

GUARDIANS *of* GA'HOOLE

Welcome to the Owl Kingdoms, a world without humans and where owls and other animals live in more-or-less harmony with nature. The Owls seem to be the brightest of the lot, being able to work metal after they plucked burning branches from forest fires, and have something of a medieval-level civilisation which divides the world geographically into many 'kingdoms' - though without the feudalism.

The Guardians of Ga'hoole are defenders of this order, warriors and scholars who protect the downtrodden and fight threats from beyond the kingdoms. The owls and other creatures - Guardians or not - face many challenges, from rival owl armies, to natural disasters, to war with magically powerful creatures, in addition to the usual turmoil of life in the natural world.

You have **1000cp** to spend on your plumage.

Timeline

Your time here begins when a young Tyto named Soren falls from his tree in the Tyto Forest (at the start of the book series/shortly into the movie) and concludes ten years hence.

Locations

Roll 1d8 or pay 100cp to select your choice of location.

S'yrrthghar - The Southern Kingdoms

1. Tyto Forest - a temperate pine forest. A rich ecosystem with many animals, some capable of taking on owls.
2. Isle of Hoole - Home to the Tree of Ga'hoole and the Guardians.
3. The Beaks - A mountainous region.
4. The Forest Kingdom of Ambala – The most diverse populations of owls live here.
5. The Desert of Kuneer – Home to many Burrowing Owls and snakes.
6. St. Aegolius Canyons - Where St Aggie's Academy for Orphaned Owls can be found, ruled over by the Pure Ones.

N'yrrthghar - Northern Kingdoms

7. The Ice Narrows - A puffin-inhabited area where many tunnels snake into the rocks. Stronghold of dark magic users.
8. Free choice - Choose from any of the above, or any point on the world map.

Backgrounds

Select a background.

Drop In

You appear in an intelligent animal form, with no memories but your own, free to your own path.

Denizen of the Kingdoms

You're an owl of the Kingdoms, typically interested in owl things like building nests and hunting, but don't say you don't have culture - rich storytelling traditions, claw carvings and painted art tell of the heroic deeds of your ancestors.

Guardian

You are a Guardian, one of the owls trained to defend and nurture the Owl Kingdoms, and make your nest at the Tree of Ga'Hooole (though you may start your jump further afield).

Pure One

You may or may not be a Tyto, but you were certainly allied to this tyrannical faction, bent on subjugating all the Owl Kingdoms beneath them. Their leader, Metal Beak, is in fact a Crowl, despite his talk of purity.

Species & Age

Select a species. Your gender is unchanged.

You may choose any age within the lower half of the natural lifespan of your species, and I will guarantee that you won't die of old age before the end of your time here.

Not An Owl - 200cp, Free Drop In

Pick an air-breathing animal that is not an owl – such as bat, echidna, mouse, snake, crow, lizard or the like. This is your form in this jump – you can speak the language of the owls, but just be warned – many of the smaller animals are prey for those bigger. There's a bit too much owl-blood in a Crowl for it to count as "Not An Owl".

As You Were – 100cp, Drop In Only

We will not assign a new species to you – you are what you are, after all. Since there are no humans, robots, ghosts, living flames or posthuman singularities in this neck of the woods, I must charge you a small fee, and do note: nothing here will have any idea of what you are. Caution is in their nature. You do not have the perks **Instinct** or the free version of **Prehensility** (but may purchase the upgrade).

Typical Owl - 100cp for Drop In, all others Free

You are a 'true owl' or 'typical owl', Family Strigidae. A nocturnal predator, along with the Tytos your kind has created kingdoms of owls with culture and even the sciences of metalworking and understandings of magnetism. Feel free to select which species of owl you wish to be, from tiny Elf Owl to the huge Great Grey Owl.

Tyto - 100cp for Drop In, all others Free, 100cp upgrade

You are no *typical* owl, you are a “Pure One”; a Tyto or Barn Owl (Family Tytonidae, Genus Tyto). While not inherently better or worse than a typical owl, there is a slight degree of cultural bias towards the Tytos among all owl kind (and even some non-owls) owing to the heroic deeds committed by them in ages past.

