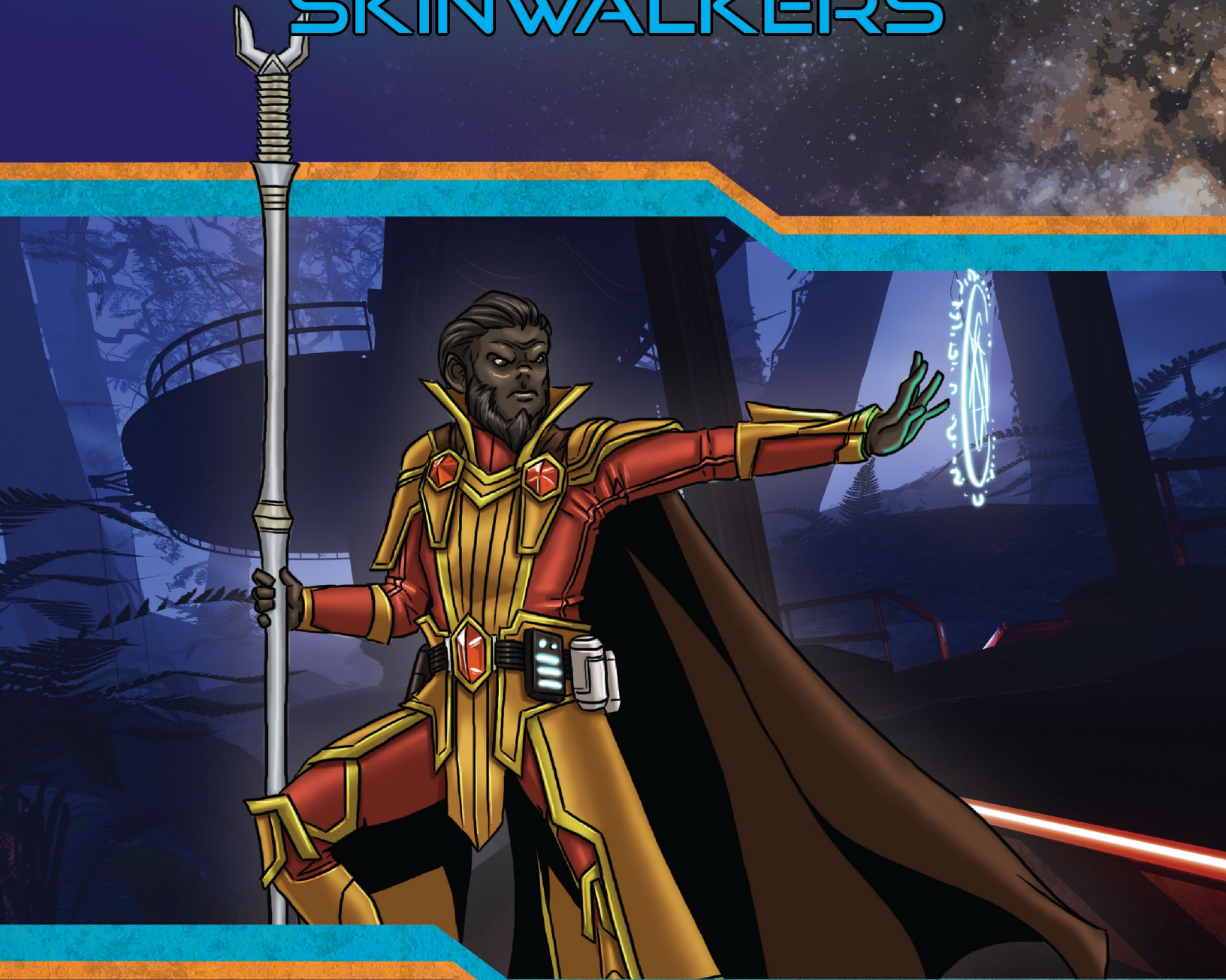


STAR LOG.EM-015

SKINWALKERS



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SKINWALKERS

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~ Alexander Augunas
Publisher & Crunchmaster of Everyman Gaming LLC

ACCESSING ARCHIVES QUERY: SKINWALKERS

Hello, and thank you for purchasing *STAR LOG.EM015: SKINWALKERS!* While skinwalkers are by no means a common race in the Xa-Osoro system, you'd be pressed to avoid seeing them when traveling to Ulo and its moons. Eogawa, one of Ulo's moons, is largely considered the modern "home" of the skinwalker race, though pre-Nova Age records suggest that they could be found on virtually any world with substantial human populations. But during the Regicide, when the star Osoro went supernova and drenched the system in Blood Space, off-worlders on Eogawa became subject to a potent strain of lycanthropy that had been enhanced by Blood Space—driving the infected mad and allowing their transformation to be continued by the light of planets as well as moons, enabling the very world that Eogawa orbited to trap the infected in an endless lycanthropic transformation. Skinwalkers are the natural result of this massive uptick in lycanthropic activity. Although weregorilla skinwalkers are the most common variety in the Xa-Osoro system due to the militant Dwhalli-Gor, skinwalkers of very animal and insectoid variety can be found on Eogaa and beyond.



