

# WALKABOUT ADDENDUM 1

## CREATING SPIRITS AND SHADOWS

One of the Elder's duties is to create an antagonist for a Walkabout story. The main antagonist is called the Shadow.

In some cases the Shadow will be a mortal of the waking world, someone who may have disrupted the balance through their actions (intentionally or otherwise), unleashing one or more unsuspecting spirits into the world. In other cases, the shadow itself will be a spirit of the Dreaming.

If the Shadow is a mortal, create them in the same way that you'd create a wayfarer.

Spirits are a bit different, in most ways they are very similar to the mortals of the Waking World, they use the same die rolling game mechanisms to influence the story; but at their deepest essence these beings are a strikingly different.

Spirits have four core traits that share similar functions to those of mortals:

**Affinity (Edge):** Spirits are linked to concepts. Sages and poets have long argued whether the appearance of a spirit presages the arrival of a new concept in the world or if the flicker of conscious thought about a subject brings a spiritual equivalent into existence. All spirits are linked to a concept and they are able to easily perform tasks associated with this concept.

**Manifestation (Dance):** The appearance of a spirit is closely linked to the way it moves. Does the spirit manifest as a thunderstorm, a humanoid with a nimbus of light, an animal, a nightmarish monster, a fractal pattern or something else.

**Community (People):** Most spirits protect someone, or associate more strongly with one community over any other. Some spirits care less about specific individuals or families in the Waking World, instead they belong to strange celestial groups that the wayfarers call Courts.

**Charm (Scar):** Just as wayfarers have scars and marks on their skin to perform feats in the Dreaming, spirits have intrinsic charms associated with them. Some charms seem to be general, while others seem commonly linked to certain types of affinity or manifestation, a few charms seem to be the closely guarded secrets of specific courts. Charms may only be used to perform tasks in the dreaming, unless the border between worlds has been breached.

Affinities, Manifestations and Communities each gain a pair of descriptive words (like their corresponding mortal traits). Charms have a single descriptive word, much like scars.

Some examples of each follow.

*As a suggestion for long term play, each player could create a single spirit to be encountered during the ongoing story. Such a spirit has a deeper connection with the wayfarer controlled by that player. This spirit is an enemy at a deeper level, something that has caused the character to take up the path of the Wayfarer through its malevolent actions. Spirits like this would automatically start with a motive against the Wayfarer in question (though they might pick up additional motivations for or against other members of the circle). If this option is used, a single supporting cast is randomly removed at the start of each play session, this supporting cast member is replaced by a random spirit.*

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### Sample Spirit Affinities

**Conceptual Affinity** – The spirit is linked to an important but ephemeral concept such as a virtue or a vice, or maybe a societal concept such as money.

**Elemental Affinity** – The spirit commands the core concepts of the universe: Air, Earth, Fire, Metal, Water, Wood, or possibly some combined or lesser element such as Lightning, Mist, Clay, Bone, Blood.

**Mystical Affinity** – The spirit is linked to a specific type of mystical phenomenon, examples might include illusions, summoning or death.

**Territory Affinity** – The spirit has a bond to a specific location and may only draw on their core affinity trait while in that location. It could be a river, a town, a forest, or some other landmark.

### Sample Spirit Manifestations

**Abstract** – The spirit appears as a ball of light, a cloud of mist, solid darkness, or something else that simply doesn't look natural.

**Animals** – The spirit appears as an animal, they may communicate through talking, mime, telepathy, by scratching in the dirt, or they may not communicate at all.

**Monsters** – The spirit appears as one of the creatures of legend appropriate to their location or the court they belong to.

**Plants** – The spirit may appear as a normal plant, they may have a face hidden in their flowers, roots that can be pulled out as legs, and possibly tentacle-like appendages appearing as vines.

**People** – The spirit is indistinguishable from a normal person. Or perhaps they look humanoid with something noticeably "different", such as demonic eyes, retractable angelic wings, circuitry patterned through their skin, etc.

### Sample Spirit Communities

Choose any group of mortal people available to the wayfarers

or...

*Court of Blood (Eastern Europe)* – Linked to legends of vampires and werewolves, they eternally strive for dominance through raw power and fear.

*Court of Bone (Central and Southern Africa)* – Linked to legends of voodoo, these are some of the most ancient beings who helped mankind ascend from its primal state before the diaspora.

