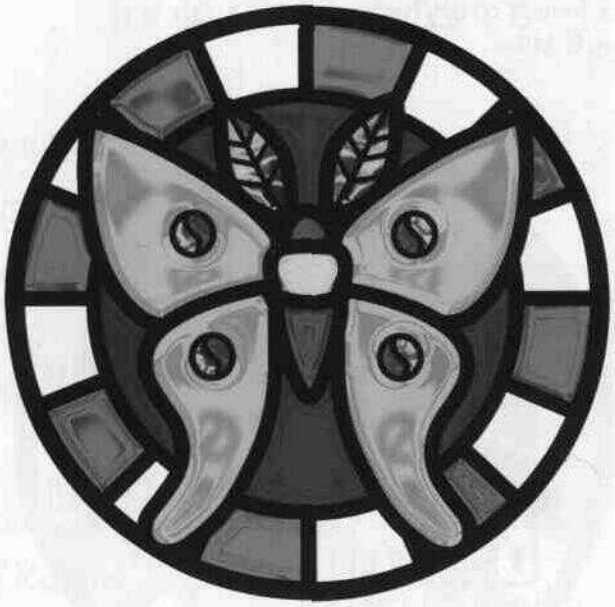
Changeling

The Dreaming™

The Storytelling Game of Modern Fantasy



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Second Edition by Ian Lemke

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• Dedicated to **Jim Henson**, whose inspiration continues to return us to our childhood, and to **Neil Gaiman**, who tears aside the veil to show us our hidden dreams.

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Introduction

Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before.
— *The Raven*, Edgar Allan Poe

The gates to the Realms of Faerie are closed. Humankind has turned its back on the magical in favor of a new dream — a dream of a sterile, banal world with no mysteries or wonder. A world where all the questions have been answered and all the puzzles of the universe solved. And yet, in the quest for this Utopia, much of humankind has lost a little of themselves. They have forgotten how to dream....

When the last trods to Arcadia closed and the gates slammed shut, there still remained a few of the Fair Folk living alongside humanity. These stranded fae were forced to adopt a new way of living in order to survive the sheer power of humanity's collective disbelief in all things magical: they became mortal themselves, sheltering their fragile faerie souls in mortal flesh. And yet these fae continue to dream of a day when humanity will once more return to the mystical. In the centuries following the Shattering, the fae have quietly fostered the dreams of mortals, seeking to usher in a return of the halcyon days when the fae were welcome and could openly walk among mortals.

Changeling is a storytelling game about the Dreaming. It's about lost innocence, about the cynicism of adulthood and make-believe come to life, about imagination taking fruit. Herein you will find an invisible world of fantasy that exists alongside our reality — a place of delight, mystery and enormous peril.

When you play **Changeling**, you will come to understand that faerie tales aren't just for children (not that they ever were), and that they don't always have happy endings. You will discover what it is like to be exiled from your homeland, persecuted for your true nature and unable to express the beauty welling up from your soul. You will know what it is like to be alone in a crowd, to be aware of the power of dreams and to be able to tap the power of magic. And you will learn what it is like to be helpless in the arms of Fate and unable to stop the crushing weight of Banality from robbing your memory of all you have discovered.

Enter into the realm of the Dreaming — a place of unimagined wonder and impossible terror.

About This Book

Changeling is a game of make-believe, of pretend. But it is not a "game" in the normal sense of the word; **Changeling** is more about storytelling than it is about winning. If you've never played a storytelling game before, you may be confused by the whole premise of such games. Once you grasp the basic concepts, however, you'll find storytelling games aren't all that strange.

You and your friends are going to tell stories of wonder and delight, tales of love and romance, tragedy and peril, lurking evil and heroic triumph. And at the heart of these stories are the lost fae.

These stories will capture your imagination far more readily than any play or movie. Likewise, they are of a darker tone than the children's fairy tales you might remember (although those, too, were rather grim in places). This is because you are *inside* the story, not just watching it. You are creating it as you go along, and the outcome is always uncertain.

What you need to do now is read this book, a little bit at a time, and enjoy it. You don't have to study it like a textbook or devour it like a newspaper. Just browse. Later on, when you're playing, you can consult and refer to whatever you need. You don't need to memorize anything — just have an idea of what your character can do and understand the world in which she adventures. Don't let anything in this book scare you out of having a good time — storytelling is, first and foremost, about fun.

Changeling Kind

You lead a double life, alternating between reality and fantasy. Caught in the middle ground between dream and wakefulness, you are neither wholly fae nor wholly mortal, but burdened with the cares of both. Finding a happy medium between the wild, insane world of the fae and the deadening, banal world of humanity is essential if you are to remain whole.

Such a synthesis is by no means easy. Mortal affairs seem ephemeral and trivial when you stand amid the ageless magnificence of the Seelie Court. When you don garments spun of pure moonlight and drink wine distilled from mountain mists, how can you go back to polyester and soda pop?

Alas, you have no choice. Although your faerie self is ageless and eternal, your mortal body and mind grow older and less resilient as you move through life. Sooner or later, nearly all changelings succumb to one of two equally terrifying conditions: Banality, the loss of their faerie magic; or Bedlam, the loss of their mortal reason.

But is this fate inevitable? Can you retain your childlike wonder while fighting against the frigid Banality that seeks to numb your mind and steal your past? Can you ride the currents of the Dreaming without being swept away in the maelstrom of Bedlam?

You stand alone in the mundane world. No mortal will ever understand the depth of your alienation, strangeness and uniqueness. Though you may try to communicate your condition through art (and many have tried and failed), only those with faerie blood will see, understand and appreciate what you are.

An exile among exiles. Lost among the lost. The stranger in every crowd.

Hail, fellow traveler — welcome to the Dreaming.

Storytelling

Long ago, before movies, TV, radio and books, we told each other stories: stories of the hunt, legends of the gods and great heroes, bardic epics and tales of ravening monsters. We told these stories aloud, as part of an oral tradition — a tradition that we have virtually lost.

Today we no longer tell stories — we listen to them. We wait to be picked up and carried to prepackaged worlds. We have become slaves to our TVs and VCRs, permitting an oligarchy of mythmakers to dictate the content of our imaginations.

It need not be this way. Storytelling on a personal level can be returned to our culture. This is essentially what **Changeling** is about: not stories told to us, but stories we tell others. Through the game and art of collaborative storytelling, we create new stories and claim the ancient myths and legends for our own.

Storytelling allows us to understand ourselves by giving us a medium to explain our triumphs and defeats. By looking at our culture, our family and ourselves in new contexts, we can understand things we never before realized. Storytelling is entertaining because it is so revealing, exhilarating because it is so true. Our fascination with stories has a purpose to it — of that there is no doubt.

Roleplaying

Changeling is a storytelling game, but it is also a roleplaying game. As a **Changeling** player, you not only tell stories, but actually act through them by assuming the roles of the central characters. It's a lot like theatre, but you make up the lines.

To understand roleplaying, you need only think back to your childhood and those wonderful afternoons spent playing Cops 'n' Robbers, Cowboys and Indians, or Dress-Up. What you were doing was roleplaying, a sort of spontaneous and natural acting that completely occupied your imagination. This playacting helped you learn about life and what it meant to be a grown-up. It was an essential part of childhood, but just because you have grown up doesn't mean you have to stop.

In **Changeling**, unlike pretend, there are a few rules to help you roleplay. They are used mainly to avoid arguments — "Bang! Bang! You're dead!" "No I'm not!" — and to add a deeper sense of realism to the story. Rules direct and guide the story's progress and help define the characters' capacities and weaknesses.

Changeling can be played with nearly any number of players, but roleplaying games in general work best with six or fewer players. Mystery and flavor are diminished when players must compete for attention.

The essential rules of Changeling are described in Chapter Six.

The Storyteller

Changeling is structured a little differently from the games with which you might be familiar. In the first place, there is no board. Second, one player must assume the role of Storyteller — the person who creates and guides the stories.

Being the Storyteller is a bit like playing the Banker in *Monopoly*™, but bears greater responsibilities and rewards than control over a handful of play money. The Storyteller describes what happens to the characters as a result of the players' words and actions. She decides if the characters succeed or fail, suffer or prosper, live or die. Storytelling is a very demanding task, but it is equally rewarding, for the Storyteller is a weaver of legends.

The Storyteller's primary duty is to make sure the other players have a good time. The way to do that is to tell a good tale. Unlike traditional storytellers, however, the Storyteller doesn't simply tell the story. Instead, she creates the skeleton of a story, and then lets the players flesh it out by assuming the roles of its leading characters.

