Chronicles of Ancient Darkness Jumpchain

By QafianSage

Six thousand years ago, in prehistoric Europe, the people of the Clans lived between the mountains and the open ocean, hunting and gathering to live. Theirs was a world of natural beauty and savage danger, where all that existed between the people and a swift death was the side of a hide tent and one's own skills. Nevertheless, the Clans of the Forest and beyond lived in relative harmony; there was strife, but not war. They told tales of their ancestors, of the World Spirit which created all, and the long-ago Spirit Walkers who could send out their souls to enter and understand all things in the world.

But not all were content with such an existence. A group of mages gathered their wisdom together, each from a different Clan, in hopes of spreading good through the Forest and beyond. They sought to bring healing, and named themselves as such the Healers - and they were good, at first. But slowly they became corrupted; some desired personal power or immortality, while others were frustrated by the divisions and different beliefs of the clans. Whatever the case, the Healers came to desire power over the Forest, to bend it and the people to their will. Calling up their magecraft, the Healers unleashed a reign of terror on the forest, seeking to bring the people into line through fear, bound demons and other evils.

However, not all were happy with this new course, and with a terrible fire they broke the power of the Healers, now named the Soul Eaters by the peoples of the Forest. It is now thirteen summers since the Soul Eaters were first defeated, and they are rising again, seeking to secure anew their grip on the Forest.

By default, you arrive one month before Torak's Fa dies to the demon bear.

Take 1000 CP.

Age and Gender

You may choose your age freely, between 10 and 70. You may choose your gender freely as well.

Location

Roll a d8 to determine location. You may start in the homeland of your Clan, if you have one, for free.

1. **The Open Forest.** Perhaps the most hospitable of the lands, this is open forest, inhabited by many clans and much prey. A good place to live, though still harsh in the winters.

2. **Lake Axehead.** Situated to the northeast of the middle forest, and north of the Deep Forest, marshy Lake Axehead is home to the Otter Clan, who fish and hunt there in the shadow of the great Ice River which crawls down from the eastern mountains.
3. **The Shores.** Running from north to south with many small bays and inlets, the shore is home to such clans as the Whale, the Sea Eagle and the Salmon. The people here exist in a middle-space between the sea and the forest, and they like it that way.
4. **The Seal Islands.** A day's paddle out into the ocean, the Seal Islands are, perhaps unsurprisingly, inhabited by the Seal Clan, alongside the smaller Kelp and Cormorant Clans. These clans have a stronger division between the roles of men and women than those in the open forest, and revere the Sea Mother.
5. **The Deep Forest.** Situated to the east of the Open Forest, the Deep Forest is denser, and home to a subset of Clans who hold themselves apart from the rest, such as the Bat, the Forest Horse, the Auroch and the Red Deer Clans. It is here, on the Burnt Hill, where the power of the Soul Eaters was once destroyed.
6. **The Southern Forest.** A sparser forest, merging into moorland and up to the mountains, this region is avoided by most, as it sits in the shadow of the Mountain of Ghosts, where the spirits of the dead gather on certain nights.
7. **The Northern Ice.** Far to the north is the great, open ice, perhaps the harshest of the Clans' homes. The Ice Clans which live here are harsh as well, worshipping both the fire which warms them and the wind which seeks to slay them.
8. **Free Choice.** You may begin wherever you wish to, within the locations described in Paver's books.

Origin

Choose <u>one</u> Origin.

Wanderer
You are a wanderer without a clan; you still have a Clan-Soul, which lets you tell right from wrong, but you have no strong connection to any one place or group of people. You may choose whether to gain a history in this world as a wanderer, or to appear without roots or memories - for better and worse.

Hunter
You are one of the people of the clans, with your foremost duty being to help provide for yourself and your clan. You spend much of your time out in nature, hunting and foraging, and thus have gained an understanding of animals and their ways.

Leader
You are not a king, nor an unquestioned ruler, but you are a leader. Although you hunt and work alongside the rest of your clan, your true task and calling is to guide them, to mediate disputes and keep the people together in the face of a harsh world.

Mage
Having studied the arts of magecraft, you are one who seeks to understand the world. This can enable many things, from medicines and healing to divination of the future, but can also

be turned to evil, commanding demons, spreading sickness and more. You may begin as a part of any clan.

Perks

General Perks

Three Souls (Free)
Like all human beings here, you have not one soul but three.

> Your *Name Soul* comprises your sense of self and memory, and losing it after death ensures you will linger as a nameless, formless ghost bereft of true selfhood. It is possible for your name soul to temporarily leave your body, in which case that body will sleepwalk in pursuit of it, but if your name-soul becomes sick or lost, you will forget yourself and who you are.
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> Your *Clan Soul* comprises your sense of right and wrong, and helps to feel and express emotions. Losing it after death results in a demon; a creature with selfhood but no sense of what is right and wrong, and thus able to do anything in pursuit of its thirst for life. If this soul becomes sick or lost in life, you will have less and less regard for those around you; you will become unable to tell right from wrong, and behave callously and cruelly.
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> Finally, your *World Soul* is your connection to the Nanuak, the great life-energy and soul of all things. It is the seat of supernatural power, and more importantly your connection to the world. If your World Soul becomes sick or lost somehow, you will lose the capacity to understand the world around you - a deadly prospect for a hunter-gatherer. Your senses become no weaker, but you will not be able to interpret what they tell you, or relate what you see to your knowledge.

Under normal circumstances, this shouldn't really have much influence on your day-to-day life. However, so long as you have a healthy World Soul you will have a sensitivity to the world around you. You will be able to tell when a place is sacred or naturally-powerful or when it has become corrupted or tainted. When near a being with a powerful spirit - an ancient, mighty tree, a sacred animal, a powerful mage - you will be able to sense their power, and likewise you will gain a limited sensitivity to the presence of spirits, lingering souls, prowling demons or similar. This doesn't mean you'll be able to clearly perceive them, but you'll be able to sense they're there - and you might be able to sense when a person has been possessed or inhabited by a demon, or when they're soul-sick, unless they go to lengths to conceal this.

Additionally, you know how to place the death-marks on the heels, forehead and chest to help the souls stay together as they journey to the afterlife. In future jumps, you may use these marks to speed souls on their way after death in a similar manner, preventing them from lingering or becoming ghosts unless they truly want to.

Following this jump, you may choose to retain this complex soul-anatomy, or return to whatever schema you used before. You retain the skills and sensitivity this perk grants.

Survivalist (100 CP; First Free)
The world of the Clans is divided into four; the mountains, the forest, the sea and the northern ice. Choose one of these environments; you are entirely able to support yourself in such an environment, supplying yourself with everything from food to clothes to shelters to hunting tools and survival gear from only those things that can be naturally found there. This also gives you proficiency in the use of whatever tools are required for such survival; survival-skills in the sea include the ability to handle a skinboat, for instance, and all regions provide knowledge of how to kindle fire, and how handle axe, spear, knife and bow and arrow for the purposes of hunting and dressing kills.

In addition to the demands of practical survival, you also know the small rites and customs common to the clans of each chosen area. For instance, you know that sea-clans frown on mingling things of the sea with those of the forest, and how to avoid giving offence to the north wind if you travel up to the ice. In future jumps, this extends to a certain affinity for appeasing natural spirits of appropriate environments. In jumps without such apparent spirits, observing such customs seems to bring you a little extra luck - so why not?

The first version of this perk is free. You may purchase it up to an additional three times for 100 CP apiece to gain understanding of the other parts of the clans' homelands.

Well-Weathered (50 CP)
You possess a body shaped by the rigours of hard, outdoor life. You endure the elements well, and you're strong and tough enough to make your way in this harsh world. Effectively, you have about three-quarters human peak in strength, speed, endurance, coordination and reflexes, and can at least keep all of these qualities at a similar level without conflicting with one another. So long as you get regular exercise and don't absurdly overindulge, you will be able to retain this physique without constant effort.

You may treat this as a body mod, if you so choose.

Craftsman (100 CP)
While all people living in this world learn how to make all manner of things for their survival, you are particularly skilled in the creation of stone-age tools and objects. Your bows shoot straight and don't break save under incredible force, your spears are the envy of most, and you could make a skinboat which could endure harsh storms. Such creations are often in high demand from others, and you could earn yourself no small amount of regard by making them as gifts - or even asking favours in return for your craftsmanship.

Charming (100 CP)
Like Bale of the Seal Clan, you are gifted with both fair speech and a fair appearance. In short, you're notably handsome and/or beautiful, and are good at capitalising on your good looks and charm. You've got a talent for making good first impressions, and there are few who would deny that you're at least good-looking, even if they don't like you.

Spirit Walker (400 CP; Incompatible with Demon)

Said to be given only once every one thousand years, to say that the gift of Spirit Walking is a rare one would be an understatement. In the normal course of things, Torak would be the Spirit Walker of this age but, lucky you, you're one too.

