

# Mortla: Claw of Wendigo

Mortla is a series of techniques that employ a rapid succession of calculated strikes delivered to the opponent's body; resulting in various effects ranging from maiming to fatal. The art itself is based on the concept of using Gnosis to augment attacks, enhancing a Garou's natural weapons with the damaging effects of long-term exposure to cold weather.

With Gnosis behind each attack, natural weapons become capable of dealing damage that typically manifests as frostbite. After being hit it's possible for an enemy to experience extreme fatigue, degenerative muscle symptoms, tissue destruction, and a whole host of life threatening conditions. The use of Gnosis makes the cutting nature of each technique possible, making them seem more like something of a minor charm; this reflects the harsh and cold nature of Great Wendigo.

*"Teeth barred, Winds of Silver crouches down on all fours, then makes a mad dash at his opponent in a blur of silver fur. As he closes the distance, he 'focuses' his Gnosis, concentrating it to his mouth and fangs in preparation for the upcoming attack. His teeth tear into the tainted creature's flesh, leaving a modest sized wound. While suffering a minor injury, the former just couldn't seem to shrug off the effects of Winds of Silver's Gnosis. As it looked closer, it witnesses the horror of it's skin blackening and sloughing off."*

Mortla was developed by the northern septs of the Wendigo tribe. Inspired by the spirits of Great Wendigo's brood, practitioners emulate their behaviors and movements. In combat,

the Warriors of Mortla would seem as though they were something more; as the air around them drops in temperature. The art of Mortla is something completely unique to the Garou, as these fighting techniques weaponize Gnosis, causing supernatural damage that persists after the initial attack.

Developed when all was one, this art causes Garou who practice it to become more spirit than flesh. Their presence, everything about them reflects the harsh and bitter cold of the spirits that their techniques embody. Their Gnosis takes on added properties when focused or 'converted' through these techniques; giving off an icy 'aura'.

Learning the basics of Mortla from a master is the usual beginning for any questing Warrior, but to further one's understanding, it is mandatory to make a pilgrimage into the harshest of cold environments. Those who choose to walk the path of Mortla will inevitably come into contact with Great Wendigo's brood, as it was Windtooth who was the first to show Garou how to 'fight like (Great) Wendigo'.

While Windtooth may seem a bit simple in terms of intelligence, its lessons are always unique, challenging and straightforward (most of the time). Assimilation is an essential lesson: learning how to become one with the environment, overwhelming and ultimately consuming one's opponent (sometimes in a literal sense). Cannibalism is a part of Great Wendigo's ethos.

## Using Mortla

1. *Mortla* is considered a secondary ability like *Kailindo*. The player rolls *Mortla* + *Dexterity* for an attack. Purchasing dots follows the same format as any other secondary ability, but each technique is independent of the other. All techniques take time to learn, and are never easy to master. A specialty may be taken, however it can only be with one technique.

2. None of these attacks can be performed with a melee weapon.

3. Techniques that employ the use of *Gnosis* (spent, or rolled) cannot be used when *Rage* is spent on the same turn.

4. Techniques that require 2 or more actions to complete are considered *multiple actions*. To perform multiple actions, the player subtracts one die from their pool for every action beyond the first that they wish the character to take. This reduction is cumulative.

A specific number of actions are required to be completed in order to progress and ultimately finish each technique, the number of actions are noted as **Actions required**. Each action is to be performed at a set difficulty.

The attacker is performing two actions this turn, a *dodge* and then a *punch*. The attacker has five dice in their *Dexterity* + *Dodge* pool, while their *Dexterity* + *Brawl* pool is eight. Since the attacker is performing two actions this turn, they remove two dice from each action. The attacker is dodging first; they roll their adjusted *Dexterity* + *Dodge* pool for that action (three dice). Then, they roll their adjusted *Dexterity* + *Brawl* pool the same way (removing two dice) and

subtracting one additional die because the attack is their second action (giving a total of five dice).

Techniques that cost only one action can be done multiple times, as long as they are performed as *multiple actions*.

For each success above the first that the player achieves on the attack roll, they add one die to the damage dice pool. These dice are referred to as *Roll-over*.