SKINWALKER

Scions of the wilds, skinwalkers are humans whose bloodline is tainted by lycanthropy, granting them the ability to assume a specific bestial form. Despite the many similarities between skinwalkers and their human cousins, most skinwalkers feel like outsiders even among friends, and prefer the chill of literal loneliness to the figurative, social one.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

In their true forms, skinwalkers are indistinguishable from humans save for some small glimmer of feral savageness deep in their eyes that sets them apart from their cousins. Yet as shapechangers, each skinwalker is able to assume the form of an animal/humanoid hybrid that combines their natural form's traits with the physical features of a specific type of animal—bears, gorillas, tigers, and rats are common, but so are the likes of crocodiles, bats, and even sharks. In this state, skinwalkers develop markedly bestial attributes, but their general humanoid silhouette remains unchanged.

Like a kitsune, a skinwalker's hybrid form is hereditary and unchanging. A skinwalker's pigmentation remains largely the same between transformations, so that a skinwalker with red hair who can assume an ursine form likely retains some measure of red in their fur's palette. No two skinwalkers ever follow precisely the same rules for their transformation, however. This is believed to be the case because skinwalkers, like most Xa-Osoro's lycanthropes, have their origins in the chaotic properties of Blood Space, where things like 'rules' and 'laws of genetics' simply do not apply.

HOME WORLD

Although they've only come into prominence since the Nova Age, skinwalkers as a race have existed for as long as lycanthropy has, and pre-Nova Age records indicate that this infamous disease existed in some capacity on every habitable world in the Xa-Osoro System. Skinwalker scarcity vanished abruptly as part of the fallout of the Regicide, however, for when Blood Space seeped into the atmosphere of Eogawa, it transformed nearly all the moon's foreign inhabitants into frothing lycanthropes—most permanently locked into a blood-mad state beneath the ever-present glare of Ulo, the planet that Eogawa orbits.

Yet by some miracle, those who were infected while pregnant, however, gave birth to skinwalker children rather than true lycanthropes. A sobering number of these youths died from neglect or simple savagery on the part of their blood-mad parents, but many young skinwalkers were saved by native vanaras and brought to their shinning cities across Eogawa to be raised in safe and nurturing environments, if not among family. Though to say that all skinwalkers are free citizens safe from the perils of lycanthropy would be false—the dreaded Dwhalli-Gor, sworn enemies of the vanaras, have been said to take human mates for the sole purpose of siring weregorilla skinwalker children to use as spies and infiltrators,

leaving the race very much divided between two sides of a war that literally birthed them.

SOCIETY AND ALIGNMENT

Skinwalkers don't truly possess a society of their own—most of them live either among vanaras or the Dwhalli-Gor, and are expected to live and work towards the ends of whichever culture they find themselves among. A rare few leave Eogawa to live amongst humans, but most skinwalkers find themselves remained of everything they're not when they're around humanity, and so many simply depart for the stars, living and working alone as much as possible. Their wilderness senses and connection to the natural world affords most skinwalkers something that the modern world sorely lacks—a measure of skill at wilderness survival. When fate or necessity brings them into contact with other societies, skinwalkers tend to prefer to blend into the crowd than stand out, hoping simply to be passed over while on the hunt for resources or luxuries, whichever they find themselves lacking at the given moment.

RELATIONS

Skinwalkers tend to get along well with other bestial-looking folk, especially catfolk, kitsune, ratfolk, and tengus. Vesk tend to like skinwalkers even before they learn that they can change into a more imposing form, commenting that skinwalkers just seem "tougher" and "less pathetically soft" than other humans. Actual lycanthropes, such as the Dwhalli-Gor of Eogawa, view skinwalkers as an inferior race, however, and often hunt skinwalkers for sport when they aren't pressing them into slavery or forcing them to die for their causes on the field of battle.

ADVENTURERS

Skinwalkers are adventurers by nature, never willing to stay put for too long and always looking towards the beaten trail when they feel complacent or threatened by civilization. In truth, many skinwalkers simply don't feel comfortable moving through the daily motions of modern living, their hearts beating to the call of the wild. A skinwalker's signature aloofness makes them poor envoys, but their physical brawn makes them excellent soldiers. Skinwalkers also possess a stronger connection to the wilds than most, and many become mystics capable of drawing otherworldly power from nature.

NAMES

The history of a skinwalker's name largely depends upon where they're from. Skinwalkers born and raised among the Dwhalli-Gor often have brutish, undignified names in the Dwhalli-Gor's patchwork tongue (which is a mix of Common and simian grunts), while those rescued by vanaras have names that reflect the vanaras' philosophies and traditions. Still other skinwalkers have mostly human names, and a few simply choose to rename themselves after some aspect of nature that's usually tied to their hybrid form's appearance after living on their own for a while.

