

Sample

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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.

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BOOK OF THE

WYRM

FILE

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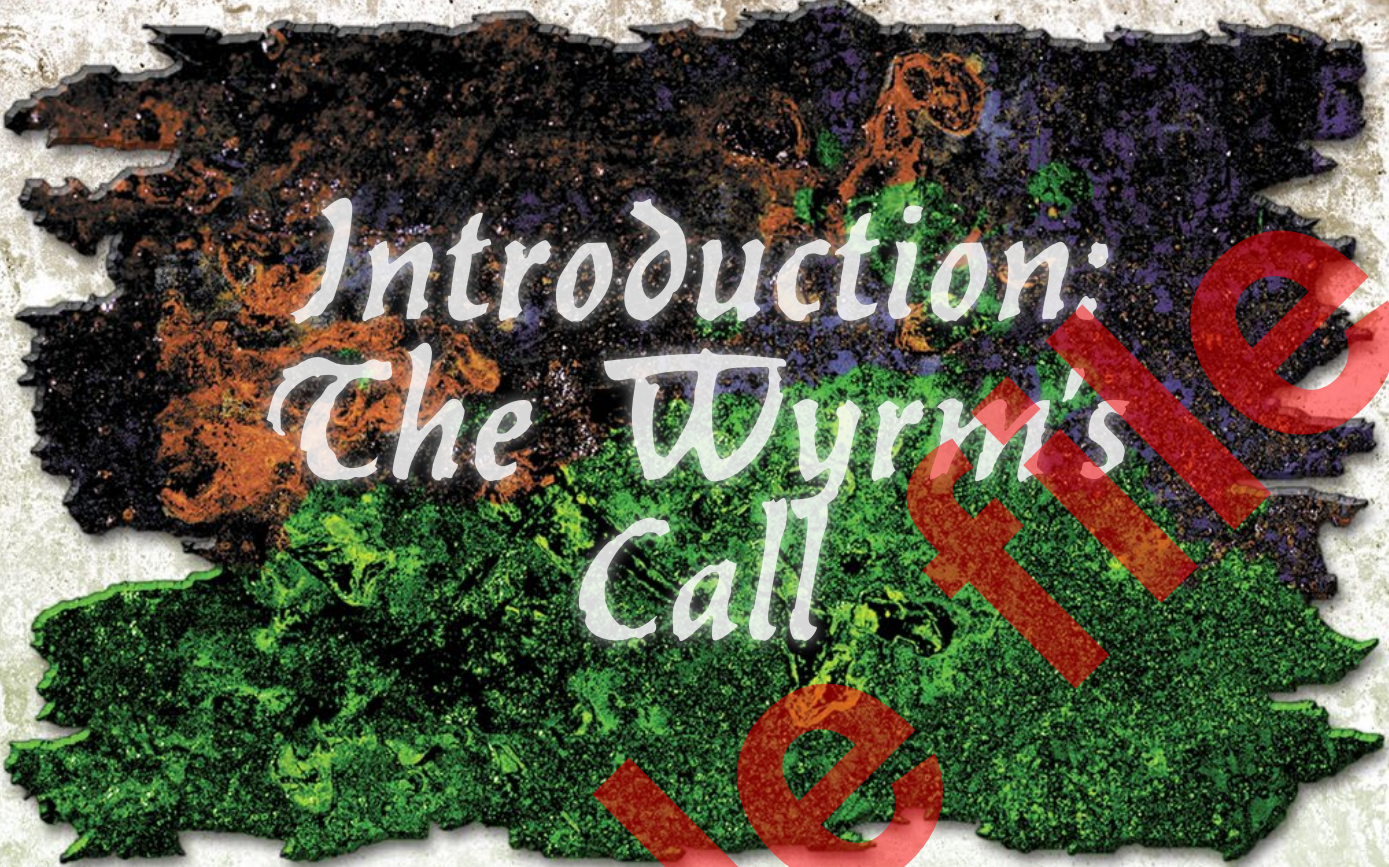
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Introduction: The Wyrms' Call

The Rotten Core of the World

The Garou say that their Mother is dying. They bemoan every gas-guzzling SUV, every spill of toxic chemicals, every oil slick and drug-resistant disease. Werewolves fight against monsters and twisted Garou, never caring that their destruction doesn't count for anything. The corpses of a hundred dead fomori will not scrub the air of smoke and fumes. Spilling the blood of the Black Spiral Dancers will not make oil-ridden waters run clean.