5. **Banned Forms:** Some techniques are accessible only to specific forms. For example, if an attacker were in their *homid* form, they would lack the claws necessary to perform the technique: *Frostbite*, or the teeth necessary to perform *Maw of Frost*.

6. Some techniques may cause a dice penalty in addition to the damage dealt. Also, said techniques can be cumulative (which is always explicitly stated), resulting in multiple dice penalties. Examples include *Frostbite*, and *Maw of Frost*:

*Maw of Frost:* The attacker rolls *Dexterity* + *Mortla* at a difficulty of 5. They receive 3 successes on their roll. 2 *Roll-over* dice were achieved from the attack roll, therefore a damage roll of *Strength* + 2 dice occurs. The defender receives 2 aggravated health levels of damage. After receiving damage, the defender is subject to the technique's effect: The attacker's permanent *Gnosis* score is 5, so for five turns, the defender's stamina suffers a -1 penalty. This effect is cumulative.

## Techniques of Mortla

- **Cold Sinew:** The Warrior grapples with the target, forcefully introducing Gnosis into their body, causing a temporary but severe form of arthritis. The target suffers inflamed joints and damaged muscle tissues. Ultimately, movement is inhibited. To complete the maneuver, the Warrior then kicks or pushes the target away; not hard enough to cause damage or cost an action, but to create distance.

**System:** If successful, the player rolls Half of their permanent Gnosis score rounded up (example: 5 Gnosis = 3 dice for damage) + Roll-over. If the defender fails to soak any damage from the attack, then the difficulty for all of their physical actions are increased by 1. The duration of this effect is equivalent to the number of health levels lost. (-3 health levels = 3 turns).

**Actions Required:** 1

**Banned Forms:** Lupus, Hispo

**Roll:** Dexterity + Mortla

**Difficulty:** 6

**Damage:** ½ Gnosis, rounded up (lethal)

- **Frostbite:** The Warrior expends Gnosis while clawing the target. Gnosis seeps in and chills the muscle, breaking down various tissues and fibers, thus mimicking the effects of frostbite and reducing the strength of the target.

**System:** The attacker rolls Dexterity + Mortla at a difficulty 7 to execute a claw maneuver. If damage was dealt, the attacker rolls Gnosis (difficulty 6). For one turn per success, the defender's strength will incur a dice penalty of -1. The strength penalty effect can be cumulative.

**Actions Required:** 1

**Banned Forms:** Homid, Glabro, Lupus

**Roll:** Dexterity + Mortla

**Difficulty:** 7

**Damage:** Strength (Aggravated)

- **Limbs of Ice:** The Warrior's blocks are really strikes aimed at the target's attacking limbs.

**System:** Roll Dexterity + Mortla for a 'normal' Block roll, but if the player scores three or more successes than the opponent on their roll to attack, they also inflict (Strength) damage.

If the attacker is using this technique against an opponent armed with a melee weapon, the difficulty can increase up to 8.

**Actions Required:** 1

**Banned Forms:** N/A

**Roll:** Dexterity + Mortla

**Difficulty:** 6

**Damage:** Strength (Bashing)

- **Harsh combination:** The Warrior attacks with a brutal three hit combo. The first two attacks simply help build up momentum for a bone-jarring aerial spin kick.

**System:** Each action is rolled at a varying difficulty, and damage (Roll-Over still applies). Once the technique is started, if another action is performed (i. e. dodging after performing the first punch), or if an attack is missed, then the attacker must start from the first action.

The first attack is a punch at a difficulty of 6. The damage roll for this punch is Strength - 1.

The second attack is a kick at difficulty 7. The damage roll for this kick is Strength.

The third attack is a kick at difficulty 9. The damage roll for this kick is Strength + 4. If the attacker inflicts more health levels of damage than the defender has dots in Athletics, they are knocked off their feet and rendered prone.

**Actions Required:** 3

**Banned Forms:** Lupus, Hispo

**Roll:** Dexterity + Mortla

**Difficulty:** Varies

**Damage:** Varies (Bashing)

- **Maw of Frost:** The Warrior focuses Gnosis into their bite. Acting very much like a deadly poison, the Gnosis lowers the target's defenses, and can cause intense shivering.