*Court of the Chrysanthemum (Japan)* – Linked to legends of kami and oni, they may also be responsible for legends of ninja and the great feats of heroic samurai.

*Court of Jade (China and South East Asia)* – Linked to legends of the twelve zodiac animals, the celestial bureaucracy and the 1000 hells, they often have a sense of fixed purpose in the universe.

*Court of Gold (Central and South America)* – Linked to the legends of the Aztecs and Mayans, this groups has splintered into many pantheons over the millennia.

*Court of Ochre (Australia)* – Linked to the deepest natures of the Dreaming, these beings are claimed to have taught the first wayfarers.

*Court of Peyote (North America)* – Linked to the legends of the totems and elemental spirits like the Wendigo, they have fought long and hard against incursions in their homeland.

*Court of the Rose (Western Europe)* – Linked to legends of elves and fey, these capricious spirits are often tricksters with an alien sense of honour and nobility.

*Court of Sand (Egypt and Northern Africa)* – Linked to legends of the Egyptian gods, they were once a dominant power in the world but have long since fallen.

*Court of Sapphire (India and South West Asia)* – Linked to the legends of daevas and asuras, these masters of illusion try to awaken the mortals from their cycle of dharma.

*Court of the Waves (The Oceans)* – Linked to legends of merfolk, krakens and kingdom like Atlantis, these beings remain mysterious to land based mortals and spirits alike.

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## General Charms Ideas:

- Call of the Wild* – The spirit may summon beasts to its aid.
- Communion* – The spirit can understand languages and concepts beyond its normal sphere of influence.
- Corruption* – The spirit may make it harder to resist vice or attain virtue.
- Darkness* – The spirit can lower the ambient light in an area.
- Fear* – The spirit's presence may be unsettling and fearsome.
- Healing Touch* – The spirit's touch and concentration restores lost/damaged traits.
- Light* – The spirit can manifest a ball of light or its body may glow.
- Madness* – The spirit's presence induces mental instability.
- Technology* – The spirit may have a natural affinity for repairing (or destroying) useful tools.
- Transformation* – The spirit may be able to alter its form, or alter the form of others.
- Touch of Frost* – The spirit chills things possibly even freezing them into stasis.
- Breach the Waking World* – The spirit may manifest their other charms in the Waking World without crossing over (or maybe they have access to their charms while manifested)
- Feel free to come up with more of your own.

## Affinity Charms

- Affinity Empowerment* – Elementals may gain strength when in the presence of their element, those with a conceptual affinity may gain strength when someone manifests a certain virtue or vice.
- Mystical Resonance* – Spirits with a mystical affinity might be able to add their traits as bonuses whenever someone is using a mystical trait of their own. Maybe they can counter mystic phenomena the same way.
- Summon Element* – Elemental spirits may be able to call up an amount of matter relating to their element, perhaps conjuring fire or water, or summoning up rapidly growing plant life (for wood elementals).
- Territorial Teleportation* – Spirits with an area affinity may be able to teleport to anywhere within their territory, or automatically teleport home if outside their range.

## Manifestation Charms

- Animal Communion* – Spirits manifesting as animals are often able to talk to other animals whose forms they share.
- Doppelganger* – Spirits appearing as people often have the ability to change their appearance to look like any person.
- Legendary Gift* – Those spirits who manifest as the monsters from legend may gain the powers associated with those monster; a gorgon's petrifying gaze, a dragon's fire breath, a werewolf's resistance to non-silver weaponry, etc.

