characters need to intervene in one way or another. One approach is to cut away the corruption, pacify Minotaur, and then use some method of cleansing the Wyrm-taint sufficiently that they can put him on a narrow path to redemption. The more expedient solution may simply be to destroy him — though that'll be much more difficult for any pack that isn't remarkably strong.

Action: The two major actions likely in this scene are to sever the corruption affecting Minotaur and cleanse the spirit as best as able — or to write him off as a lost cause and finish him off.

When Minotaur perceives the player characters, he becomes instantly aggressive. He will attack them to the best of his ability. Fortunately for them, that best isn't what it used to be; he's at a one-die penalty to all actions thanks to the maddening shackles of the Wyrm.

- Straight-up combat plays out largely as usual. However, there's still a danger of more eruptions taking place in the heart

of the labyrinth. Whenever Minotaur misses an attack, his anger and frustration cause another eruption to manifest, threatening a random player character.

- The strands of corruption are difficult targets, requiring an attack roll at difficulty 9. Each one has four soak dice and four health levels. It may require careful teamwork, with each character striking from behind and then acting as a distraction to give a packmate a clear shot. Cutting all five ends the fight, as Minotaur sinks to his knees in a state of exhausted delirium. At that point, a Rite of Cleansing will undo the state of corruption he's been in, though he will still retain the flaw of rage in his breast that made him vulnerable in the first place.
- The players may well choose to negotiate with Minotaur. Even when he's maddened and aggressive, a successful Manipulation + Persuasion roll (difficulty 10) will make him pause for a turn, fighting back to some temporary lucidity. This reduces the difficulty to sever a strand of corruption to 7 for that turn. Once he's been cleansed, negotiations

can likely be handled through roleplay: Minotaur is terribly proud, but also in the characters' debt, and neither side is likely to win out on its own.

Consequences: The events of this scene don't significantly affect the events of "The Skinner Reborn." Minotaur made his pact with the Skin Dancers after Sam Haight's death, and the reincarnated version of the Skinner has no real reason to care whether or not the player characters aided Minotaur or let him fall. Minotaur's part in the story is done when this scene ends; he won't have the strength to influence events as he heals (or worsens).

However, the consequences of this scene are likely to have long-term effects on a chronicle. Even if this scene doesn't take place there are consequences. If the players skip this scene entirely, and leave Minotaur to his own devices, then Minotaur falls to the Wyrm not too long thereafter. The damage Tick did to his labyrinth and the corruption it let in won't heal on its own. The consequences are dealt with in the Aftermath section of the story.



Scene: The Skinner Reborn

Mental ••• Physical ••• Social –

Overview: With his pack scattered or slain and no good way to quickly contact Tick, Samson decides the only option left to him is to invoke more of Samuel Haight's power. He retreats to a cemetery, where he invokes the power of his remembering remnant fetish for the last time. The pack must stop him here, or the Skinner will be on the hunt once more.

Description: The players have learned of Samson's location in the Sacred Peace cemetery, a mile from the funeral home where he laired. He must know trouble's coming but there's little choice in the matter. If the players leave him alone, the Skinner is sure to make another appearance.

A fog too thick to be natural hangs over the Sacred Peace cemetery. You can make out the vague forms of tombstones and unmoving angels close by, but not much else. Even your senses of hearing and smell seem muted in this wet, oppressive mist.

The first attack against the pack isn't made by The Skinner at all. The players might not initially recognize them — shadowy Unseelie fae creatures, the pseudo-solid shock troops called up to even the odds.

They appear like vague humanoid outlines, their forms blurred more than can be accounted for by the fog. Their features are indistinct but familiar — like meeting someone in a dream that you think you remember, only

to find out when you wake that they never existed at all.

The Skinner makes his first attack when his prey is properly distracted. If he can split apart the pack, all the better. He sends his hobgoblin allies to try overwhelming the enemy, then he moves stealthily into position to strike at a straggler or someone in the rear of the fight.

A searing pain shocks into you, down to the bone. Silver! You can see the attacker now, looming out of the fog. Your blood runs down the edge of a Grand Klaive, held easily in the Crinos' hand. "Should have left well enough alone," he growls. "I already didn't need an excuse to take your hide."

Storyteller Goals: Here the story of the Skinner begins again, or ends again. The players should be well aware by this point that even if Samuel Haight is dead and gone, his disciple is capable of resurrecting enough of his memories that it will be an effective rebirth. But because it isn't actually Haight, the players should feel some uncertainty as to just what this new incarnation is going to want.

At the moment of his rebirth, the new Skinner is not entirely lucid — though he is certainly entirely functional. A few of Nicholas' memories remain, but now the controlling personality is the remnants of Samuel Haight, forged together into a remade blade. The Skinner hates the Garou with all of his cracked, pieced-together

soul, but he's not quite willing to die again just to get revenge. If he gets a shot at cutting apart one of the smallest and weakest of his enemies, he'll take it, but he's no berserker. He would rather escape so that he can hunt his prey properly.

The Skinner anticipates that the pack who's been hunting the Vulture Walkers, and possibly even going after Tick or Minotaur, is certain to see him as a loose end. He decides that the first order of business is to confront them in a location where he can control the terrain, set up obstacles, and basically have the best fighting chance possible. If he can't wipe them out, he can at least hurt them severely enough that they have to withdraw and lick their wounds, giving him a healthier head start. And, to be honest, he's looking forward to hurting some Garou right now.

The Skinner should play dirty in this scene at every opportunity. One of the biggest tricks about challenging a werewolf pack is that any one single target can get pulled down and shredded fairly easily unless the target is just seriously out of the pack's weight class. The fight against the reincarnated Skinner will be over in a flash if all the characters are allowed to step up and get some unimpeded turns to spend Rage and start slashing. The enemy knows this and has evened the odds with fog and summoned fae allies.

Of course, it may be that the characters are interested in something other than killing the increasingly possessed Samson. They may attempt to capture him, perhaps exorcising his patron spirit. If they've taken Tick's bargain, they may have an interest in turning Samson into a more benevolent messiah figure to bring the Skin Dancers around as clear allies.