**System:** The attacker must spend one point of Gnosis before rolling Dexterity + Mortla at a difficulty 5 for an upcoming 'bite' attack. If damage was dealt, then the attacker's Permanent Gnosis score will determine the number of turns for the following effect: The defender's Stamina is lowered by 1. (5 permanent Gnosis = 5 turns). The Stamina penalty effect is cumulative, but cannot exceed more than half of the defender's permanent Stamina rating, rounded down.

**Actions Required:** 1

**Banned Forms:** Homid, Glabro

**Roll:** Dexterity + Mortla

**Difficulty:** 5

**Damage:** Strength -1 (Aggravated)

- **Blacken the Blood:** While expending Gnosis, the Warrior focuses the power of their claws by thrusting their fingers in a spear-like fashion. The attack leaves large puncture wounds while the Gnosis 'poisons' the target's blood. As a result, the surrounding flesh develops frostbite; more importantly it can hinder the power of vampires.

**System:** The attacker must spend 1 point of Gnosis before the upcoming attack. If damage was dealt, then for one turn per health level lost (2 levels of damage received = 2 turns), the vampire must spend 1 additional blood point per point used (1 BP = 2 BP).

For non-vampiric beings, the attack creates a weak-point. If damage was dealt from the initial attack, then for one turn per health level lost all damage dealt to the defender's weakpoint must be soaked at difficulty +1. All attacks to the weakpoint must be called shots.

**Actions Required:** 1

**Banned Forms:** Homid, Glabro, Lupus

**Roll:** Dexterity + Mortla

**Difficulty:** 7

**Damage:** Strength (Aggravated)

## Gifts of Mortla

- **Fray the Spirit (Level two gift):** The Warrior thrusts their fingers (or paw) into the opponent's body. The attack forcefully injects Gnosis which spreads to various nerve points, causing involuntary muscle spasms, an intense flow of pain, and disorientation.

**System:** The attacker must first spend a single point of Gnosis, and roll Dexterity + Mortla at a difficulty of 7. If successful, the attacker's temporary Gnosis will directly contest the defender's temporary spiritual essence (i.e. Garou's Gnosis, or Mage's Quintessence).

In the case of vampires, only half of their blood point pool is counted, rounded down: (i.e. 7 blood points = 3). If the attacker's temporary spiritual essence is higher than that of the defender's, the defender takes a -2 wounded penalty and will

only be able to act at the end of a round, before rage actions are taken.

If the defender's temporary spiritual essence ties that of the attacker's, then the tie goes to the defender. The gift's effects will last for as many rounds as the attacker has dots in permanent Gnosis (5 Gnosis = 5 Rounds).

The effects override gifts such as Spirit of the Fray, but the -2 wounded penalty does not stack upon penalties from lost health levels.

- **Body of Ice (Level Three Gift):** The Warrior allows their opponent to hit them, giving the illusion of having been dealt a most fatal blow. The process is instantaneous; as the Warrior is struck, a body of ice is summoned to take their place. The ice reflects a mirage of the 'fallen' Warrior, and may fool the target long enough to set up an ambush.

**System:** The Wendigo is automatically hit. However, in response they roll Gnosis, difficulty of the defender's Perception + 4.

If successful, the Wendigo takes no damage from the defender's attack. A body of ice is summoned, creating an illusion of the Wendigo's death. They are then obscured from the defender's detection until the beginning of the next round. During this period of obscurity, the Wendigo repositions for a rear counter attack (reducing the difficulty on their next attack by 2). Further action can only take place at the beginning of the next round.

If Failed, the Gift does not take effect and the defender proceeds to roll for damage as per usual. Successful or not, this gift can only be done once per combat scene, and cannot be done against an opponent who has seen it before.



# Windtooth

**Image:** Windtooth cannot be seen, only felt. When he bites, the force of his jaws can knock people over, and his breath can freeze limbs into ice. He is the wind itself, but he is an angry wind.