The most foundational gift of the Spirit Walker is the ability to send out your Name Soul and Clan Soul to inhabit the body of another, while your World Soul remains in your body to keep you anchored to life. This can be done by will and a form of meditation alone, but this takes great practice; until you can achieve such mastery, you will need to make use of a special blend of herbs to Spirit Walk.

While Spirit Walking, your body will be unconscious, but you will be able feel and perceive all that the being you inhabit perceives as well. In this way, a Spirit Walker can see far away, perceiving things at great distances from their body, and can communicate with their host regardless of language or even lack thereof; souls-to-souls, a Spirit Walker can communicate with a bear as easily as with a human being. To go further, it is possible to directly control an inhabited body, either by the consent of its normal occupant, or by overcoming their souls to take control yourself.

With great skill in Spirit Walking, it is possible to not only inhabit the bodies of living beings, but even natural features. These have their own slow, powerful souls, fragments of the World Soul itself, and it is very difficult to understand them, but through such visitations you might gain a deeper understanding of the nature of the clouds, or the ancient experiences of the mountains, reaching back to when they were reared up from the earth itself. However, touching such vast consciousnesses as the Forest or other great features of the land is dangerous: It may be near-impossible to escape their grip and return to your own body. It is to all intents and purposes impossible to command such mighty powers, but a Spirit Walker might be able to 'persuade' such things to take action; to cause a mountain to let loose an avalanche kept long in waiting, or to influence a storm to be especially strong in a certain area.

Regardless of what you spirit walk into, this is not something to be done lightly. Something of whatever you enter will stay with you; usually only a trace, but sometimes more significant. If you spend time with your souls inside a viper, you may become more focused and intent. A wolf might impart an increased sense of group cohesion and loyalty. This can even induce minor physical changes; after spirit walking into the trees of the Deep Forest, Torak's eyes gained flecks of green, and he slowly became able to tap into a little of their ageless wisdom within himself.

This Perk acts as a **capstone booster.** However, if your abilities are discovered, you will suffer the effects of the Soul Hunger drawback for no additional CP.

Demon (400; Incompatible with Spirit Walker)
You are not human. You may wear human flesh, but your souls, your true self, are that of a demon. You may choose whether the body you wear is your own or that of some poor unfortunate into which you were once summoned and bound, their souls cast out while you take their place.

Whatever the case, your inhuman nature affords you many benefits. First and foremost, your own spiritual potency is added to that of your host body; by default this makes you about half again as strong, fast and enduring as you should be, your flesh fortified by demonic might. As your spiritual power increases, though, this benefit likewise increases. If you grow strong enough, you might one day equal the Demon Bear, inhabited by an uncontrollable elemental, and so powerful that no effort of the Clans could defeat it; only the World Spirit's intervention by avalanche could end the creature's rampage. As an added bonus, because you are one-step removed from your body, its pain does not particularly impact you, though actual debilitation still would.

Secondly, like a cruel parody of a Spirit Walker, your demonic spirit can slip the bounds of your flesh, leaving it alive but insensate until you return. While roaming in demonic form you are a naked spirit; hard to see under normal circumstances, but able to shape-shift to appear as almost anything no larger than a bear. You have no physical substance and cannot be harmed by most physical means, but spiritually-powerful objects can interact with you, and you are much more vulnerable to magic which can bind or command spirits. If your body is killed, you enter this state automatically.

Thirdly, while acting as a demon, you can crawl into the mouths of sleeping, drugged or otherwise mentally- and spiritually-vulnerable animals or individuals to possess them. While doing so, you can either cause their souls to slowly sicken, making them lose respect for right and wrong in the case of the Clan Soul, or impeding their memories, sense of self and connections to others in the case of their Name Soul, or you can directly control them. Such control is imprecise and temporary save in those whose Clan and Name Souls are profoundly weakened - such as the children made into Tokoroths - but could let you do things like cause a person to go into danger or attack a loved one while sleepwalking.

This perk acts as a **Capstone Booster**. However, you must take the Weak Clan Soul Complication.

Wanderer Perks

Walker (100 CP; Free for Wanderer)
You have the endurance and hardiness for long journeys, and an excellent sense of direction to help keep you from getting lost in trackless wilderness. Once you've seen a landmark, you're certain to be able to recognize it again. Finally, you're less bothered than others by loneliness or isolation; you still feel the need for human company, but you won't suffer any serious psychological ills for spending years at a time alone.

Well-Met (200 CP; Discounted for Wanderer)
You have a talent for making good first impressions. If someone met you in the open forest, they'd at least give you time to explain yourself, and it wouldn't be too hard to make a new friend with such a brief meeting. This doesn't necessarily give you a strong connection, but it'll give you the start of one. Additionally, this kind of good impression means you can generally beg for sanctuary and hospitality, as long as whoever you're asking it from isn't hostile to you and doesn't have good reason to deny you.

Perspective (400 CP; Discounted for Wanderer)

Perhaps because of your position outside the normal Clan-structure of this world, you have a particular ability to understand the groups of others. By observing such groups, you can quickly gain insight into their natures and structures - their traditions, practices and group dynamics, and how and why those have arisen and taken hold. This doesn't let you pluck information out of thin air, but you're excellent at working it out by deduction and investigation. Furthermore, you're good at questioning and discussing such group peculiarities with people without risking offence. You could engage in a civil discussion with an Auroch Clan member about why they make their fires just so, with only wood and no stone or strike-fires. With enough time and some care and tact, you could even work to slowly create changes in such traditions - though that won't be risk-free.

Finding Family (600 CP; Discounted for Wanderer)
It is a terrible thing to be clanless in this world. Fortunately for you, that's not a state which has to last forever. With this perk, you gain an incredible ability to pick up the skills, mannerisms and philosophies of clans, groups and societies, and to display them in such a way that even those raised within them would, if they didn't know better, say you were raised in the same way. This kind of cultural assimilation only takes a few days to begin, and within a few months you'll be like a native. With time, it may become almost an inevitability that you'll be offered some form of adoption or inclusion into the culture. Even completely closed societies, like those who only accept those born into them, would at least be open to considering adopting you into them. If you turn down this offer, you'll still be looked on favourably, though either way this perk doesn't mean that your relations will stay good if you're a dick.

> If you're a **Spirit Walker**, this kind of inclusion and adoption goes beyond the social and into the magical and spiritual. If you're adopted into a group or society, you'll be able to learn any skills native to that society at four times the normal rate, until you reach the level of an experienced member. Furthermore, if the group has any kind of special magic or power associated with them, you can gain access to that ability as well over time by a combination of spirit walking into people from that group, as well as earnestly participating in that community.
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> Finally, you gain a greater affinity with your Spirit Walking with humans and humankind in general. It is easier for you to Spirit Walk into other people, your communication with them is especially clear, and with a few such visitations and conversations - ideally consensual and amicable - you can absorb customs, languages and other aspects of culture at great speed. Additionally, it is easier for you to hide your souls' presence within another, letting you observe from behind their eyes unnoticed.
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> If you're a **Demon**, on the other hand, you have an incredible level of cunning and charisma for a particular end: Building trust and causing others not to pay attention to what you don't want them to. With your skills, you could speak to a hunting party as a marked outcast, and within a month be an inner member of their Clan, beloved and trusted by all save those you directly and obviously harm. With time, you could turn families against one another and themselves with manufactured grievances, all the while seeming the reasonable, peace-seeking party. You can dissemble your true intentions such that only clear and obvious proof of your lies will suffice to break

them, and you're damn good at keeping that under wraps. If a society falls into your clutches, it will be very hard to root you out again, save by direct force - and if that happens, you can count on your trusting friends to try to save you.

Hunter Perks

Keen Senses (100 CP; Discounted for Hunter)
Your senses are especially sharp and attuned to the world around you. You notice the minute details others might miss, and can tell the normal sounds of the forest from the crack of a twig beneath a stealthy paw. This aids you in all forms of tracking or investigation, but also functions as something approaching a danger sense; it is very hard for someone - or something - to sneak up on you entirely unawares.

Warrior (200 CP; Discounted for Hunter)
Though outright fighting between people is rare in the Forest, it does happen, and you're more than ready for such an occurrence. You're unusually strong and tough, allowing you to keep fighting through wounds that would subdue lesser people. Furthermore, you are an expert with both bow and spear, and more than capable of using them to bring down men as well as animals.

Shadow (400 CP; Discounted for Hunter)
In the Forest, to be seen is to be in danger. This doesn't guarantee peril, but in general it is better to see than be seen, and that is your area of expertise. You know how to move so as to go unnoticed, how to conceal yourself in almost any natural environment and, given a few minutes, how to create camouflage to render yourself almost invisible so long as you stay still, and only a little more obvious when moving. Even wolves would have a hard time tracking you, as you know how to hide or conceal your scent and any other traces of your passage.