Character Goals: If the players are dedicated to making sure that Samuel Haight doesn't live again in any form, then the stakes are clear: Samson has to die. The question is just how vulnerable he'll be. Even at the height of his power Haight would have a hard time surviving an entire pack of angry, veteran Garou — and a cagey pack is going to want to leave him as little time to define the terms of the conflict as possible.

Action: The new incarnation of The Skinner isn't planning to make a final stand here; he just wants to cause as many casualties as possible before he has to retreat and begin moving from place to place again. He wants the Garou to feel fear, but he's not willing to die in the process.

With as many resources as a Garou pack can bring to bear, it's impossible to make an accurate prediction of specific events in the battle. The Skinner and his allies will be attempting to separate and cut down the player characters one at a time. The numerous headstones and

occasional mausoleum or statue provide plenty of cover for them to make an approach, or to defend themselves against ranged attacks.

The battleground is covered in fog summoned by the Curse of Aeolus Gift. The player characters' Perception dice pools are halved (round up), and they lose one die from all Willpower rolls. The Skinner's movements are also hard to track thanks to his Scent of Running Water Gift. He has an effective 9-die Stealth dice pool in Crios; 10 in Hispo or Lupus, 8 if he bothers with Glabro.

Further, he's not the only enemy on the field. The Skinner has used his Gift: Faerie Kin to conjure a number of Unseelie fae to assist him in his fight. There should be roughly the same number of hobgoblins moving amongst the fog and tombstones as there are pack members; you can adjust the number up and down to make an appropriate challenge for the pack. Remember that the Skinner and his fae allies alike can see through the fog as if it weren't there.

Unseelie Hobgoblins

These hobgoblins are not entirely real creatures; they're flashes of nightmare made solid, partly sentient and fully malicious. Their partly phantasmal swords, spears, knives and cleavers pass through armor. Targets can soak with Stamina only. Success on an Intelligence + Occult roll (difficulty 8) will identify them as fae entities, probably summoned with a Gift or rite.

Hobgoblin

Initiative: 6 dice

Dodge: 5 dice

Soak: 2 dice (bashing and lethal only)

Willpower 4

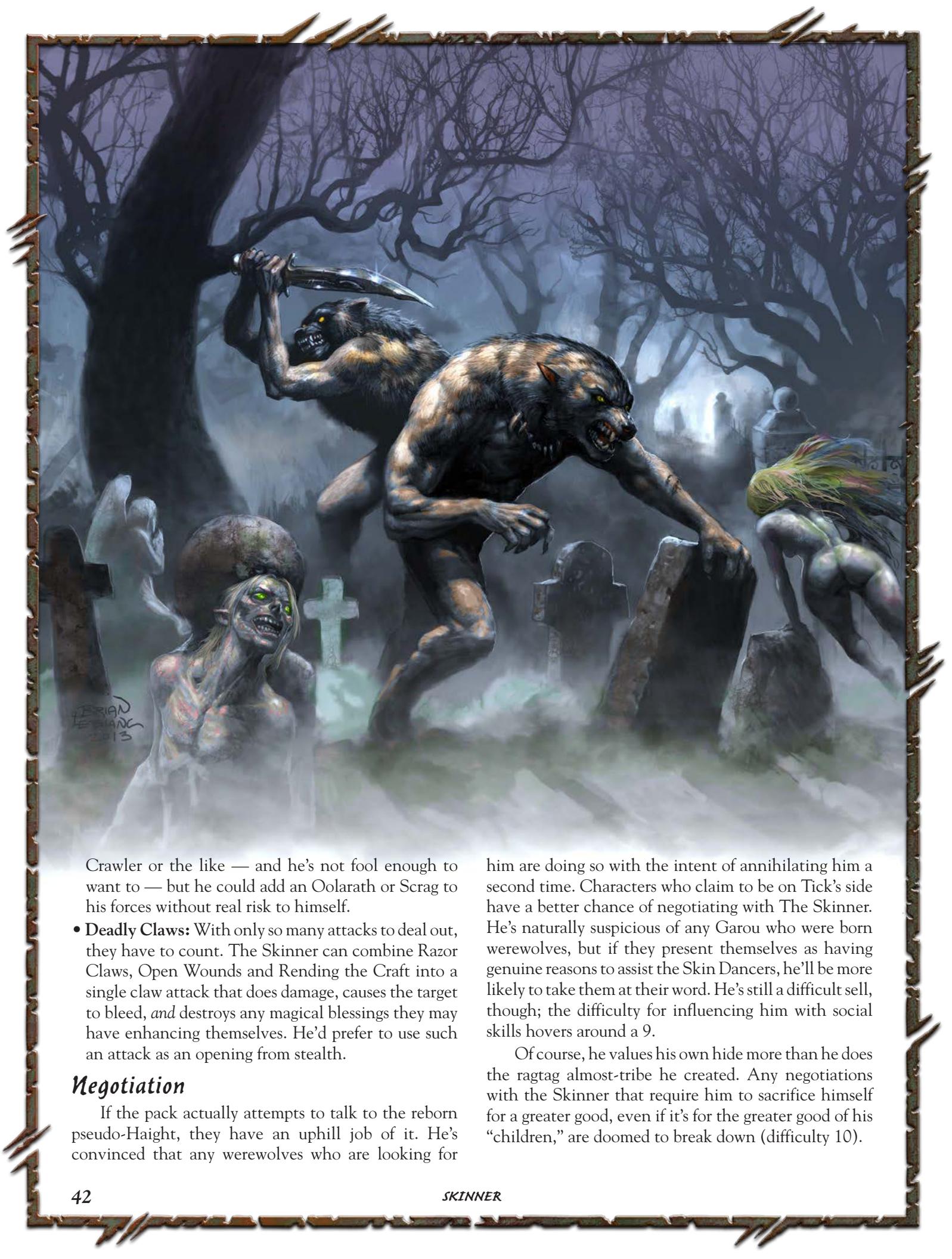
Weapons/Attacks

Type	Difficulty	Dice Pool	Damage Pool
Phantom Weapon	6	7	5 aggravated

The Skinner's Tactics

With the Gifts available to him, the Skinner has a number of tricks to try evening the playing field. The following are a few ideas for actions he may take when an appropriate opportunity presents itself.

