

Beast of Bechaeux

A vicious dire wolf terrorized the town of Bechaeux for several years before local hunters killed it – at least, that was the story everyone believed before the attacks began again this year, falling on the eve of the full moon. The truth is the death was faked by Duke Wydein, who sought to protect his son Sir Chevian, the true werewolf. Upon taking power as ruler of the Vale, the Duke was eager to ensure he had a son to inherit his duchy, but he and his wife Unceile could bear no children; convinced his wife was barren, the Duke began seeing courtesans, but none of them could bear him a child either. Mortified, Unceile realized the Duke was impotent and so she consulted with witches who took her to the hag Rivenna, the only one who possessed magic strong enough to cure the Duke's impotence. However, Rivenna's condition was that Unceile's child would bear the hag's mark such that under the light of the full moon the child would reveal its soul's true form. Unceile made a blood pact with the hag, and so her child's fate was sealed.

Chevian grew into a vigorous lad, but was trapped between a domineering father, a worrisome mother, and the responsibilities of his stature. He often would escape into the woods to go fishing and frog-hunting with his friends, but never ever on a full moon. Unceile had instilled in her son a fear of the full moon's magical power, and managed to keep him from seeing it for thirteen years. One night, after he could bear no more of being locked away in the castle, Chevian snuck out into the woods. He returned three days later in a daze, covered with unexplainable wounds, his mouth smeared with blood, his clothing in tatters, and no memory of what had occurred. Horrified, Unceile managed to hide the truth from her husband, afraid he would leave her and Chevian; she mended Chevian's wounds and placed a protective wolfsbane charm around his neck. However, as he trained to become a knight, a feral glint grew in Chevian's eye, and he became known as a fierce – even berserk – fighter, wholly undisciplined and lacking in all patience. Likewise he developed into a lothario, seducing every serving maid in his father's castle, local village girls, and visiting princesses. Chevian's reputation deteriorated as he frequented taverns and other dens of ill repute. He would at times wake up in the woods, beaten and bruised – he assumed by ruffians who took advantage of him in his drunken stupor. So the stories of the Beast of Bechaeux began, a ravenous wolf decimating herds and terrifying villagers.

Eventually, Duke Wydein learned the truth of his son's curse when he noticed his wife had removed all silver from the castle. At first he felt betrayed, refusing to speak with his wife, and oblivious to his son's existence, but gradually he devised a plan and ensured his wife's complicity by threatening to implicate her in witchcraft. A dungeon cell was prepared with enchanted manacles and stone walls so thick that a lion's roar could not be heard by those outside. On the next full moon, Unceile drugged her son's food, and Duke Wydein's two most trusted captains dragged Chevian to the dungeon where he was bound until morning. So it passed every full moon. At first Chevian would wake up in bed, assuming he had too much to drink, but hazy memories surfaced and he realized he was being held prisoner in his father's castle. With the return of the Beast, Chevian suspects the Duke is involved (the wolfsbane charm his mother's attempt to protect him), and that his own father may indeed be the Beast!

Beast of Bechaeux Lore

A character knows the following with a History check:

DC 20: The Beast of Bechaeux is an extremely powerful werewolf that only appears on the night of a full moon. A vicious killer, the Beast preferentially targets clergy and the Duke's men. Hanging a wreath of wolfsbane on the door is supposed to protect a household from the Beast.



Beast of Bechaeux

Level 8 Solo Brute

Large natural humanoid (shapechanger)

XP 1,750

Initiative +9 **Senses** Perception +11; low-light vision**Keen Scent** aura 5; the Beast pinpoints any invisible or hidden foes within its aura. A character trained in Nature can de-scent in advance, negating the aura's effect for them and their allies.**HP** 332; **Bloodied** 166; see also *combat shapeshifting*.**Regeneration** 5 (if the Beast takes damage from a silver weapon its regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)**AC** 22; **Fortitude** 26, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 18**Resist** +5 saving throws; **Vulnerable** 10 wolfsbane poison**Speed** 6 (8 in wolf form)**Action Points** 2**Vicious Bite** (standard, at-will) ♦ **Disease**

+13 vs. AC; 2d8 +5 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends) and contracts moon frenzy (see the werewolf entry in MM page 181).