Storytelling in **Changeling** is a careful balance between narration and adjudication, between story and game. Sometimes the Storyteller must set the scene or describe what occurs, but mostly she must decide how the environment responds to the characters. She must be as realistic, impartial and creative as possible.

As the Storyteller, you are in charge of interpreting and enforcing the rules, yet you are also an entertainer — you must struggle to balance your two roles. This book was written to help you do just that. It won't make being a Storyteller easy, because it never will be easy, but it will make you better at it.

The role of the Storyteller is explained in more detail in Chapter Nine.

Players

Most **Changeling** players will not be Storytellers. They will instead assume the roles of the central characters in the story. Being a player does not require as much responsibility as being a Storyteller, but it does require just as much effort and concentration.

As a player in a **Changeling** chronicle, you assume the persona and role of a changeling — a faerie being whom you invent and then roleplay over the course of one or several stories. The life of your character is in your hands, for you decide what the character says and does. You decide which risks to accept or decline. Everything you say and do when you play your character has an effect on the world.

You must also be an actor. You speak for your character and act out whatever you want your character to do or say. Whatever you say, your character says, unless you are specifically asking the Storyteller a question or are describing your actions.

As a player, you try to do things that allow your character to succeed and thus "win the game." This strategic element of the game is essential, for it is what so often creates the thrill and excitement of a dramatic moment.

Often, after describing the actions "you" want to take, you may have to make dice rolls to see if your character successfully accomplishes what you have illustrated with words. Your character's Traits — numbers quantifying her strengths and weaknesses — dictate how well your character can do certain things. Actions are basic elements of **Changeling**, for it is through actions that characters change the world and affect the course of the story.

Characters are central to a story, for they alter and direct the plot. Without characters you can't have a story. As the story flows, the characters, not the decisions of the Storyteller, direct and energize the progress of the plot.

To some extent, each player is an assistant Storyteller. Players should feel free to add ideas and elements to the story, although the Storyteller may accept or reject them as she sees fit. In the end, a good story is the most important goal. Players and Storytellers work together to make a story come to life.

Characters

Many different elements compose what we think of as the "self" — too many, in fact, to separate or identify. We really don't know who or what we are. It is from this essential diversity of self that our desire and ability to pretend to be someone else originate.

Characters are the literary versions of real people — they are not real, but they do capture some aspects of reality. Only when you enter the world of the story can your characters become complete. They are real only with you as the animating force — the soul, if you wish. Treat your characters as unique individuals, as works of art, or as fragile expressions of your poetic sensitivity. You must treasure the characters that you create.

Changeling characters are easy to create. It takes less than half an hour to choose all the Traits that describe your character. It takes more time and effort to turn this collection of numbers into a living, breathing character. You must reach deep inside yourself to produce a complete character. The Frankenstein monster was easily assembled from available body parts; it was the breath of life that proved difficult.

Character creation is discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

Winners and Losers

There is no single "winner" of **Changeling**, for the object is not to defeat the other players. To "win" at all, players need to cooperate with each other. Because this is a storytelling game, there is no way for one person to claim victory. Moreover, the **Changeling** world is fraught with danger: monstrous chimera, implacable Dauntain, ever-encroaching Banality and the machinations of the Unseelie Court. Players cannot afford to squabble with their brethren, for so doing leads to death — and the only true measure of success in **Changeling** is survival.

If, however, a character has some overwhelming motivation (such as a need for vengeance), accomplishing this goal also becomes a measure of success. Stories and extended chronicles often come to conclusions that either benefit or harm the characters. If the players can turn stories to their characters' advantage, they have "won," at least for the moment. When a group of changelings manages to rescue a fellow changeling who has been captured by one of the Dauntain, those changelings can be considered to have "won" a temporary victory. If the Dauntain has powerful friends among the occult underground, however, attacking that individual may prove a dangerous exercise in the long run. A "victory" under these circumstances can become worse than defeat.

To achieve even partial victory, characters must usually become friends, or at least watch out for and have a modicum of trust in each other. The World of Darkness is a dangerous place, so trustworthy allies are essential. A divided group will not survive for long.

Playing Aids

Changeling was designed to be played around a table. Though the game does not require a board, a number of props require a table to use properly. Dice, pencils, paper and photocopies of the character sheet are the only other necessary items. The dice required are 10-sided; these you can purchase in any game store. The Storyteller may also want paper (to sketch out a setting, thus making it easier to describe to the players) and a few other props to show the players what the characters see (photographs, matches, scarves — anything to make the experience more vivid).

How to Use this Book

The information in **Changeling** has been divided into three books for easier access:

• **Book One: Childling:** These three setting chapters offer a wealth of information about the history, society and cosmology of changelings. The actual rules for playing the game can be found later on, but reading these chapters allows you to understand what **Changeling** is all about. **Chapter One: The Dreaming** examines the realms of the Dreaming as well as the chimerical creatures that changelings often interact with. **Chapter Two: A World of Dreams** offers a complete history of the fae as well as an in-depth look at changeling society. **Chapter Three: The Kithain** details the various races of the fae as well as the noble houses of the sidhe.

• **Book Two: Wilder:** These three chapters contain the core rules needed to play **Changeling**. **Chapter Four: Character Creation** contains all of the information you will need to create a character. **Chapter Five: Arts and Realms** explains the magical powers of the fae, known as the Arts and Realms. **Chapter Six: Basic Rules** covers the basic ideas of how to play the game, converting ideas and situations into dice rolls.

• **Book Three: Grump:** These final chapters contain some extra systems and Storyteller help to add a few bells and whistles to your **Changeling** game. **Chapter Seven: Glamour Systems** offers all of the rules pertaining to changeling magic. **Chapter Eight: Dramatic Systems** outlines a number of different ways to resolve conflicts during a game as well as showing how a character's Traits increase or decrease during the course of a chronicle. **Chapter Nine: Storytelling** is intended as an introduction to Storytelling, giving both new and experienced Storytellers ideas for chronicles and advice for how to keep things moving. The **Appendix** provides a range of potential enemies and other characters for changelings to interact with, including mortals, chimerical beasts, wraiths, vampires, mages and werewolves.

Other Changeling Sourcebooks

The following books offer you a range of possibilities beyond the basic rules, and are recommended for serious **Changeling** players.

Nobles: The Shining Host offers a detailed look at the nobility of the fae, plus a new noble house and new Arts.



The Shadow Court is an invaluable book for Storytellers who wish to have a strong Unseelie presence in the chronicle. This book not only offers complete information on the Unseelie Court, but has complete information about the three Unseelie houses and new Unseelie Arts.

The Immortal Eyes Trilogy (The Toybox, Shadows on the Hill and Court of All Kings) is a series of settings and adventures that mirrors the novel series of the same name. Each of these books offers a complete setting for **Changeling** as well as mini-adventures that can be inserted into any chronicle.

Dreams and Nightmares presents an in-depth look at the realms of the Dreaming.

Lexicon

The fae have a distinct *patois* that draws on many different tongues and gives many new shades of meaning to mortal words. One can often identify a changeling's age or station by listening to the parlance he uses.

Common Parlance

Following are the most common general terms in use among changelings.

Arcadia — The land of the fae; the home of all faeries within the Dreaming.

Arts — The ways of shaping Glamour.

Autumn — The modern age.

Balefire — The fire that is the focus of Glamour in a freehold.

Bedlam — A kind of madness that falls upon changelings who stray too far from the mortal world.

Banality — Mortal disbelief, as it affects changelings and their Glamour.

Bunk — The price Glamour exacts for its power.

Cantrip — A spell created through Glamour by using a combination of Arts and Realms.

Champion — A warrior chosen by one of higher rank to fight in his stead. A champion always wears the token of his patron, *which he keeps if he wins the duel.*

Changeling — A fae who has taken on mortal form in order to survive on Earth.

Childling — A child who has come fully into his changeling nature; this lasts until he becomes a wilder, around 13 years of age. Childlings are known for their innocence and affinity with Glamour, and are well-protected by other changelings.

Chimera — *A bit of dream made real; unseen by mortals,* chimera are part of the enchanted world. Chimera may be objects or entities.

Commoner — Any of the changeling kith who are not sidhe.

Dauntain — Faerie-hunters, deeply twisted by Banality.

Deep Dreaming, The — The furthest reaches of the Dreaming. The most powerful Dream Realms, such as Arcadia, exist here.

Dreaming, the — The collective dreams of humanity. Changelings often travel in these realms both to seek adventure and to gather the raw dreamstuff that can be used in crafting chimera.

Dreamrealms — The lands comprising Arcadia and the other realms of the Dreaming.