- Lengthy Gifts:** The Skinner is likely to activate Wyrm Hide and Razor Claws as part of his initial preparations. He favors attacking with his Grand Klaive, thanks to its lethality, but may activate Razor Claws just to have insurance against being disarmed.
- Spirit Summoning:** If he has enough time before the attack and reason to risk it, the Skinner can also call up a spirit to aid his cause — probably a Bane, given his Bane Protector Gift. As he lacks actual standing among the forces of the Wyrm, he can't call up a Nexus



Crawler or the like — and he's not fool enough to want to — but he could add an Oolarath or Scrag to his forces without real risk to himself.

• **Deadly Claws:** With only so many attacks to deal out, they have to count. The Skinner can combine Razor Claws, Open Wounds and Rending the Craft into a single claw attack that does damage, causes the target to bleed, and destroys any magical blessings they may have enhancing themselves. He'd prefer to use such an attack as an opening from stealth.

Negotiation

If the pack actually attempts to talk to the reborn pseudo-Haight, they have an uphill job of it. He's convinced that any werewolves who are looking for

him are doing so with the intent of annihilating him a second time. Characters who claim to be on Tick's side have a better chance of negotiating with The Skinner. He's naturally suspicious of any Garou who were born werewolves, but if they present themselves as having genuine reasons to assist the Skin Dancers, he'll be more likely to take them at their word. He's still a difficult sell, though; the difficulty for influencing him with social skills hovers around a 9.

Of course, he values his own hide more than he does the ragtag almost-tribe he created. Any negotiations with the Skinner that require him to sacrifice himself for a greater good, even if it's for the greater good of his "children," are doomed to break down (difficulty 10).

Aftermath

Depending on the players' actions, the status quo is sure to be shaken up. At the very least, even if Tick's ambitions are thwarted and the return of the Skinner quashed, the status of Skin Dancers around the world will be affected by the events surrounding Minotaur.

- **Minotaur:** If the player intervened to cleanse and aid Minotaur, then the Skin Dancer patron has good reason to curb the excesses of his children. If Minotaur fell into the Black Labyrinth due to inaction or failure, or the players destroyed him, then the Skin Dancers will be in need of a new totem — possibly Tick, or possibly something worse. Either way, the players have an opportunity to influence the actions of surviving Skin Dancers who hear of the upheaval, whether encouraging reform or spreading fear.

If Minotaur was left to fall to the Wyrm, this is potentially the worst of all possible outcomes. Players are unlikely to see any effects of Minotaur's fall until further on in a chronicle. Once his fall is complete, though, Minotaur will counsel his children to join with the Black Spiral Dancers as allies. This partnership is likely to end with the Black Spiral Dancers learning the Rite of Sacred Rebirth — a dire prospect for the Garou Nation.

- **Tick's Pact:** If the player characters accepted Tick's bargain, then they have the question of whether they want to betray their pact with her — which would have dismal effects on their renown among the spirit world — or if they want to help her ascend to the status of tribal totem. Either way, Tick will be contacting them shortly. The answer they give may lead to another story entirely. The pack's Philodox, if any, is going to have a lot of work to do convincing other Garou of the legality of their decision.
- **The Traitor's Fate:** If the Kinfolk who betrayed his charges was spared, the pack has a new ally with every reason to prove his gratitude to them. However, this mercy will probably spark more dissent among the sept as a whole and potentially more resentment towards Kin in general. Letting the turncoat live is a controversial decision that won't be soon forgotten.
- **Kinfolk Relations:** The player characters' actions over the course of the story may influence the Kinfolk attached to the sept. Did they display compassion for the Skin Dancers who started life as abused Kin? Did they start their investigations among the Kinfolk with a gentle hand, or did they come across as oppressive beasts with no tolerance for disloyalty? Do the Kin have more reason now to love the pack, or to fear them? With a more direct lesson in where the Skin Dancers

come from and why, the player characters may see more significance in how the sept rewards loyalty or punishes disagreement among "lowly" Kinfolk in future.