Claw (standard, at-will)

Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 2d8 +5 damage.

Rending Attack (standard, at-will)

The Beast makes two claw attacks. If it hits with its first claw attack, it may shift 1 square and replace its second claw attack with a bite attack against the same target.

Pounce (immediate reaction; when an enemy scores a critical hit against the Beast; at-will)

Any mark on the Beast ends. The Beast leaps to the side and pounces on the opponent; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 5 damage and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone.

Jaws of the Wolf (immediate reaction; when an enemy within reach is knocked prone; encounter)

The Beast shifts adjacent to the target and the target is restrained (save ends); if the opponent attempts to stand up while the Beast is adjacent to it, the Beast makes a vicious bite attack as an opportunity attack against the target.

Combat Shapeshifting (immediate reaction; when first bloodied; encounter)

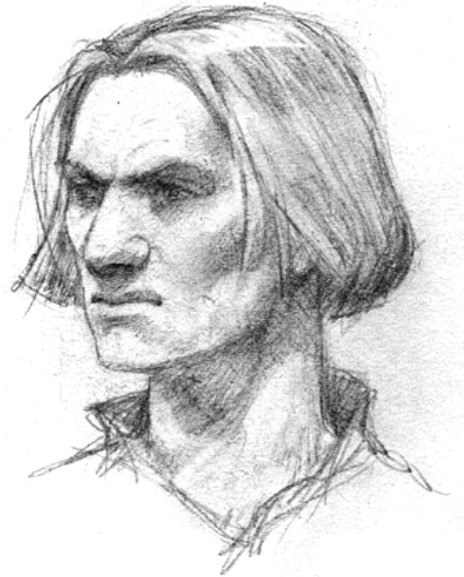
The Beast shifts 2 squares, increases its movement to 8, becomes medium-sized (losing its reach), gains +2 AC, and on a successful hit knocks prone any enemy it has combat advantage against until the end of its next turn.

Bloodcurdling Howl (standard; encounter) ♦ **Fear**Close burst 10; targets all creatures; +10 vs. Will; the target is immobilized until the end of the Beast's next turn. *Aftereffect*: The target takes a -2 penalty to AC and Perception (save ends).**Alignment** Evil **Languages** Common**Skills** Athletics +14, Insight +12, Intimidate +10, Nature +12, Stealth +13**Str** 21 (+9) **Dex** 16 (+7) **Wis** 14 (+6)**Con** 19(+8) **Int** 11 (+4) **Cha** 11 (+4)**Beast of Bechaeux Tactics**

The Beast prefers to fight in dim light. To signal its hunt, the Beast begins with a *bloodcurdling howl*, then sneaks up to its prey before charging the weakest creature in the group, using an action point to make a rending attack. As soon as it knocks an opponent prone, usually with its *pounce*, the Beast uses *jaws of the wolf* to keep the creature pinned down. Once bloodied, the Beast attempts to gain combat advantage to maximize the effectiveness of *combat shapeshifting*.

Sir Chevian

The only son of Lady Unceile and Duke Wydein, Sir Chevian was cursed at birth as a werewolf. During his transformation, he has no recollection of what occurred only fleeting nightmares. Ironically, Chevian has a fierce hatred for the Beast of Bechauex which assaulted him and his best friend; Chevian regained consciousness wounded with his friend's mangled body nearby. Since that day, Chevian swore to kill the Beast. As he became aware of the strange happenings at his father's castle – the reports of wolf packs straying too close, dreadful howling coming from the castle on the full moon, the dread his parents show toward silver, the wolfsbane charms his mother displays around the household, his own nightmares, and his father's extended absences – Chevian came to suspect the unthinkable, that his father is the Beast. This coincidence (albeit imagined) suits Chevian very well, for he is unsatisfied with the Duke's sympathetic stance for the peasantry and is planning a coup. Chevian would rather see noble privileges protected from "low life vagrants and thieves."