SKINWALKER RACIAL TRAITS

+2 Wis, -2 Cha, +2 to any 1 physical ability (Str, Dex, or Con)

4 Hit Points

Skinwalkers are humanoids with the human, skinwalker, and shapechanger subtypes and are Medium. They have a base speed of 30 feet.

Bestial Lineage: Skinwalkers are born with lycanthropic taint in their blood, a corruption that determines the benefits of many of their racial abilities. Choose one type of animal or vermin to serve as the skinwalker's lineage. Once chosen, this cannot be changed.

A skinwalker can gain the Bestial Shapechange feat as a replacement class feature at 2nd, 4th, 6th, 12th, or 18th level, as if the bonus feat were granted by an archetype. (See the archetypes section in Chapter 4 of the *STARFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*). Skinwalkers cannot replace a replacement class feature gained from an actual archetype with the Bestial Aspect feat.

Change Shape (Su): Each skinwalker can assume an animal/human hybrid form that combines their true appearance with physical traits from their bestial lineage (see above). This form has the same general silhouette and prehensibility as the skinwalker's true form and is always of the same age and sex as the skinwalker. A skinwalker always take this specific form when using this ability. A skinwalker in bestial form gains a +10 racial bonus on Disguise checks made to appear as an animal/humanoid hybrid. Changing shape is a standard action. A skinwalker in hybrid form returns to its true form if knocked unconscious or killed.

Feral Hide: A skinwalker's hide toughens while in their hybrid form, providing them a measure of protection even while unarmored. While in their hybrid form (see above), a skinwalker gains a +1 racial bonus to AC.

Low-Light Vision: Skinwalkers can see in dim light as if it were normal light. For more details, see the light-light vision section in Chapter 8 in the *STARFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*.

One with the Wilds: Skinwalkers gain a +2 racial bonus on Survival checks.

Natural Weapons: Skinwalkers are always considered armed while in their hybrid form. They can deal 1d3 lethal damage with unarmed strikes and the attack doesn't count as archaic. Skinwalkers gain a unique weapon specialization with their natural weapons at 3rd level, allowing them to add 1-1/2 × their character level to damage rolls with their natural weapons (instead of adding their level, as usual). Skinwalkers lose this ability while in their true form.

NEW FEAT

The following feat is available to skinwalker characters.

BESTIAL SHAPECHANGE

You can assume additional aspects of your lycanthropic lineage.

Prerequisites: Change shape racial trait, human subtype, skinwalker subtype, shapechanger subtype.

Benefit: Your lycanthropic heritage manifests in one of the following ways. You choose the manifestation when you choose this feat, and once chosen it cannot be changed. Some manifestations have prerequisites. These prerequisites must be met by the type of animal that your change shape transforms you into.

Aquatic Adaptation (Ex): Your heritage makes you especially adapt at fighting underwater. Whenever you attack with a melee weapon that deals kinetic damage while underwater, you don't take any penalty on attack rolls and your damage isn't reduced, regardless of the type of kinetic damage your attack deals. In addition, you can hold your breath for a number of rounds equal to four times your Constitution score. You can only choose this manifestation if your bestial lineage is that of an aquatic creature (such as a crocodile or a shark).

Beast Speech (Ex): You can speak with any animal, magical beast, or vermin of the same general family as your bestial lineage at will, as if you shared a common language. For example, if you have werewolf lineage, you could use this ability to speak with most canines (such as dogs or wolves). This ability doesn't make those animals any friendlier towards you than they would otherwise be, but it does allow you to use Diplomacy to change their attitudes towards you instead of Survival. You can choose this manifestation twice. The second time you choose it, you can speak with any animal, magical beast, or vermin as if you shared a common language.

Blindsight (Ex): You gain the blindsight special ability out 30 feet (see the Senses section in Chapter 8 of the *STARFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*). When you gain this manifestation, you must choose a whether your blindsight is through scent, sound, or vibration, and your choice must be one that your bestial lineage possesses. For instance, a skinwalker with werewolf heritage could choose scent, but not sound or vibration. Once chosen, this cannot be changed. If your bestial lineage has multiple types of blindsight, you can choose this manifestation multiple times. Each time, choose a new sense to gain blindsight with.

Darkvision (Ex): You gain darkvision out 60 feet. You can choose this manifestation up to three times. The second time you choose it, your darkvision increases to 90 feet. The third time you choose it, your darkvision increases to 120 feet.

Fast Change (Su): You can use your change shape racial ability as a standard action or a move action. If you have 12 or more ranks in Disguise, you can choose this manifestation a second time. The second time you choose this manifestation, you gain the ability to use your change shape racial ability as a standard action, a move action, or a swift action.

Wild Skill (Ex): Choose two of the following skills—Acrobatics, Athletics, Bluff, Intimidate, Perception, or Stealth. Add those skills to your list of class skills. If they're already class skills for you, you gain a +1 bonus on checks made with those skills instead. You can choose this manifestation up to three times.

Special: You can select this feat multiple times. You can only choose each manifestation once unless specifically noted otherwise.

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