Enchant — To imbue a mortal with the power to see the faerie realm.

Escheat — The highest faerie laws.

Fae, Faerie — A being indigenous to the Dreaming (though not always a current resident thereof).

Fae Mien — A changeling's faerie visage, visible only to other changelings and enchanted beings.

Far Dreaming, The — The Far Dreaming is only attainable through the Near Dreaming. Many Dreamrealms exist here.

Fathom — A deep-seeking, protracted use of the Art of Soothsay. Also called the *Taghairm.*

Fior — A contest, the point of which is to determine justice.

Fledge — A newly awakened changeling of any age.

Freehold — A place that is infused with Glamour. Important to all changelings, freeholds are proof against Banality — for a time.

Gallain — 1) "The Outsiders," those who may be Kithain but whose origins, customs and magical ways are not understood. 2) Any inscrutable creature of the Dreaming.

Glamour — The living force of the Dreaming; changeling magic.

Grump — A changeling of elder years, usually beginning at about the age of 25. Very few changelings reach this age — most succumb to Banality long before.

Hue and Cry — 1) A hunt called out against a criminal. 2) The call of all changelings to come and defend a freehold.

Kin — Human relatives of a changeling who do not possess faerie blood.

Kinain — Human kinfolk of a changeling who possess faerie blood and frequently have strange magical "gifts" because of it.

Kith — All the changelings of a kind, or race. One's kith determines the nature of one's faerie guise and soul.

Kithain — Changelings' self-referential term.

Liege — One's sworn noble sovereign, whether baron, count, duke or king.

Long Winter, the — The prophesied eradication of all Glamour.

Mists, the — A metaphysical curtain of humanity's collective disbelief. The Mists are responsible for the following: 1) The tendency of mortals to forget the effects of Glamour and the presence of changelings after a very short time; 2) The tendency of Banality-tainted changelings to forget their faerie lives.

Mortal Seeming — The mortal appearance of a changeling. This is how mortals perceive a changeling.

Motley — A family or gang of commoners.

Near Dreaming, The — The realm of the Dreaming most easily assessable from Earth, usually by a trod.

Noble — Any *changeling raised to* noble title; although nobles are traditionally sidhe, lately commoners have begun receiving noble positions.

Oathbond — The mystical bond created by the swearing of an oath.

Realms — The five aspects of the world with which changelings have affinity.

Resurgence, The — The time when the sidhe returned in 1969.

Retainers — Any servants of a liege.

Saining — "The Naming"; a ritual performed on a newly awakened changeling to determine his kith, his True Name and his place in the Dreaming.

Shattering, The — The time when the last sidhe departed and the last trods to Arcadia closed.

Sundering, The — The time when humanity first began to turn away from their dreams; the Iron Age.

Tara-Nar — The great freehold castle of High King David. Beneath it is the Well of Fire, from which all balefire comes.

Time of Legends — *The age when magical* powers ran free in the world.

Trods — Magical gateways, faerie roads; some lead to other freeholds, some to the Dreaming itself.

Tuatha De Danann — The mysterious *progenitors of the fae.*

Vassal — The sworn servant of a liege.

Vellum — A specially preserved chimerical hide on which changeling scribes write.

Wilder — A changeling of adolescent years, usually from age 13 to age 25. Known for their wild undertakings and loose tempers, wilders are the most common changelings.

Yearning — Also called "the Gloomies," the Yearning is the utter longing for Arcadia that overcomes grumps as Banality encroaches upon them.

Vulgar Argot

These are the words most frequently used by commoners, and have been picked up the wilder exiles (even those of the noble houses). They tend to be somewhat crude and abrupt, and carry with them a certain disregard for tradition and rank. Many of these terms are very ancient, others are quite new, but all of them are quite in vogue among wilder nobles. During the Interregnum many commoners formed or joined circuses in order to escape the stupefying Banality of mortal society, and much vulgar argot originates from that culture.

Churl — A vassal; insulting if used to describe a noble.

Codger — A word for *grump.*

Callowfae — *Self-absorbed faeries* with no purpose higher than that of play; often said in reference to childlings, insulting if used to describe any other changelings.

Chiven — Craven, cowardly or wimpy.

Chummery — A particularly hospitable freehold.

Cozen — To cheat someone or steal something.

Fancypants — A nickname for sidhe or any self-absorbed noble.

Foredoom — When a use of Soothsay prophesies very bad news.

Jimp — To create a faerie token or charm.

Mew — A *commoner* freehold, typically controlled by a motley.

Mux — To *really* screw up something; to add chaos and disorganization to things. "You really muxed things up this time!"

Sots — Mundane people; "sothead" and "*sot-brain*" are popular epithets.

Old Form

These are the terms used by nobility (*especially sidhe*) and more sophisticated grumps. These words are seldom used by younger exiles, but are still fashionable vernacular among the older members.

Burgess — A mortal; sometimes used to refer to commoners.

Crepusc — The period at the end of any faerie festival when activities have begun to die down, but the night is not yet over. It is said to be a particularly mystical time, when the perceptive will discover many secrets.

Clarion — A call to war made by a noble to his vassals.

Covey — A group of changelings united by an oathbond.

Chrysalis — The dawn of fae consciousness, the great awakening into one's changeling nature.

Dán — Fate; one's destiny and karma.

Draocht — Cantrips and other changeling magic.

Driabhar — A *treasure,* usually one of great power.

Entrant — A worthy rival, one assumed to merit prolonged struggle and respect.

Gosling — A childling changeling or very young faerie.

Fychell — 1) A chesslike game played by nobles. 2) A stylized dance popular among grump nobles.

Fuidir — The vassals to whom one owes fealty.

Gloam, the — 1) The blackest part of the night. 2) Midwinter's Night, also called "the Gloaming."

Greybeard — A grump; a term of respect.

Grandame — A powerful female sidhe, often used when speaking of a queen.

Knarl — A special magical knot that serves as a type of ward.

Laud — To receive the glory of courtly acclaim. Often some sort of token is bestowed as well.

Mot — An adage, maxim or saying.

Privy Council — The inner council of a liege and his high-ranking vassals.

Retrorse — To revert to one's mortal seeming.

Reune — A noble rendezvous, often a secret negotiation.

Trollop — A promiscuous fae.

Voile — Chimerical clothing, garb and/or jewelry.

The Young Knight

Once upon a time in a not-very-magical land called Suburbia there lived a perfectly ordinary little boy named Justin. Justin lived with his father and his father's second wife in a split-level ranch house with white aluminum siding, a lawn with three sycamore trees and a driveway that Justin's father refinished every other summer. Justin had a room at the end of the house that had two windows; he decorated the walls with pictures of dinosaurs. Justin's stepmother disapproved of the dinosaurs and said that the walls of Justin's room should just be white, but Justin's father let him keep the dinosaurs. It was better, Justin's father said, than trying to keep the walls white, then coming home from work one day to find that Justin had covered them in crayon drawings of dragons and knights. At least that's what Justin said they were. Truth be told, they looked more like green-and-red squiggles, or maybe overly aggressive pasta, but to Justin, they were dragons. And dragons, like beauty and magic, live in the eye of the beholder.

Justin's mother died when Justin was very small. His father, whose name was Jake, had remarried when Justin was only a little bit bigger, and Justin could barely remember his mother at all. His stepmother, whose name was Leah, didn't seem to like him much, and sometimes Justin could hear her fighting with his father. On those nights, Justin closed the door to his room and put his pillow over his head, pretending not to hear and wishing that he was somewhere else. Occasionally he wished he was in the land of his crayon dragons, but most of the time he just wished he was somewhere else.



There was one other little boy who lived on Justin's block, and his name was Devin. Devin and Justin were best friends, which was funny because they were complete opposites in many ways. Justin was tall and clumsy, with blond hair and blue eyes, while Devin was short and quick, and had brown skin and black hair. Justin and Devin did everything together: they raced their tricycles and Big Wheels, dug holes in the backyard, explored the mysteries of Around The Corner, drew pictures and watched cartoons – *everything*. Justin sometimes got the feeling that his stepmother didn't much like his being friends with Devin, but he didn't care.

So it was Devin that Justin told when he first started seeing things – flashes of butterfly wings and curious faces peeping out from trees. Devin told Justin that he saw these things too, and had been seeing them for a while. After that, whenever one saw a magical shape, he would laugh and smile and point it out to the other. It became one more secret for them to share. "But," Devin said, "*you can't tell* your parents about this, or something bad will happen."

"What could they do?" asked Justin.