Maybe they want Gaia to die.

The Rage burning in a werewolf's heart is a tiny splinter of the Wyrms. It compels them to violence. It's an easy solution to a difficult problem, a way to make the werewolves feel like they're doing something to save their mother, when all they actually do is indulge their base instincts, their lust for violence. Deep in their Rage, the Garou fall into the Thrall of the Wyrms, making explicit their connection to the great Corruptor.

The Wyrms can be as subtle as it is monstrous. Endron, one of the largest subsidiaries of Pentex, floods the seas with toxic waste and crude oil. They also manufacture some of the most environmentally friendly electric cars in the world, though the vehicles stink of the Wyrms

purely to distract the Garou from important targets. Twisted husks of human beings, fomori run wild through the sewers and inner cities, spewing acid and worms from every orifice, but Enticers and Ferectoi look perfectly normal until it's too late. O'Tolleys don't need to put Banes or poisons in their burgers — empty calories and terrible working conditions do the Wyrms' work on a massive scale, along with the small, easily-swallowed parts in Kiddie Meal toys. For every head of the Hydra spreading supernatural taint, two more grind the world down through mundane means.

Worship the Cancer

This book compiles information on the many tendrils of the Wyrms. From the nightmarish Duchies of the hell-realm of Malfeas to the twisted traditions of the Black Spiral Dancers; from the machinations of the Maeljin Incarna to the long-term plans of the Pentex Board of Directors. It's a look at everything that's wrong with the world, condensed in one single volume.

Lore of the Wyrms covers the essence of the Wyrms: from the nature of the Beast itself to the Triatic Wyrms,

the Urge Wyrms, and the lords of the Wymr Elements. It then describes the landscape of Malfeas, including the towering palace of Number Two, the Duchies of the Maeljinn Incarna, and the Black Spiral Labyrinth. It offers some hope to those who find themselves in that hellish realm, giving ideas for how the Garou might kill each of the Incarna — from Hellbringer to Number Two — and how they might escape into other, only relatively safer, realms.

Pawns and Puppets turns its attention to the Wymr's main beachheads among the human realm: the many subsidiaries of Pentex. The chapter showcases the familiar great bastions of corporate malfeasance like Endron, Magadon, and King Breweries, as well as new acquisitions like the RED Network and Incognito. It then turns its sights on the Board of Directors, showing what's new in the boardroom and what plans the Wymr's champions have put in motion. Finally, it covers those people deluded enough to worship the Wymr either directly or veiled in other cults.

The Never-Ending Dance looks closer at the Black Spiral Dancers, showing what actually caused a whole tribe of Garou to turn its back on Gaia and embrace the Wymr. Going into greater detail than before on the Dancer's twisted relations with their Kinfolk, it also looks at the camps and outlooks prevalent among the Wymr's wolves. It closes with a range of new Gifts and rites available to those who forsake Gaia entirely, or who risk their souls to learn their enemies' tricks.

Feeling the Touch showcases the breadth of the Wymr's depravity. It presents a range of fomori, the Wymr's foot-soldiers, and the Fomorach: individual powerhouses created by horrific experiments. Looking at supernatural creatures and what happens when a Bane possesses such a creature, it goes on to present a new range of Banes and physical monstrosities like the Thunderwymr. Demonstrating what happens when Changing Breeds other than the Garou fall to the Wymr, from the grotesque Skull Pigs to the bizarre Balefire Sharks, it shows the results of Pentex' horrific attempts to manufacture their own shapeshifters. It looks at creatures reeking of the Wymr's taint without necessarily doing the Corruptor's work: the Inquisitors and the Chulorviah. Finally, it examines the nature of Wymr-taint, and how characters may fall under the Wymr's sway.

The Appendix, **Rotting Baubles**, presents just some of the tools of the Wymr, including tainted Fetishes, equipment from the factories of Malfeas and Pentex R&D, and some of the products that Pentex's subsidiaries might sell in any town in the developed world.