One With the World (600 CP; Discounted for Hunter)
You have an understanding of the natural world which borders on the preternatural. You can instinctively understand why an animal takes the actions it does, how you could direct those actions (for instance, how to create a stampede so it doesn't trample a camp, or how to plant trees to block the wind), and how to take on different appearances to animals; how to appear non-threatening, or as a friend, or a threat too dangerous to lightly challenge. This understanding extends beyond animals, though, and into the natural world itself. Not only does nature itself seem to guide you to what you need to survive, such as clean water or sources of food, you have an instinctive ability to understand both the landscape and whatever ecosystem you find yourself in. A few days spent in the deep forest would let you extend all your skills from the open forest to that new environment. Finally, you are able to easily understand and trace back the causes of any disturbances in the natural world, identifying their sources and ways to address them.

If you're a **Spirit Walker**, you gain an incredible affinity for using that gift to connect with animals in particular. By experiencing life as an animal species, you can come to understand it so deeply that you can effectively communicate with them as if you shared a language, even while not Spirit Walking. Furthermore, when you spirit walk into living things, you may bring more of their qualities with you when you leave.

These benefits are subtle, and require time to build up to noticeable levels. Frequently Spirit Walking into a wolf, for instance, might enhance your senses of smell and hearing, while spending time with your souls inside trees might grant you some of their patience and even their longevity over time. This deeper communion often leaves deeper marks on your psyche as well, however - so be careful.

If you're a **Demon** on the other hand, your deep understanding of nature and its ways only gives you more ability to break it. You know every weak point in an ecosystem, how attacking or removing one species might cause another to run amok. You are an expert in setting traps of all kinds, whether physical traps to catch and injure your enemies before they notice, or more tactical traps, such as leading an enemy force into a location where they can be wiped out. Finally, you are a master of turning almost anything you can find to violent purposes, from adapting magic for warfare to building improvised weapons to breeding and conditioning animals as weapons of conflict.

Leader Perks

Empathy (100 CP; Free for Leader)
It is said that the ancient Spirit Walkers could become other people, truly understanding their minds. You don't have that gift, but you do have a keen sense for the thoughts and emotions of others. More often than not you can tell when you're being lied to or deceived, and tell people's true feelings on a subject even if they don't tell you, as well as guess how people would feel about something, based on what you know about them. A useful skill for a clan-leader.

Weighty Words (200 CP; Discounted for Leader)
Understanding others and making wise decisions is one thing. Getting people to go along with them is quite another. So long as you don't show yourself to be incompetent or malicious, people tend to give your words a great deal of weight. If you pronounce judgement on a dispute, people will probably accept your arbitration rather than arguing. Even when leading others into danger, you can convince them that this is the best way to go. As an additional benefit, you become quite good at public speaking and either encouraging or intimidating others, able to pick just the right words to get across the message you want and impress it upon the hearts of others. Even if they don't obey, they won't simply ignore you.

One People (400 CP; Discounted for Leader)
Long ago, it is said, the Spirit Walkers helped all people of the world understand and live with one another in harmony. You can't quite claim that, but you do have a real talent for mediation, getting disparate groups to talk to one another, and persuading them to overcome their prejudices. Under your guidance, clans who've been feuding for generations could be persuaded to reach neutral terms, or even to ally - though it'd take some work.

The Sun Shall Rise (600 CP; Discounted for Leader)
Trouble and suffering are facts of life. They come and go like the weather, bringing pain in its season and then passing away. No matter the situation, though, whether in hard times or good, you will be there. You have a near-inexhaustible reservoir of will and drive that can

sustain not only your own spirit, but that of others as well. You may be exhausted, wounded or sickly, but if the situation calls for it, you will be there to provide guidance, a helping hand, or a wise word - even if you have to do it from a litter. Even if the forest were to be destroyed and you yourself on the verge of hopelessness, you could lead your followers forwards towards whatever faint light remains, lead them in the celebration of ancient traditions and tell stories to restore their faith in a better tomorrow.

In short, you are the model of an indomitable leader, able to hold your people together even in the face of terrible catastrophe, and making the decisions you know to be right, even if they break your heart. With time and the demonstration of good judgement, you easily find yourself favoured for positions of authority by those below you and respected by your peers, and you can always maintain your outward calm and air of leadership in a crisis.

> If you're a **Spirit Walker**, such is the power of your spirit that it can reach out to others even when you're not present. Even without spirit walking, those who follow you or have a close connection to you - your friends, your kin - feel the touch of your Clan Soul against their own; a kind of conscience reminding them of their better nature and providing spiritual support in dark times or against deadly foes. Additionally, when you send out your souls, you can send them over great distances to reach your followers and close connections to provide more direct guidance. Even if such a person was in the far northern ice, you could spirit walk into a bird and find them, and once you have found them you have an easier time than you ought in making yourself understood - even if the form your souls have entered can't speak.
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> If you're a **Demon**, on the other hand, your mighty spirit is a terror to your followers. You can effortlessly inspire fear, superstitious dread or reverence in the weak-willed, and even the brave will find their hearts quail before you. Under such conditions, it's easy for you to slowly wear down resistance to your rule, until people become accustomed to your domination and submit without thought to carrying out actions they might have once found heinous or believe things they might have once found strange as you slowly weaken their Clan Souls. Even far away from you, the memory of your power and your terror will drive them to obey you. If a person lives long enough under the shadow of your fear, it is all but certain they will become a demon when they die - and such a demon will retain its fear and reverence of you.

Mage Perks

Signs and Omens (100 CP; Free for Mage)
You have an attunement to the world which lets you pick up on subtle signs and omens, which can hint to you of things that are, or are to come. You can't control when these omens appear to you, and it can be difficult to tell them from simple coincidence - especially if you want or fear a certain thing to be real - but some will be true. Interpreting these omens can become more certain if you go into a trance to do so; an essential practice for mages which the **Magecraft** perk will teach you.

Magecraft (200 CP; Discounted for Mage)
You are learned in the skills of mages; you are proficient in all the basic forms of magecraft - healing, poisoning, summoning, binding, sending, severing, cleansing and the reading of

omens - and have especial skill in a particular branch or specialisation. Perhaps you are a master of the interpretation of omens and signs, allowing you to accurately sense the locations of prey or dangers to come, you are a master of cleansing and purging evil influences, or an expert in understanding the thoughts and intentions of others.

Whatever your specialty, through the use of herbs, rituals, trances, potions, incense, chants and the making of charms, talismans and effigies from natural materials, you can work subtle but potent magic. Don't mistake subtlety for weakness, though; a curse-stick can afflict a person to death by sickness, and a sleeping-draught could bind a whole clan into slumber. With a powerful link to a person, such as their hair or a pebble they placed their clan-marks on, you could even influence them from afar, summoning them, sending help or afflicting them with sickness.

This perk may be repurchased, granting you an extra specialisation with each subsequent purchase.

Weaving Words (400 CP; Discounted for Mage)
You have a mage's talent for making cunning use of your words, and the delicate tapestry of taboos, traditions, laws and ceremonies which weave together the fabric of this world. You are learned in all such matters, able to tell evocative stories and inspire powerful emotions through such means, or through ceremonies and rituals. You are also a master of making use of a culture's traditions and rules. This could be anything from invoking superstitious fear of a mage to go unmolested, to calling on ancient laws and rights to be honoured so that peace can be reached, to using the threat of communal shame to compel individuals to act according to the expectations of their culture. With time, you can even change such taboos and accepted ways of being, using cultural manipulation to shape the societies which surround you. With a manufactured enemy or two and some performances of power, you could transform clans into fearful, xenophobic forces leashed to your control - or you could work to change cruel traditions for the better.

Mighty Spirit (600 CP; Discounted for Mage)
If you had been present when the Healers formed, doubtless they would have asked you to join. You have great strength of will and spirit, and can manifest this sense palpably to others, in accordance with your intent. If you mean to protect a group, your power will feel protective and uplifting; if you are hostile, it will be intimidating, almost crushing, such that the weak-willed will feel unable to act against you at all. Your power lies about you like a mantle, making most reluctant to harm you - though you can conceal this aura as well, if you so choose.

Furthermore, any magic or magecraft you perform is enhanced. Any given spell may not necessarily have a greater effect, but you will be more able to command great works of magecraft, like the ice-storms of Eostra. Moreover, your spells will become more forceful and harder to turn aside or counter; only a powerful mage can hope to oppose your magecraft directly, and if you enter a mystical or mundane contest of wills, you are all but certain to win. Only the very mightiest powers can match you directly, and only the greatest of agonies or terrors turn you aside from your purpose so long as you still wish to pursue it - though you are not omniscient, and more subtle means of opposition may yet disguise themselves from you, or misdirect your power to your own undoing.