## Community Charms

- Spirits only gain community specific charms from belonging to one of the Courts.*
- Blood* – Primal Fear, Transform into Wolf/Bat/etc, Command Legions
- Bone* – Instincts of Survival, Loa Riding, Primal Communion, Voice of the Drums
- Chrysanthemum* – Detect Untruth, Lethal Blade, Honourable Stance
- Jade* – Alchemical Mastery, Correct Feng Shui, Discern the Tao, Send Victim to the Hells
- Gold* – El-Dorado's Charm, Jungle Mastery, Power of the Flayed Skin, True Sunlight
- Ochre* – Corroboree Dance, Creation of the Rainbow, Song-Line Teleportation
- Peyote* – Purify Spirit, The Hunt, Totem's Deep Wisdom, Vision Quest
- Rose* – Invisibility, Luck of the Fey, Oath of Binding, Ritual of the High Hunt
- Sand* – Bestow Immortality, Commands of the Gods, Eyes of Maat, Traverse the Underworld
- Sapphire* – Caste Empowerment, Renew Dharma, Manifest Illusion, Karmic Knowledge
- Waves* – Breathe Underwater, Create Wave, Dreaming of the Deep Ones, Ride the Currents
- Note that a lot of these charms may seem to duplicate charms from other sources. If a spirit has two charms that might apply to a situation, they may use both of them to gain a double trait advantage.
- To develop new charms related to a court, consider the culture associated with the court and the mythology of the people. If you can find a mythological equivalent of the power you're looking for, then you've set a precedent and the power is a viable option. The elder will make sure to include symbolism regarding the power in the context of the story as it is unfolding.

## SPIRITS IN THE WAKING WORLD

The world of Walkabout is in spiritual upheaval. This is a phenomenon that has occurred on several occasions in the recorded history of mortals, and has happened countless times in a repeated cycle since the dawn of time.

Before the collapse of the technological civilisation there were numerous times and places where the courts came into conflict when explorers from one culture interacted with natives from another. But the spiritual upheaval seen now is of a magnitude not encountered since the fall of Atlantis around ten millennia ago.

The vast majority of spirits are old, but many are not old enough to remember the last time the Dreaming and the Waking World were in such a precarious balance. They do not know how to walk between the world and for many of them, the waking world is a strange and mysterious otherland where their power don't work as they should (which is much the same as most mortals think about the dreaming when they accidentally get caught there).

Spirits end up in the waking world in one of three ways...

Firstly, they may be lured by radiation or strong emotion (both of which have a strong resonance in the spirit world). Spirits have times of recharging, similar to mortal sleep, it is theorised that sometimes when in the presence of strong physical and emotional energies, a dormant Spirit will dream themselves across the barrier between world, effectively "awakening with a body" in the waking world. To shift such a spirit back to the Dreaming and restore the balance, the source of physical or emotional energy must be dealt with.



*When Song-lines pass through areas that have acted as graveyards for centuries, the emotional energy often draws spirits. In many cases the restless souls of the dead linger too long, becoming confused by other spirits and thus causing new issues that need to be resolved by Wayfarers.*

Secondly, they may be mystically summoned through a ritual, some kind of religious faith or the mind of an unstable mortal. It is possible for the beliefs of mortals to pierce the barrier between worlds; this has long been known to various religious institutions and occult organisations. Once a mortal breaches the barrier enough to begin seeing spirits it's only a small step for them to interact with them, and then to call them into the waking world. Spirits summoned across the barrier in this way are often confused and lonely, and the little they understand about the Waking World comes from a power-hungry ritualist, a religious fanatic or a

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deranged lunatic. In these cases, shifting such a spirit back to the Dreaming and restoring the balance requires dealing with the mortal (the spirit may be the penultimate confrontation, while the mortal is actually the story's Shadow).

Finally, a spirit may simply become caught in a location where the Shallow Dreaming and the Waking World overlap. In these cases the spirit simply wanders between the worlds without realising they have left the spirit world. These spirits may become frustrated that their old powers no longer work, or they may gradually learn about the world around them. These spirits may be easy to detect if they are alien in appearance, but some of them are the hardest to detect because they simply go about their normal business. Restoring the balance and shifting these spirits back to the dreaming typically requires taking them back to the place where they crossed over, and explaining the issues they have caused in the waking world. When this doesn't work, sometimes a ritual conflict or banishment at the place of crossing over is required.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DREAMING

Walkabout is a setting where the Waking World of mortals has collided cataclysmically with the Dreaming World of the spirits. But that doesn't mean every tale from the setting needs to begin with a localised disturbance that is always traced back to the machinations of ancient and unfathomable spirits.

Some of the examples given over the last couple of pages imply that it is possible to tell a weave a Walkabout tale that doesn't require the spirit world at all. There was the idea for a charm, where a spirit can manifest their powers in the waking world, there is talk of spirits being drawn into the waking world by mortals intentionally or otherwise.

It is certainly possible to tell a walkabout story without requiring a journey into the dreaming, but you need to remember that the world of the spirits is always an important part of the setting. If you don't want to deal with spirits, you might as well be playing another game.