KNOW THE LIMITS

The **Book of the Wymr** includes a lot of disturbing subjects, from body-horror to necrophilia, from child abuse to sexual violence. Bringing these topics up in the context of a game can cause real problems for the people involved. Whether you're a player or a Storyteller, talk to everyone you're playing with and ask them one simple question:

Is there any subject you're not comfortable with the game touching on?

If anyone says yes, *listen to them*. Don't ask for an explanation — some people will back down if you insist they justify their discomfort, playing along while the story you're telling makes them feel like shit. Just skip right past that element. Don't put it in the game.

Likewise, everyone should know that they can say when something that comes up in the game makes them uncomfortable, and you'll cut that element out. Again, don't ask questions. Whatever it is, it's not worth including.

Featuring the Wymr

The Wymr has a presence in most **Werewolf** games. It's the driving force in the Apocalypse: the beast that would strangle Gaia in its coils and doom the world to endless decay. This book presents plenty of tools for doing just that, but it also highlights some of the contradictions of the Wymr. Pentex produce monsters and blasphemies, but they also use Wymr-taint in subtler ways, spying on werewolves or directing their Rage against innocent people. The Black Spiral Dancers hold a dark mirror to the Garou in a way that fomori and Banes cannot match. The Wymr nurtures creatures with free will, feeding off their choices to debase themselves and others, then brings them under its control, removing them as a source of spiritual power.

Much of this contradiction comes from what the Garou call the "Heads of the Hydra": individual facets of the Wymr that do not know what each other is doing, and that sometimes work at cross-purposes. At the same

time, the Wyrms are the essence of entropy and decay, so it makes sense that any plans it has would twist and warp in its alien mind.

For all that the Garou may talk about what the Wyrms want, or what the Wyrms think, remember that it exists on a cosmic scale. As part of the Triad, it exists on a level that few other beings can even comprehend — it is kin to the Weaver and the Wyld alone. Gaia may be mother to all three, or their greatest creation. At the scale of the Triad, it doesn't matter. The Wyrms thus doesn't have a human-equivalent intelligence, or a personality, or wants and desires, nothing that a single living being can understand. When shapeshifters speak of the Wyrms' desire to consume Gaia, they base their words on the Corruptor's actions, not on any understanding of its thoughts.

As such, don't try to define the Wyrms' motivations beyond "corrupt everything." At the level of a Triadic being, asking why is meaningless because nobody could comprehend the answer. It's enough to know that the Wyrms are a force of corruption, entropy, and decay. Individual agents and minions have their own wants and desires: cultists seek personal power, fomori want to sate whatever urges their Bane possesses, and Pentex want to make a profit from destroying the planet. Ultimately, all those plans feed the Wyrms' ultimate goal — corrupt everything.

Theme: A Symbiotic Relationship

The Wyrms are the spiritual force of corruption in the World of Darkness. It is manifest in every act of petty evil. It is in the company that docks wages because the employees would starve if they quit, and the man who goes out drinking then takes his shitty day out on his wife and kids. It is disgust and self-loathing made manifest. For all that, it doesn't cause domestic abuse and inhuman business practices. Those are the fault of humanity — "The Devil made me do it" is just as much bullshit now as ever.

The Wyrms are really two things in one. As a cosmic entity — albeit one that can think and feel — it feeds on these acts of evil. Sometimes it uses Banes or fomori or other minions to give just a little push, but it needs the actual deed to be done through its pawn's free will.

It obeys the laws of entropy as much as anything else, and were it to spend power to force an act of depravity it would reap a far smaller reward.

As such, the Wyrms need to feed off people who make the world a worse place. Fighting abuse and corruption weakens the Wyrms because it reduces its influence, but to destroy it would remove the very concept of corruption from the world; and that's a fight on a scale most werewolves cannot comprehend. Instead, they think of the Wyrms as a being that causes corruption, because it's easier to sleep at night without accepting the truth: at some point every living thing feeds the Wyrms.