For an additional **100cp**, you are the ‘purest’ subspecies of owl: a pure white *Tyto Alba*, and considered the most noble-blooded of all the owls. In some places – like St. Aggies’, and to a lesser extent, the Great Tree of Ga’Hoole – your pure white plumage carries a great deal of social credit and is a sign of beauty, but in other lands and kingdoms nobody gives a hoot.

Crowl (Hagsfiend) - 300cp

A crow/owl hybrid, possessed of dark magic. You naturally possess the fyngröt, glowing yellow eyes which can yeep (paralyse) lesser creatures, and wield other powers of the nachtmagen (dark magic). Also known as the Hagsfiends, they are the enemies of proper owls and all weaker creatures throughout history.

Perks

Perks are single-purchase unless otherwise stated.

Instinct - Free All

You have the animal instincts to operate your animal/bird body and survive in the wilderness – if you are an owl, it includes such as the ability to eat (and keep down) a raw mouse, preen and care for your feathers, regurgitate a pellet, and get an idea of how to fly. Small animals have predator-avoidance instincts, bats know how to sense with echolocation, etc.

Prehensility - Free or 100cp upgrade

The birds don’t have ‘feather fingers’ here – you’ll have to rely on your feet to hold things if you have wings. Fortunately, you can use your feet and beak with the same aptitude as you use your hands – writing, painting, holding objects, even typing if you had a keyboard.

For a further **100cp**, this allows you to use ‘hand’ techniques you know with other prehensile body parts, probably not as well, but good enough to pull it off, like casting spells with a wand held in your toes or performing a pressure point attack with your beak.

Well, Sprink On Your Spronk! - 100cp

When you curse people out, those of prim and proper nature might comedically faint on hearing your fowl language. No combat applications, unless you count verbal jousting.

Nurse-maid - 100cp, Free Drop In

You are adept at raising birds and other animals from egg or birth to adulthood. You can opt to have them imprint you as their parent, or not. It also makes the early stages of training (housetraining and simple obedience training) much easier.

Strong Gizzard - 100cp, Free Denizen

You’re particularly resistant (though not totally immune) to fear, corruption and mundane coercion. That is to say, you’re damn stubborn when your mind is set. Against supernatural mind control, possession and the like, you’ve got a fighting chance at resisting.

Chaw - 100cp, Free Guardian, further purchases discounted

Guardians-in-training take one or more courses - Chaws - to provide education. You have graduated one of these courses; choose one from the following list. You can purchase this perk multiple times, for a different speciality each time.

- Healing - What it says on the tin. Mundane first aid and care of the ill and injured.
- Weather Interpretation - Weather prediction, but also includes tides, animal migrations & seasonal patterns.
- Blacksmithing - The crafting of basic metal items.
- Search-and-Rescue (and Combat) – Aka Combat Chaw. What the Guardians are known for. Aerial scouting, claw-to-claw fighting, recovering the injured.
- Navigation - Navigation by sun and stars, plotting landmarks, cartography and flying by dead reckoning.
- Tracking - Following tracks on the ground either on foot or on wing, but also identifying the signs that birds make when they land.
- Ga'Hoolology - Care of the Great Tree, farming and botany.

Colliering Chaw (requires Weather Interpretation Chaw) – 100cp

The art of snatching hot coals from bushfires, basically being the owl version of Prometheus. You can resist the radiant heat of a raging fire to some degree, predict the motion of wildfires with acceptable accuracy and treat all forms of burns, scalds and heatstroke. Colliers are considered to have a slightly higher status among Guardians for the daring required to dive into fires for the coals.

Red Glare – 100cp, Free Pure One

A menacing, red-eyed glare which enhances your fear-inducing abilities, both magical and mundane. Makes you look particularly badass wearing a helmet with eye slits. You can deactivate this at will - after all, it's just a trick of the light in your eyes, right?

Gadfeather – 200cp, Drop In

You have the talent to compose inspiring and hearty poems and ballads on the fly. Lift low spirits, heat the blood of those about to face battle, and calm flaring emotions. You might not win awards for your performances, but at least you can work "hitting a crow over the head with your lute" into the routine somehow.