Finally, you know a terrible secret. You know a ritual to prepare another for sacrifice, readying them and yourself to steal their power. This rite requires that you kill your victim and devour their heart, but if successful you can take into yourself any one mystical or spiritual power source they might possess. Spirit Walking is one such example, but you might steal another's connection to the Force, or the ability to bend an element. This cannot steal purely physical or psychic abilities, nor mundane ones like intelligence.

If you're a **Spirit Walker**, you are undoubtedly the greatest mage of your generation, and a dozen generations before. Such is your power that you no longer need rituals to perform many of your feats, able to communicate with or command demons, ghosts and other lesser spirits - to leave or to obey - by directly contesting your will and souls against theirs, without need for a tool such as the Fire Opal. You could even reach out to the very recently dead, returning their souls to their body as a form of mystical resuscitation. More than this, though, you have gained the capacity for two particular rituals.

With a lengthy rite, you can transfer all three of your souls permanently from your body into another's. Your body will die, but all your souls, memories and powers will follow you into your new form, which must be a living creature, but otherwise may be anything you choose. Effectively, you can become immortal by transferring your selfhood from one body to the next - though by doing so you cast out the souls of your new host, likely to become a demon or ghost themselves.

Alternatively, you may perform an initiatory rite with another person, Spirit Walking into their body and bolstering their World Soul with your own. In this way, you can grant others any magical or spiritual ability you yourself possess, though only at a very minor level to begin with. Effectively, this allows you to impart to others a 'seed' of potential to interact with a certain magic system, which must be cultivated and nurtured to be of any great use.

As a **Demon**, on the other hand, you are a terror like no other the Forest has seen in living memory or the tales of olden times. With your demonic might alloyed to the power of your magecraft, you are a true master of demons. You can command demons and ghosts as if you held a shard of the Fire Opal, mastering them with your mere presence and will, compared to the rituals of mere human mages. If you held such a tool yourself, you would be able to create and entirely control even such monsters as the Demon Bear, which required the intervention of the World Spirit to defeat.

Beyond your magecraft, however, you have another truly terrifying power: Unlike those who merely claimed the title, you are a true eater of souls. If you can subdue a ghost, spirit or demon, or the souls of the dead, you can devour them in whole or in part. Devouring the Clan Soul creates a demon, which you can command as you would any other, while you gain your victim's understanding of those close to them. Devouring the Name Soul instead creates a ghost you can use as a messenger to send images in dreams and visions to those connected to it, while you gain a portion of your victim's skills and memories. Devouring the World Soul increases your

spiritual power; it doesn't give you any special abilities your victim might have possessed, but it increases your own power based on that of your victim. This can be done alongside the heart-eating rite.

Gifts

You may gain three discounts on 100 CP Gifts, two discounts on 200 CP Gifts, and one discount each on 400 and 600 CP Gifts. 100 CP Gifts are free, if discounted.

Discounts cannot be stacked.

Wild Clothing (Free)
You have clothing suited to your starting location or clan, as you choose. In the forest this will generally be well-made deer hide clothing, while on the sea it will probably be seal-hide. In the northern ice, these will be clothes designed to protect you against the bitter cold and the glare of the snow, including a bone visor with a thin slit to see through. This item also gives you all you need to repair such clothing.

Clan Tattoos (100 CP; Free for all but Wanderer)
These tattooed markings, unique to each Clan, mark you as a member of that Clan, for better and worse. Those of your own clan will consider you a kinsman and treat you as such, while those of other Clans will treat you as an outsider, but otherwise according to their relations with your home Clan. Additionally, you have a pouch of ochre, used to give the dead the marks their souls need to remain together as they journey into the afterlife.

After this jump, you may choose to remove the tattoos permanently, or to keep them. You may hide or manifest them as though they were an alt form.

Spirit-Walking Herbs (100 CP; Free with Spirit Walker)
For most, these herbs merely produce a disorienting effect as the Name Soul comes a little loose, leaving one forgetful and prone to sleepwalking for a time. For a Spirit Walker, however, consuming the herbs which come in this small hide pouch allow you to easily walk outside your body and explore the wider world. There is enough in this pouch for a dozen such uses, as well as seeds to grow more. Thankfully the herbs grow quickly and hardily, and are easy to preserve, so after planting you can expect a new batch in a week, along with new seeds.

Bow and Spear (100 CP)
A fine bow, a good quiver, and two dozen well-made arrows, along with a finely-made, stone-headed spear. All a hunter needs to make a living in the forest or on the sea, if he knows what he's doing.

Skinboat (100 CP)
A well-made boat of sealskin stretched over a wooden or bone frame, light and able to skim easily over the water - as long as you know what you're doing. If you don't, enjoy going in circles. Oh, and you get a paddle, too.

Mark of Authority (100 CP)
An item or symbol of your authority, respected by others and acting almost as a stamp of your identity. You can choose its precise form, but common ones might be an amulet, a carved staff or something similar. When holding this, people tend to listen to you a little more, and give your words a little more weight. Additionally, if you have the gift of magecraft, using this when facing spiritual forces will give your work a little more *oomph*.

Crafting Tools (100 CP)
A bag filled with bone needles, gut threads, good stones for knapping, a small set of slate and flint knives, stone scrapers to help with cleaning hides, a good hand-axe, and otherwise everything you'd need to make most of what the people of this world know.

Animal Companion (100 CP)
You have a friend, an animal who you have a close connection with, and who has become a dear companion. With the base purchase of this Gift, they are loyal and intelligent, but mundane and no larger or more intimidating than a dog, wolf or raven. For an additional 100 CP, your companion is more formidable, such as a young elk or smallish bear. Either way, you can more or less understand one another. Your companion is not immortal (unless you have some means to make them so), and will not return on death, but if they do die you will discover either a descendent or another animal willing to take their place. For any magical purposes, you may treat such a companion as a familiar.

At the end of this jump, if they so choose, you may take this companion with you.

> **Guide (200 CP; Incompatible with Host)**
> Your animal companion is no longer mundane. Instead, they are a mystical animal-guide, with intelligence bordering on that of a human - though their perspective is certainly not the same. They can perceive demons, ghosts and other spiritual beings as easily as any other thing in the world, can sense such entities at a long distance - for instance, scenting demons on the wind. They can lead you to hidden places, particularly those of supernatural power, by a kind of supernatural instinct and, most impressive of all, they have some influence over demons, ghosts and souls, such that they could frighten away lesser spirits and act as a guardian, hold down a possessed beast by biting its spirit as well as its flesh, or lead your souls back to your body, should they become lost.
>
> For the purposes of discounts, this counts as a separate 200 CP purchase.
>
> **Host (200 CP; Incompatible with Guide)**
> Your animal companion is no natural creature. Perhaps they once were, but through the machinations of a dark mage they have become host to a powerful demon, maybe even a lesser elemental; that left behind when a great natural feature is destroyed, such as a glacier or a mountain. They are not so loyal to you as another animal companion might be, but they will obey you so long as you maintain control, and the spirit within them has given them both human intelligence - though with all the malice and strange perspectives of demonkind - as well as terrible toughness, strength and speed; perhaps double the normal attributes of their kind. Finally, as a

spiritual being, they have the power to perceive other such entities clearly, and can attack them, though they are incapable of the more subtle feats possible by a Guide.

For the purposes of discounts, this counts as a separate 200 CP purchase.

Travelling Gear (200 CP)
A pack, a portable tent, ice-picks, clothes to resist (most of) the worst this land can throw at you, ropes and a sleeping roll with feathers or fur on the inside for warmth. Really, everything you need to keep yourself safe from the elements - safe-ish, at least - and to reach anywhere on land, provided you've got the patience and endurance to walk there. And, to help you out a little more, a pair of really good hide boots, comfortable enough to never give you blisters, tough enough to never wear out, and which somehow never get wet or damp inside.

Companion (200 CP)
A friend, a companion, perhaps a lover. You have a close friend, someone who'll stick with you through thick and thin, from this world. You may either choose an existing character, create an original one, or import an existing companion into this role. Either way, they gain an Origin with all associated freebies and discounts, and 600 CP to spend. They cannot take a Companion themselves, though they may take an Animal Companion.

At the end of this jump, if they so choose, you may take this companion with you.

Canoe (200 CP)
A finely-made canoe, able to seat three people alongside gear, and hardy enough to endure both rough seas and wild waters. So long as you know how to handle it, this canoe won't break or capsize save in the worst of storms, and even if it does, a new canoe you carve will have the same properties. Comes with paddles as well.

Mage's Tools (400 CP)
This sack contains all a mage needs to work their crafts, from charms of bone, feathers and teeth to herbs, pigments and minerals of all kinds, to stone bowls and bone pestles. Much of this would be more or less incomprehensible to most people of the Forest, but to a mage this would be a treasure trove. With these and the right knowledge, you have all you need to concoct potions, poisons and remedies, enter revelatory trances and otherwise take advantage of the subtler side of the world. As an added bonus, this sack also contains all the seeds you'd need to grow more of any herbs, and comes with the knowledge of where to find more of any inorganic materials, or to create replacements for lost or broken tools.

