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The Dark River Society  
is an official Domain of the  
Camarilla™.

# Undercurrents

## What's New?

By Paula Watt, Editor

Hello Undercurrents readers,

Welcome to the newest edition of the Undercurrents. Another big thank you to everyone who submitted this month. You are the ones who make this newsletter worth reading.

This month we have article from Chris on Wolf behavior and an article from JT on the different Magey stuff. We also have an FAQ about Nostradamus and the NYC bombings, and a bit of levity about a stupid bat. Enjoy! Ω

## News from the DC

Hi everyone,

I'd like to congratulate Travis Abston for reaching MC 6 and Matthew Skipper for reaching MC 10. Good work guys, keep it up!

I'd like to welcome Nikki Cole back into the ranks of Cam-hood, along with Emily Douglas and Tony Gowell as our newest members.

The new Tome Prestige guidelines are on the Camarilla website, along with the US Addendum (which basically clarifies some issues that weren't clear in the original document). Since there seems to be some kinks in the Tome distribution process, I'm printing copies for the new members.

Scheduling the games 3 months in advance seems to be working well, so we're planning to continue doing that. Schedules are set during the monthly Chapter/ST Council meetings.

I've appointed Mike McMahan as the new ADC Charities. Please send any suggestions or offers to volunteer in his direction. Ω

## Nostradamus and NYC

*Editor's Note: This is taken from an FAQ on the Nostradamus Repository web site (<http://www.nostradamus-repository.org/>). PW*

*Q. Did Nostradamus predict the recent attack on New York City?*

*A. No. He never mentions New York City at all. Nor 'York', for that matter.*



*Q. But he mentions America, surely?*

*A. Only once -- at quatrain X.66, which you can check for yourself on the websites listed below. Apart from that, he himself insists in his covering letter to King Henri II that his prophecies are mainly about Europe, North Africa and Asia Minor. Only two other of his place-names fall outside that area.*

*Q. But what about the famous 'Fire from the sky hitting the New City at 45 degrees' prediction at VI.97?*

A. New York City is not at 45 degrees latitude (it's all of 300 miles to the south), and the New City (as ever in Nostradamus) is Villeneuve-sur-Lot in France ('Villeneuve', like 'Naples', \*means\* 'new city') -- which IS roughly at 45 degrees.

*Q. But couldn't Nostradamus's 'Five and forty' mean '40.5'?*

A. No. The decimal place system had not yet been invented in Nostradamus's day. It was simply a perfectly ordinary way of saying '45'.

*Q. But what about all the Nostradamus quatrains that people keep posting here?*

A. Virtually all of them are either

(a) badly corrupt, and deliberately twisted to fit the events (b) hopeless mistranslations, deliberately twisted to fit the events, or (c) pure inventions, and not by Nostradamus at all.

*Q. What about "In the City of God there will be a great thunder, Two brothers torn apart by Chaos, while the fortress endures, the great leader will succumb", "The third big war will begin when the big city is burning" -Nostradamus 1654." ?*

A. None of this was written by Nostradamus -- and he would have been .. er... 150 years old in 1654! If you doubt it, ask whoever sent it to you for the verse-number and/or the original French.

*Q. What about "In the year of the new century and nine months, from the sky will come a great king of terror...the sky will burn at 45 degrees. Fire approaches the great new city...In the city of york there will be great collapse, twin brothers. Torn apart by chaos while the fortresses fall, the great leader will succumb; the third big war will come when the big city is burning."*

A. It's a garbled mixture of carefully selected lines from two different Nostradamus quatrains (X.72, which in the original doesn't even mention a 'King of Terror' -- see third website

*Q. How about: "Earth-shaking fire from the center of the earth. Will cause the towers around the New City to shake, Two great rocks for a long time will make war, And then Arethusa will color a new river red. "*

A. A more reliable (and artistic) translation of I.87 (which doesn't mention towers at all) would read:

Earth-shaking fires from the world's center roar: About Villeneuve\* the earth shall be a-quiver. Two leaders long shall wage a fruitless war, Till Arethusa reddens a new river.



