

# Bavanshee

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## *Race and Racial Feats*

**Introduction:** Bavanshee are ageless beings who subsist on the blood of the living. These fey creatures are rumored to be the origin of vampires, and share with those vampires an unquenchable thirst for blood, but these fey lack many of the traditional strengths and weaknesses of the undead that occasionally plague Erath.

*by David Milman*



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Bavanshee are ageless beings who subsist on the blood of the living. These fey creatures are rumored to be the origin of vampires, and share with those vampires an unquenchable thirst for blood, but these fey lack many of the traditional strengths and weaknesses of the undead that occasionally plague Erath.

## Legacy of Trauma

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Bavanshee are of elven descent. Elder elves of both the eladrin and wood variety eventually experience the Remembrance or Revelation; their memories from their other-life call them back to Arvandor before their next rebirth. The Transcendence—cataracts in the shape of crescents, points down, appearing over the pupils of both eyes—is a sure sign that an elf is on the verge of relinquishing their soul to the great cycle of rebirth. It is said, however, that an elf who dies of old age without experiencing the Transcendence is never reincarnated again.

Before the migration to Tír na Aval, the Dawn Crusade brought about atrocities against the fey of Erath so great that entire generations of elves felt bound to their current life with the desire for justice or vengeance. An unprecedented number of elves began to age and die without experiencing the Transcendence. A cabal of elvish witches—spellcasters of various backgrounds—sought to save the souls of their people from being lost to “The Sorrow.” Using necromantic magic, they attempted to halt the aging process of their troubled kin and hold the souls of elder elves unable to experience the Transcendence in the bodies of their current-life. The result was the emergence of the bavanshee.

The witches failed. Their goal was not to create undead. Without resorting to magic potent enough to create undeath, an elven soul could not be bound to mortal flesh... or so they thought. Children, however, began to be born with the trance memories of those who had died unable to experience Transcendence. At first, the elven magi rejoiced. They thought they had unintentionally succeeded in a task they had not even dreamed of attempting: allowing elves who succumbed to the Sorrow to be reborn. These elves, however, never experienced their “First Reflection”—the moment that an elf begins to experience memories of their waking lives during a trance for the purpose of self-education. Nor did these elves ever experience “The Drawing of the Veil”—the moment an elf stops experiencing its other-lives during a trance. Instead, during their trance, the memories of their other-lives became more and more horrific. Eventually, during adolescence, such elves stopped entering into trance in order to avoid the horrific memories of their other-life and were forced to sleep like normal mortals.

By adulthood, other changes also began to manifest. Their appetite for mortal food waned even as an unquenchable thirst for blood grew. Their skin took on a pallor. Children of eladrin found that their hair turned an uncharacteristic black. Sunlight began to hurt their sight. The sclerae of their eyes darkened, tending towards red or even black coloration. Their irises become more vivid in color. The more they succumbed to their thirst, the more distinct these changes became. Soon, it was clear that they also stopped aging. Such “elves” were truly immortal, unless killed in violent acts, and were trapped within their current-life while suffering the nightmares of one past. Some grew so troubled by their predicament that they attempted suicide. It was then that the extent of the coven’s failure became clear. The death of every elf suffering from these symptoms was swiftly met by the rebirth of their soul and the reemergence of their symptoms in the next child born to the elven people. The bavanshee are the immortal legacy of the Dawn Crusade, a reification of the trauma suffered by the elven people.

## Blood Drinker

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Bavanshee are fierce predators who often mask their ravenous thirst behind a façade of sophistication and sensuality. Those who sip blood from their golden chalices, however, are no less voracious than those who rip out their victims’ throats with their claws in messy displays; they just hide it better. All bavanshee are driven to consume the blood of the living. Unlike vampires, however, bavanshee do not grow fangs. Instead, bavanshee have long, magically retractable claws which they use to rend their prey. After, they bite down on open wounds drawing blood and life from their victims. Some, troubled by the moral and social implications of murder, seek out individuals strong enough to survive their embrace. Others drink from commoners, leaving behind a swath of unfortunate victims in the wake of their passing. Of these, many embrace the rage of their other-life and use it to fuel intentional murder sprees which they justify with the word “revenge.”

## Predatory Socialite

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In Tír na Aval, bavanshee commonly find homes in the Unseelie Court. Their grudge mirrors that of the Queen of Air and Darkness, and she welcomes these wayward children with open arms. From her, some bavanshee learn to manipulate darkness like a tangible object. Others congregate around the Queen of Witches, learning how to use the natural magic in their blood to not only grow claws but to transform into wolves and ravens. One might expect the predatory qualities of the bavanshee to make them a natural fit for Oberon's never-ending hunt, but his daylight revelries are unpalatable to most bavanshee. Only those willing to feed gluttonously can overcome the pain that sunlight causes their senses. Of those born to wood elves in Erath, most bavanshee commonly find homes working for criminal organizations. Such bavanshee use positions of power to collect payment in the form of blood. The secretive qualities of criminal work are also a good fit, as bavanshee are frequently stigmatized, and keeping their true nature hidden tends to be prudent. Almost all bavanshee, however, are characterized by a dual nature: charismatic on one hand, vicious and ravenous on the other.

## Bavanshee Names

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Bavanshee usually keep the names they were given in life. As such, they usually have the same types of names as any other elf.

## Bavanshee Traits

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Your bavanshee character has the following traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 2, and your Charisma modifier increases by 1.

**Age.** Bavanshee reach physical maturity at about the same age as humans, but like elves, their understanding of adulthood goes beyond physical growth to encompass worldly experience. At around the age of 100, the creature undergoes a full transformation into a bavanshee, and their thirst for blood awakens. The process that transforms them into a bavanshee leaves them virtually immortal. They can still, of course, be destroyed by violent acts.