Hunting Grounds (400 CP; Discounted with Clan)
Choose a biome within this world, whether sea dotted with islands, open or deep forest, mountainous highlands, the sea shore or the harsh northern ice. You know of such a region in the world, unknown or generally avoided by others, about ten miles in diameter. It is as rich and bountiful as can be hoped from whatever biome you chose in whatever animals and plants are appropriate, and so long as you remain in this jump will stay untouched unless you lead others there yourself, or they pursue you into it. Even then, people will tend not to stay long-term unless you let them. So long as the ecosystem is not totally destroyed, it will recover swiftly and healthily from damage.

In future jumps, this region may either be inserted into new worlds as you choose, or be added as an attachment to your warehouse however you choose; whether as a separate 'pocket dimension' or as a place your warehouse is situated within - usually in concealed fashion, such as inside a hillside. If part of the warehouse, the hunting grounds experience seasons and other environmental phenomena as usual.

Tokoroth (400 CP; Discounted with Fire Opal)
The result of the darkest of a mage's crafts, a Tokoroth is a monster, and a tragedy. A Tokoroth is a child taken at a young age from its parents, kept in the dark and fed only just enough to keep it alive, until it forgets all love and even the memory of its own name. Then, a mage summons a demon and imprisons it within the child's body, suppressing their souls and taking control of the body. Tokoroths are powerful and cunning servants to such evil mages, as despite having a relatively animalistic intelligence, they are very cunning and adept in all manner of malicious traps and tricks. They are stronger than their bodies should allow, and a skilled mage can command them to do almost anything, as they lack any sense of right and wrong which would prevent them from doing so. They are both reviled and terribly feared by the Clans, as they combine the inhuman malice of a demon with a physical body able to perform such evil in the world.

You have such a tormented being in your service and under your command. It has a child's body to begin with, about the age of ten or so, but it will age as normal. As a Tokoroth ages, they become better able to pretend at humanity, while their physical abilities likewise grow. It will obey your commands to the best of its ability - as long as you can bear using a forsaken child in such a way.

Pack (400 CP)
You have formed a close bond with not only one, but a group of others. You have five companions and friends, members of your Clan or, if you're Clanless, similar Clanless wanderers. These can either be original characters, or minor/background characters from the books. Each receives an Origin, associated freebies, and 200 CP to spend. They may not take Drawbacks, buy the Pack or Companion Gifts, or pool points to buy more expensive perks. They may, however, buy an Animal Companion, though its loyalty will be to them rather than directly to you. Alternatively, you may replace any number of these companions with two wolves or animals of similar strength each, or four smaller animals, such as ravens. These do not get an Origin or CP to spend, but get the Keen Senses Perk for free, and are excellent hunters.

Whatever the combination of humans and animals you choose, they are loyal to you and, if you and they so choose, will follow you into future jumps.

Clan (600 CP)
You are the leader of an entire Clan. You may choose its clan guardian animal, the form of its clan tattoos, and either roll on the Location table above to determine its homeland, or have it begin in the same location as you. Your Clan consists of about fifty people, all reasonably skilled survivalists, but none truly exceptional. For exceptional members, consider buying the Pack Gift. It also includes your clan's home grounds - about a mile diameter around their camp - and the contents of that camp; spears, bows, fishing lines,

tents, shelters, a bone-ground and everything else a neolithic society might need - apart from hunting grounds, of course.

In future jumps, you may either have your Clan and their grounds attached to your warehouse, or inserted into the world in appropriate locations.

Fire Opal (600 CP)
You have in your possession a previously-unknown shard of the Fire Opal, a mystical gem with strange and terrible powers. A couple of inches long and about half that wide, this shard of the Fire Opal is a beautiful, fiery red, and seems to capture and throw back any light which falls upon it, creating a reddish, internal glow. More than its beauty, however, the Fire Opal has potent powers in magecraft. It attracts demons, and can be used to amplify any magic to attract, summon, control or bind demons. Still, there are limits to its power; even with the Fire Opal, the Soul Eater Tenris could create the Demon Bear, summoning a mighty elemental into the body of the bear and trapping it there. However, he couldn't control it, only set it loose to rampage and to hunt down particular individuals above others.

In future jumps, this jewel will amplify the potency of any similar magic to deal with demons or demonic entities, making it easier to accomplish any related feats. Furthermore, while under the command of the jewel, demons will not be able to resort to rules-lawyering or other chicanery to get around the letter of their bindings; while you command them with the jewel, they will obey in good faith, so long as you can command them in the first place. If you lose the jewel, however…

Medicine Horn (600 CP)
Though beautifully-made, this medicine horn - the hollowed-out tip of an antler used to contain earthblood and other substances used in spiritual rites - seems at first glance to be nothing particularly special. Which is, in fact, *why* it's special. Carved from a tine of the World Spirit's antlers (who knows why it deigned to permit such a thing?) the horn has a powerful protective virtue. While you wear it or keep it on you, any magical or spiritual power of perception cannot find you, or discern anything mystical about you. As Torak's mother's medicine horn protected him from the Soul Eaters noticing his nature as a Spirit Walker until he all-but told one of them, so you too will be protected. In the galaxy of *Star Wars*, you would slip beneath the notice of Jedi and Sith alike; the Force would not reveal you. In Middle-Earth, the eye of Sauron or the Palantiri would not fall upon you unless you unveiled yourself to them directly (putting on the One Ring still wouldn't be a good idea). Anything kept inside the medicine horn will be similarly concealed, and any harmful or corruptive effects it has will be contained. The horn isn't very big, though, so don't try to stuff too much in there at once.

Additionally, once per jump (or ten years, whichever is shorter), when you or those you care about are in grave danger, the horn will bring help and protection. This won't necessarily get you out of a scrape completely, and the form this aid takes will either be shaped by the nature of the spirit or magical phenomena in that world (e.g. in Lord of the Rings you might be saved by the great Eagles), or seem to be a coincidence, but it'll ensure you have a way out of your predicament - if you have the will to take it.

Complications

You may take any number of Complications, but may gain no more than +1000 CP from any combination.

Another Soul (+0 CP)
Instead of inserting as yourself or in a new life, you may instead insert yourself in the place of one of the characters of the Chronicles of Ancient Darkness. You do not get any additional skills or abilities you didn't purchase with CP, and must have at least the basic elements to represent the character; if you're going to be Torak, you're going to need to be a Spirit Walker.

Clanless (+100 CP)
Like Torak, you will never quite find peace in any of the Clans of this world. Circumstances will conspire to ensure that although you may be friendly with one, some or even all of them, none will truly accept you. This doesn't get in the way of personal bonds of friendship, but you'll always be some degree of outsider.

Enemy of Nature (+100 CP)
Animals don't like you. Like, *really* don't like you. This doesn't mean they'll actively seek you out, but good luck trying to tame or domesticate anything. They'll start and run if they catch your scent, or treat you as a threat by default. This can be overcome through diligent effort, or means like Spirit Walking to truly understand the animals, but you'll probably take ten times as long to get anywhere with regards to getting animals' good side.

On the bright side, this doesn't apply to any animals you purchase with CP, or who arrive as companions.

Bad Reputation (+100 CP)
You have a bad reputation; maybe you committed a crime in the past and are well-known for it, maybe you have some mannerism or habit that people just don't like. Whatever the case, you're going to have to overcome people's initial impressions of you to be able to really do anything with them.

Hated (+100 CP)
Choose a category of Clans from the following: Forest Clans, Sea Clans, Ice Clans, Mountain Clans, Deep Forest Clans. Those clans hate you in particular, and will treat you as if you were an outcast (see above). This Complication can't be taken with the 200 CP version of Marked, but it may be taken up to three times.

Sickly (+100 *or* +200 CP)
Your constitution isn't the best - a problem in a world like this with so little to help those with such difficulties. By default, you're merely susceptible to various minor ailments, which will generally make your time here miserable and hamper your physical abilities and general fitness.

For an additional 100 CP, however, this vulnerability extends even to deadly diseases and contagions - a real difficulty with antibiotics several thousand years away. Best be careful of infection.

Old Injury (+100 *or* +200 CP)
This is a world whose medical knowledge, while effective in some ways, is still very primitive. Old wounds trouble almost everyone who reaches a reasonable age, and you're no exception. For 100 CP, you have some old wound or injury which causes you problems; perhaps smoke inhalation during the Great Fire has injured your lungs, or you have a weakened leg which gives you a persistent limp.

For an additional 100 CP, the injury is more crippling. Perhaps your hand was severed in a barbaric punishment, or you lost a whole eye to a flying shard of stone, or a foot to frostbite. Whatever the case, your wound will cause you significant problems in your daily life.