"I don't know," said Devin, "But I can tell that it would be bad." And he went home shaking his head, because he already knew that Justin wouldn't be able to keep the secret.

Sure enough, Justin forgot Devin's warning and told his father about what he had seen. The second he had done so, Justin knew he'd made a mistake. Later that night, he heard his father and Leah talking. They used words he didn't understand, like "therapy" and "boarding school." Leah used them a lot, he noticed.

The next day, Justin's father told him that he would be going to a new school, far away. Justin asked if Devin was coming with him, but his father said no. "This is going to be an adventure just for you," he said.

And so Justin went to the school far away. The visions of strange and magical things, though – they didn't vanish. He saw more and more of them every day. He'd daydream for a moment, and suddenly his teacher would be eight feet tall and blue – with horns! Or, late at night, after all of the lights were turned out and he'd been sent to bed, Justin would hear the strange voices of the Monsters Under the Bed in secret conversation.

Justin had learned from experience, though. This time he told nobody what he saw.

Then, one day on the playground outside, Justin saw something wonderful and terrible. As he played with the other children, he heard phantom footfalls loud as thunder. Finally, he could ignore it no longer. He looked up, and there he saw all his dreams and nightmares come true – a dragon! It was green and gold, and where the sunlight sparkled on its scales it shone so bright it was like a knife to the eyes. Its neck was long and thin, its claws huge and sharp, and its roar loud enough to call rain down from the skies.





Justin thought that he was the only one to see the dragon, but his teacher saw it, too. Ms. Lombard ran to where the dragon stood, and as she ran Justin saw that his teacher wore armor and held a huge sword that was so bright that it gleamed. None of the other children saw, but Justin watched Ms. Lombard (who was blue, of course – Justin had expected no less) battle the dragon. Stroke and counterstroke, challenge and echo – Justin watched it all in rapt fascination.

Ms. Lombard won the battle, and the dragon turned to run. Bleeding from a score of cuts, it turned to her just before it vanished and spoke three words. "I shall return," it said, and then vanished into the rows of corn beyond the distant soccer field. Ms. Lombard sheathed her sword, then turned back to her charges.

She seemed rather surprised when Justin came up to her and said, "I didn't know that dragons could talk."



Late that night, when everyone else was asleep, Justin sat up in his bed. He knew that it was important that he be awake, just as Devin had known so long ago that to share their secrets would somehow be folly. Quietly he dressed and waited for the door to open.

He only had to wait a few minutes. Ms. Lombard came for him, beautiful and cold in her armor. She was not at all surprised to see Justin ready for her, and he in turn was not surprised to see that his skin was the same color as the sky. "Come with me," she said, and he did. Out in the hall two others, garbed and visaged like Ms. Lombard were waiting, also armored and unsmiling. They took up positions to Justin's front and rear, and refused to speak a single word. Somehow he knew, though, that the man who marched before him was Mr. Simms, the janitor, and that the woman behind him was Ms. Loveless, who taught the girls' gym. And even though no one said a word or even so much as looked kindly upon him, Justin could sense a secret joy bubbling up out of the three who escorted him.

They led him out of the building into the night, and shimmering firefly globes sprang into existence to light their way. Out past the main courtyard they walked, across the soccer field and past the waving stalks of corn. Finally, they came to a place that Justin had never seen before, where laughter and music heralded their approach.

At the edge of the woods was the most wonderful and most terrible thing Justin could imagine. Seated upon a throne of glass that sparkled like it encased a thousand stars was the most handsome man Justin had ever seen. The man's hair was black and fine, and his face was thin and pale. He wore armor of black and gold, and a naked sword thin as a whisper lay across his lap. At his brow the man wore a thin circlet of gold, set with a single green gem.



Around the throne dancers cavorted, graceful men and women like the man with the circlet. In a wider circle whirled other dancers, but dancers like none that Justin had ever seen. Men with the features of animals cavorted with elegant, dark-skinned women, while faerie musicians made sounds that would call the woods themselves to dance. Thin, sad-faced waifs in tattered finery waltzed as wine was poured and songs were sung. Glowing lanterns hung from every tree bough, and the very grass seemed to put forth a dew of pure silver.

The dancers parted for Justin and his escorts, though the music never faltered. To the very base of the throne the four walked, and the man who sat upon it greeted them. "Well met," he said, "and welcome to you and your charge, Anneke."

"I pray that he may find welcome here always, Duke Hamish, for I think that his is an old soul, and one that has greatness in it," the warrior woman replied.

"We shall see what the future casts for him, Anneke," said the duke. "But there is a more pressing matter."

"Your Grace?"

"I have it on very good authority," said the duke, nodding at a pair of pasty-faced waifs in flowing dresses who were waltzing a score of feet away, "that you single-handedly faced and defeated a chimerical dragon of some mickle might this day — and that you did so with aid of neither cantrip nor charm, but only the strength of blade and arm. This," he said, rising to his feet, "is a deed of greatness! To honor you, and your deed, Anneke, I declare this night to be a night of revels! May all who are here shower you with praise and gifts, for you have earned them. And as pride of place here is mine, I give you the first gift of this night, Pages!"

From behind the throne came two youths, thin and imperious as their master. They bore in their arms a great shield which shone like silver, and had the shapes and forms of many beasts upon it. The pages bore the shield to Anneke, who took it from them. They bowed, and vanished back into the shadows.

"That shield was taken from a trollish champion during the fires of the Accordance War, Anneke, and it has charms and spells woven tightly about it. You have merited its return to your people, and knowledge of its powers. Of all the images of beasts that dance on your shield, you may choose one this night from which you will henceforth be protected. I grant you leave to select any, save the dragon, for you have shown that you need no magics to defeat one of that brood," the duke cried.

"I thank you, my duke," said the woman whom Justin had once known as Ms. Lombard. She knelt then, and made obeisance to the man on the shining throne, then rose and walked away. The others walked away with her, and suddenly it was just Justin and the man who wore the crown.

"And you, my young warrior," said the man very softly, "do you know your name yet? It would be a very good thing if you did."

And suddenly Justin knew — knew that he'd borne another name time and time again, in many skins and in many lives. The details of those other days were a blur of blood and blue sky, of ringing steel and crashing glass, but they were real, he somehow knew.

Moreover, he knew that in those bygone lives, he'd been called "Ulf," which means "the wolf" in many lands and many tongues, and that once upon a time, it had been a name to be feared.

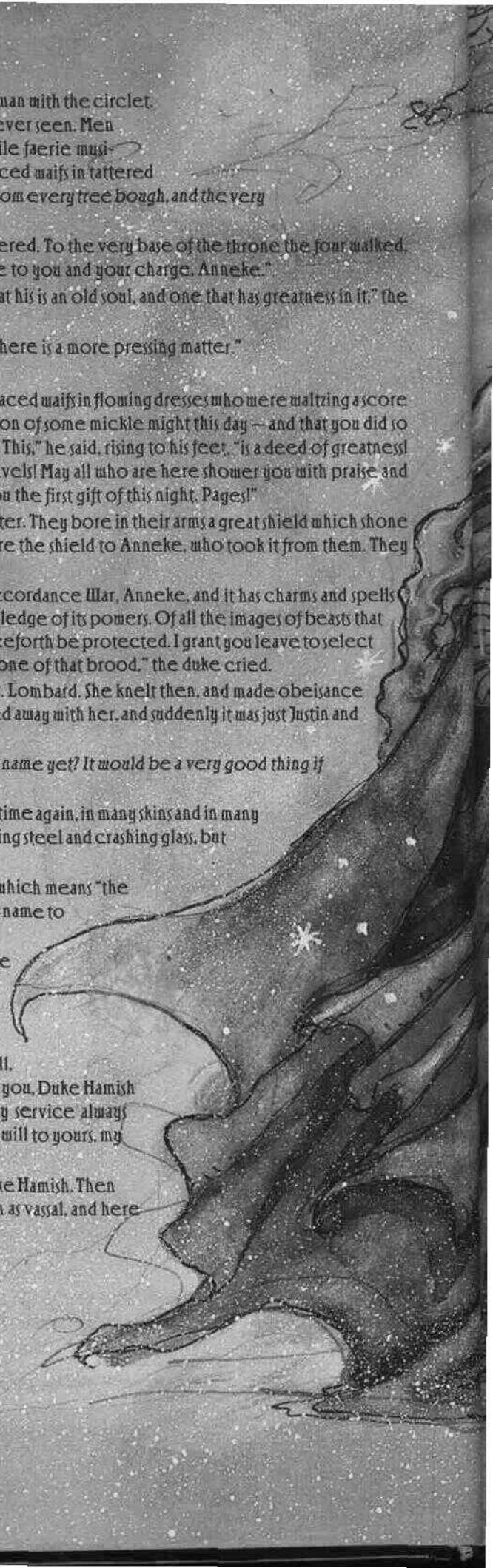
"I do know my name, Your Grace," said Justin. "And I would fain take service with you, if you would have me."