Jumper, Who Doubts – 200cp, Denizen

You have a pretty good idea if something isn't on the level. Whether that's calling out a liar to their face or figuring out that your mission instructions steer you towards a good spot for an ambush, your sceptical attitude serves you well in separating the deceptions out from the truths.

Silent Wing – 200cp, Guardian

Rigorous training – helped with no small amount of natural talent – has enabled you to fly silently through the air and snatch small creatures without alerting them or others. With experience you could snatch a tin full of rocks on the wing without even a faint rattle, or take down an alert Owl sentry in armor without alerting his fellows. It should go without saying that a noisy engine or inability to feel the winds will negate this ability.

Turnfeather – 200cp, Pure One

You certainly don't have friends in the Ice Narrows, do you? The very face of loyalty, not even your closest friends could suspect you of hatching traitorous plans. If you ever need to

act like you barely got away from the ‘enemy’ with your life, you give a performance that would cause even witnesses to your treachery to doubt about what they saw.

Higher Magnetics Spronk - 200cp

You have studied the spronk (forbidden knowledge) of the use of Flecks and their interaction with both standard and higher magnetic fields – especially its interaction with the zi field, which is the life energy all creatures emit. You have the knowledge to produce a Devil’s Triangle and craft devious traps from enough Flecks, as well as knowledge of how to handle them safely or treat those affected by them. Knowledge itself, after all, can be used for both good and evil.

Ryb of Blacksmithing – 400cp, Drop In

You are no neophyte with a crisp new Forge Safety Certificate; you know the ways to work metal into the forms used by the owls, fashioning them into items light as feathers but with no loss of strength. Depending on how complicated the item must be, it might be somewhere between a quarter to half as heavy as it usually is – a dagger, after all, can be honed down to a razor-edged needle. You may also forge mu metal into objects just as strong as steel, or many tiny Flecks into whole items without loss of their power.

Bedtime Stories – 400cp, Denizen

Stories are powerful tools, and you can use them to remind someone of the owl they used to be. Telling a story will set a point in their mind which they will remember with clarity.

Should that owl’s mind later change for the worse – corruption by Flecks, Moon Blinking, or simply the slow change over time to become bitter and jaded – you can briefly bring back the owl they used to be by reminding them of your tale.

For temporary or weak mental effects, like Moon Blinking, this resurgence of their old personality might be enough to break it. For stronger or permanent effects, you might have a few minutes of their old personality back.

Hot Coals for Gizzard Stones – 400cp, Guardian

Your gizzard holds hot coals from the Ember of Hoole - figuratively. Your zi has an inner light that renders you immune to a Hagsfiend’s fyngrout, moon blinking/moon scalding, and bestows a strong resistance to dark magics of all kinds. It would take multiple Hagsfiends working in tandem to put any kind of nachtmagen over you.

Moonblinking – 400cp, Pure One

You can “moon blink” or hypnotise those of weak wills by having them stare into a light source like the full moon. Those hypnotised will carry out tasks as ordered, but those with strong wills or stories in their hearts may resist it. Moon blinking has no fixed duration, but is relatively easy to cast off with help from others. Other light sources can be used, like “fire blinking”, where fire is the source of light instead of the moon. If you used a lamp, it’d be called “lamp blinking”. With experimentation and time, you can also develop the technique of “Moon Scalding” (and fire scalding or lamp scalding), a much stronger effect that only those of legendary gizzard-strength would be able to resist.

Starsight – 600cp, Drop In

A rare and precious talent among those few who have it, Starsight is the ability to peer through windows in your dreams and foretell moments yet to come in the path of history. Usually only the most momentous occasions are shown; the fall of the dice too trivial to bother with. At least when something earth-moving happens, you can tell them “I foretold you so!”.

Gizzard Flying – 600cp, Denizen

When you take wing, you can make the most incredible turns and twists through shifting obstacles with skill that borders on the prescient. Time itself seems to slow down as you find the safe path to fly through a raging firestorm or scathing storm. This applies to all forms of personal flight, but not piloting aircraft. Be warned – just because you can fly like the wind itself, doesn't make you a better fighter.

