

# Pechs

"Now he understood what it was to be a man: that it was to be weak as well as strong, to be foolish sometimes and wise sometimes, to know love as well as to kill. And he had learned that there were other paths for him, other gods who called in the deep places of the earth, in the lap of wavelets on the shore, in the breath of the wind." *Wolfskin — Juliet Marillier,*

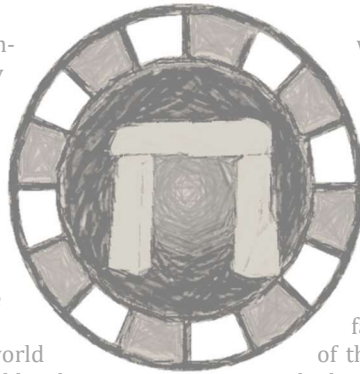
**Quote:** Our old tongues are lost, our tribes are scattered, and the Wolf-children want our children to breed with. Yet you still think that a council with Celtoi-Sidhe matters to me? I have far more important things to fix. Let the long-ears fight amongst themselves.

From the barrow-mounds of the highlands to abandoned towers with seemingly no exit, the Pechs were always a mysterious creature. The word pechs comes from a bastardization of the Roman "Pictoi", meaning painted. A reference to the blue swirls adorning the original people of the Scottish North. The dreams of that people, and the dreams of the conquering romans were realized when the Oldest of the Fae came up from the underground.

The Pechs are the purest of the old-world Celtic Wicht (Kithain). Older than the Sidhe, older than the Fomorians, Older than even the serpent and Arachnid folk said to live deep with-in the earth. They lived out their lives with strength of arm, building great towers that reached to the heavens as well as deep tunnels that crisscrossed under the Rocky lands. They lived with strength of character as well, administering to their sick and wounded with magic heather-ale and battling Romans, Saxons, Danes and the renegade Celtoi tribes all at once. And when a wall was built that would keep the others away from their land, they returned underground. Under the stones and sod, they were able to live out their lives as they saw fit, rarely dealing with the newer kiths that made Caledonia their home.

However, all things must change with time. The gentle Blue Annies grew into monsters, the world forgot about the Orcs to the South, and the Redcaps, once dark-gods of the hungry/dark/cold, were treated like thugs and bastards. The Pechs saw this and were disheartened. And then the Trow, the Pechs younger brother tribe began a war with the new Celtoi tribes called Sidhe. The Spunchie-tribe, ever ready to add insult to injury quickly joined in with the slander. With so much noise and turmoil above, the Pechs had no choice but to remind the whole of the Caledonian Fae why they were still the Kings. With strength of arm, and strength of character, they have come up from their brughs and sitheans deep under the Scottish hills.

**Appearance:** While once, mortals though that they Pechs were some sort of gnome-like creatures in Scottish mythology. Those who have actually seen the Kith realize that this was just an exaggeration of their height. The Pechs are short to a one, but hardly gnomish. Even in Mortal Coltach, the Kith is short, rarely over a meter and a half or so. In mortal form, they are pale, with pale blue eyes, and red hair. Their hands and feet are unusually big however, and their muscles are unusually defined and taut, even in the females. In Fae Coltach, Each of these features is exaggerated. The Skin is a greyish color, with swirls of blue,



white and green crisscrossing across their grey arms, face and chest. The hair is bright-red and arranged in horn-like spikes on the women, though the men usually shave themselves bald. The eyes are a pale white, though they have no problems seeing. Their hands and feet are still a little on the largish side, but the muscles are rock-hard and thin, like tight coils of wire. The men usually wear yellow and saffron colored kilts or pants, braided in ancient fashion, and the women wear overalls or dresses of the same material. When going into battle, all go naked.