"Bold words, boy. Tell me your name, and I will consider it."

"Ulf, Your Grace."

The man on the throne was silent for a minute. "Ulf," he said softly. "Well, then, Ulf, if you would take service with me, say these words: I swear fealty unto you, Duke Hamish Starguided. Your command is my desire and your request my desire. May my service always please, and may my sight grow dark if it does not. As the tides to the moon, my will to yours, my liege."

And so Ulf swore the Oath of Fealty, and became a part of the court of Duke Hamish. Then Duke Hamish swore the Oath of Noblesse Oblige unto Ulf, and accepted him as vassal, and here began Justin's true journey into the lands of the fae.



It was later that same year when trouble came to Justin. He had spent his days in school, learning what Ms. Lombard taught him about reading and writing and arithmetic. He had spent his nights learning what Anneke could teach him, and that (as far as he was concerned, at least) was far more interesting.

She instructed him in the use of sword and shield, until his skill was lauded by no less a personage than Duke Hamish himself. She taught him the rules of court and the ways of the fae, and he learned much from what she did not tell him as well. He learned the small magicks called cantrips, and used them in ways to make his dreary, dreary school a much more interesting and magical place. And he learned about honor, and what it might cost him.

Justin — or Ulf — was a very apt pupil, and never had to be taught anything twice.

Occasionally, Justin would go home for a holiday, but he found more and more that the school was home, and that the house he'd lived in was simply the place where his father dwelt. School was altogether more magical these days, and Justin much preferred it when his father came to visit him there. His stepmother, of course, never came to visit.



The first time Justin went home, he tried to go see Devin, but strangers now lived in the place where Devin's family once had dwelt. Justin asked his father what had happened, and Justin's father said that they'd moved away. Justin asked if they'd left an address so he could write to Devin, but Justin's father said that they hadn't. And so, Justin became convinced that he had lost his best friend. When he returned to school, he told the Kithain he knew from court about what had happened — Melinda the sluagh, and dashing Desmond the satyr, and Sir Reginald the pooka knight, who had the features of a squirrel. They all said that it sounded like this was a quest in the making, and they were sure that ere too long, Ulf would find a reason to go seek out his friend. Duke Hamish, on the other hand, claimed that bigger magics were afoot, and refused Ulf permission to quest for the boon companion of his sandbox days.

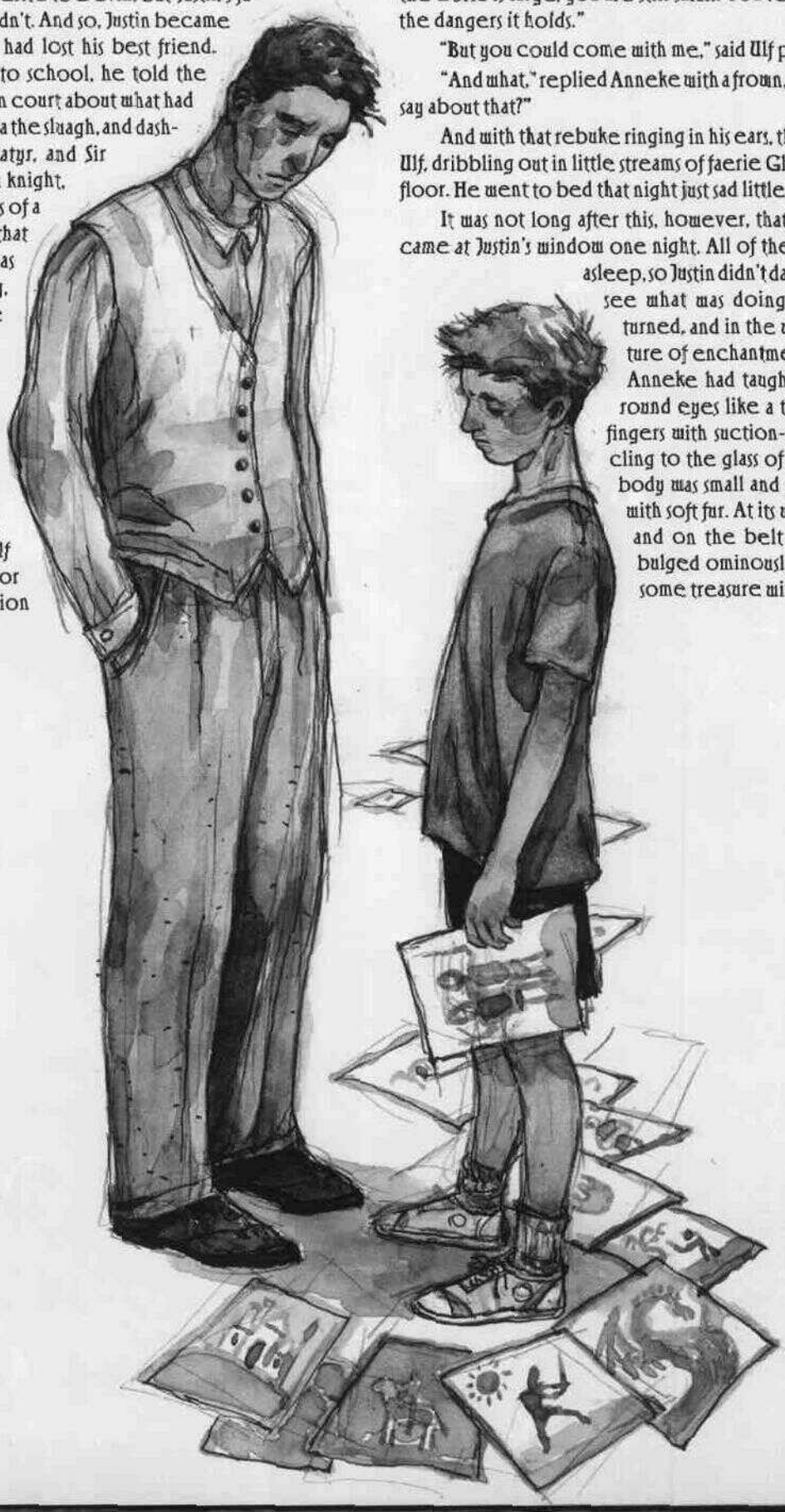
Ulf even tried to ask Anneke for help in questing, but she refused. "You have sworn an oath," she reminded him, and his face drooped in shame. "It would be a disgrace to all of our kind if you were to forsake your oath to seek your friend. Besides, the world is large; you are still small. You're not ready yet for the dangers it holds."

"But you could come with me," said Ulf plaintively.

"And what," replied Anneke with a frown, "would your father say about that?"

And with that rebuke ringing in his ears, the magic fled from Ulf, dribbling out in little streams of faerie Glamour all over the floor. He went to bed that night just sad little Justin once more.

It was not long after this, however, that a tap-tap-tapping came at Justin's window one night. All of the other boys were asleep, so Justin didn't dare turn on a light to see what was doing the tapping. He turned, and in the window was a creature of enchantment — a chimera, as Anneke had taught him. It had huge round eyes like a tarsier, and splayed fingers with suction-cup tips that let it cling to the glass of Justin's window. Its body was small and gray, and covered with soft fur. At its waist it wore a belt, and on the belt was a pouch that bulged ominously, no doubt hiding some treasure within.



When it saw Justin's face, the creature gestured frantically at him to open the window. Ulf (for he found he had taken on his fae guise while observing the fascinating creature) did so, and was rewarded with a soft "ker-thump" as the creature fell into the bushes below. However, it soon clambered back up to the windowsill, where it executed a most courteous bow.

"Do I have the honor," it said in a voice like one might imagine a chipmunk to have, "of addressing a certain Justin, friend to one Devin?"

"You do," said Ulf.

"Ah, then I bear great things for you! First, I bring you tidings that your friend is alive and well, though many miles from the land where once you knew him. He did leave word of his destination with the queen of the demesne where once you dwelt, but through his mighty arts discovered that she had with malice aforethought mislaid the secrets of his missive."

Ulf nodded; he had suspected as much of his stepmother.

"But that is not all I bring! Ceeker is my name, for I have been woven from dreams and the small scuttling noises of the night. I also bring you two gifts from Devin, if you would take them from me."



"I will take them, Ceeker, though I'm afraid I have nothing to offer you in return."