Raptor – 600cp, Guardian

With their big eyes and round faces, it's easy to forget that owls share their lineage with the great eagles. When it comes to aerial combat, your skill is the subject of sagas, and will be sung in the same songs as the great Lyze of Kiel. You have the manoeuvrability, strength and skill with talon blade and beak to match the very best and battle-hardened owls. You wouldn't blink an eye at taking on a hundred bats or turnfeathers yourself, swooping and slashing through their flock without suffering a nick in return. Applies to all forms of personal flight, but not piloting aircraft.

Nachtmagen - 600cp, Discount Pure One & Free Crowl

You have the fowl powers of the Nachtmagen at your command, able to yeep (paralyse) other creatures with your fyngröt (glowing yellow eyes), change into the shapes of other birds and owls, corrupt owlets into Hagsfiends, induce hallucinations, deceive the eye, and more. Dark magic, basically.

Items

All items may be purchased multiple times, if desired.

A History Of Ga'Hoole, by Lyze of Kiel - 100cp, Free Drop In

The collected works of the Legends of Ga'Hoole and the history of their world, along with a number of sagas and stories, as written by Lyze of Kiel.

Mu Metal Helmet – 100cp, Free Denizen

A silvery metal helmet that defends the wearer against the power emitted by Flecks and is strong as steel. It prevents all forms of mind- or body-control (including stun, sick and paralysis effects) which rely on electromagnetic transmission (eg: Flecks, mind-control rays, a phaser set to stun), but not magical or psychic effects (fyngröt, Jedi mind tricks, Charm Monster spell, etc.).

Steel - 100cp, Free Guardian, Free Pure One

Armor and weaponry for your animal form. You have a utilitarian but lightweight steel helmet and a pair of weapons.

The mainstay weapons of choice among owls are a pair of battle claws - bladed gauntlets for the feet of raptors. This set is far sharper and stronger than any yet produced by owls (or any other animal for that matter).

At your option, you may have a pair of swords instead - a pair of blades like a cross between a scimitar and a punch dagger, able to slash as well as stab, but they prevent you from grappling enemies in mid-air.

If you are a bat, you receive a pair of Wing Blades instead which fills a similar purpose, adding a slashing blade to the leading edge of your wings. Other types of animals might have different weaponry or armor; snakes might have a helmet and tail-blade, crows might have beak blades, kangaroos might have a breastplate and a lance, you get the idea.

Ember 200cp, Drop In

A hot coal, eternally glowing with heat. Its light is comforting to those of kind disposition and burns away nachtmagen (and other 'dark'/'evil' magic) in its presence. Even though it's hot enough to light fires with, it will never burn someone holding it unless they wield dark magic of some kind.

Seed of Ga'Hoole – 200cp, Denizen

You possess a seed from the Tree of Ga'Hoole. With time and nurturing, this seed will grow into a huge, twisted tree with many internal cavities within its trunk, branches and even roots, and providing delicious milkberries and noots (nuts). Fully grown, at human scale, it seems merely an exceptionally large and twisting tree, but at owl scale it's the size of a small town. After several decades, it too will produce viable seeds.

Hollow In Ga'Hoole – 200cp, Guardian

You have a nest in the Tree of Ga'Hoole. It is comfortably furnished for an owl's nest, a circular hollow with elegant but simple furniture, windows, and a pit for hot coals in the centre. Depending on your personality it might have wall hangings, shelves of books or paintings. The Hollow may import into suitably-large trees in future jumps, or becomes a hole in the wall of your warehouse.

Education Chamber – 200cp, Pure One

You have a large cavern in the St. Aegolius Canyons or Ice Narrows with a tall central rock to perch on, surrounded by metal perches. The Chamber has excellent harmonics, and is perfect for conducting lectures or lessons; anyone perched on the rock finds their voices magnified and those on the perches find themselves riveted by the speaker's words - they'll pay rapt attention no matter how weary or bored they are. The chamber is a room-sized add-on for the warehouse once this jump ends, or can be added to any caves that follow you between jumps.