When he reached the age of majority, Sir Chevian at last found a way to escape the castle which had become his prison – he accepted a commission to fight in the borderlands alongside a beleaguered king. He planned to use this time to study his father's court and to develop the skills and connections he would need to orchestrate the coup. During the campaigns in the borderlands, Chevian lost himself to rage several times, pursuing fleeing enemies and fighting against unthinkable numbers – the other soldiers called him the "Wild Wolf." One night he vanished, and woke a captive of the king's enemies who treated him like he was a devil in the flesh. After being tortured, Chevian revealed all he knew of the king's keep, but his tormentors were not satisfied, as if they were trying to exorcise a demon from him; the cleric who tortured him demanded he repent and tell them of his king's demonic pact. Taking advantage of their superstitions, Chevian threatened to unleash the demon on them if he was not released. Chevian does not clearly recall what happened next, but he found himself back in the king's keep under siege; countless soldiers reported the enemy called upon evil magic and had sent a wolf-demon upon them, decimating their numbers. Believing the Beast to be his father who'd aligned with the foe to end his son's treacherous plot, the wounded Chevian did the unimaginable, calling upon those loyal to the king to join him in a midnight charge. His bold move and fierce leadership broke the enemies' ranks, but the "Wild Wolf" did not stop there, killing every single soldier, down to the wounded and surrendered, in retaliation. Chevian had won the king's campaign, and in return asked for one-fifth of the king's remaining soldiers to return home with him. Amidst the old castle walls of his birth, Chevian bides his time, waiting for the moment to strike and end his father's reign... and kill the Beast.

Curse of the Soul's True Form

Rivenna's curse caused Chevian to bond with his spirit animal, but as Chevian's heart turned to evil, he became something more terrible than a wolf. Hag's curses are not easily undone by the Remove Affliction ritual, in this case requiring 3 things: (1) Rivenna must lift the curse, be slain, or Chevian must have a change in heart; (2) a piece of the Chevian like blood or hair from each of his forms; and (3) Chevian must be forgiven of his crimes by his parent with a cleric presiding.

Sir Chevian	Level 8 Elite Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger)	XP 700
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +4 HP 186; Bloodied 93 AC 22; Fortitude 24, Reflex 19, Will 18 (+4 Will vs. fear) Resist +2 saving throws Speed 5 Action Points 1	
Bastard Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +20 vs. AC; 1d10+5 and the target loses the benefit of its shield or off-hand weapon until the end of Sir Chevian's next turn.	
Vicious Shield Bash (immediate reaction; when target shifts or moves from an adjacent square; at-will) ♦ Weapon +14 vs. Reflex; 2d6+5 damage and the target is dazed and immobilized until the end of Sir Chevian's next turn.	
Cleave (immediate; when Sir Chevian drops an opponent to 0 HP; at-will) ♦ Weapon Shift 1 square and make a bastard sword attack.	
Lord's Resurgence (free; when Sir Chevian is first bloodied; encounter) All allies within 5 squares heal 5 hit points and can make a basic attack or charge.	
Blood Rage Sir Chevian's melee attacks deal 4 extra damage against a bloodied target.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common Skills Athletics +12, Insight +12, Intimidate +14, Nature +12 Str 16 (+8) Dex 11 (+4) Wis 14 (+6) Con 14 (+6) Int 11 (+4) Cha 16 (+7) Equipment: chainmail +2, light shield +2, bastard sword +2	

Sir Chevian Tactics

Sir Chevian will attack from horseback when possible, gaining a +5 bonus to damage on a charge. He will engage a defender in his arrogance, attempting to drop his foe as quickly as possible, relying on his guardsmen to draw other foes away with their crossbow fire. After dropping the defender, he attempts to spread out damage in order to take down two or more opponents with his *cleave* and *blood rage* combo.

Encounter Groups

Depending on whether the PCs confront Sir Chevian or the Beast of Bechaeux, the encounter plays out very differently. Generally, Sir Chevian travels with royal guardsmen, though he sometimes takes matters into his own hands, especially when he is concerned word will get back to his father. The Beast roams with a wolf pack in the wild (whose alpha male it kills), but when found in town it stalks alone.

Level 8 Encounter (XP 1,750)

Sir Chevian (level 8 elite soldier)
1 warhorse (level 3 brute)
6 human guards (level 3 soldier)

Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,500)

Beast of Bechaeux (level 8 solo brute)
6 gray wolves (level 2 skirmisher)