"No," and the chimera's eyes grew even bigger, "nuts, even? Ah, well, 'tis but a moment's fancy. The first gift I bring you is that of prophecy. Devin wishes you to know that you and he shall meet again, and not to be disturbed by any news you hear of him in the days to come. He has soothsayed the future, and knows these things to be true.

"The second gift I have for you, however, is something more tangible." And with that, the chimera reached into his pouch and drew forth a ring of silver. The band was polished smooth, and an amethyst sat atop it in a setting like the claws of a dragon. "Devin said you might have need of this," said Ceeker in a more sober tone. Silently, Ulf took the ring and placed it on his finger. The stone began to glow softly; the glow was brightest when Ulf pointed his hand in the direction of the coming sunrise.

"Thank you, Ceeker. If you see Devin before I do, tell him I miss him."

"Oh, I most certainly shall, most certainly shall," said the chimera, *and then with a hop and a skip* and no small amount of thrashing in the leaves, the creature was gone.

Justin shut the window and went to sleep. In the morning he awoke to find that there was a ring of wire and paste on his finger. *Wisely, he decided against taking it off.* Ms. Lombard looked oddly at it during class, but said nothing. She was a troll, after all, and knew the value of silence.

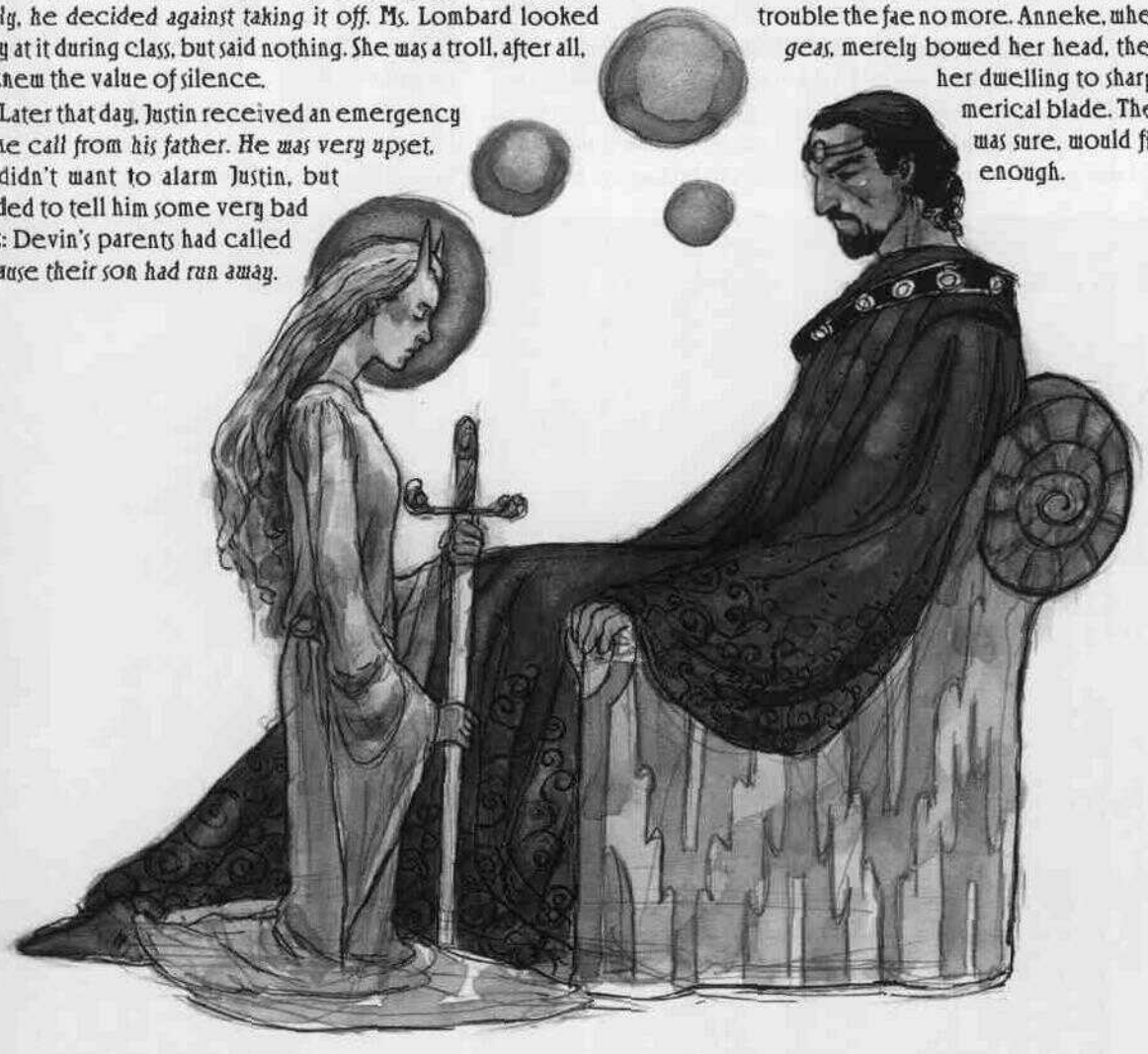
Later that day, Justin received an emergency phone call from his father. He was very upset, and didn't want to alarm Justin, but needed to tell him some very bad news: Devin's parents had called because their son had run away. *They were hoping that perhaps* Devin would find his way back to the old neighborhood, and that if he did so, Justin's father would take him in until they could come get him. Justin's father told Justin not to worry, and that everything would be all right.

"I'm not worried," *said Justin, and hung up.*

The talk of Devin's disappearance was all the buzz at court for several days. It was deemed likely by Isidore Webbery, the other sluagh who visited on occasion, that Devin must be a changeling himself, possibly a tale-telling eshu. Others bent Ulf's ear with sympathies and soothing words. Duke Hamish, of course, merely offered suggestions on ways in which Ulf might better perform his duties.

But talk of Devin vanished on the fourth night, when word came that a chimerical dragon was again loose in the land. Whispers flew like daggers: the beast wanted vengeance for some imagined slight; the creature had been born of Duke Hamish's dreams; it was the dread beast that had laid waste to Caer Dhomnaill and all who dwelled therein!

But Duke Hamish did not heed rumors, or perhaps he knew precisely which ones to heed. He called for the services of one of his knights who had already vanquished a dragon of this sort, and set a *geas* on her to slay the beast so that it would trouble the fae no more. Anneke, when told of her *geas*, merely bowed her head, then retired to her dwelling to sharpen her chimerical blade. The dragon, she was sure, would find her soon enough.



And so it did indeed come to pass. The very next day after class had ended, Justin heard the familiar roaring in the fields and saw the towering head of the dragon, breaking through the waves of corn like the prow of a Viking ship of old. The beast bellowed a challenge like thunder raining down from the skies, and waited for an answer.

Anneke came forth to answer soon enough, with blade in one hand and gift-shield in the other. She strode out to where the dragon stood and commanded it to take itself to a place where it would trouble neither mortal nor fae ever again. The dragon just laughed, however, and struck at her with one cruel claw. Anneke ducked under the blow with ease, and taunted the monster as she did so. "Is that the best you can do, worm?" she shouted. "I've a student who's only seen seven summers; he could have avoided that!" Then she raised her blade and struck at the dragon's belly; only by recoiling like a serpent from a fire did the beast avoid certain death.

Then the battle was joined in earnest, with Ulf watching in wide-eyed horror and fascination. He longed to go down to the field and aid Anneke, to give her an ally, or, at least, a distraction that might enable her to strike a fatal blow. But he knew that his skills were not yet ready for such a challenge. Furthermore, it had been Anneke's *geas* to fight this beast, not his. If he were to interfere, she would not be pleased.

With burst of flame and shine of silver, the battle raged on for a full hour. The dragon's flame and claws could not find their target, and yet the dragon always managed to stay out of reach of the troll-woman's flashing blade. Back and forth across soccer field and cornstalks the conflict continued, until disaster struck. Retreating onto a patch of earth where previously she had hewed the dragon with mighty blows, the troll-woman slipped. Ere she could rise, the dragon had taken one of its claws and pressed it down upon her with all its terrible weight.

"And so, little valkyor," the dragon purred, "it ends." With that, it bent its head down and seized Anneke in its terrible jaws. The gift-shield of the duke, charmed against other beasts, crumpled like thin tin, and the warrior woman's armor buckled as well. Ulf could not bear to watch, and so he turned away.

He could not, however, block out the sounds of his teacher's destruction – the tearing of metal, the sharp sound of breaking bone. She cried out, once, ere the end, then the dragon lowered her to earth and lumbered off, whistling a song known only to dragonkind.