Sluagh by Matthew Skipper

listed below -- and is about \*1999\* [!]; and VI.79, whose 'new city' on 45 degrees is Villeneuve in SW France, not New York, which is on 40 degrees 40 minutes) plus a bunch of other lines that are not by Nostradamus at all.

Anybody can garble quotations like that -- even with the Bible... Er...

"And he went and hanged himself (Matthew 27:5). Go, and do thou likewise (Luke 10:37)."

\* = 'New City

Line 3 is in fact based on a French expression ('faire la guerre aux rochers' -- 'to make war on the rocks') which in fact means 'to struggle fruitlessly'. 'Deux grands' means 'two nobles'.

No obvious connection with New York!

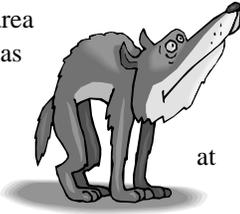
*Q. What about:*

*Garden of the world near the new city, In the path of the hollow mountains, It*

*will be seized and plunged into the Vat, Drinking by force the waters poisoned by sulfur?*

A. Relax. It's nothing to do with New York. The 'garden of the world' is Eden, which means 'delight', which is 'plaisance' in French, which is the name of a village on the road north from Villeneuve (= 'new city')-sur-Lot to the Dordogne, with its caves and the village of Aubeterre('Dawn of the World')-sur-Dronne, with its hollowed out church and tombs...

All that the quatrain predicts is that someone ('he', not 'it') will be immersed and poisoned at Plaisance - which of course lies in an area that at one time was very familiar to Nostradamus during his time at Agen.



This is one of Nostradamus's many obvious 'local' quatrains, in other words. His horizons were a lot smaller than many people often give him credit for. There is absolutely no excuse for imagining that all of his predictions apply to huge world-events.

*Q. Can't I believe Erika Cheetham's book or Orson Welles's film, then?*

A. No, unfortunately not, especially as the film is based directly - and rather fancifully -- on the book. Erika performed a valuable service in making some of the original French texts available worldwide for the first time -- but, alas, her 16th century French wasn't up to translating them reliably, and her credulity got in the way of her interpreting them reliably.

*Q. Is there to be no Antichrist with a blue turban, then, calling down nuclear missiles on New York, as in the film?*

A. Not if Nostradamus himself is to be believed. For him, the target of the Antichrist was always going to be \*Europe\* -- and, moreover, he would eventually be defeated. Ω

<http://www.nostradamus-repository.org/nycfaq.html>

## Wolf Behavior:

### How to Play a Lupus Garou

By Chris Simpson

One of the most challenging role-playing experiences that I have had so far is that of portraying a Lupus Garou. I am still trying to get many of the behaviors correct, and it is quite difficult to adapt to the different way of thinking and acting that wolves exhibit. I have recently done quite a bit of research into wolf behavior and have made quite a few discoveries. What follows is information that I have gleaned from several sources, including several White Wolf books that I have recently found. It includes information on the social structure of wolves, and their communication and hunting styles. Hopefully this can help to guide those that play lupus characters. Most of this information is taken directly from "Ways of the Wolf", a Lupus supplement for Garou. It is a TT book, but is very relevant to LARP.

### Social Hierarchy

Wolves follow a very strict social hierarchy, with the alpha at the head. The alpha wolf is the most dominant wolf in the pack, and there is usually an alpha male and female. These members

## Deadfall

By Michael Blank

It's hard to get started when you begin at the end.

I drove home a while back.

The old theater I sat in as a child is gone,

Pushed aside by a drugstore chain.

(As if that could keep the town healthy.)

The other end of the building had been buried long ago,

After a train threw itself from the track, coming to rest in a pile of scrap and brick.

No surprise that the theater was gone.

The silver realm of fantasy had dulled long ago in our reality.

Before I left, the marquee only announced anniversaries and birthdays.

The mortuaries at the other ends of the street announced the other reasons I came home.

As I drove out, I passed some of my high school friends,

Cruising on a Saturday night like when I still lived there,

Going from the ghost of the theater to the other end of the street.