Experience and Renown

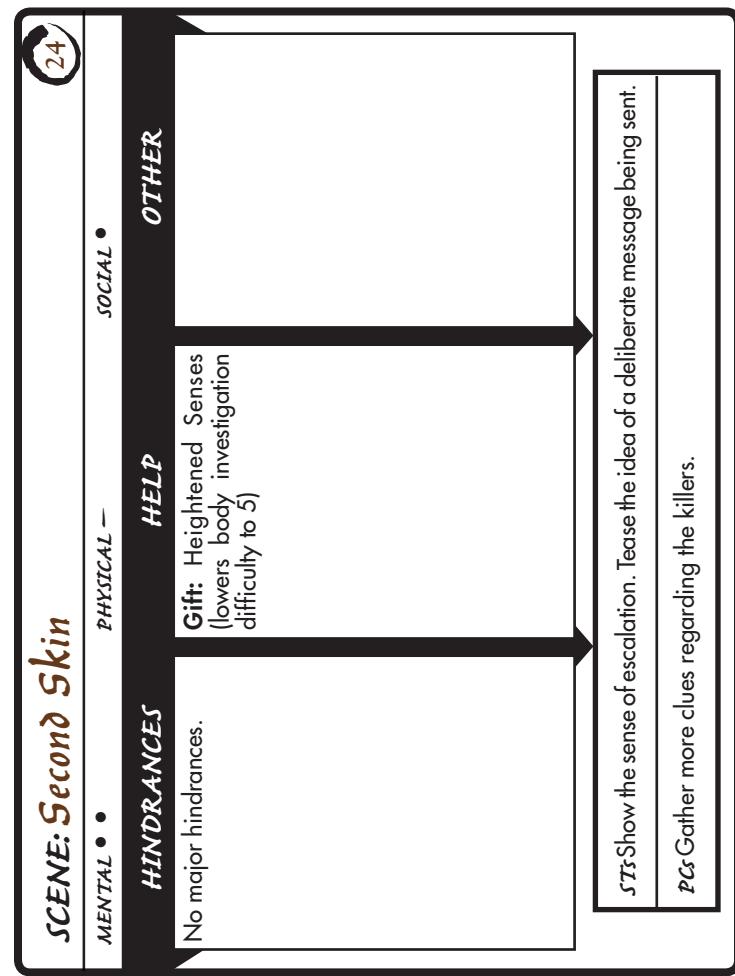
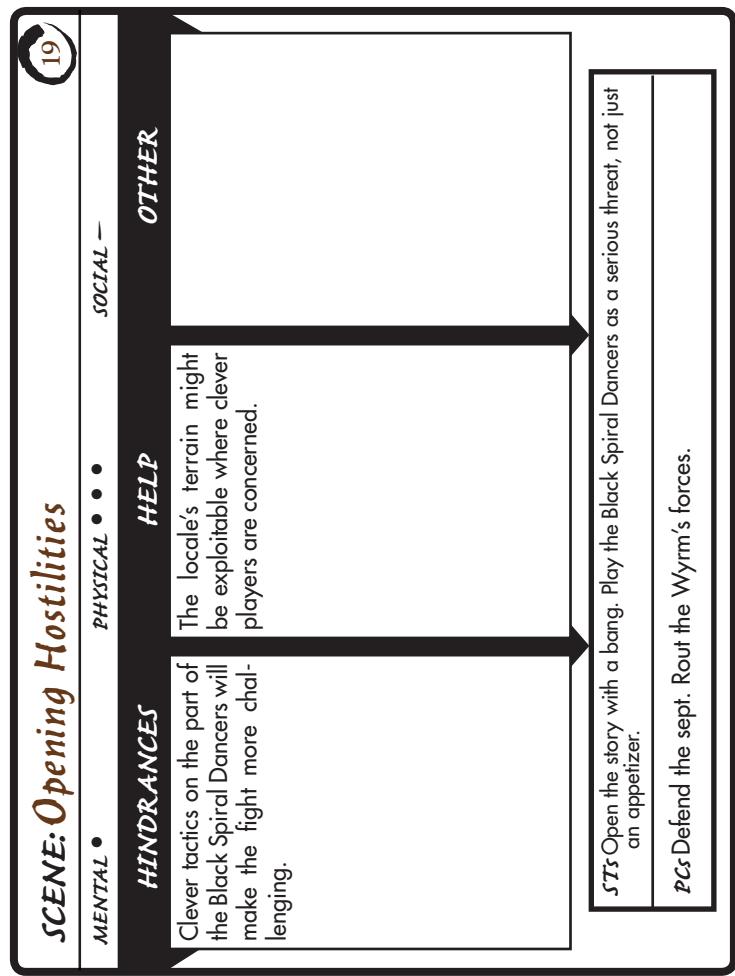
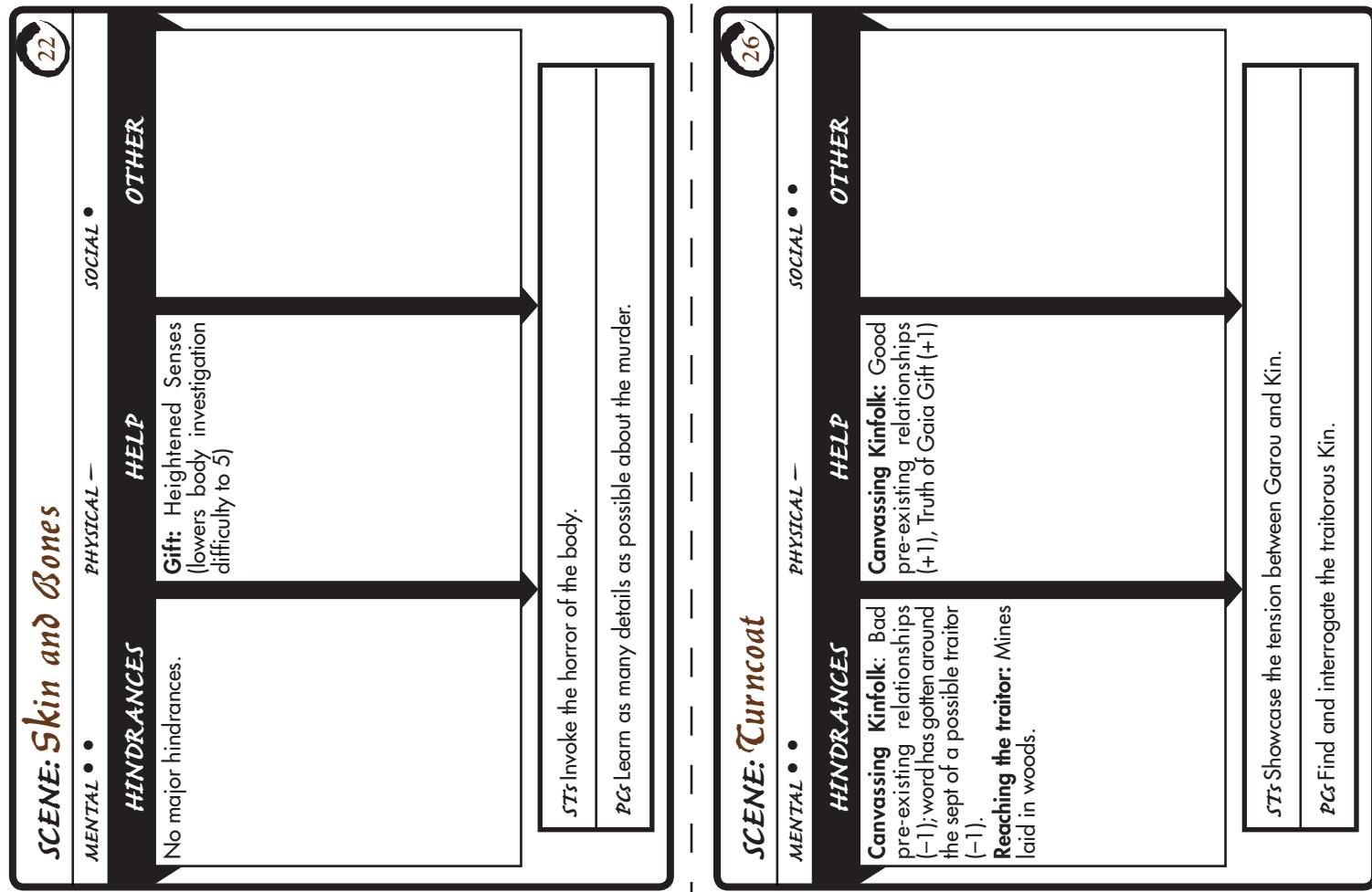
The events of Skinner may play out over multiple sessions; between one and three is about average. Award experience as per usual at the end of each session: one point for simply surviving the session's events and additional points as directed by the Experience section in *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*. In addition, once the story is completed you may add the following bonuses to all player characters for particularly notable goals the pack may have achieved.