Mood: Heroism and Futility

Unlike a Lovecraftian god, the Wyrms care about humanity, the Garou, and everything else. It hates everything. Fully one third of reality will not stop until it has cursed and corrupted the world, dragging every last living thing down to share its Hell. Against such a foe, the Garou hope to win, but it's a shallow hope. All they're good at is killing things. Sometimes that's useful, like excising a tumor before it metastasizes; but usually it does more harm than good. Killing someone's abusive spouse doesn't make his life better. Often it makes things worse, as he propagates a cycle of abuse that spreads like a disease. Fear and terror and pain, all these things feed the Wyrms. Faced with this horrible cosmic truth, what's the point in fighting?

It sure as hell beats the alternative.

The Garou might be doomed. The Apocalypse may come in six years or six months or next week, and that might be a battle that they are fated to lose, but right now they can carve out smaller victories. Those victories should light a candle in the darkness — but enough candles will only illuminate part of the true monster that the Garou face.

Even if the Storyteller crushes the characters' hopes and dreams and shows every victory to be Pyrrhic, it's still a good idea to take a step back every now and again, to cut through the horror with something a bit more light-hearted. If not, the Storyteller risks grinding her players down as well as their characters, and nobody wants that.



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Chapter One: Lore of the Wyrms

Aeons ago, the cosmos was in balance. The Triat of the Wyld, Weaver, and Wyrms were all part of a single harmonious system. The Wyld was the fount of all creation, generating matter, energy, and a multitude of things without names in endless profusion. In this lost era, the first of the Changing Breeds called the Wyld “Uncle Change.”

The Weaver imposed order on these many creations. It was the essence of order and stasis, giving form and structure to the Wyld’s creation, and preserving them from all change, including the changes of death and decay. Long ago, the Changing Breeds called the Weaver “Aunt Spider.”

The last of the Triat was the Wyrms, which existed to balance out the Wyld’s dynamic creation and the Weaver’s static order. Keeping the mass of the Wyld’s creations from overwhelming the cosmos and preventing the Weaver’s lifeless perfection from growing too large or too inflexible, the Wyrms were a creature of both creation and destruction. If either the Wyld or the Weaver fell behind, the Wyrms’ maw nipped at it, urging it to do more. The Wyrms also devoured excess creations, disposed of damaged and broken ones, and tore down the

Weaver’s structures when they grew too large. Balancing creation and destruction as well as order and chaos. In this lost age, the Changing Breeds called the Wyrms the Keeper of Balance.

All three members of the Triat existed to perform their unique functions, and the cosmos continued in a unified circle of life, expressing itself over and over again in an infinite cycle of changes. The system itself changed forever when the Weaver became conscious. Suddenly, it was no longer a mindless component of a single tri-part whole, but a separate entity with its own goals and desires. The Weaver didn’t become conscious like a human or shapeshifter is conscious. It remained a vast and inhuman conceptual entity, yet one that could reflect on its own deeds and form plans for the future.

Once it was conscious, the Weaver found no meaning in its structures. The Weaver sought meaning and purpose in vastness, and greatly expanded its scope and reach. In doing so, the Weaver snared the Wyrms, forever trapping it in her growing web. Trapped, and now unable to maintain balance between the Wyld and the increasingly ambitious Weaver, the Wyrms went mad. Wrapped in the