Marked (+100 CP *or* +200 CP)
You are marked, physically, in some way which is very hard to cover up or conceal, and which allows others to recognize you at a glance. This isn't too bad in most circumstances, but if you want to pass as someone you're not, that's going to be tricky.

For an additional 100 CP, you have a very specific mark: that of an outcast, a small black circle on your forehead. Anyone who sees this mark will immediately regard you as exactly that: An outcast, an outsider rejected by the society of the Clans in general, and reviled for whatever it was you did to earn that status. You will be warned away, driven off and, if you keep coming back, likely killed. At least one Clan already knows you're an outcast, and they won't hesitate to spread it around at Clanmeets.

If you take this with Bad Reputation, not only will you be unwelcome and driven away by any Clans you encounter, you will be actively hunted by all who know your identity, nature and whereabouts, and that information will be shared between Clans at any opportunity.

Demon-Haunted (+200 CP)
Something about you is ill-omened. When you are near, demons seem to find their way into the world, and come to cause you trouble. Most of the time, this will manifest as really bad luck; you'll step on what seems to be a secure rock, only to find it was a demon in disguise and plunge through into a river, or find dangerous animals inexplicably alerted to your presence. Occasionally, though, a demon will get more brazen, and try to go for you directly. They will seek to enter your body and sicken your souls, weakening your sense of self and morality to alienate you from yourself and those around you as your actions become wilder and more amoral. When you sleep, you might find yourself awakening in the middle of some malicious act. Eventually, when your souls are weak enough, it will try to possess you directly, and if you cannot overcome it your body will become its host - and who knows what it could do then?

This can be countered by various means to protect against demons or drive them out, but no matter how many you drive away, more will always find their way to you to trouble you.

If you are a demon yourself, this Complication manifests similarly, in that you will always be troubled by other demons whose desires run counter to your own. Even if you were to open up the Otherworld for them to escape, demons would still be a pain in your ass.

Weak Soul (+200 CP)
One of your souls is unusually weak. Decide which this is when you take this Drawback.

> If your **Name Soul** is weak, so is your sense of identity and memories. Your skills are about half as effective as they otherwise would be, and you learn new skills at half the normal rate. You are unusually pliable and easy to deceive or persuade, and you often drift off, unable to pay attention for long.
>
> If your **Clan Soul** is weak, you lack any strong sense of right and wrong. You are, in effect, a sociopath, able to intellectually understand what others would consider permissible or taboo, but unable to relate that to yourself. You can understand others, but lack all but a vague sense of empathy with their pain or joy.
>
> If your **World Soul** is weak, your connection to others and the world at large is similarly fragile. You will find it difficult to learn about beings other than yourself, whether empathising with a human or understanding the nature and desires of animals and other living things. This kind of impairment can be very dangerous to a hunter.

This Drawback may be taken three times, once for each weakened soul.

The Way of the World (+200 CP *or* +300 CP)
Any out-of-jump powers you possess are limited in a specific way. Namely, anything which could not be explained, with a bit of a stretch, as a natural or coincidental result is no longer accessible to you. Shooting fireballs or magical laser blasts is a no-go, as is stopping arrows mid-air. Magical glowing runes do not function, though those which are more subtle in both their appearance and effect might. Psychic abilities which could be explained as merely impressive empathy and insight will work, but those that let you just pull images out of someone's head won't. Astral projection is a special exception to this rule.

Overall, any effects in a powerset which would contravene this rule are no longer available to you, though those which would not still are. For example, you couldn't use magic from *Game of Thrones* to set swords on fire (not without using oil or something), but receiving hints about the future in dreams would be alright. This automatically includes your warehouse.

For an additional 100 CP, all out-of-jump supernatural powers are removed.

Soul Hunger (+200 CP)
Whether it's true or not, the Soul Eaters know of you, and are convinced you hold the key to dominating the Forest. They don't always know where you are, and will need time to gather their power to make their assaults, but they will hunt you for the entirety of your time in this

world, and will ally with one another to do so, pooling their talents to bring about your destruction and their rise to power. If you destroy them or somehow convince them to give up their search for power, however, you will be free of their pursuit.

Sticks and Stones (+300 CP)
In short, you are no longer able to remember any technology level higher than what is native to this world. Which, considering the people here are stone-age hunter-gatherers, includes things like basic metalworking, farming and similar. Any items you have which exceed this level of technology are sealed away, unable to be used or researched. You may choose whether you remember your past existences, but simply have a total mental block on any higher level of technology (or sharing it, for that matter), or whether you are entirely amnesiac about your life before this jump.

Scenarios

You may choose one Scenario, if you wish to do so.

The Thunderstar

Seven years into your jump here, a great calamity will befall the Forest. On the eve of midwinter, unannounced, a meteorite - what the Clans will later call the ‘Thunderstar’ - will fall, striking the Forest. Many clans will be utterly destroyed by this impact, along with much of the trees and wildlife, while the natural and supernatural balance of the Forest will be devastated. Hibernating animals will be awoken and, starved of their normal food, seek other prey, while the destruction of many natural features will release the demons that were long ago trapped within them. Worst of all, the First Tree - the winter lights which stretch across the sky, and the destination of the souls of the dead - will vanish from the sky, and ghosts will linger in the world rather than passing onto their proper end.

As part of this scenario, you will not know about this event beforehand. Fortunately the Walker - the last of those who were the Soul Eaters, but mostly harmless - knows what must be done, and will announce it at the Clanmeet called to discuss this catastrophe. Reenacting the aid the first Clans gave to the World Spirit in its battle against the first demon, the clans of the current day must gather four artefacts, each representing a part of the Forest, and shoot them into the sky with their arrows, carried by the ‘cries of the purest souls in the forest’. Unfortunately, the Clans are in disarray, bewildered and divided by the disaster. It will be up to you to gather these four mystical artefacts from across the Forest, to find the purest souls, and to bring the Clans together to perform this ritual.

All of these are complicated by the chaos the Thunderstar has brought to the Forest. Those Clans spared by the star, but which were still close, have become strange and hostile to all outsiders, considering themselves the ‘Chosen Ones’ and following a new leader who claims to protect them from a danger the Thunderstar has brought; monstrous creatures they name the Skin Takers, who cry in the forest and kill and devour the brains of those who wander alone. You will have to journey deep into their territory to retrieve the four pieces of the Forest, but the last of these is held by their leader himself. He is a terror unlike any the Forest has known in an age; a Tokoroth grown to full maturity, with a demon’s might and a

man's cunning. Naiginn is the son of the now-dead Soul Eater Seshru, and he will use both power and trickery to keep you from your goals.

Finally, with all the pieces gathered, you will need to bring them together and have the - at least partially united - Clans fire them into the sky upon their arrows, while the wolves of the Forest howl. If you do so, the First Tree will spread across the sky once more, and the order of the world begin the process of healing. You have until the end of this jump to complete the scenario, but the longer you take, the more the Forest falls into anarchy and suffering, as sicknesses spread rampantly, beasts hunt men in their hunger, and demons spread like a plague.

Reward: If you complete this scenario, you will be hailed as the Forest's saviour, welcome in all Clans - unless you commit (or committed) some particular crime against them - and the separation of the 'Chosen Ones' will come to an end, so long as Naiginn is killed or driven off.

Additionally, the sky above your warehouse will become filled with the shifting lights of the First Tree, and you may spread it if you wish into future jumps. The First Tree functions as an afterlife, a refuge for souls of all kinds, so long as they are given the Death Marks which help them to reach it. Souls which travel to the First Tree will remain in comfort, looking down upon the world, until they are ready to be reborn, whereupon their memories will be lost until they return to the Tree once more. Souls journeying to the Tree are vulnerable to whatever predators or malign magics may be present, but enjoy some protection so long as they have the proper Death Marks. Souls within the Tree are safe from any such influence they do not wish; they cannot be stolen by demons or claimed by monstrous gods, no matter their power. In jumps where souls are not generally considered to exist (for instance, *Eclipse Phase*), spreading the First Tree there will effectively ensoul any inhabitants according to the way that souls work in the Chronicles of Ancient Darkness.

Once per jump, if you die, you may begin your death-journey to the First Tree. This may be a difficult journey, with only what you are buried or left with manifest to be used by your souls to defend you against whatever spiritual predators might assail you. Furthermore, it is a constant effort of will to keep your souls together, though this is lessened if you have been given the Death Marks. If you reach the Tree unharmed, you are not resurrected unless you have some other means of doing so, but this does not count as death for the purposes of chain ending.

If you die for real, you may choose for your soul(s) to join with the First Tree as well, and can be assured that you will reach there safely. This still counts as death for the purpose of chain ends, unless you have some other means of mitigating this, but it will ensure a peaceful afterlife and eventual rebirth, albeit without your memories.