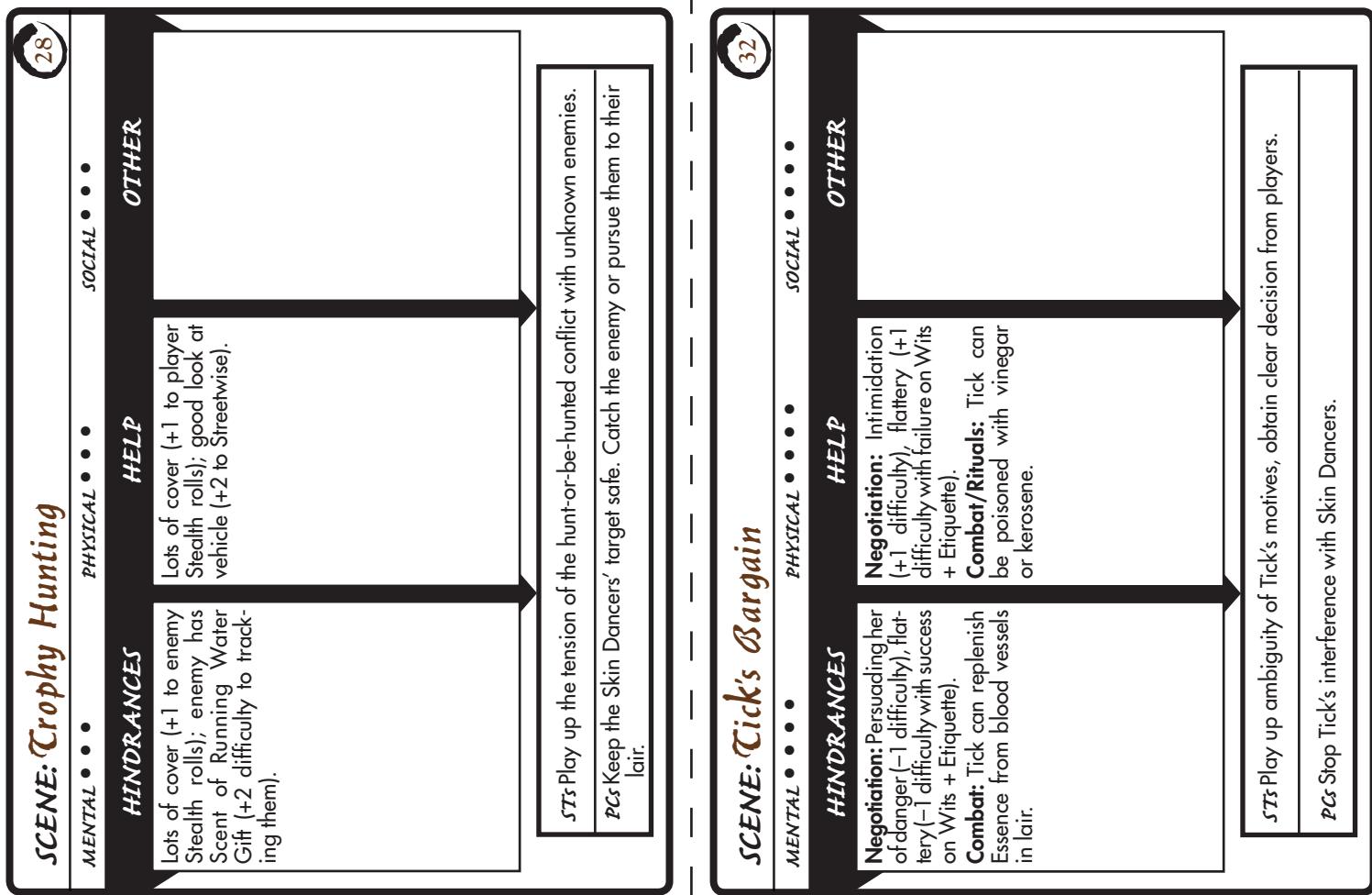
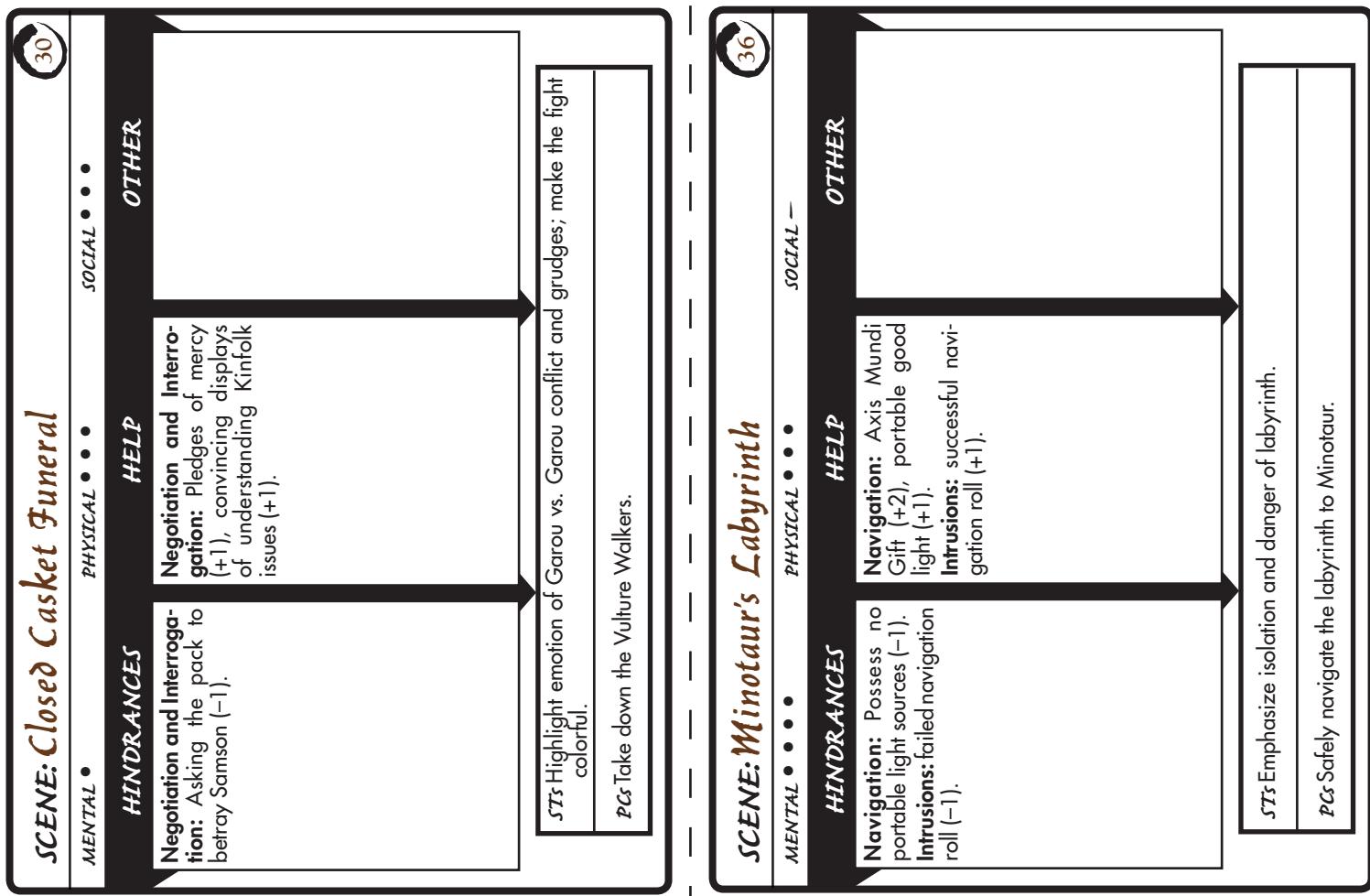
- +1 **Success.** Taking on the events of the story and resolving the situation with the Skinner in a way that matches the character's goals — probably by defeating him — merits an experience point for story completion.
- +1 **Influencing Minotaur's Fate.** If the characters take an active hand in dealing with Minotaur's corruption, one way or another, this merits an additional experience point.
- +1 **Redemption.** It's the curse of the Garou that they use violence against their enemies and alienate possible allies through pride and bloodlust. If the characters work to put an enemy or rival on the path to redemption even when it'd be more expedient to kill them (such as a Skin Dancer or the traitorous Kin), they gain an additional experience point for the effort.

