Iceland is a country full of witchcraft and supernatural creatures— including werewolves. It is said that Icelandic witches and wizards were taught how to assume the shape of beasts at the famous hidden Black Schools— schools of witchcraft— which were tucked away in remote areas.

One of the most famous of these black magicians was actually a churchman. He was Gottskalk Nikulasson the Cruel and was bishop of Hólar in the north of the country between 1497 and 1520. He is said to have been the most evil man who ever lived in Iceland.

Under the previous bishop, Olafur Roegnavalsson, Hólar had a great Cathedral School that educated many fine young monks. When Gottskalk became bishop, he turned it into a den of black magicians, educating the monks in the ways of black magic and turning them into werewolves.

Gottskalk himself was able to change shape, and prowled about the countryside in the guise of a great wolf, threatening and killing many people. He is also said to have written the most evil book in Icelandic folklore— the Raudskinna— or Red Skin Book, packed with the secrets of black magic. Among the spells contained in it were several to allow men to change shape and become wolves. No one really knows what happened to it, although some believe he had the terrible book buried with him in order to keep the dreadful power to himself.

After Gottskalk’s death in 1520 the Cathedral School had to be burned to the ground to get rid of the werewolf curse and it took two years before a new bishop, Jon Arnasson, could be appointed in Hólar, so evil was the legacy that Gottskalk had left.

That evil lingers on, and several times since his death there have been attempts to raise his bestial spirit in order to discover the whereabouts of the Raudskinna— none of which have succeeded … as far as we know.