**Lifestyle:** The Pechs maintain the same life-style that they did the millennia ago. They farm their heather, they brew (although the recipe for their magic Heather-Ale is lost to time) and they work the rocky land. While they can't work in the sun, the nights in the Wild Scottish lands are cool and misty, and the Pechs enjoy the feeling of the rough grass under their feet. Many of them have kinain kin-folk still remaining, and people of Scottish descent the world over brag of their Pictish blood. Even a small tribe of Kinain known as the White-Howlers has recently announced itself again (although the Pechs are wary of what this entails). With all this said, the Pechs are doing just fine.

**Glamour Ways:** Pechs gain Glainnead by engaging the simple things that life can provide. Throwing rocks, working hard, engaging in battles. Whenever they are around their mortal kin (usually the Scotch-Irish) what enjoy living and working and playing with the land, the Pechs refuel their magics.

**Unleashing:** Cantrips cast by the Pechs are accompanied by the smell of wet stones and moist earth, as well as a low rumbling in the Earth under one's feet.

*Òga Pechs* are small and quiet things, rugged and sharp. They often rough-house with each other in the cool night air and play games in the crisscrossing tunnels under the hills.

*Ghaisgich Pechs* are eager to prove themselves. While they won't seek out just any Motleys, those with like-minded and brave Scottish Kithain may find themselves shadowed by an unseen ally.

*Àrd Pechs* find themselves enmeshed in politics, much to their chagrin. Having so many wild cards among the Scottish Kiths,

they have to take an active role to ensure peace between all sides. That being said, they politics still come second, as their daily work-schedule and barrow-building take up the majority of their time.

**Affinity:** Fae

**Birthrights:**

**Strength of the Auld Sod (*Neart an t-seann Talamh*):** The Pechs gain 3 extra dots to physical abilities upon character creation, even if this puts them above 5.

**Pure Blooded (*Fior-ghlan Fuil*):** The blood of the Purest of the Celtic Fae, before even the Sidhe (much to their chagrin), lives on in the Pechs. The Birthright adds 3 extra die to any social or challenge rolls involving the other Celtic Fae. This might also extend to the Werewolf Tribe known as the Fianna as well (per storyteller sanction).

**Frailties:**

**Spears of the Sun (*Sleaghan a 'ghrian*):** Unfortunately for the Pechs, life in their Barrow-mounds has made them susceptible to the light of the Sun. Any actions undertaken in the brightness of day is at a +2 difficulty.



**Verm-Kin (*Fuil Bhlàth*):** The Pure blood of the Pechs endears them to all sorts of creatures, not all of them benevolent. Some of the more nefarious monsters of the Scottish lands (such as the Dancers in the Black Spirals) or even those most ancient of enemies known as fomorians, may seek to recapture the pure-blood of the Pechs for breeding, or other more unsavory rituals. It is up to storyteller how this may manifest

**Fhiba Grey-Scar, Ard Bean Rìgh of Rath under the Loch, explains where it went wrong.**

**Annis Hags:** The blame falls on us, we could not see, and so we could not act.

**Brollachans:** Spies and messengers, is what they were, What they are now is but a pale shadow.

**Brunnies:** The hearth Gods remain unchanged.

**Ceasg:** Rome tried to rewrite their names into something as innocuous as mermaids. They failed.

**Sunchie:** We all prefer our own ways. Their ways are no different, save that we aren't invited.

**Kirk-Grim:** The Dogs of the Christ-God are good friends. I hope our Gods and their one God can be friends.

**Shelleycoats:** The Fen-Gods and Bog-Kings fell the most, yet none remember their fall. They themselves won't say anything.

**Tod Loweries:** Not a wicht, and they never will be. They are something older and more terrifying.

**Trows:** This tribe and mine were brothers, they chose war, and we chose life. We now have to help with the war. They should've chosen like we did.

**Urisks:** They have had more than tears in the past, I can only pray that they discover their gifts soon.

**Wulver:** Their ways are for the kinain.

**Clann Mhic Fhinn:** Of the Hibernian Families, and the Howlers in White, I cannot say. I don't see them anymore. Of their bastard Children, the dancers in Black, I will not say. I refuse to look. If either come looking for our children to breed strong again, then they will see the True kings of the world beneath, and their verm-king will not be able to save them.