Playing through the story should involve many opportunities to gain Renown. For example, besting the Vulture Walkers is effectively "defeating a formidable supernatural threat not of the Wyrm," and would provide the according 2 Glory reward. You may also give Renown awards specific to the story's events, such as those following.

Purifying Minotaur: 3 Wisdom. This is higher than the usual award for purifying a Wyrm-tainted person, given Minotaur's status and influence over the Skin Dancers.

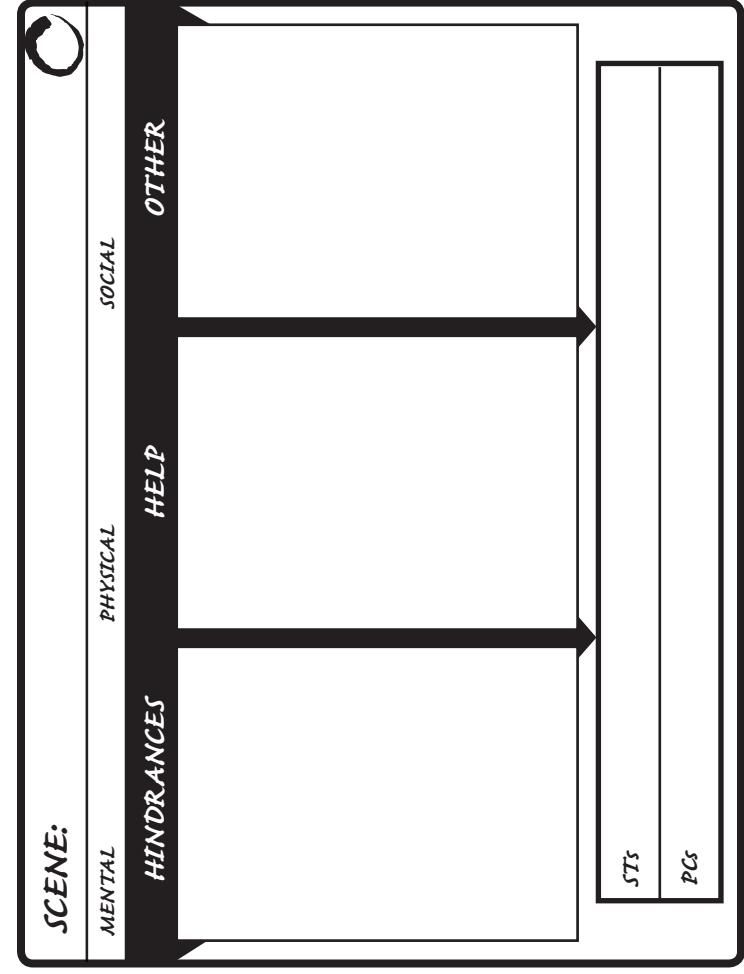
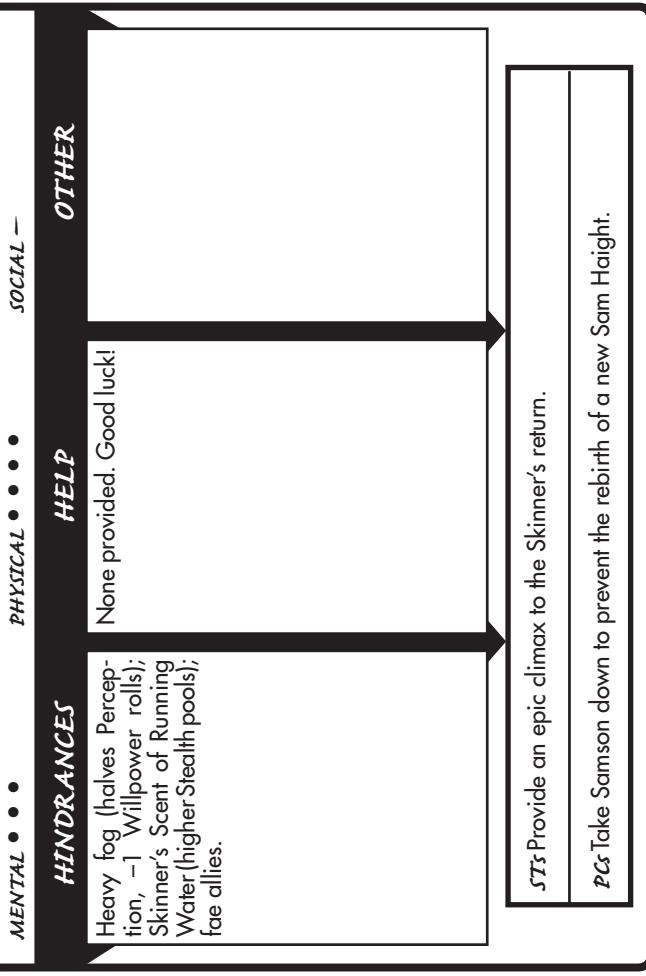
Returning the Grand Klaive Thunderous Howl to the Shadow Lord tribe: 1 Glory, 2 Honor. This award does not apply if a Shadow Lord character decides to keep the weapon for herself; it must be surrendered to tribal elders. (It is possible the elders might decide to allow the character to be its keeper — but this consideration would likely come with a few extra responsibilities or owed favors.)