Flecks – 600cp, Drop In

Every week, a tiny blue glowing Fleck of metal will present itself to you somehow; maybe washing up on the beach as you walk along it, perhaps mixed in with another ore that you mine, maybe even in mob item drops, if that sort of thing happens to you.

Flecks produce a form of 'higher magnetism' which seems to act a little like radiation, and a little like magnetism, interacting with the very life-energy of owls themselves.

The power of massed flecks – a few kilograms – is enough to paralyse nearby owls with arcs of electromagnetic energy. A single tiny Fleck can “shatter” an owl – which is to say, corrupt or mentally break them - with persistent exposure.

Mu Metal Supply – 600cp, Denizen

A metal which shunts magnetic fields aside, protecting whatever is behind it from magnetism and electromagnetism, including “higher magnetics”. In its normal form, it is a very soft metal, able to be torn by a raptor's talons, but can be alloyed or plated to stronger metals (losing a proportional amount of “protection” the more foreign metal it is mixed with). In every jump you are in, a shooting star will streak from space once a month, landing near you and providing about half a kilo (a pound, more or less) if you can be bothered to retrieve it.

An Empty Nest – 600cp, Guardian

This empty nest contains within it the power to uplift life. Any owl's egg placed within it will (after the usual time) hatch into an owlet as intelligent as the owls of the Kingdoms; some would say just as smart as a human, capable of speaking in their own tongue and mastering fire in their own way. These owls will gift their intelligence to their offspring, and so the line of Hoole may yet spread to new worlds and forests.

Book of Kreeth - 600cp, Pure One

A copy of the original work by the archhagsfiend, Kreeth, it contains frightening pictures and diagrams between dense paragraphs of Krakish script. Among the treatises on the use of nachtmagen, it describes the creation of bird hybrids - experiments to resurrect the ancient power of the first birds, from which all are descended. The power of the book is so potent that even a typical owl - or perhaps a non-owl - could learn nachtmagen from it.

Companions

Companion options may be selected multiple times.

Import - 50cp/100cp/200cp

Import one companion for 50cp; up to four companions for 100cp and eight for 200cp. They get a free background and species (except for Crowl or As You Were), and 400cp to spend on perks (may be used to purchase Crowl or As You Were as a species).

Met On Wing or Under Leaves - 100cp

Create a new companion from this world with a free background and species, and 600cp to spend on perks and items.

Drawbacks

Up to +600cp worth of drawbacks may be taken.

Slow Starter (Bird or Bat only) +100cp

You begin unable to fly properly. It will take you weeks to learn to fly and this bizarrely slow start is sure to make you the ridicule of anything with a pair of wings.

War of the Ice Claws Veteran +100cp

You're old. Really old. While you might be able to draw on a little more wisdom and experience than other owls, there are a few downsides. Not only does your body hold an old injury from that conflict, the younger owls (read: pretty much all of them) will treat you as irrelevant and senile.

Pyrophobia +100cp

You are especially fearful of fire, flame and even exceptionally hot weather. You won't go near a fireplace, forge, or even a candle.

Yeeping +200cp

When startled, you freeze up, wings and all. This is rather bad if you're in mid-flight. Hope you can loosen up before you hit the ground.

The Ground Is Dangerous +200cp

Ten times out of ten, you will be attacked if you set foot on the ground. Whatever carnivorous animal is attacking you will have the advantage of brute strength, size and surprise.

Higher Magnetism +200cp

In here, your supernatural powers and abilities will be powered by the very rare Flecks. You will be immune to shattering by exposure to Flecks, but your friends and allies will not.

Bird-Brained +300cp

You're one of the Shattered - affected by exposure to Flecks. Between lucid moments, other owls and animals will give you a wide berth – half the time you retreat into your own fantasy world, half the time lash out at whatever displeases you, and the other half furiously carry out bizarre works of art or hobby.

Clipped (Bird only) +300cp

You cannot truly fly, maybe due to an accident or a battle injury. The best you can manage is to glide and hopefully gain some height off thermals.

