



The Wolf That Walked on Two Legs

The following Legend is a popular one told among both the Barrites of the Deep Forest and the Bear Striders of the Caralkspur. It is believed that this tale is a story that attempts to explain the origins of the Wulfhetan Half-Horrors.

- Washka

Long ago, before the coming of the Untold Winter, there was a wolf. The wolf lived with its mate and their children in the lands that would one day be called Vasgothia. For many years, the wolf and its family hunted rabbits and deer in the forests, and they were happy. Then one day, Namegivers came to the forest. They cut down the trees to make their homes. They used fire and axe to clear the forest and they killed all the rabbits and deer and took them for themselves. Confused, the wolf went to the great longhouse at the centre of the forest where the Passions lived and beseeched their chieftain for help.

'The Namegivers have cut down the trees' he said 'they have killed all the rabbits and now there are none left to feed my family. Why do you favour them so?'

'We favour none of our children over the other' the great chieftain boomed.

'You do' the wolf replied defiantly 'look at the gifts you have given them. You have given them the gift of fire and the gift of iron so that they may cut down our forests and warm their homes.'

'We have given you many gifts as well mighty wolf' the chieftain retorted 'We have given you fangs so that you may defend yourself and kill your prey. We have given you fur so that you will not freeze in the winter.'

'You favour the Namegivers more' the wolf continued, 'though they walk on two legs, they use bows and slings to kill their food. I must run my prey down, and you have made the deer and the rabbits too fast so that many times they escape my fangs. We have fur yes, but you have made the winters so cold that some of my cubs still die when the frost comes.'

'You dare question the will of the Passions!' the chieftain shouted, throwing his cup at the wolf so hard that it struck blood. 'Be gone from my halls, your whining is souring my mead and my mood.'

The wolf left, his tail between his legs. When he returned to his home, he was shocked to see that the Namegivers had built a town.

'How long was I gone?' he wondered.

Running home to his family, he found his den empty.

'Where is my mate and where are my cubs?' he growled.

He ran furiously to the town of the Namegivers, but stopped in his tracks when he saw the furs that they were draped in. Each Namegiver was wearing the skins of his family. Furious, the wolf leapt into the village and tore the throat out of the nearest Namegiver. He was eventually chased off by the fire and iron that they wielded, but he had killed six of their number before he fled.

Alone in the forests, the wolf wept. He howled in pain for three nights before





exhaustion took him. When he awoke, he saw a small bright figure hovering above him, it was the Passion known as the Grinning Stranger.

'Leave me be' the wolf whispered, 'I have nothing to say to the Passions that have forsaken me'.

'Not all' grinned the Passion 'The chieftain is a fool, he loves the Namegivers above even his own kind. In time, they will rule this world. They will master magic, the greatest of all the Passions' gifts, but this knowledge will be their destruction'.

'I will be dead long before then' the wolf replied, 'I will never visit my revenge upon those who have killed my family'.

'Then allow me to impart a gift upon you, brave wolf, for I know many secrets that even the chieftain is not aware of, what would you have me teach you?'

The wolf's ears pricked up at the proposition.

'Teach me to walk on two legs' he growled 'teach me how to take the skins of the Namegivers, just as they have taken the skins of my cubs. I want to walk among them as one of them. I want to hunt them in the safety of their own homes. I want them to fear the creatures of the forest once more'.

The Grinning Stranger nodded, and he spent the next year and a day teaching the wolf all that he knew.

And so, the wolf learned how to take the skins of Namegivers. He learned how to walk among them on two legs and he learned everything he could about what they feared most. Over time, the wolf found others of his own kind, and he passed on the secrets he had learned. When the Untold Winter came to Vasgothia, the wolf and his kind sided with the Ulks against the Passions and their most favoured children. They walked among the kaers and the citadels where the Namegivers huddled, and visited all manner of terror upon them.