John waved his bottle of beer as I passed out of town,

With the girl he always wanted in the car he always loved.

are usually the ones who formed the pack. The wolf pack follows most of the normal ways that Garou treat hierarchy, first share of the kill to highest in station, etc. The other wolves below the alpha pair are usually assigned a dominance hierarchy as well. Wolves who are higher in the structure dominate those below them, and all those below submit to those higher in the hierarchy.

This hierarchy is also followed for mating privileges. The alpha male always mates with the alpha female, unless the alpha male chooses not to. In this case, a lower ranking male may do so. The alpha male still retains dominance over the other males. Usually the lower-ranking male is driven out of the pack or perhaps even killed for mating with the alpha female.

The lowest ranking member of a pack is known as the "scapegoat". This wolf generally lives on the outskirts of the pack, and eats what little the other members leave for it.

This hierarchy has three exceptions:

**1. Juveniles, pups, and yearlings-**

These are not part of the normal hierarchy, but have a hierarchy of their own. It is usually established by play fighting, etc. Lupus Garou are usually at the top of the hierarchy even before the First Change.

**2. The "lone wolf" or "out cast wolf"-**

This wolf is usually a sick or older wolf that can no longer hunt as well as the other wolves. They are usually harried by the other wolves, and travel at a distance from the pack. They do not join in the pack, and some travel in between adjoining territories to feed off of carrion or small game.



*Solitude by Matthew Skipper*

**3. Garou-**

The Garou living in a pack outrank the same-sex alpha. Garou are rarely present to lead a pack. When they are, the other wolves obey them unconditionally. This dominance surpasses even sexual boundaries.

In the case of these exceptions, separate social hierarchies are formed among the groups.

The dominance hierarchy also determines the privileges that a wolf receives. The alpha always receives the first feeding from a kill, and a subordinate wolf may not take food away from the dominant wolf.

The alpha also leads the pack, and rules through an odd combination of absolute tyranny and democracy. The alpha acts independently of his packmates, but his packmates below him influence his behavior as well. For instance, if a pack is travelling and some members begin to tire, the alpha will slow. The alpha takes the good of the pack into consideration, and takes action accordingly.

The dominant wolf also is responsible for determining when a hunt begins, and leads the pack in a hunt. He also takes responsibility for guarding against or attacking intruders.

If the alpha happens to leave the pack voluntarily or unwillingly, he will be replaced by the beta. Even if they return at a later date, the beta will remain the alpha. The determination of dominance is an ongoing activity, but in stable times an alpha is rarely challenged. It is only after a major event that leadership is challenged. Events such as this include death or crippling of a high-placed wolf, lack of food, or the acceptance of a new pack member.

**Communication**

Wolves have a highly sophisticated means of communication. They rely on three senses: vision, smell, and hearing.

Of these senses, sight is the primary means of communication. Most communication is done through the posture of the wolf. The expression of the face and position of the tail (upright, medium-height, or tucked between the

legs) are key indicators. Full body positioning also communicates a great deal. Such examples include crouching and threatening to spring (harassing a subordinate), nuzzling the muzzle or pawing the ground (gestures of friendly submission to a dominant), and exposing the chest and abdomen (gesture of passive submission).

Odor is another strong means of communication. It usually applies within as well as between packs. Among pack members, most activities involve either the head and neck region or the anal-genital area. Smelling the head is usually a friendly act, directed by a submissive male toward a dominant. It developed from the way pups will “ask” a parent to regurgitate food for them.

The anal-genital region becomes involved during rituals of dominance and submission. A dominant will extend its rear end towards a submissive, while the submissive will withdraw its own. This is a communication of both posturing and odor.

A leader will also use scent marking, both to assert its own domination (by scenting areas around the pack), or to mark its territory other packs to smell and avoid. Wolves will mark territory by either urinating on any object thrusting out of the ground (a scent post), or rolling in the ground or snow, leaving their scent.

The third way that wolves communicate is through vocal expression. Humans know of wolves’ mode of howling. However, wolves also make whining, growling, and barking noises. These noises serve many purposes, including communicating submission and domination.

Garou howls are different from the howls that wolves use to communicate, so wolves do not usually fully understand the meaning of Garou howls. However, they are often capable of deriving the basic concept of these Garou communications.