Hagswar +300cp

Vast flocks of Hagsfiends, bats, and dark-hearted owls are forming a vast army, the likes of which would dwarf the army raised by the Pure Ones of St. Aggies. War will come to the Owl Kingdoms, every last one of them, and blood will be spilled on claw and beak. The Guardians will be outnumbered and outclassed against such a horde, those of them who do not also fall to darkness.

Those who side with the Guardians will have to fight as hard as they can just to keep from losing territory – small victories in one place mean losses in other areas.

Those of you who side with the Hagsfiends will find the conquest to be hollow – hardly any good sport in battle, and the years to come will be wracked with famine and chaotic infighting as the horde turns on itself.

Ending

Once your ten years are up, you are presented with three options:

- **Go Home** to your original world.
- **Stay** in this world with its wonders.
- **Move On** to the next jump.

Notes

v1.02, jump by Myrmidont, Guardians of Ga'Hoole books by Kathryn Lasky.

The timeline of the jump will do its best to reconcile the events of both books and movie, deferring to the book series when conflicting.

For the purposes of future jumps, treat references to owls in the perks as "people". Items do not 're-size' - they are made for owls, after all.

How dangerous is this setting?

Not especially dangerous, but owl-vs-owl combat can be pretty brutal - they're predators, after all, and losing a fight is going to result in steel-sheathed talons through your heart or a snapped neck. Depending on the drawbacks, I'd say as dangerous as any other low-magic fantasy setting where people are still running each other through with swords.

A Devil's Triangle is a triangle of three Fleck sources that causes an owl (people) within to be so disoriented they can't walk out again, effectively trapping them in a prison without walls.

Nachtmagen is not particularly powerful as far as magic goes, and its best effects are ones which deceive or corrupt. Nearly all its effects are subtle rather than overt - visions, curses, hypnotism, enchantments, subtle illusions, making charms or talismans, that sort of thing. Casting magic missile or fireball is pretty much out of the question (without other perks to do so, at least).

Nachtmagen specifically allows you to corrupt young owls or people into beings which also can use nachtmagen, although not at your level of ability. In jump, all users of nachtmagen are evil Hagsfiends, and the power itself is referred to as 'dark magic'.

Hagsfiends/Crowls or anyone else with fyngrout can deactivate it at will, or cause the yellow glow to be cosmetic only.

The light of the Ember can lift light enchantments and minor curses. It could lift Moon Blinking/Scalding from someone, but there's no way it would burn away the magic of the One Ring or hold back a swarm of dementors by itself (the light *might* hold back *one* dementor, as an example).

Raptor vs Gizzard Flying vs Combat Chaw

To give some ideas of how these compare:

Raptor is straight up aerial combat skill. It won't help you find the safe path through a tornado. Gizzard flying doesn't make you better at hitting things, but will boost your dodging and agility. Combat Chaw includes a bunch of basic Search and Rescue skills like searching by grids or formation, signals, recovering wounded owls without further injuring them, that kind of thing, and happens to include combat training.

A Raptor will straight up beat someone who has only Combat Chaw.

A Gizzard Flyer can probably stay out of reach of a Raptor, but moving close enough to strike them will put them in the Raptor's claws.

Gizzard Flyer + Combat Chaw might let you beat a Raptor with a difficult fight.

Sadly, those hatched from the Empty Nest must remain in the world of their hatching, unless they were already going to be companions.

Changelog

v1.0

Released to the wild

v1.01

Raised cost of Location purchase and Typical Owl for Drop Ins to 100cp, to avoid having 50cp left over.

Clarified cost of 100cp perks and Chaws.

Corrected flavour text on Raptor.

Added As You Were species option.

Tried to outline the difference between Raptor and Gizzard Flying.

Adjusted some minor text issues.

v1.02

Reduced Cost of “Not an Owl” to 200cp for non-Drop Ins, removed legacy text saying Not-Owls were for Drop In only.

Moved “& Age” from the Locations to Species because I forgot to do that last version. Minor spelling corrections & text shuffling.