Notes: Rather than appearing in this jump shortly before the death of Torak's Fa, you arrive shortly after the death of Eostra, the last of the Soul Eaters who remain dedicated to their ambitions.

If you take this scenario, the Soul Hunger Complication instead makes you a particular target of Naiginn, who now has access to his magecraft, rather than the Soul Eaters - who, by this point, are dead.

If you have some means to stop the meteorite from hitting in the first place and do so, that does not count as completion of this scenario.

The Hunger of Demons

Jumper, you are cursed. The World Spirit has seen your intrusion into this world, and seen fit to trap you here - though as ever its reasoning is inscrutable. If you reach the end of your jump within any place within its control - meaning the entirety of the normal world - you will suffer a chain end. In order to continue on your way, you will need to find a place beyond the control of the World Spirit - and there is such a place.

Just a pity it's filled with demons.

The Otherworld is the prison in which the World Spirit sealed many demons long ago, and they wish always to escape. In order to continue your chain, you will need to complete a series of difficult trials. First, you must find an entrance to the Otherworld; not merely a prison for many demons, such as the Burnt Hill, but a true entrance. There is one in the far north, in the caldera of an active volcano, but there may be others you could discover. Either way, you must find the correct location, which will be nigh-impossible without help - and no member of the Clans will tell you the location of such terrible places.

In order to discover the location of an entrance, you will need to travel the Forest and consult with all manner of dark creatures. Perhaps a Soul Eater might be able to tell you where to find it - but they will not give their aid for free. Besides them, there are many demons imprisoned in the Forest; within certain trees, or hills, or in blocked-up caves. You will need to hunt down tales of these demons and bargain with them for the information you want - both the location of the entrance, and how to open it.

Once you know where you've got to go, you'll learn what you need to do, as well. Whatever entrance you have learned of, it is guarded by the spirits of the long-dead, both animal and human. In order to overcome them, you will need an army of demons. Fortunately, the promise of opening up their prison will earn you their allegiance (mostly), but the process of releasing enough of these monsters to be of use will undoubtedly alert the Clans to your efforts - demons are not known for their restraint. With the aid of demons and whatever allies you have managed to sway to your cause, you must take and hold the entrance for a full day while the red eye of the Great Auroch is high in the sky, and demons are at their strongest. There, you must make a dagger of a shard of the Fire Opal, and use it to slay a wolf, a human and a mage, and use their blood to conduct the ritual to open up the Otherworld.

If you succeed, the demons within will flood out, while you can go in. At your choice, you may immediately leave this world, or wait in it to see the results of the plague of demons you have unleashed.

Reward: If you complete this scenario, you will be reviled and feared by all Clans you haven't convinced to join you, but those you have will hail you as their leader - out of awe and fear. Demons will be your allies, having as little restraint as before, but respect for the great feat you have completed - a good thing, given that demons will be spreading like a plague across the Forest.

Beyond this, however, whatever entrance to the Otherworld you discovered shall follow you into subsequent jumps, along with the Otherworld itself. This entrance will be some intimidating natural feature, likely volcanic. On the other side is a spiritual afterlife of fire and torment, inescapable from the inside, filled with thousands or tens of thousands of demons, which can be summoned out and bound to your will. By default they will obey you generally, but with more powerful magecraft or other magic they can be bound more stringently.

With simple rituals to defile and desecrate a corpse, you (and others) can condemn another's soul to this hell, using it as a prison for those you so choose to confine. This also works on spirits, ghosts and other ethereal entities, provided you can capture them or somehow send them there. Only those you wish may escape; the rest are trapped forever, or until you release them, though spending too long in the Otherworld will transform human souls into more demons.

Notes

On Spirit Walking

While spirit walking, you can use any magical or spiritual powers you may possess through whatever being your souls have entered, subject to the limitations of those powers. If you need to touch a target to affect it, for example, you will only be able to use that power while your host is touching something, whether or not you are in control. If you need to speak an incantation, use a focus or material or somatic components of the magic, the host must do or have those things, though you can provide any magical energy required, either from your own reserves or, if the host has such, from theirs. They must still have the right kind of energy, unless you have some ability to convert between types.

On Demons

When a living being dies, its souls are scattered and, if the clan soul is lost, then a demon is born. They are no longer tamed by clan feelings but are simply raw spirits who hate every living thing. They hunger for the light in other beings while hating it at the same time and exist only to destroy.

Demons are trapped in a fiery place known as the Otherworld, a place beneath the earth from which they constantly try to escape to wreak havoc on the world. The demons' constant fight to escape the Otherworld has weakened the skin between the world and the Otherworld and, in some places, it can be breached and the demons can escape.

Demons are hard to see and only glimpses can be caught of them. They are also shapeshifters, so no one can ever be sure of what they look like. Demons can possess living beings by entering their mouths while they sleep. Mages can also conjure demons from the Otherworld and trap them in host bodies. The power of the demon is then added to the power of its host body.

All demons are attracted to the Fire Opal, from the slitherers and scurriers, the creepers and the crawlers, the roarers and the clawers, even Elementals. As light from the eye of the greatest of demons, the Great Auroch, they hunger for its power above all other things. This allows anyone who possesses the Fire Opal to control demons. Conjuring a demon and imprisoning it in a host is easier for a Mage if he possesses the Fire Opal.

On Agriculture

The Clans are primarily a hunter-gatherer society, and the vast majority are nomadic, following the migrations of their prey - deer, reindeer and so on. But, being jumpers, a majority of you are likely going to try and introduce a level of agriculture. This isn't impossible, but there's going to be more to it than just going 'Here's how to plant seeds'.

First, it is important to recognize that the Clans do have the basics of agriculture. They're not agricultural societies, but they do do things like scatter seeds from plants they use, so that when they come back to a place there'll be more next year. This is a form of agriculture, albeit a very light one. They're not going to gasp in shock at you telling them that seeds = plants.

Second, there is the matter of tradition. The Clans have lived their way for a very, very long time, and although there have been changes and upheavals, very few have been to their basic way of life. This is the way they have lived, their parents have lived, their grandparents have lived and so on - and it works. Very well, in fact; by and large the Clans prosper, and live fruitful lives. It would not be impossible to convince this or that clan to go along with certain changes, but it would probably be best to work 'up' from small things like the Clans' current light cultivation of plants, to something that perhaps looks more like the cultivated but half-wild gardens of the First Nations than European monoculture farming, or perhaps even towards the husbandry of nomadic cultures such as those of the Mongolian steppe.

Third, there's the matter of the unattractiveness of agriculture. The fact is that getting all your food from farmland takes a lot of work, and while that work is in some ways safer than hunting in the wild, it is also generally unattractive labour, and leaves relatively little free time compared to hunting. Investing all your time and effort into one patch of land means that a storm, flood or other natural disaster which strikes your land wipes out all your effort - and you're less able to simply move somewhere else. Archeological research also shows that agricultural workers (which is to say, peasants in most cases) had poorer levels of nutrition and higher levels of mortality due to disease than nomadic or hunter-gatherer societies in similar areas, likely due to less variety in food. And finally, there is the matter that (for better and worse) it is easier to centralise an agricultural society. The production of surplus foods allows the opportunity for some to take up dedicated crafts besides helping to provide for the community, but it also means that if some take up the craft of violence (or, indeed,

convincing others they speak for the divine), they can start consolidating power, and beginning the formation of a class structure.

None of this is to say that helping the Clans begin more widespread agriculture is impossible, or necessarily a bad idea. However, it will not be easy, for good reasons, and it will not be a cure-all.

The Clans

The people of the Forest and the surrounding lands organise themselves into Clans; fairly close-knit groups of people, generally a handful of families. Each Clan is led by a clan Mage - who acts as a shaman, healer and general wisdom-giver - and usually by either a council of respected members, or a semi-informal leader chosen mostly on grounds of the respect others hold towards them.

Each Clan has a Clan guardian; usually an animal, but sometimes a plant, which acts as a kind of totem. It is taboo for any member of a Clan to hunt or harm their Clan guardian, but Mages are said to communicate with their clan guardian, gaining advice and protection from them for the Clan.

Each Clan also has distinctive tattoos, usually quite small and simple, placed on the face to identify members. For instance, Raven Clan's members tattoo three small lines on each cheek, while Willow Clan tattoo three small circles between the eyebrows. It is possible to move between clans, often by taking a mate in another clan, but it can also happen by adoption or simply voluntarily moving, in which case the person adds the new Clan's tattoos.

