

Excerpt from the novel *Bear Witness*:

Every night, countless humans gaze up at the night sky and ponder the vast unknown. Are we alone in the universe, or is there another civilization out there gazing back? How was Stonehenge constructed? What happened to the Roanoke Colony? Who wrote the Voynich Manuscript? What caused the Tunguska explosion of 1908? Even the seemingly mundane can be baffling, like why the sudden urge to yawn seems contagious and uncontrollable. Yet despite the countless puzzles littering the human experience, one specific mystery has remained in the category of myths and legends, despite the reality that's right under their noses: the existence of Wearh creatures.

Wearh origins are shrouded in mystery. There's no pinpoint on a timeline, no specific culture that can claim the first humans who transformed into beasts. Yet, across the globe, whispered tales of these shapeshifters dance in the embers of folklore. From the icy tundra of the north to the sunbaked deserts of the south, every civilization has its own Wearhs and the legends that go with them.

Long ago, Wearh transformations were a primal dance associated with the luminous pull of the full moon. But time was a patient teacher for the Wearhs. They eventually mastered control and now, most of the time, their shifts are no longer dictated by the lunar cycle. The metamorphosis is voluntary, achieved through deliberate choice and hard-won mastery over the power coursing through their veins.

But this newfound control didn't bring acceptance. To some, Wearhs remain monstrous anomalies, creatures to be feared and hunted. So, they walk among the humans, unseen, a hidden society cloaked in normalcy. They live their lives, raise families, and blend into the human tapestry. But the weight of prejudice is a heavy burden. They keep to themselves, their interactions with outsiders a cautious necessity. Only within their own communities, where fangs and fur are commonplace, can they shed their masks and embrace the wild within.