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The **Complete**
Guide to

werebeasts



The Complete Guide to

WERERATS

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Introduction

And so the time came to choose a form. The Council of Flesh gathered together in a secret place, and all swore an oath to be bound by the will of the majority. And the greatest among them rose around the table and made their voices heard.

“Let us choose the boar,” said Goran, always the first to speak. “Let us be fierce and bold, so all will fear to face us in battle.”

Jessasyra spoke softly, but her voice was always heard. “The boar is fierce, it is true,” she said. “But his anger clouds his mind. Do we not value reason over rage?” The Council nodded in agreement and Goran was shamed.

Stoic Bram was next to speak. “Let us choose the bear,” he said. “Let us have strength and power.”

Jessasyra spoke again. “What use is power when one stands alone? The bear is slow and solitary.” Again the council agreed and Bram, too, was shamed.

Cunning Shelysa was next to speak, seizing the opportunity left by her sister. “Then let us choose the wolf. She hunts with her pack, and together they bring down prey that one alone could not face.”

“All you think of is battle,” Jessasyra said. “Can the wolf live among men? Can her pack find a home in the city? Or do you intend to live your life in the woods?”

Shelysa’s eyes burned with hatred as she turned the question back. “As you are so wise, perhaps you would tell us what form to take, sister?”

“Let us choose the rat,” Jessasyra replied. “The rat lives among the cities of man; no matter how hard he tries, the rat cannot be destroyed or driven out. Through cunning, the rat overcomes all challenges. And yet it can carry the power of life or death. What boar or wolf has caused as many deaths as when the rats brought the Burning Plague to Sharna?”

The Council weighed her words and agreed with Jessasyra’s choice. Goran and Bram broke their oaths and left the Council, and so it was that until recently their followers could not take the form that stands between man and beast. Treacherous Shelysa remained only so

that she could steal the wisdom of the others, so that she could create her wolf-children in the woods. Others followed her example, stealing the knowledge of the council to take the form of tiger, falcon, or other beasts. But the wisest remained and took the form of the rat.

While these first Weavers had the form of the rat, they knew that they had not learned all of its secrets, nor infused their blood with all of its power. And so they fell to fighting over how this could best be accomplished. And so was the Council broken.

Jessasyra, wisest of the Council of Flesh, was the mother of our brood. To her we owe our lineage and our power, and it is in her name that we continue our work. And that work is threefold. We must perfect our form until we have gained all the gifts of the rat. We must destroy those who broke their oaths to the Council of Flesh, and all of their children, and their children’s children — both those traitors who take the forms of other beasts and those who turned on Jessasyra at the last, those who share our form. And we must manage Man until our work is done and we are ready to replace him. Let him be kept unaware of our work in the darkness. Let us remain invisible as the rat, lurking beneath his eyes and under his feet. If a man shows promise, let him become one of us. If a man should threaten us, let him fall to tooth and blade. But work always in silence and let the shadows be your shield. Our cunning and our wits are our greatest weapons — and with them we shall overcome all who oppose us.

— from *The Book of the Rat*
as transcribed by Carrus of the Asyra brood.

Lycanthropes — beings who can shift between human and animal form — are creatures of legend. Stories are told of savage werewolves that prey on the unwary, and of solitary mountain men who battle evil in bear’s shape. But the wererat is the most dangerous of these shapeshifters. A wererat does not have the raw physical power of those who take the forms of tigers, boars, or bears, but she makes up for that with cunning. Wererats are clever, social creatures — where you see one, there are probably a dozen that you haven’t seen. And when a wererat starts a fight, she is not driven by rage or primal instinct — you can be certain that she has a plan.