In closing, I hope that this will help those that currently play or are thinking about playing a Lupus in the future a basis for the way their character should behave. I am currently working a lot of this behavior into my character, and it



helps me too get into character more easily and to portray my character more accurately.

I hope to write more articles on the behavior of wolves, including hunting behaviors. In the mean time, I highly suggest “Ways of the Wolf” if you can find it. There is also a section on wolf behavior in the new “Laws of the Wild Revised” that is helpful as well. Ω

## Numinae, Sorcery, And Magick

Or

### What’s With All The Weird Shit?

By JT Talley

Ok, now that we finally have venues for all this stuff, you ask yourself, “Self, how can I make a character with all this stuff and still kick butt?” Glad you asked, and no, I’m not that little voice responding.

Let’s start with Numinae. This is the psychic stuff. Now, it’s different than sorcery and magic because it is usually a talent an individual has inborn. It requires training to reach the full potential, but it is a part of the individual from the get go, usually. With Numinae, there is no paradox,

more on that later. Numinae is useful in that it takes nothing but force of will and determination. Telepathy, Telekinesis, and Clairvoyance are all types of Numinae. Sorcery, however, usually requires bits of this and pieces of that.

Get a cauldron and eye of newt and you’re on the way to Sorcery. Actually, there are many different types of Sorcery, also called hedge magic. The average sorcerer is dedicated to his art at the exclusion of everything else. There is no automatic learning for the sorcerer, she must search out everything she wishes to learn. Hedge magic can achieve spectacular results and not risk paradox. Some paths of Hedge magic are Cursing, Enchantment, and Technomancy. Sorcery paths can be more powerful than Numinae, but they lack the versatility of True Magick.

True Magick, or just plain magick, is the warping of reality to suit your whims. Unfortunately, reality dislikes being warped and royally screws anyone who does. That is the effect called paradox, called such due to the fact that it takes two doctors to fix you up afterwards.(insert laugh track) Anyway, depending on how well you understand, you can effect aspects of reality to greater or lesser degrees. Understanding matter fairly decently could allow you to change a key into a quarter and back. Magick doesn’t need the trappings of sorcery, however this makes it easier for the mage to focus on what he’s trying to do. Magick can duplicate or exceed most paths, gifts and disciplines, just remember that there is always a trade off somewhere. Ω

## The Stupid Bat

*Editor’s Note: A bit of levity I found on the internet last year. PW*

This is a true story. I wish it weren't.

Last night I had a little trouble getting to sleep, and it wasn't a case of insomnia.

I had just finished brushing my teeth and was heading back to my bedroom for a much needed rest. Upon entering the room, I switched on the light and noticed a black object flying around the light in the center of the room. I thought to myself, "no problem, just a small bird that will fly out of the room when I open the window."

After looking at this object for a few seconds, I realized that it was a BAT. My reaction was, and I quote, "SHIT!". Milliseconds later, I was in the next room looking at a closed door and wondering how the hell I was going to get rid of this thing...

The window in the bedroom was closed and locked, hence it could not be opened from the outside of the house. This left me with one alternative ... going back in and flushing out the BAT.

I returned to the bathroom and got a large towel which I put over my head. I slowly entered the room and started shaking the towel over my head while the BAT circled above. Too bad that bats can't see .. the sight of a 6'6" male in his underwear hiding underneath a bath towel would cause any normal animal to die of laughter. I must have looked like an epileptic King Faud.

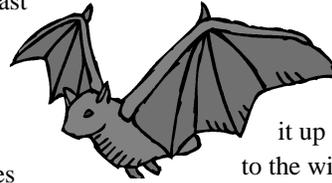
I made my way, as quickly as possible, to the window and succeeded in opening it. After returning to the safety of the next room, I realized I was dealing with a STUPID BAT. The damn thing would not fly out of the room.

My next brainstorm was to scare the STUPID BAT out of the bedroom. So, the man with the shaking towel on his head re-enters the room and tries to scare a STUPID BAT. Notice that I never said this was a clever brainstorm.

After trying for several minutes (that seemed like hours), the STUPID BAT is still circling and I'm more scared than the STUPID BAT.