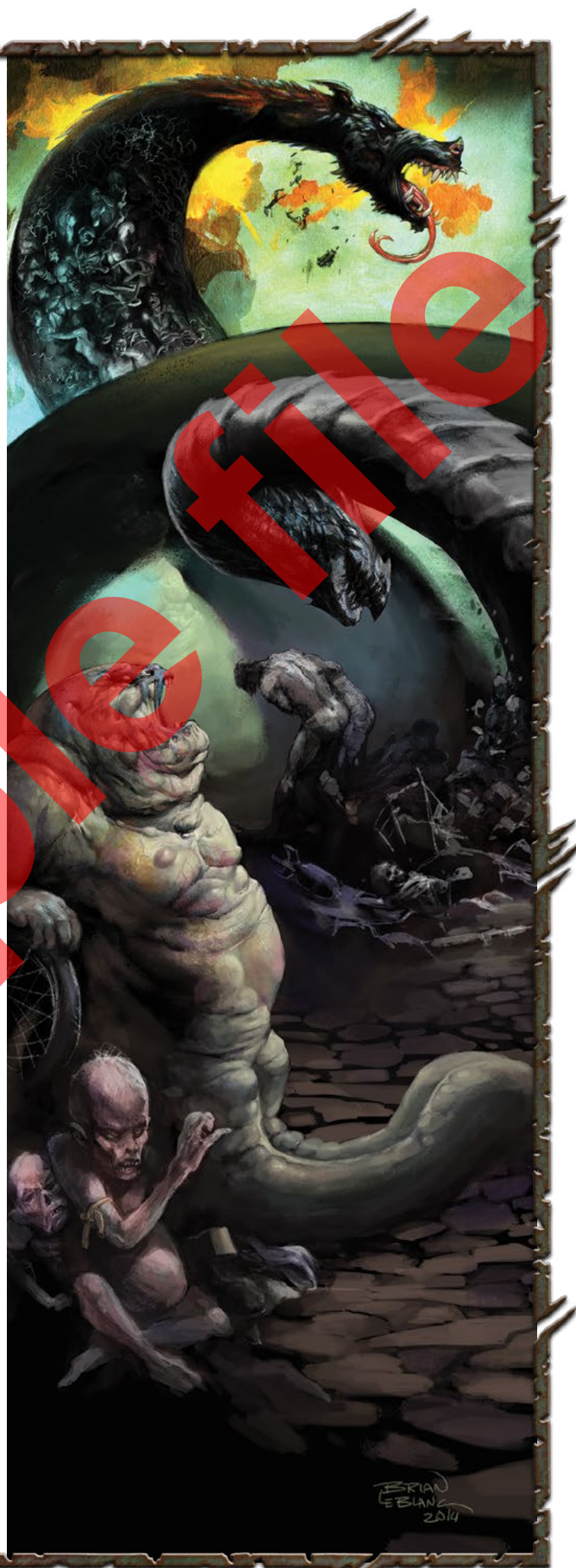
Weaver's web, frantic to escape, the Wyrms lashed out in an orgy of random destruction. However, the Weaver's immense reach limited even this, forcing the Wyrms to learn to work between the strands of her web, making use of the freedom available to it. Unable to devour nearly as much as it could before, the Wyrms learned to bend and twist the Weaver's webs, using them to spread corruption. Instead of destroying something outright, the Wyrms could twist it, so that its victim would first corrupt the creatures and objects around it, eventually destroying itself.

Acting indirectly, the Wyrms found new methods of causing living creatures to act for it, corrupting their minds and bodies for its use. Entropy, death, and destruction are not new. All three are a natural part of the world, existing since the beginning of the cosmos and the Triat's birth. Corruption is new, and with it came other new and terrible phenomena. Parasites, autoimmune diseases, and fatal overgrowths like cancer all became more virulent than they had previously been. Corruption made new toxins possible, toxins that could rend the Umbra's fabric and cause spirits to twist and sicken. The corrupted Wyrms' madness also created radiation poisoning — a direct physical manifestation of its corruption.

The Triatic Wyrms

As part of its descent into madness and its desperate attempts to win free from the Weaver's web, the Wyrms ripped itself into pieces, each one of which tore itself into other, smaller pieces. Shards of the Wyrms' madness and desire embedded themselves into these fragments, which then acted on the unsuspecting and unprepared world. The Garou call the Wyrms' various divisions and extensions the Hydra. One of the first acts of the trapped Wyrms was to use the Hydra's many heads to make contact with potential allies, leading them through the depths of the Umbra to the site of its imprisonment, the place that eventually became the hideous realm of Malfeas.

Every creature acting in the Wyrms' service serves one of the Hydra's three heads. However, what the vast majority of the Garou do not understand is that each of the Hydra's heads is a separate entity, connected to the others only via the mad bulk of the Wyrms. These heads not only cannot communicate, but they frequently end up in conflict with one another, as each seeks to destroy or defile in its own particular manner. These conflicts sometimes result in the efforts of all of the Hydra's branches failing, and a few clever shapeshifters have found ways to put the differ-



ent heads in conflict with one another. One of their most effective tactics has been causing agents of the Calamity Wyrms to destroy agents of one or both of the other two heads.