The spirit of this game derives from the mythology of the Australian Aboriginals. In the tales of this people, the dreaming world and the waking world are two sides of the same coin (or if you're familiar with the concept, it's more like the topological curiosities known as the "mobius strip" and the "klein bottle" with an inside, and an outside but no definite place where one becomes the other).

The Dreaming and the Waking World are parts of the same thing, a good mystery told in this setting should probably weave between the two parts of the world, a conflict should involve

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parties from both sides of the divide, and a road trip should travel through locations firmly planted in either realm.

The Wayfarers have an advantage in this respect. Most mortals who interact with the Dreaming don't realise how close it really is, those of a mystical bent think they can hide things on the other side of the barrier, unable to be uncovered by prying eyes. Most events in one world leave an echo in the other, and the system of secret tokens reflects this in the game, so make use of it.

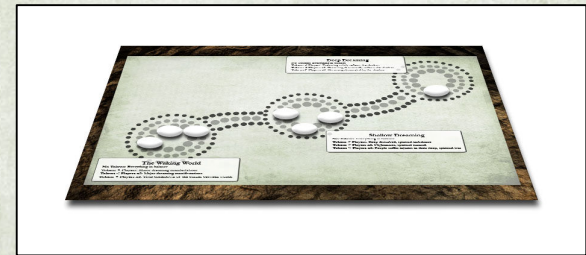
When it comes to the movement of tokens by Wayfarers there are two important things to remember:

1. Wayfarers may only interact with tokens in the same world as themselves. As an example, Wayfarers in the Waking World can only resolve issues associated with tokens in the Waking World, and the Elder can only make things more difficult for Wayfarers using the tokens in the Waking World.
2. Any time the Wayfarers move from one world to another, they initiate a distinct and automatic change of scene. If there are no tokens in a location and the Wayfarers move away from it, this is considered a distinct and automatic change of act (a new phase of the story is entered).

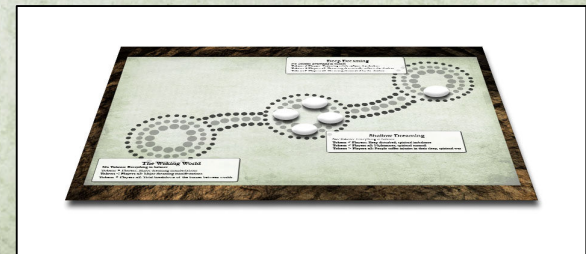
Any time the characters seem to resolve an issue by removing all the tokens in the waking world, there is a good chance that these actions will develop ripples that spread across to the Dreaming...and thus those tokens will probably return to the story in the world of the spirits.

As a story progresses (especially towards the end) a quick look at the tokens can confirm the status of the worlds around the wayfarers.

If there are tokens left in both the Waking World and the Dreaming, then the imbalance is still present and there is more work to do. If these numbers are low enough, then a relative stability may have been achieved, but problems will naturally develop again later.

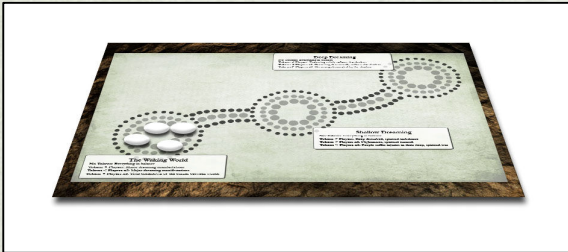


If there are tokens in the Dreaming but none in the Waking World, then the surface issues have been resolved, but it is only a matter of time before the issues concerning the spirits bubble back over into the Waking World. The dreams of the mortals will still be disturbed, their emotions will still run high for reasons they don't understand, and there will remain a palpable tension in the air.



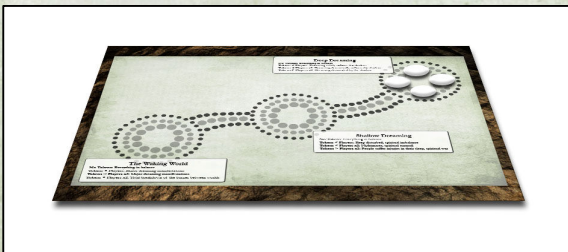
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If there are tokens in the Waking World but none in the Dreaming, then the deeper problems remain, but the symptoms still echo in the world of mortals. Eventually these symptoms will subside, but there is a good chance that the resonance from these symptoms will produce a new series of problems in the waking world.