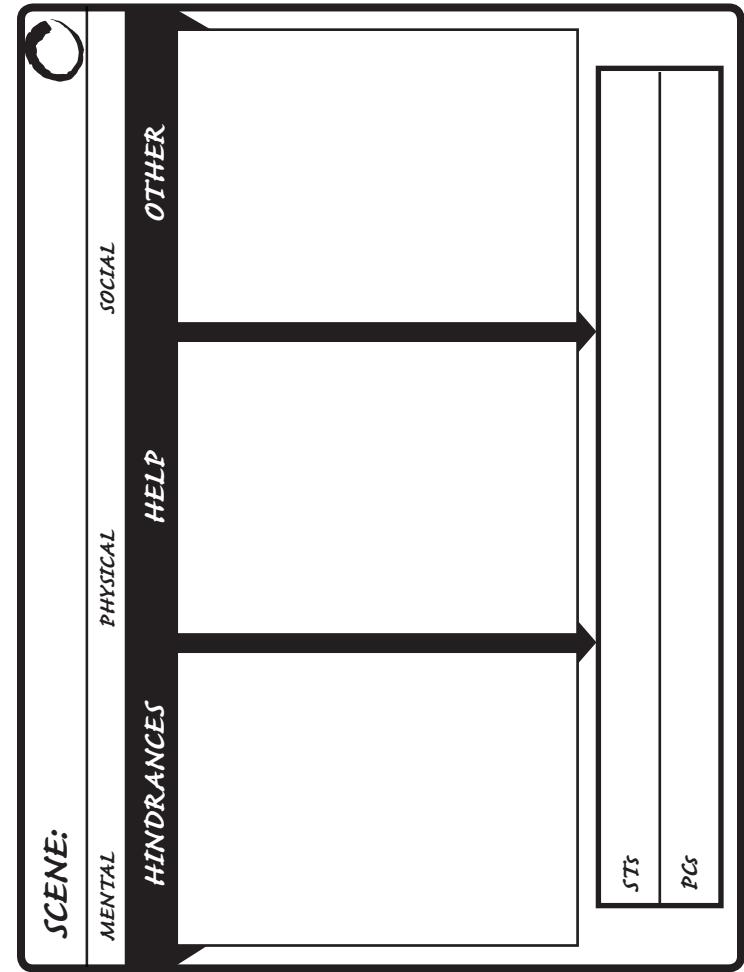
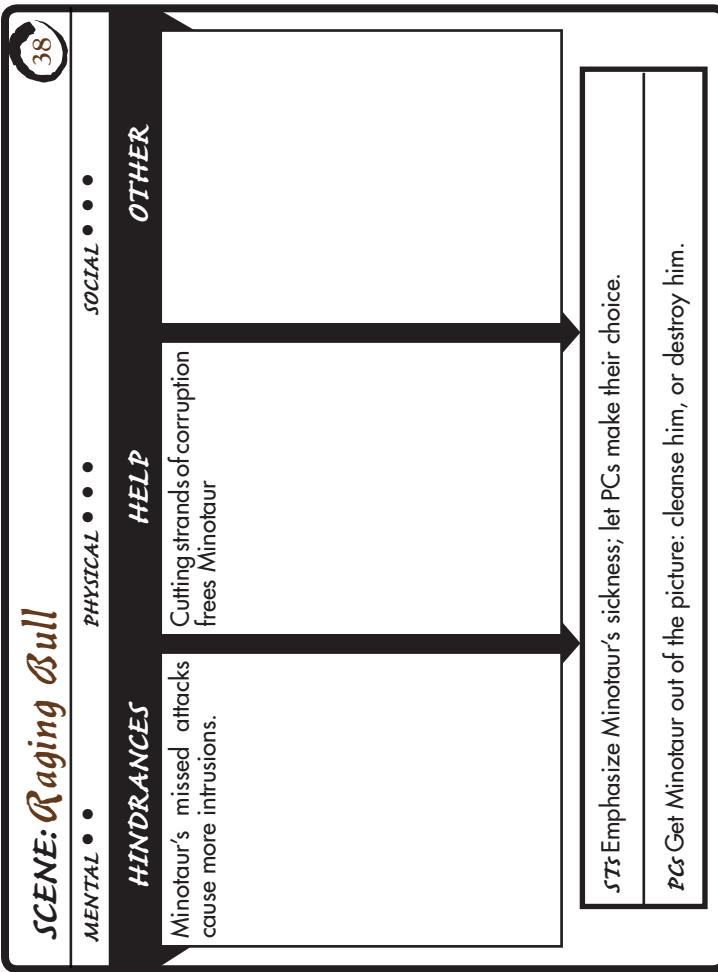