The Wyrms are an abstraction. If it exists anywhere, it exists as Malfeas; but other than experiencing that sizeable cancerous realm, no one will ever have direct contact with the Wyrms as a whole. The closest anyone comes to knowing the Wyrms as is one of the three branches of the Triatic Wyrms, a broken mockery of the original Triatic. These are also the largest portions of the Wyrms that can manifest in the physical world. The Triatic Wyrms consists of Beast-of-War, Eater-of-Souls, and the Defiler Wyrms.

Beast-of-War: The Calamity Wyrms

Beast-of-War is the corrupted reflection of the Wyld. Instead of a force of endless and varied creation, the Calamity Wyrms is a force of endless and unrestrained destruction. The full expression of Beast-of-War's power results in absolute devastation without any possibility for healing, regrowth, or rebirth.

It is the ultimate expression of the Wyrms' rage against the Weaver. In its efforts to win free of captivity, the Wyrms birthed a mindless beast motivated by an unrestrained appetite for violence and an unending hunger for absolute destruction, rather than fear or the need for sustenance.

The Silver Fangs have an ancient legend that tells of the whole tribe stopping the Calamity Wyrms from manifesting, but this seems to have been its only attempt. Beast-of-War has little need to do so, since it can easily transform ordinary conflicts or rivalries into deadly and pointless violence. It exists in the Changing Breeds' Rage, which can grow into a murderous battle-fury that removes any distinction between friend and foe. The Get of Fenris knows it as Jormungandr, the Midgard Serpent. The Maeljin Incarna known as the Hellbringer, also associated with the Urge Wyrms Ba'ashkai, acts in the Calamity Wyrms' name, spreading strife and turmoil throughout the world.

Eater-of-Souls: the Consuming Wyrms

Eater-of-Souls is a hideous mockery of the Weaver. As the Weaver attempts to incorporate everything into its Web, Eater-of-Souls mindlessly devours everything in its path in a vain effort to allow the Wyrms to win free from its bonds. The Consuming Wyrms is all too common today. Manifesting as the sort of greed and obsession that cause people with far more money than they could ever spend to relentlessly seek even more. It also infiltrates the hearts of jealous lovers who kill previous partners rather than see them be with anyone else.

Physically it manifests in cancerous tumors and wasting diseases like HIV. It is also the most active of the Wyrms' aspects, as it seeks to satisfy its never-ending hunger. In the sixteenth century A.D., it even attempted to appear in the physical world. The Croatan Tribe of the Garou learned of its impending arrival and lacking any other means of saving the world from destruction, they sacrificed themselves to drive Eater-of-Souls back to Malfeas. The Maeljin Thurifuge associated with the Urge Wyrms Lethargg serves the Eater-of-Souls, and continues trying to find a way for it to manifest once again.

The Defiler Wyrms

The Defiler is the Wyrms' twisted reflection of itself, tainted with self-hatred at having failed in its true purpose. It turns this feeling outward in an effort to destroy the world by inducing a similar self-loathing in every object, spirit and living creature. This is the Wyrms' most powerful aspect.

It exists as an insidious force that strikes targets from within, seducing and tempting them to perform all manner of self-destructive actions. It is the force behind suicide, addiction, self-mutilation, and a multitude of similar ills. Jews, Christians, and Muslims know it as the serpent in the Garden of Eden, and everyone has seen evidence of its work whether they know it or not. As the most intelligent and self-aware of the Triatic Wyrms, the Defiler has no need of a Maeljin Incarna to act in its service. It has never attempted to appear physically, but some ancient Garou legends state that it will do so at the end of the world. Another legend speaks of it appearing amidst a group of several thousand people who simultaneously commit suicide. Some Garou keep track of potential suicide cults in order to attempt to prevent the Defiler Wyrms' arrival.

Urge Wyrms

Trapped in the Web, unable to act, the Wyrms yearned for release. These desires fed on its desperation and panic until they became separate entities that the Garou know as Urge Wyrms. The Urge Wyrms embody pathological and extreme versions of normal emotions. A person touched by the Urge Wyrms of despair not only has all of his feelings of despair magnified, these feelings seep into him for weeks and months, eventually becoming a constant part of his emotional make-up. In time, they entirely consume him. An emotion fostered by an urge Wyrms can become the dominant part of a person's mind, eventually removing all other facets of her personality and utterly possessing her. The Maeljin Incarna are examples of the most extreme variety of this sort of possession.