**Alignment.** Bavanshee can be of any alignment. Nevertheless, their traumatic memories and need to consume the life energy of other creatures often pushes them towards evil.

**Size.** Bavanshee are about the same size and build as elves. Your size is Medium.

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

**Bavanshee Talons.** You can magically turn your fingers into long, scythe like talons or back again once per turn without using an action. These talons are natural weapons, and you can use them to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with them, you deal slashing damage equal to 1d6 + your Strength modifier instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

**Blood Thirst.** You do not eat or drink the food of the living, nor do you suffer the effects of exhaustion from not consuming such food or drink. However, you must drain blood from a living creature at least once per day. At the end of each day that you do not, you automatically suffer one level of exhaustion. This exhaustion can be healed with a long rest, provided you also ingest some blood from a living creature.

Ingesting blood from a living creature is an action. You can only ingest blood from a creature with an open wound: the creature must have taken at least 1 point of piercing or slashing damage within the last minute. You can drain blood and life energy from such wounded creatures if they are willing or grappled by you, incapacitated, or restrained. Make a melee attack against the target using your Dexterity modifier to hit. If you hit, you deal 1 point of piercing damage and 1d6 necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and you regain hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if its hit point maximum is reduced to zero.

At 5<sup>th</sup> level, the necrotic damage increases to 2d6. At 11<sup>th</sup> level, the necrotic damage increases to 3d6. At 17<sup>th</sup> level, the necrotic damage increases to 4d6.

**Cold Iron Vulnerability.** You take double damage from bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage dealt with a cold iron weapon (treat as a silvered weapon).

**Cursed with Life.** A bavanshee cannot be reduced to a 6<sup>th</sup> level of exhaustion.

**Darkvision.** You have superior vision in dark and dim light-conditions. You can see in dim light within 120 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.

**Fey Ancestry.** You have advantage on saving throws against being charmed.

**Keen Senses.** You have proficiency in the Perception skill.

**Necrotic Resistance.** You have resistance to necrotic damage.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, you have disadvantage on attack rolls as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

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

## Bavanshee Racial Feats

### Blood Binder

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*Prerequisite: Bavanshee*

You learn to manipulate the magical connection between yourself and a creature you feed on. When consuming a humanoid's blood, you create a sort of empathic bond that allows you to exert some magical influence over a victim. If you hit and deal damage with the attack granted by your Blood Thirst racial feature, the target must succeed on a Charisma saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier) or be charmed by you for 1 minute. While charmed in this way, the target is infatuated with you. If you deal damage to the target, this effect ends.

### Blood Glutton

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*Prerequisite: Bavanshee*

Thanks to your gluttonous consumption of blood, you have begun mutating into a more powerful creature. You must, however, keep yourself well fed to continue to benefit from this state. After hitting and dealing damage with the attack granted by your Blood Thirst racial feature, you may choose to gain one of the following benefits:

- You no longer suffer from sunlight sensitivity. After taking a short or long rest, you begin to suffer from sunlight sensitivity once again.
- If you are not suffering from sunlight sensitivity, you may choose to gain damage resistance to one of the following damage types: bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing from nonmagical attacks. The natural melee weapons of a supernatural creature with a CR equal to or higher than your level count as magical weapons for the purpose of bypassing this damage resistance. Any creature with one of the following types counts as a supernatural creature: aberrations, celestials, constructs, dragons, elementals, fey, fiends, monstrosities, and undead. After taking a short or long rest, you lose this benefit.

### Feral Feeder

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*Prerequisite: Bavanshee*

You make no pretense at sophistication when you feed. You gain the following benefits:

- When you use the Attack action on your turn and either hit or successfully grapple a creature with at least one attack, you can use the attack granted by your Blood Thirst racial feature on that turn as a bonus action.
- Your bavanshee talons use a d8 for damage and gain the finesse weapon property.

### Shadow Caller

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*Prerequisite: Bavanshee, Renown 5 or higher in the Court of the Queen of Air and Darkness.*

You learn to create a shadowy-rift in a 10-foot sphere centered on a point you can see within 60 feet. Any creature in the rift takes 1d4 cold damage and must make a Constitution saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier). If the creature has taken damage from your Blood Thirst racial feature in the last 24 hours, it takes disadvantage on the save. Creatures that fail the saving throw are also restrained by icy wisps of shadow and take an additional 1d4 necrotic damage. A restrained creature repeats the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the restrained condition on a success. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and you regain hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if its hit point maximum is reduced to zero.

At 5<sup>th</sup> level, the cold and necrotic damage increases to 2d4. At 11<sup>th</sup> level, the cold and necrotic damage increases to 3d4. At 17<sup>th</sup> level, the cold and necrotic damage increases to 4d4.

After using this ability, you cannot use it again until after a long rest. Alternatively, if you hit and deal damage with the attack granted by your Blood Thirst racial feature, you may roll 1d6. On a roll of a 5 or 6, you regain your use of this feat.

### Skin Changer

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*Prerequisite: Bavanshee, Renown 5 or higher in the Coven of the Queen of Witches*

You learn to use the natural magic in your blood to change into a raven or wolf. You gain the following benefits:

- While in dim light or darkness, you can use an action to magically assume the shape of a wolf or raven. You can stay in this shape for a number of hours equal to half your level (rounded down). You then revert to your normal form. This ability is identical to the Druid's Wild Shape class feature, except that after using it you cannot do so again until after a long rest. Alternatively, if you hit and deal damage with the attack granted by your Blood Thirst racial feature, you may roll 1d6. On a roll of a 5 or 6, you regain your use of this feature.