I am running out of brainstorms at this point. That is until my cat walks up to the door and looks at me with an expression that can only be described as: "why are you standing at your bedroom door with a towel on your head?" Cats are good at recognizing abnormal behavior.

My cat, Roxy, is also quite a good hunter. She regularly brings dead objects into the house for inspection (that's another good story). By now, you probably are having the same brainstorm that I was last night. She can kill a moth as it flies through the air why can't she KILL the STUPID BAT as it flies through the air.



At first, she is a little confused as I toss her into the bedroom to do her instinctive duty. However, as soon as the STUPID BAT goes into his flight pattern, she makes several stunning leaps into the air to KILL the STUPID BAT. Unlike her owner (who has finally realized that a towel on the head is not really needed against a STUPID BAT) she gives up and sits in the middle of the bed looking at the STUPID BAT hanging upside down on curtains and her owner peeking through the door. I'm sure she is thinking: "You are 6'6" tall. YOU can reach the STUPID BAT".

I hate it when my cat has these great ideas.

So, I slowly enter the room .. the STUPID BAT remains on the curtain .. Roxy is waiting patiently for an opportunity to attack .. I get within a couple of feet of the STUPID BAT .. the towel is wadded into an efficient,

STUPID BAT KILLING projectile (thank God for rec.pyrotechnics) .. I'm ready to attack .. the towel is launched .. and the STUPID BAT comes straight at me! And I don't have a towel on my head!

I don't know how, but I got out bedroom alive. I quickly went to the bathroom and got more ammo. I really want to KILL the STUPID BAT.

So, I slowly enter the room .. the STUPID BAT remains on the curtain .. but this time I notice that the STUPID BAT is stuck in the curtain .. IT CAN'T MOVE!!! I find myself thanking God that this is a STUPID BAT .. if it were a SMART BAT, I'd be dead.

Confident that I have won this battle, I slowly walk up to the STUPID BAT and wrap it up in a towel. I then quickly walk to the window and throw the entire bundle out the window. Within seconds, the window is closed and the sense of safety overwhelms me.

Before retiring for the night, there is one last thing to do. I need to collect all the ammo (towels) that have been used in this adventure. After putting away the towels that are inside the house, I remembered that there is still one more outside that used to contain a STUPID BAT.

It's so dark outside, I don't even bother to put on a pair of pants so that I won't offend the neighbors. I easily find the towel in the faint light coming from the bedroom light and start to pick it up carefully by the corners. I want to shake it out to make EXTRA sure that the STUPID BAT is not still inside the towel. After all this, I'll be damned if I'm going to take the STUPID BAT back into the house.

Suddenly, I feel a small fur covered object rub against my arm! It makes me

jump about 3 feet and nearly gives me a heart attack. After recovering, I slowly approached the towel to find Roxy looking up at me with the expression: "Thanks for putting this towel outside for me to sleep on!" Ω

## Rumors and Quotes

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. .  
The material printed here was gathered through keeping an ear open during the games, and through direct member input. Some of the rumors are true and some are false. They're things that your character might have heard IC, react accordingly!

### Kindred Rumors

The Giovanni are preparing for a Large battle with ancient enemies.

The Giovanni seem to be growing. Is this a sign as to the state of the domain?

### Kindred Quotes

Chris: "It's too late! Gramps is making the rounds!"

Abby: "Gramps is making the rounds with his coat tucked into his shorts."

- OOC Chris R., finding out that Abby had already checked out for the night.

"You're twitching and looking uncomfortable."

Raven: "That's because I'm wearing a suit."

- OOC conversation.

"Do you smell anything like beaver?"

- Mrrou sniffs Ward.

"You get a real clear image of what the cat's ass tastes like. I think I had squirrel today."

- Mrrou's response to the mysterious voice in his head.

"Mayhap you shouldn't have drunk the blood on the wall?"

- Tristen, Regarding the mold growing on Gitana's legs.

"A Tremere just puked on me. A very low-ranking Tremere."

- The Countess Carmilla, after the Wilf incident

"Please go back into Meditation before you kill us all."