SCENE: The Skinner Reborn

40



38





Name: Jericik	Breeds: Horned
Concept: Abused turned abuser	Auspice: Regalabah Tribes: Skin Dancers

Name: Jerrick		Breed: Homial	Forms	
Concept:	Abused turned abuser	Auspice: Ragabash	Homial	Lupus
Strength	●●○○○○○○	Charisma	●●○○○○○○	Hispo
Dexterity	●●●●○○○○	Manipulation	●●●●○○○○	Crinos
Stamina	●●●●●●●●	Intelligence	●●●●●●●●	Glabro
Manipulation	●●●●●●●●	Appearance	●●●●●●●●	Lupus
Wits	●●●●●●●●	Charisma	●●○○○○○○	

Skills

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Renown</i>	<i>Glory</i>	<i>Honor</i>	<i>Wisdom</i>
Alertness	●○○○○			
Bravd	●●○○○			
Expression	●○○○○			
Primal Urge		○○○○○		
Streetwise		●○○○○		
Subterfue		●●○○○		

Health

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

Notes

Forms

	Homid	Glabro	Crinos	Hippo	Lupus
Strength	2	4	6	5	3
Dexterity	4	4	5	6	6
Stamina	3	5	6	6	5
Manipulation	4	3	1	1	1
Initiative	5	5	5	5	5
Stat + Primal Urge	5	7	8	8	7
Dex + Brawl	6	6	7	8	8
Dex + Athletics	4	4	5	6	6
Bite		7 Aggravated	7 Aggravated	4 Aggravated	
Claw	5 Bashing	7 Aggravated	6 Aggravated	4 Bashing	

Gift	Roll	Rite	Roll
<u>Blur of the Milky Eye</u>	<u>Man + Stealth</u>	<u>Rite of Sacred Rebirth</u>	<u>Wits + Rituals</u>
<u>Primal Anger</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
<u>Scent of Running Water</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
<u>Speed of Thought</u>	<u>Man + Expression</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
<u>Curse of Hatred</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
<u>Taking the Forgotten</u>	<u>Wits + Larceny</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
<u>Laugh of the Hyena</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>

Fetish *Roll*



Name: Werewolf
Concept: Veteran Werewolf Auspice
Tribe:



Breed: Vulture Walker
Auspice: Recruit
Tribe:

Forms

	Homid	Glabro	Crinos	Hispo	Lupus
Strength	3	5	7	6	4
Dexterity	3	3	4	5	5
Stamina	3	5	6	5	5
Manipulation	3	2	0	0	0
Initiative	6	6	6	6	6
Sta + Primal Urge	6	8	9	9	8
Dex + Brawl	7	7	8	9	9
Dex + Athletics	6	6	7	8	8
Bite			8 Aggravated	8 Aggravated	5 Bashing
Claw		6 Bashing	8 Aggravated	7 Aggravated	5 Bashing
Fetish Knife	4 Aggravated	6 Aggravated	8 Aggravated		

Forms

	Homid	Glabro	Crinos	Hispo	Lupus
Strength	3	5	7	5	4
Dexterity	3	3	4	4	5
Stamina	3	5	6	6	5
Manipulation	2	1	0	0	0
Initiative	4	4	4	4	4
Sta + Primal Urge	4	6	7	7	6
Dex + Brawl	5	5	6	7	7
Dex + Athletics	5	5	6	7	7
Bite		8 Aggravated	8 Aggravated	8 Aggravated	5 Bashing
Claw		6 Bashing	8 Aggravated	7 Aggravated	5 Bashing
Fetish Knife	4 Aggravated	6 Aggravated	8 Aggravated		

Gift

	Rank	3
RAGE	●●●●●●●●●●	
GNOSIS	●●●●●●●●●●	
WILLPOWER	●●●●●●●●●●	

Gift

	Rank	4
RAGE	0000000000	
GNOSIS	0000000000	
WILLPOWER	0000000000	

Health

Bruised	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hurt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Injured	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wounded	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mauled	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crippled	<input type="checkbox"/>
Incapacitated	<input type="checkbox"/>

Bruised	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hurt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Injured	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wounded	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mauled	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crippled	<input type="checkbox"/>
Incapacitated	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes

Health

Bruised	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hurt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Injured	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wounded	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mauled	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crippled	<input type="checkbox"/>
Incapacitated	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes



Name: Nicholas "Samson" Carver	Breed: Hound
Concept: Skinner Reborn	Auspice: Therouge
	Trible: Skin Dance

Forms

Skills

Health

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

Notes

Backgrounds

<u>Rending the Craft</u>	<u>—</u>
<u>Umbral Camouflage</u>	<u>—</u>
<u>Visceral Anger</u>	<u>—</u>
<u>Open Wounds</u>	<u>Str+Medicine</u>
<u>Spirit Ward</u>	<u>Man+Rituals</u>
<u>Thieving Talons of the Magpie</u>	<u>Wits+Larceny</u>

Gnosis

Fetish

7
Thunderous Hoof (Grand Klause)

SKINNER

TM

A flayed body is found in a landfill. This is no cadaver of a helpless victim, though — the corpse is Garou.

The People remember. A man killed werewolves, taking their skins. A blasphemous rite bound the skins of Garou to the body of a Kinfolk, creating a new werewolf. A Skin Dancer.

The Skinner is dead, though. Samuel Haight tried for too much power and was obliterated forever. The children of his legacy are few and outnumbered. They wouldn't be so bold as to invite the wrath of the Garou Nation. They're not as driven as Haight was, and he's dead and gone.

Isn't he?

