

Weeping Sires

The *qhrBFg*, "weeping sires" or simply *rBFmg* "those who weep", is one of the oldest surviving examples of cynoid folklore.

Depictions and explanations vary widely, but some elements are common. They are usually depicted as the vengeful ghosts of sires who have lost their womb nests. A typical retelling goes like this:

A group of sires is killed while attempting to protect their womb nest from harm. Their vengeful ghosts wander the bank of the River, seeking to drown passers-by in revenge for their lost kits. Their presence is heralded by the strong scent of lacrimal fluid, which to humans smells like sea spray.

The story is a classic cautionary tale told by parents to their pups to keep them away from water. The earliest versions of the tale involve an act of infanticide by a rival shire, showing how ancient the story is. More recent versions censor this detail, with the loss of the kits attributed to miscarriage, disease, or predation. In these latter versions the ghosts' aggression is blamed on grief-driven madness rather than revenge.

The exact number of ghosts vary. Sometimes there's only one. Sometimes they act together in a group, and sometimes the group is scattered around the area with individuals acting alone. Sometimes the lacrimal fluid can be seen as well as smelled, usually on rocks along the shore. Sometimes the fluid actively oozes out of the rocks rather than simply being present on them.

The sires may appear as rotting corpses that lunge out and drag their victims under, or they may be ethereal specters or even unseen voices that compel the victim to enter the water like a siren song.

Not all versions are negative. Sometimes the sires kill themselves in despair and appear before people who are contemplating suicide to encourage them to reconsider. These depictions appear as normal living yinrih and tend to have black fur.

A version of the tale where the kits die of disease has been used in modern times to criticize the natural brooding movement, which eschews the use of womb nest incubators.

This story is often associated with *The Dam's Lament*, the first extant example of written language, which is a dam mourning the loss of her kits.

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