



The  
**Whitehwoolf**

A Racial Ecology for Shadows over Vathak  
and 5th Edition Horror



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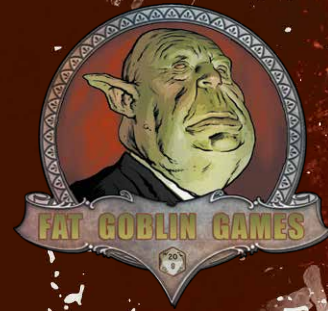
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# The Witchwolf

*You possess within you the ability for great courage and nobility. Our forebears proved this when they fought against the Vampire Lords. You will be forever known as a Blood Hound, a name that means honesty, courage, and kindness. You rare few will belong to a family respected by the annals of history, you must strive every day to earn this respect. All the races will one day be proud to honor the witchwolves because of what you sacrifice and fight for. You will learn to better control yourself during transformation. You will learn to better stifle your primal urges. You will become the quintessential good, not just in a witchwolf but in all beings.*

*Of course, within each of you is also the ability for great evil.*

*- Excerpt from Blood Hound: A Witchwolf History*

**T**he witchwolves stem from a unique mixture of bloodlines that have come together in an unnatural union. All witchwolves come from romni lineage and carry trace amounts of the hag blood found amongst their people. This, combined with the most terrible and brutal blood of a werewolf forebearer has created a union quickly establishing itself as a new race in Vathak.

Witchwolves often attempt to hide their true nature from outsiders for fear of being hunted, burned at the stake, or covered in molten silver like so many lycanthropes throughout history. Yet, even after years of practice, even the most controlled witchwolf can still fall prey to their most bestial urges in a moment of weakness. For many witchwolves, the greatest possible nightmare involves waking in a pool of a loved one's blood.

Neither romni nor werewolves, witchwolves are unique beings drawn to extremes of good for those who attempt to control their inner beast or evil for those who revel in it. Many witchwolves fight against the Spawn of the Old Ones, and attempt to exemplify goodness in every way. Others embrace the darkness and wish nothing more than the destruction of all.

## BESTIAL VISAGE

Outwardly human, witchwolves are virtually indistinguishable from other members of the romni race. Witchwolves have mixed colored eyes like all romni but also carry the sign of their werewolf blood with prominent eyebrows that grow together, long index fingers, or wild hair that seems impossible to tame. A witchwolf's features change when they shapechange. They gain a bestial wolf-like visage; the snout elongates, teeth become more prominent, claws emerge from fingertips, and skin toughens into hide. Despite their shape changing abilities, they are not immune to infection from full lycanthropes.

## MOON & MANNERS

Witchwolves are often passionate and intimidating. Their first transformation commonly occurs during puberty or shortly thereafter beneath the light of the full moon.

Like their werewolf relatives, witchwolves are feared and despised for the savagery that characterizes the worst of their kind, and not without reason. While not all are monsters, many werewolf-kin bands are happy

I shall never forget the walk I took one night in Sileasia, after having accomplished the examination of an unknown bhriota relic, the Cannibal Hooked Organ Fork, at Ravca, near the Gray Peaks. I had learned of the existence of this cromlech only on my arrival at Ravca in the afternoon, and I had started to visit the curiosity without calculating the time it would take me to reach it and to return. Suffice it to say that I discovered the venerable pile of grey stones as the sun set, and that I expended the last lights of evening in planning and sketching. I then turned my face homeward. My walk of about ten miles had wearied me, coming at the end of a long day's posting, and I had lamed myself in scrambling over some stones to the ancient relic.

A small hamlet was at no great distance, and I betook myself thither, in the hopes of hiring a trap to convey me to the posthouse, but I was disappointed. Few in the place could speak the common tongue, and the priest, when I applied to him, assured me that he believed there was no better conveyance in the place than a common cart with its solid wooden wheels; nor was a riding horse to be procured. The good man offered to house me for the night; but I was obliged to decline, as my family intended starting early on the following morning.

Out spake then the mayor--"Our guest can never go back to-night across the flats, because of the--the--" and his voice dropped; "the loups-garoux."

"He says that he must return!" replied the priest in romni. "But who will go with him?"

"Ah, ha,! It is all very well for one of us to accompany him, but think of the coming back alone!"

"Then two must go with him," said the priest, and you can take care of each other as you return."

"Picou tells me that he saw the were-wolf only this day se'nnight," said a peasant; "he was down by the hedge of his buckwheat field, and the sun had set, and he was thinking of coming home, when he heard a rustle on the far side of the hedge. He looked over, and there stood the wolf as big as a calf against the horizon, its tongue out, and its eyes glaring like marsh-fires. By the One True God! catch me going over the fields to-night. Why, what could two men do if they were attacked by that wolf-fiend?"

"It is tempting," said one of the elders of the village;" no man must expect the help of God if he throws himself wilfully in the way of danger. Is it not so, Herr Delviou? I heard you say as much from the pulpit on the Day of Oaths, preaching from the Codex Seprenious."