Wulfhetan

Wulfhetan are shape shifting Half-Horrors that skin Namegivers alive and then masquerade perfectly as their victims, replacing them in their day-to-day life. In their natural state, they resemble a shadowy anthropomorphic wolf with glowing yellow eyes. Most Namegivers however, have never seen them in this form, and those that have rarely live to tell of the experience. The Wulfhetan stalks its victims carefully, examining how they fit into the social structure of their communities. Once a victim has been selected, the Horror will wait until they are isolated and then strike, killing their prey as swiftly as possible before flaying the skin and magically bonding with it. Once this procedure is finished, the Wulfhetan resembles the target in every way and their use of Mimic Voice allows them to pass off as such. They do retain some memories of their victims, but many are clever enough to feign amnesia, often covering up their take over as some kind of traumatic accident. Their favourite prey are high ranking individuals like tribal chieftains, but such targets can be difficult to ambush alone, and it is not unheard of for an Wulfhetan to slowly work its way up the chain of command in order to gain access to its intended target. The Horror is careful to hide the skins it discards, and the discovery of such a grisly item is evidence that a Wulfhetan is present in a community.





Some scholars suggest that before the Untold Winter, these Horrors took delight in sowing paranoia and distrust among communities, feeding off the negative energy that such emotions produced. Although unable to feed as they once did, the Wulfhetan appear unwilling to abandon their former ways and stubbornly adhere to their pre-Scourge routines. If discovered or somehow unmasked a Wulfhetan can transform into a terrifying amalgamation of Namegiver and wolf, erupting out of its stolen skin in a fountain of blood and viscera.



Challenge: Journeyman (Eighth Circle)

DEX: 12	Initiative: 14	Unconsciousness: 93
STR: 12	Physical Defense: 18	Death Rating: 111
TOU: 11	Mystic Defense: 16	Wound Threshold: 16
PER: 12	Social Defense: 15	Knockdown: 15
WIL: 10	Physical Armor: 12	Recovery Tests: 3
CHA: 9	Mystic Armor: 8	Karma: 6 (24)





Movement: 14

Actions: 2; Bite: 20 (22), Claw: 20 (20)

Powers:

Awareness (16): As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p.129

Flay (18): The Wulfhetan may make a Flay test when skinning a dead Namegiver in order to wear their skin. The test result is the difficulty of any test to see through the Horror's disguise using Astral Sight, Awareness, Lifesight, Perception or any other talent, skill, or ability to detect their true identity.

Horror Power: (20, Skin Shift, Standard).

Lifesight (16): As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p.156.

Mimic Voice (15): As the talent, *Player's Guide*, p.158.

Skin Shift (20, Standard).

Stolen Memories (15, Simple): The Wulfhetan can attempt to magically access its victim's memories in order to better pass as that individual. The Wulfhetan makes a Stolen Memories test against the Mystic Defence of their victim. Each success allows the Horror to recall one piece of information relevant to their victim.

Terror (20, Standard).

Special Maneuvers:

Pounce (*Wulfhetan*)

Provoke (*Opponent, Close Combat*).

Unmask (*Opponent, Close Combat*): An opponent may spend two successes on an Attack test to purposefully tear away some of the Wulfhetan's skin to reveal the wolf fur beneath. A useful tactic when trying to convince others that the Wulfhetan is not whom it appears to be.

Adventure Idea: Wolf Skin

A group of Therans have been spotted in the Eastern Fringe (*Vasgothia*, p.140). Led by an elf Nethermancer from House Narlanth. They appear to be searching for something within the Deep Forest, possibly one of the old elven kaers on the borders of the Wastes. The local Barrites are not welcoming to Therans in their lands and muster a small raiding band (the characters) to attack them. Unknown to the tribesman, the Theran expedition has run afoul of a Wulfhetan. The Horror is slowly working its way up the chain of command, with the ultimate goal of impersonating the Narlanth magician and returning to the Lowlands. By the time the Barrites catch up with the Therans, they have splintered into small groups that refuse to trust one another and each suspects the other of harbouring the Horror. The group will have to decide who they can trust, perhaps allying with some of the Therans in order to unmask the imposter. It is possible that the nearby kaer may hold some ancient weapons or magic that can help the group defeat the Horror. This adventure works best for a group of Barrite characters, but can be modified to suit a group of Empirists or Therans.