Before the beast had even left the field, Ulf pelted down the hill upon which he sat to be at his teacher's side. Winded and terrified, he reached her before any of his school playmates even noticed he was gone.

Ms. Lombard lay there in the wreckage of some cornstalks. Her dress was muddy, and one of her sensible shoes was missing, leaving her toes to trail in the dirt. She looked confused, rather than hurt, and neither blood nor armor was anywhere to be found. "Why, Justin," she said when she saw him, "what are we doing all the way out here? I must have fallen. Come," and she rose up from the dirt,





dusting off her knees as she did so. "*let's go* back to where the others are playing. It's not good to be out here away from everyone else."

Justin let her lead him back to where the other children were playing, and even managed to join in their games for a while.

That night, before he could sleep, Justin cried for a very long time. Ulf cried for even longer.

❦ ❦ ❦

The next morning, Justin awoke with a new and deadly resolve. He would find the beast that had done such grievous harm to his friend and teacher, and he would slay it himself. It was only fitting that he take his teacher's mantle, was it not?

His resolve wasn't even shaken when in class, Ms. Lombard asked him to take off the silly ring he was wearing. He refused and she acted puzzled, but did not press the matter.

That night, Ulf went before the duke to petition for freedom to pursue the dragon that had slain Anneke. The duke listened to *Ulf's request*, then shook his head.

"There are many reasons I cannot grant this, Ulf. I have already lost one of my best knights; I do not wish to lose *your* services as well. You are not ready to face such a beast, not at all. Then there is the matter of where the beast dwells. It has gone now, wandered

off again. Even in defeat Anneke accomplished her *geas* – the dragon is gone, is it not? I cannot countenance your trespassing on the lands of another. Glamour, the substance of dream that nourishes our fae souls, is precious and rare. Other lords and ladies might not take kindly to the presence of a brave warrior," and he said this with a patronizing smile, "such as yourself invading their freeholds. No, Ulf, I cannot let you seek this dragon. Serve, and be content with that."

"Then may I ask you one question, my duke, before I return to my duties?"

The duke waved his hand magnanimously. "I grant you this boon. Ask."

"Why did you charm Anneke against taking protection from dragonkind?"

A hush fell on the court. Duke Hamish's smile fell away like the last leaf from a tree in autumn. "She had defeated the dragon once; she seemed to have no need of such protections. Such is the way of things among our kind, childling! You ask above your station!"

But Ulf just shook his head. "I think we both know the true answer to that question, Your Grace. An oath has been broken here this night. It has been pleasant in your service. I do not think we shall meet again."

And before the faces of the stunned multitude, Ulf marched forth from that place, eyes bright with tears. For he knew that his master had betrayed his teacher, and that his was the path of vengeance and sorrow.

From the court Ulf returned to the place where Anneke had fallen. There, on the ground, pieces of her broken shield still glistened faintly. Guided only by the light of the stars, Ulf searched through the wreckage until he found what he desired: a fragment of the shield that bore the image of a dragon rampant. He tucked the jagged metal inside his baldric, then held up the hand that bore Devin's ring. Slowly he turned in a circle, and the fire of the ring's stone shone brightest when Ulf faced east. And so, with a heavy heart and the barest of supplies, Ulf strode steadily eastward. Having known this day would come, he had prepared some food and water for the journey, but he knew that his rations would not last long. Success would have to come soon, or else there would be perils far worse than dragons to face.

But it was dragons that Ulf did face, or at least one. For with three days of walking between him and the duke's court, Ulf found himself face to face with the dragon. It was on a road, and many passersby shouted at the small boy who weaved and dodged between the parked cars, ducking and rolling like an acrobat or a madman. Of course, they could not see the dragon, nor could they see Ulf's true face. They simply saw a small boy playing a dangerous game.

But Ulf saw the dragon's face, and it saw his. Worse, somehow it knew him for who he was. "You have the stink of that trollish woman I killed on you, brat!" the dragon roared. "Will her heirs send babes in swaddling clothes after me next?" And with that he breathed forth flame that engulfed Ulf completely. It burned like the sun, like salt in an open wound, like nothing Ulf had ever felt before. It burned and burned, and in its burning, consumed him. Even as Ulf fell, swathed in fire, the dragon laughed and turned away.

A passerby saw the strange little boy cry out and fall, beating at himself as if in agony. With great concern, the man lifted Justin from the street and brought him inside a nearby store. He checked Justin's pockets and found there a boy's wallet, and inside the wallet found the address and phone number of Justin's father. With mounting concern (for the address on the wallet was many states away), the man called Justin's father.

It was Justin's stepmother who answered the phone, but it was Justin's father who rushed to his son's side as soon as he could. He bundled Justin up in his arms, thanked profusely the man who had taken care of him, and took Justin back to the house he had once known.

But no one else saw the dragon go, and no one had the heart to take the mire-and-paste ring from Justin's finger.

It was several days later, and Justin lay awake in bed listening to his father and Leah argue. Leah was all for sending him back to school immediately, while Justin's father wanted to bring him home. It was obvious, he said, that the school couldn't take proper care of the boy. This time they had



been lucky and Justin had not come to much harm. *What if there was a next time?*

"Well, then," said Leah, "perhaps we should see about a different type of school." And with that, there was silence in the house.

Justin frowned. He knew he could not return to Duke Hamish's lands; that way was closed to him now. Nor did he wish to remain here for, although he loved his father, his stepmother's mere presence wore away at his dreaming self. It was as if even her voice was the chill autumn wind that presaged the coming winter of his soul. Ulf seemed very small and far away whenever Leah spoke.

But this third choice, this new type of school that his stepmother had oh-so-vaguely threatened — that seemed fraught with menace as well. Beset on all sides, Justin closed his eyes and tried to sleep.

Suddenly, his room was alive with a shimmering purple light. It was the stone from his ring, dancing with fire and brilliance that he'd never, ever seen before! The whole room was bright as day

with the stone's glow, and Justin gazed at it in wonder. He'd been following the ring's glow in order to find Devin, which meant that if it were glowing this brightly now, Devin must be –

There came a rap at the window. Joyously, Justin scrambled out of his sheets to fling it open. There, clad in a vest and trews of a bygone age, crouched Devin. His eyes seemed to hold more wisdom than ever, but he was smiling with sheer joy at seeing his friend once again.

"Come in, come in!" and Justin pulled him in from the window-frame. "Tell me everything!"

And so Devin did. Sitting cross-legged on the bed, he told Justin how his family had moved away, and how his strange visions had continued. Then, one night an uncle of his, a man neither he nor his parents had seen *for years, reappeared on their doorstep.* Devin's parents, naturally, were thrilled to have this prodigal return, but Devin was even more thrilled.

His uncle, you see, was one of the eshu, the wandering tale-tellers of the fae. By some magic or charm he had sensed that his nephew, long-forgotten Devin, also harbored an eshu soul, and as such had braved long roads to find him. And so this uncle, whose name Devin never revealed, visited many times over the following months, teaching Devin (or Ismail, as he was known among the fae) the ways of the eshu.

It had been when this mysterious uncle had taken Ismail away for his Saining – his formal initiation into the ways of the changeling world – that Devin's parents had thought that he'd run away. He returned, but somehow his parents had guessed that his uncle was at the root of the "trouble" and barred the man from their house.

And so Devin had done the only logical thing – he had run away for real.

"But," he said when his tale was finished, "there *are other things afoot. A betrayal to avenge.* A dragon to slay. Honor to unstain. I've heard tell of all these things, Ulf – your tale echoes louder than you know. So, what road do you travel from here?"

Justin looked up at his friend with sad eyes. "I don't know. Anneke is gone, and there is no place for me with the duke anymore. I'm not strong enough to fight the dragon, either."