Only when both the Waking World and the Dreaming have been cleansed of their issues will the world return to a state of balance.

Tokens pushed back as far as the Deep Dreaming don't have an impact on the waking world, and many circles of wayfarers will consider a job to be a moderate success as long as they have resolved the issues of the Waking World and the Shallow Dreaming.



Since the Wayfarers begin with an interest in keeping the mortal world safe from the dangers associated with spiritual imbalance in the world, most don't push further into the Deep Dreaming. They resolve what needs to be resolved to keep the waking world free from immediate issues before curing the immediate imbalance in the next verse of a song-line.

As Wayfarers become more experienced, they learn more about the deep dreaming and begin to understand how the solving of immediate issues might not create a solution for the long term. They start to see the deeper machinations of the ancient Spirit Courts or the metaphysical imbalances that are causing issues in the Shallow Dreaming before they cascade down to the Waking World. Resolving the issues of the Deep Dreaming may be an extra level of danger that don't provide an immediate benefit to the surviving communities of the waking world, but to experienced Wayfarers they are the true source of the world's imbalance.

In much the same way that an inexperienced circle can resolve storylines without much delving into the Shallow Dreaming, an experienced circle of Wayfarers can resolve storylines without pushing too far into the Deep Dreaming. But the Deep Dreaming always beckons as a source of greater risks and greater potential rewards.

Some of the eldest Wayfarers claim that there may be another level of existence beyond even the Deep Dreaming. This may be true, but the stories relating to such a distant and foreign metaphysical plane are not the stories of Walkabout.

## INSPIRATIONS

**Legends of the Dreaming (Australian Aboriginal Tradition: C40,000 BCE - Current)** – The main inspiration for this game is the legendry of the Australian Aboriginal people. The myths that they have told for centuries have echoed a spirit world that isn't a distinct other realm like that found in the myths of many other cultures, instead it's an overlapping reality where the actions of the spirits resonate with the events of the world we see. The oral tradition of the Australian Aboriginals involve stories that tell of ancient forests from millennia past that are only now being proven by archaeobotanists, and ancient earth shifts that coincide with seismic events now accepted by geologists. The Aboriginal people see the world as a continuum between the deepest spiritual landscapes to the waking world, rather than a distinct and discreet set of heavens, hells and otherlands separated from the world of man. I'd like to hope that this is reflected in the game.

**Nightwatch (Nochnoi Dozor – Sergei Lukyanenko: 1998)** – This series of Russian novels (which were made into some decent films) relate the stories of immensely powerful beings involved in machinations focusing on a modern day Moscow that echoes our own. It is written as a series of short stories, each involving on a protagonist who transcends the boundaries of mortals with magic, legendary powers and an ability to step into a shadowy realm of magic known as the Twilight (or Gloom). Walkabout could easily be a series of stories set in a world just like this, but after a spiritual holocaust.

**Mad Max (George Miller: 1979, 1981 and 1995)** – Based in the Australian outback, this series of movies depicts a violent post-apocalyptic world and one man's struggle to bring law to it (or at least bring vengeance to those who are causing more problems to the remaining survivors). The tone of bloody vengeance could be a great way to initiate the Wayfarers into the surface mood of Walkabout.

**Resident Evil (Various Directors: 2002, 2004, 2007, 2010)** – Based on a successful franchise of console games, this series of "zombie" movies tells the tale of a world's descent into madness as genetic viruses wipe out the human population, and most other forms of life turning them into ravenous killing machines. It could be used as a setting for the fall of civilisation in Walkabout, and the main heroine could easily be used as a model for one of the first Wayfarers (picking up survivors through her travels and teaching them what is necessary to survive in a new and hostile world).

**Silent Hill (Christophe Gans: 2006)** – Also based on a successful console game, horror this movie the story of a woman who follows her daughter and becomes stranded in a desolate town. As the movie progresses, things become more surreal and darker as she uncovers strange supernatural phenomena at work. It could easily be the tale of a mortal who accidentally gets caught in the Shallow Dreaming without a way out, and who must confront a portal to the deep dreaming before the town's issues can be properly resolved. The twist in the story could easily be applied to a game of Walkabout.