Open Forest Clans

- **Raven Clan:** Living in the middle-east of the Forest, near to the hills which form the border between the open and the deep forest, Raven Clan is well-known and generally well thought-of. This is the Clan of Renn and Fin-Kedinn from the books. Their marks are three blue-black lines on each cheek.
- **Boar Clan:** Living a short distance due north of Raven Clan territory, more or less between them and Lake Axehead, Boar Clan are more sedentary than other Clans, moving less often. They wear boar-tooth necklaces and favour plain buckskin clothing with rawhide boots. Their Clan tattoos are unknown, but may be one dark vertical line on each side of the jaw.
- **Willow Clan:** A migratory clan within the open forest, Willow Clan are known as generally friendly, and have close relations with Raven Clan. They tend to wear clothes made of woven bark, and their clan tattoos are three small circles between the eyebrows, giving them a frowning look.
- **Salmon Clan:** Living to the west of the open forest along the shore, Salmon Clan migrate up and down a large delta, which they share with Whale Clan, a group they are friendly with. They have some relations with the Sea Clans, though prefer to stick to the rivers. The details of their Clan tattoos are unknown, though they are described as 'sinuous tattoos on the chest'.
- **Viper Clan:** Living towards the south of the open forest, Viper Clan are large and have a wide territory, often splitting into smaller groups. They are known to wear the

shed skins of snakes for luck, while their Clan tattoos are three black vertical lines beneath the lower lip.

- **Whale Clan:** Remaining close to the western shores of the open forest, Whale Clan tend to migrate north and south with the seasons, but join Salmon Clan at their estuary when the salmon-run occurs - there is more than enough for the two to share. They revere beached whales as a sign of their Clan guardian's blessings, and are experts in scrimshaw. Their Clan tattoos are unknown.
- **Wolf Clan:** A mysterious and reclusive clan, but the one from whom Torak's Fa originally came, Wolf Clan migrates often, staying apart from the rest of the Clans for the most part. They are known for their expert woodcraft, and their yellow eyes - achieved by draughts prepared by their Clan mage, and which all members partake of. Their Clan tattoos are two dotted lines on each cheek.
- **Sea Eagle Clan:** Living to the north of the open forest, Sea Eagle Clan live along the shore, fishing and partaking of the products of the northern rivers. They are more private than Salmon and Whale Clan, but have distant but friendly relations with Kelp Clan, out to sea. Their Clan tattoo is a four-clawed mark on the back of the left hand.
- **Otter Clan**: Living around Lake Axehead, Otter Clan are generally regarded as cheerful and welcoming folk. They make offerings to the lake, and also hold guardianship of a spring with sacred green clay, said to protect the sick or dying. Their village is built on raised platforms amidst the reeds of Lake Axehead, and they use small reed-boats to navigate the lake and to fish. Their Clan tattoos are a pair of wavy blue-green lines on the throat.

Deep Forest Clans

- **Bat Clan:** Little is known about Bat Clan, though as a deep forest Clan they were likely somewhat distrustful of the open forest, and deeply connected with their home. Nef, a Soul Eater, was once a member of the Bat Clan. The Bat Clan tattoo is a zig-zagging line over the collarbone, appearing like two smaller mountain peaks to either side of a higher one.
- **Red Deer Clan:** Unusually, Red Deer Clan espouse a strong philosophy of non-violence against other people, though they still hunt meat when necessary. Torak's mother was a member of Red Deer Clan. They use ochre to stain their hair red, while their Clan tattoo is two semi-circles facing one another on the forehead.
- **Forest Horse Clan:** One of the more devout deep forest Clans, Forest Horse Clan tattoo their whole faces with green leaves - oak for women and holly for men - and make most of their tools from the green slate common in their lands. They are resistant to intrusion or contact with the open forest.
- **Auroch Clan:** Wearing clothes of woven bark and keeping their weapons - most famously their green slate axes - in leather belts, Auroch Clan are extreme in their devotion to the deep forest. They rarely speak, preferring to communicate in hand-gestures, and shave their heads and cake their scalps with clay, both for camouflage and to emulate the trees they revere. Some go further still, scarring their skin to resemble bark. Their Clan tattoos are unknown.
- **Eagle Owl Clan:** This clan is gone, destroyed by sickness after the Soul Eater Eostra - then their mage - resurrected a boy of ten summers shortly after his death. They were known as wise and skilled warriors and hunters, preferring bows over axes, wearing beech leaves around their neck and twining their hair and beards with

thin vines. They tattooed their clan sign, a stick figure-like image of an owl, onto their eyelids, considering any other location impure.
- **Lynx Clan:** One of the clans destroyed by the Thunderstar in *Skin Taker,* Lynx Clan braided their hair, with two braids for women and one for men. They stained their faces, partings and fingernails red with pine resin. Their Clan tattoo is unknown.
- **Oak Clan:** A now-extinct Clan, dead by unknown means, its only remaining member is Thiazzi, the physically strongest of the Soul Eaters, who eventually became the Forest Horse Clan mage. From Thiazzi, it can be guessed that they tended towards larger builds and red hair. Their clan tattoo was composed of six lines on the chest; two upright and four curved across the top, creating the impression of a tree.

Sea Clans

- **Seal Clan:** The largest of the Sea Clans, Seal Clan is the clan to which Bale belonged, as well as the Soul Eater Tenris, who created the Demon Bear. Their Clan guardian is the ringed seal, and they still hunt other types of seal. Like the other Sea clans, they have a strong reverence for the sea, for the Sea Mother (who they say created all the sea's inhabitants), and for orcas, who they call 'Hunters'. They have a close partnership with their skinboats, which they regard more as companions and friends than tools, and wear clothes made from sealskin, as well as having many tattoos on their chests. Women are expected to remain on the islands, while the men hunt at sea. Seal Clan tend to be fair-haired, and use shells for ornamentation. The Seal Clan tattoo is a single line looking similar to a simple drawing of a fish, worn on the arm for men and the calves for women.
- **Cormorant Clan:** A smaller clan than Seal Clan, Cormorant Clan lives on a smaller island to the north of their 'older sibling's' island. Little more is known about them, save that they have a strong bond with the sea.
- **Kelp Clan:** Living further north still than Cormorant and Seal Clans, Kelp Clan live on the smallest of the Seal Islands, and have friendly contact, though little trade, with Sea Eagle Clan. Little more is known about them.

Ice Clans

- **White Fox Clan:** The most friendly of the Ice Clans to outsiders, White Fox Clan build shelters out of ice instead of wood, and use animal fat to light their fires. They worship both fire and the wind, building figures with streaming cloth to honour the wind, and use eiderdown and other feathers to line their sleeping-sacks and clothes. They sleep on platforms to keep the cold away, and rub their faces with blubber when going out, to insulate it. During winter, the dead are kept within the shelters, frozen, until they can be properly buried, and are considered to still be part of the community. Their Clan tattoos are a curved rectangle over the bridge of the nose.
- **Narwhal Clan:** More hostile than White Fox Clan, and living far to the north, Narwhal Clan are both very harsh and fiercely patriarchal. Women in their Clan are considered 'halfmen', lesser than the men, and do much of the most demeaning tasks along with suffering a great deal of abuse. Male children in their culture are raised by their uncles, who use harsh methods to keep them in line. Their Clan tattoo is unknown.
- **Ptarmigan Clan:** Mentioned only, without detail.
- **Walrus Clan:** Mentioned only, without detail.

Mountain Clans

- **Swan Clan:** Living in the eastern mountains towards the northern end of the deep forest, Swan Clan is distrustful of the powers of magecraft, possibly because their migration route takes them close to the Mountain of Ghosts. They worship fire, and migrate to follow herds of reindeer to hunt. Their Clan tattoo is a ring of twelve dots on the forehead, representing the twelve moons of the year.
- **Mountain Hare Clan:** Living further to the north than Swan Clan, Mountain Hare Clan are particularly known for their worship of fire, but are less superstitious than Swan Clan. Their Clan tattoo is a jagged red line on the forehead..
- **Rowan Clan:** Besides the fact that they live to the south of the eastern mountains, little to nothing is known of Rowan Clan.

Changelog

03/08/2022 - v2.0

- Changed ‘Magecraft’ to ‘Signs and Omens’
- Changed ‘Herblore’ to ‘Magecraft’
- Changed ‘Master Mage’ to ‘Mighty Spirit’
- Added ‘Clanless’ Complication
- Edited ‘Spirit Walker’
- Altered Spirit Walker boosted effect for ‘One with the World’

04/08/2022 - v2.1

- Added ‘World Soul’ to the ‘Weak Soul’ drawback

15/08/2022

- Replaced ‘Woodsman’ with ‘Keen Senses’.
- Added the ‘Survivalist’ perk.
- Changed ‘Nature’s Gifts’ to ‘Craftsman’
- Replaced ‘Bonds of Clan and Kin’ with ‘One People’
- Changed ‘Gifts and Offerings’ to ‘The Sun Shall Rise’
- Changed Spirit Walker and Demon boosted effects for ‘The Sun Shall Rise’
- Replaced ‘One People’ with ‘Perspective’
- Replaced ‘Learning and Teaching’ with ‘Weaving Words’
- Added ‘Old Injury’ Complication