**History:** Windtooth was born when Wendigo sneezed, blowing three of his teeth out and away across the tundra. These teeth gathered together and became Windtooth, a spirit of frostbite who wanders before Wendigo, tasting all it finds. If the prey is sweet, it runs back to Wendigo and tells him where the delicious food is to be found. Woe be it to those who are tasty to Windtooth. Luckily, Windtooth does not like wolves, which includes Garou.

Whenever someone gets frostbite, the Wendigo Garou say that she has been tasted by Windtooth. For this reason, the Wendigo protect their favorite Kinfolk with certain rituals before they go out into the blowing wind.

These rituals are designed to make the Kinfolk taste bad to Windtooth, so that the spirit will not summon the Wendigo. This can include such extreme measures as rubbing garlic all over the Kinfolk, along with other foul-smelling herbs. If the Kinfolk is going out hunting, she cannot accept such protections, for the smell will drive away game. A protected Kinfolk may still get frostbite, but the Garou rest assured that, while Windtooth may have bitten them, it did not like the taste.

**Habitat:** Windtooth can only be summoned in a winter storm, and it will always taste those who summon it (giving them frostbite). The

summoner should thus prepare by rubbing himself with bitter or smelly herbs. Once Windtooth is summoned, it is easy to turn him against a desired prey simply by suggesting the foe would be a tasty morsel for the Great Cannibal. Off Windtooth will rush to taste the chosen target; if he is indeed tasty (see *Taboos*, below). Windtooth will summon Great Wendigo to devour the chosen one. This does not always bring Wendigo, however; if he is busy with another meal, he will ignore the pesky wind spirit.

**Gift Lore:** Cutting Wind and Invoke the Spirits of the Storm.

**Taboos:** Windtooth only likes meals which Great Wendigo would like to feast upon, which includes Wyrms creatures, cannibals, murderers and people consumed with hate or anger. Those who live alone are also tasty.

**Attitude:** Neutral.

**Chiminage:** Windtooth demands nothing in return for his aid except that he will taste anything he sees. His bite causes frostbite (one Health Level of aggravated damage).

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## "Why...Gnosis?"

Born under the full moon, an inexperienced Wendigo sought training from the strongest fighters of his sept. The most celebrated Warrior in the sept however...was a theurge. When asked what was his secret...he told the young pupil that it was the power of Gnosis that gave him the edge in combat, not his Rage. So the young Warrior couldn't help but ask: "Why...Gnosis?" The old theurge, covered in battle scars looked over to the young one. Patience and wisdom shown clearly in his eyes: "Why Gnosis you ask? Simple. Gnosis can do what Rage cannot."

The young Warrior looked confused, as he should. He knows just about as much as any other Garou in regards to what Luna has gifted her chosen; but his expression begged a more thorough explanation from his teacher. Of course, the old theurge continues: "Perhaps this tale will explain..." he clears his throat and begins slowly. "Great Wendigo...just like any being, experiences hunger. As part of his usual routine, he traverses the great tundras in search of his next meal. He then catches the scent of a rather tasty morsel...a Vampire that had the nerve to trespass into his domain. The Vampire reeks of taint...as it slaughtered a small village the night before."

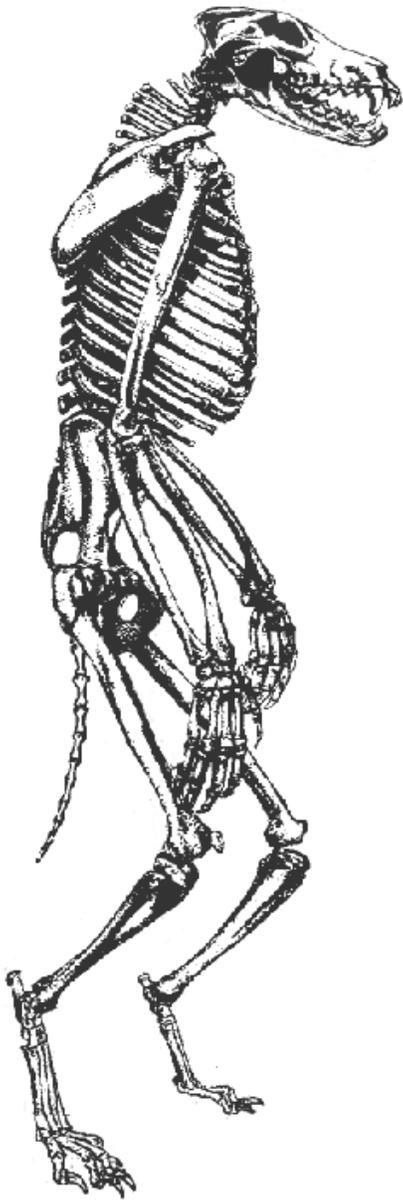
The old theurge nods a few times, continuing "So Wendigo pursues...and finds this Vampire. He finds that it indeed looks appetizing...but a problem arises..." He drops his sentence, letting the young Warrior before him become antsy. "What happened?" the young one asks impatiently, curious to know what kind of situation could possibly cause Wendigo "trouble". The old theurge's eyes widen, as he raises the pitch of his voice...for dramatic effect: "A great Wyrms beast awakened not