"That is true," observed several, shaking their heads.

"As big as a calf," threw in Picou's friend.

"If the loup-garou were only a natural wolf, why then, you see"--the mayor cleared his throat--"you see we should think nothing of it; but, sir, it is a fiend, a worse than fiend, a man-fiend,--a worse than man-fiend, a man-wolf-fiend."

from the journal of Franz Schafer



enough to rob and murder fellow travelers who will not be missed or hire themselves out as mercenaries for the most brutal jobs. Still, others seek to simply live their lives or even use their abilities for good. Found throughout Vathak, witchwolves come in as many varieties as there are wolves.

Witchwolves have few conflicts with other witchwolves. What disputes they do have with one another are most often about territory. Their fights are brief and seldom lead to death. Like regular wolves, witchwolves are quick to recognize strength and submit to dominance.

Witchwolves have a much more strained relationship with other races. In most areas, witchwolves are feared and considered cursed, abominations, or worse. The vindari especially view the witchwolves as monsters and baselessly accuse the were-kin of foul crimes, including eating human flesh and consorting with werewolves. Relations with the romni are better, and most witchwolves seek to cultivate strong ties with their full-human relatives.

Some witchwolves choose to live among men, mainly in romni cities or caravans.



## WITCHWOLF TRAITS

Witchwolves deal with the struggle of their bestial nature and how the people of Vathak perceive them.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 2.

**Age.** Witchwolves mature at the same rate as humans and reach adulthood at the age of 16.

**Alignment.** Witchwolves can be of any alignment.

**Size.** Your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Empathy of Beasts.** You can communicate in a limited manner with wolves and other predators. They can understand the meaning of your words, though you have no ability to understand them in return. You have advantage on all Charisma checks you make to influence them.

**Sharp Claws.** You are never unarmed. You are proficient with your claws, which are a melee weapon that deals 1d6 piercing damage.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Common and one other language of your choice.

## HUNT IN THE NIGHT

Although they hail from a chaotic and evil creature, witchwolves run the gamut of alignments based upon where they were raised and how. Typically, they fall along either a chaotic or lawful axis. Witchwolves falling into the chaotic alignments might have been brought up on the streets of a city or fallen in early with a criminal element. Witchwolves who are lawful by nature might have been raised in an orderly pack with a clear hierarchy or as part of a group that had rules that needed to be followed.

## TO RUN WITH THE PACK

Witchwolves often dwell with others of their kind in small, isolated settlements or traveling caravans that

resound with howls on the night of the full moon. Many witchwolves live in seminomadic bands as traders, mystics, adventurers, or entertainers, allowing them to utilize their romni heritage to hunt in large regions without fear of being discovered. Most such bands include only witchwolves, but occasionally groups adopt a werewolf out of circumstance or convenience, particularly if the two share common blood.

Witchwolf packs are often led by witches trained in a tradition of romni curses and transformation tied closely to the original curse of lycanthropy; these witches are also usually the most powerful members of their packs, though exceptions exist where a witch leads with the aid of a favored ally of incredible strength. Because witchwolves cannot recruit ordinary humans the way werewolves can, they tend to be more cautious and maintain closer bonds with their fellows than true werewolves, and their bands typically consist of only one or a few extended families or, possibly, longtime friends.

## PRIMAL FAITH

Though the disposition of a witchwolf may vary from clan to clan, one constant among all the wolf-kin is their faith. Witchwolves worship the moon, praying to the many spirits of the night for good fortune and blessings in the night. They build totem shrines near ancient landmarks such as springs, trees, rocks or mountains. Though no true dogma or structure exists for their faith, it doesn't prevent the witchwolves from holding festivals during specific phases of the moon, creating lunar inspired artifacts, and howling their prayer into the night.

## TO BELONG AMONGST THE WOLVES

Witchwolves are most often drawn to a life of adventure by a desire to prove themselves, either to earn a place as a pack alpha or even a pack lord, or else to fight against the image of witchwolves as violent monsters.

The latter often turn for inspiration to the legends of the Sawtooth Pack, a rare and blessed group of witchwolves and werewolves who became known as the Blood Hounds and fought

with the vindari against the Spawn of the Old Ones. Such goodly witchwolves form cabals dedicated to defending a particular region from horrific abominations, evil lycanthropes, and even vampires, or start adventuring parties that seek out their sworn enemies wherever they can be found.

## NAMES

The witchwolves are often named by their parents, but many are never afforded this common custom and might eventually choose a name they feel is fitting. Presented are common names chosen by the witchwolf.

**Male Names:** Berriston, Fynn, Gossom, Lucian, Rassler, Rhett, Thrain, Treznor, Quillard, Virion

**Female Names:** Avice, Constance, Edith, Kivela, Lorelei, Luna, Lyndra, Melania, Priscilla, Tatiana

**Pack Names:** Broken Creek, Dark Snow, Evening Valley, Lycan Rock, Moon Star, Nightstar, Red Banes, Silver Feather



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