- Mercurio Giovanni talking to Ciprianna Giovanni at SERE

"You will suffer the death of light and pillows."

- OOC Winn, on finding out that Mike McMahan is a morning person at SERE. Mike was willfully perky and tore the curtains open...

"Becky! Becky! Tell her I'm innocent. I've got sausage."

- OOC George, trying to convince Amanda that \*he\* is sweet and innocent.

"I thought so. Your head is flat."

- OOC Amanda balances a full can of soda on Emily's head.

Travis: "You're \*what\* enough to keep your soul in your body?"

Abby: "Fond of it!"

- Travis asks for a bid when Mercurio tries to steal Liam's soul.

"I'm threatening enough that that won't work. Oh, lookie. It worked."

- Duke, trying to make Darwyn's Toreador even more angry.

### Garou Quotes

"There's an old American saying: 'Dude, you got a rock on your head. You look like an idiot.'"

- OOC Jay to Stretch when Road "caught" him with rocks on his feet and head

"Even if it ain't Wyrmy, it's still nasty."

- Xebiechek on Apollo's mother's body

"Zestfully clean!"

- Duir, on a Rite of Cleansing.

"Give me a sprinkle test."

- Ryan H., checking to see if the geyser hit anyone.

"Find the random brightly colored guy."

- OOC Winn, on looking for the Caern.

"Citrus Drop gnosis- cleanse the Wyrms with a lemon fresh scent."

- OOC Rat

"That was a 3 agg fish that hit me."

- Rose explains how she was injured.

"We're gonna go eat babies!"

- Visions-of-Streams-Once-Pure is convinced to go into the Scab.

"Wyrmslayer needs help chasing an ice cream truck."

- Sent through Stag Pack's spirit speech by Roo

"Wonder Cliath powers, Activate!"

- Roo and Duir team up

July/August 2001

“Can't figure out the alphabet but he knows Gaelic.”

- Apollo, commenting on Duir's reading lesson.

“Weaver Bad.”

- Wyrmslayer is confronted with new technology.

“Wow. That was the most obvious example of learning from your mistakes I've ever seen.”

- Random to Sandor regarding pick pocketing lessons.

### *Mage Quotes*

“BALLS!”

- Bubba breaks the silence of Dr. Holme's office

### *Changeling Quotes*

“I hate Sundays.”

- Vulcan, while hosing down the gooey ex-construction workers outside Val's bar.

“Please excuse me while I think cryptically.”

- OOC Raven while coming up with answers for the intrepid changelings. Ω



# October 2001 Schedule

(All times are Central Standard Time)

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5 7:00 pm Kindred Anarch Game	6 7:00 pm Mage Game
7	8	9 7:30pm DBR Meeting	10	11	12 7:00 pm Changeling Game	13 7:00 pm Kindred Anarch Game
14 1:00 Pool Social	15	16	17	18 <u>ICC</u>	19 6:00 pm Kindred Game <u>ICC</u>	20 3:00 pm Mask Making Social <u>ICC</u>
21 AIDS Walk <u>ICC</u>	22	23 7:30 pm AN Chapter Meeting	24 7:30 pm Chapter/ST Council Meeting	25	26 7:00 pm Garou Game	27 6:00 pm Kindred Game
28	29	30	31 Halloween	30	31	

## *Your elected Officers*

### **Dark River Society**

Paula Watt	Domain Coordinator (DC)
Mike McMahan	Assistant Domain Coordinator (ADC)
Jay Smith	Domain Storyteller (DST)
Anton Andreev	Assistant Domain Storyteller (ADST)

### **Arcadian Nights**

Adam Steinberg	Chapter Coordinator (CC)
Amanda Plageman	Assistant Chapter Coordinator (ACC)
Kay Adams	Chapter Storyteller (CST)
JT Talley	Assistant Chapter Storyteller (ACST)

### **Days of Bitter Rage**

Chris Simpson	Chapter Coordinator (CC)
Nissa Murdock	Assistant Chapter Coordinator (ACC)
Crystal Smith	Chapter Storyteller (CST)
Abby Andreev	Assistant Chapter Storyteller (ACST)