too far away...proving to be yet another tasty meal. An occurrence such as this...is quite rare...and passing up ether is not an option." This time, he doesn't let the young Warrior sit and wait for the climax, and speaks a rather nonchalant tone: "So...Great Wendigo...came up with a solution: he touched the Vampire, and went off after the Wyrms Beast." Of course the young Warrior is perplexed. "Touched?...what do you mean...touched? Great Wendigo simply does not..." "Touch".

This of course made the theurge smile: "Oh ho...but you do not understand. Great Wendigo's touch...was fueled with his intent...charged with his spiritual essence...his Gnosis." The young Warrior was clearly intrigued. "Please...explain..." The young one was on the edge of his seat and of course, the theurge obliges. "Well...Great Wendigo's touch...is so cold...that it will freeze the soul...and in that Vampire's case...it's entire being! Rage is a force that can be directed but doesn't have the essence to be shaped. It merely 'is'...however Gnosis is something that can be crafted...molded...formed for a specific purpose...and in this case...Great Wendigo turned it into a weapon...something to keep his meal from getting too far away."

It's clear the young Warrior is enthralled, but not quite understanding; so the old theurge tries to explain further: "When Great Wendigo touched the Vampire, it's body ached...giving it a pain the likes of which it had never encountered. Its suffering was so great it couldn't move...it couldn't think. This was Great Wendigo's plan...as he simply wanted to save that meal for later, keeping it fresh."

*The old theurge sits back grinning "And indeed, the Vampire was consumed, corrupt heart and all. Now do you understand? Gnosis can do...what Rage cannot."*



## ***Logistics and Flavor...***

*Converting Gnosis is akin to using Gnosis for a Gift; however the process is slightly different. When being used for a Gift, Gnosis is merely spent to activate a knowledge that is inherent. It acts more or less like a reflex, something primal. On occasion a Gnosis user*

*would need to actively concentrate, but rarely would it require more. Conversion requires active concentration, as the individual would need to control the directional flow of Gnosis within their own body along with the changes of it's properties.*

*Great Wendigo's Gnosis is inherently "flavored" with great cold, so by learning Mortla the Garou learns to emulate that effect. The host Garou's converted Gnosis takes on more weaponized properties becoming something akin to a spiritual version of liquid nitrogen. The Gnosis is still more or less intangible, but it is able to be transferred from the host Garou to any other object or being through physical contact. Converted Gnosis is harmless to the host Garou, as long as it's their own Gnosis. Of course, the converted Gnosis of others would inflict harm as usual.*

*A interesting side effect of the Gnosis "conversion" is that the temperature around the host Garou will drop. Therefore, particles of water and ice may become visible when the host Garou exhales. The temperature drop does not create any sort of advantage or disadvantage in battle. The temperature drop becomes more and more dramatic as the Mortla practitioner advances in their knowledge. With 5 dots in Mortla, a cold mist may surround the Warrior at times. The effect is purely theatrical, and up to the player if they wish to use it.*

*Created by: Adam Wise aka Winds of Silver aka Vincent Rustov aka Crack the skye*

*These are all the people I bugged and annoyed, they helped give me ideas...also, thanks to White Wolf and Axis Mundi, as I borrowed Windtooth from it's pages.*

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