"Not strong enough *alone,*" *corrected his friend.*

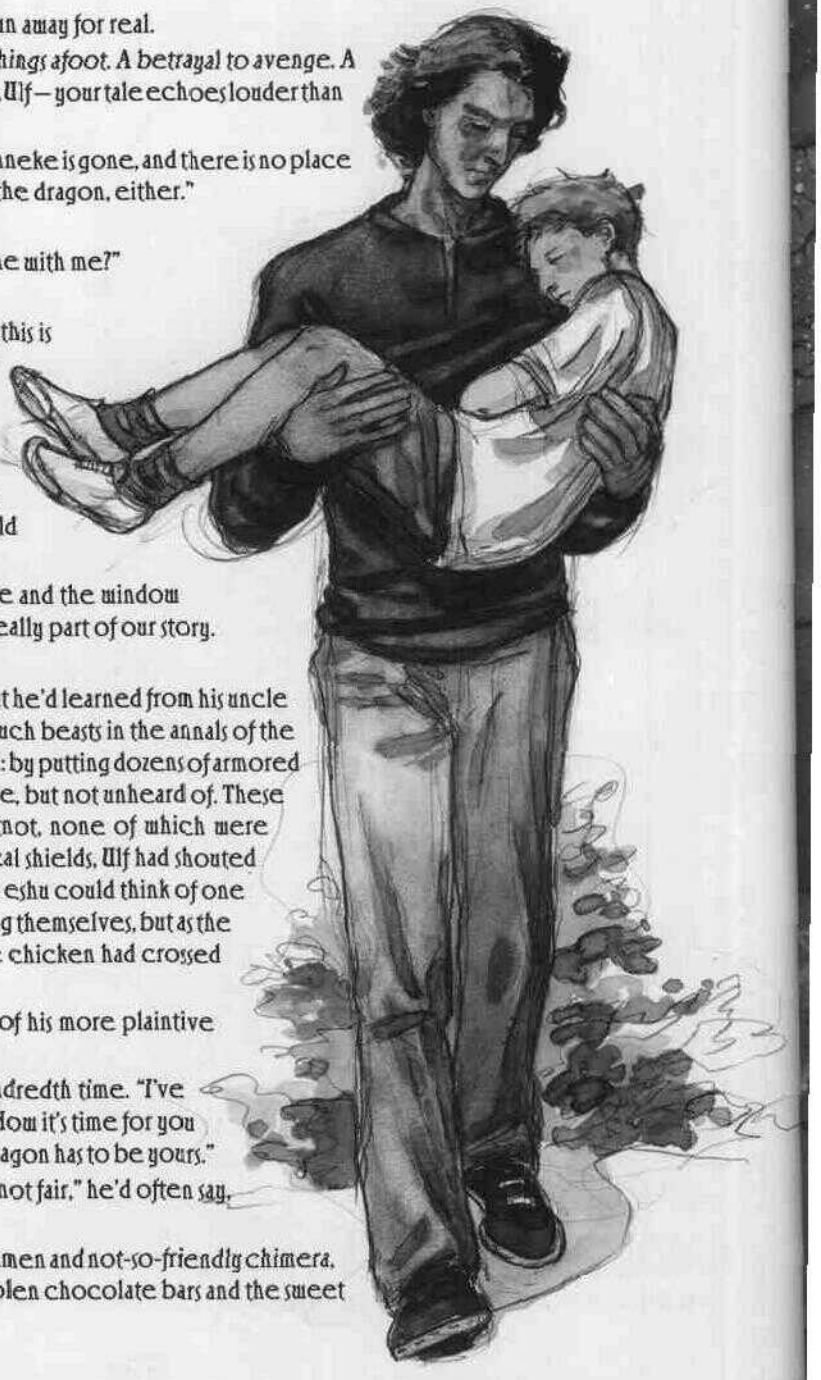
Hope dawned in Justin's eyes. "Does that mean you'll come with me?"

"Did you ever doubt?"

Justin laughed with sheer delight. "I had hoped, but oh, this is wonderful!" And the two changelings collapsed in a fit of giggles *that was so loud that it shook the rafters of Justin's father's house.*

"Would you keep it down, Justin? Some of us need sleep!" came Leah's thundering voice. So with exaggerated quiet and courtesy, the two boys helped one another out the window, down the drainpipe, across the yard and into the great wide world *in search of a dragon.*

The next morning, when they woke up to find Justin gone and the window open, Leah and Justin's father had another fight. But that's not really part of our story.



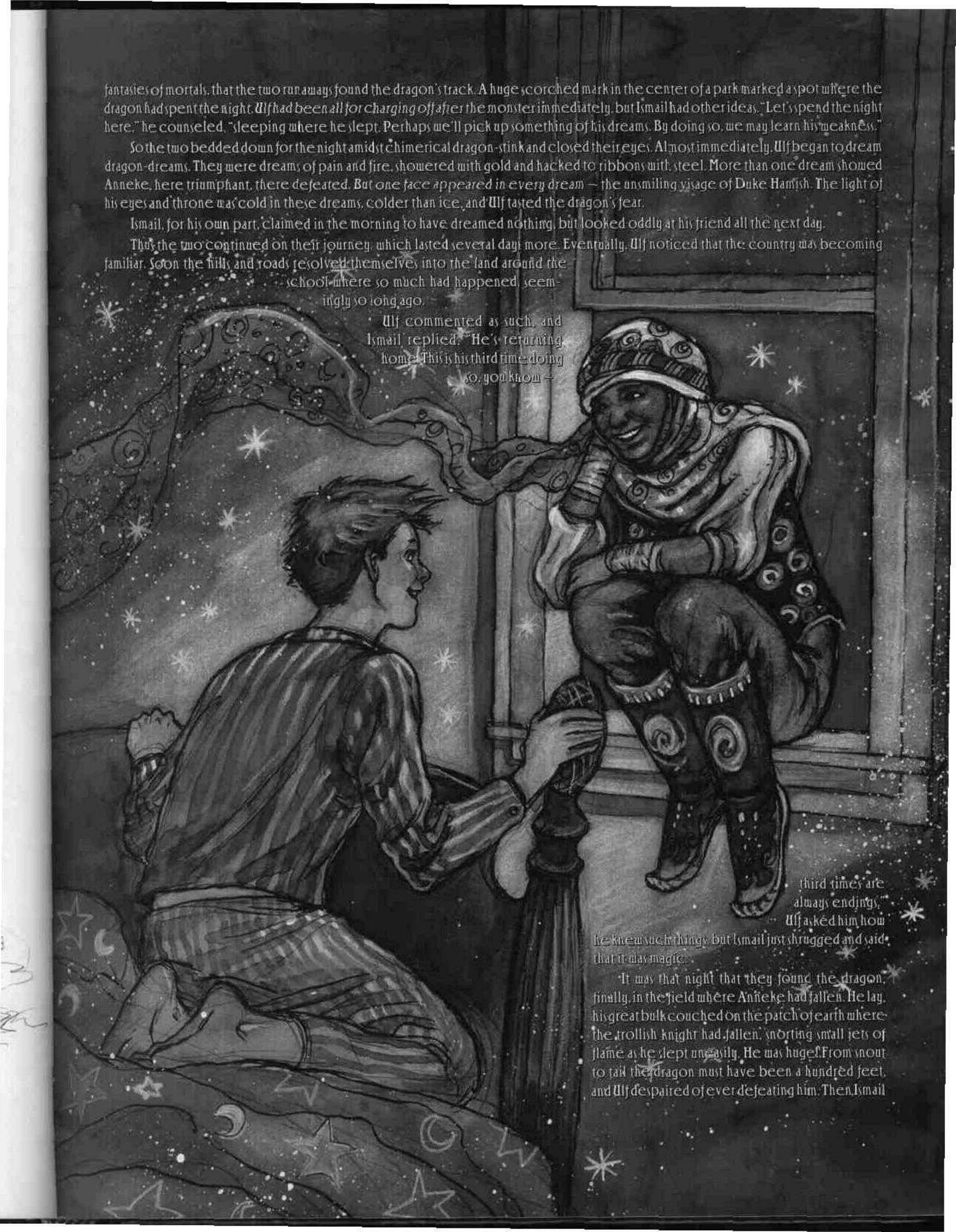
As they traveled for the next few days, Ismail told Ulf all that he'd learned from his uncle *of the art of chimerical dragonslaying.* There had been many such beasts in the annals of the fae, and most had been dispatched in the time-honored fashion: by putting dozens of armored knights in the field against it. Solo dragonslayers were more rare, but not unheard of. These warriors usually had magical swords, shields, helmets and whatnot, none of which were available to Ulf and Ismail. Moreover, at the mention of magical shields, Ulf had shouted fiercely at his friend, and so Ismail had let the matter drop. The eshu could think of one or two stories of heroes who had riddled dragons into devouring themselves, but as the young troll had always had trouble discerning why exactly the chicken had crossed the road, they both agreed that this was not an option.

"But why don't you riddle the dragon?" asked Ulf in one of his more plaintive moments. "You'd be good at it."

"Yes, but this is your quest, Ulf," replied Ismail for the hundredth time. "I've already had mine, found my own magic, earned my own name. Now it's time for you to do the same. I can help you, yes, but the hand that slays the dragon has to be yours."

And with that, Ulf would slump into sullen silence. "It's just not fair," he'd often say, and Ismail would nod and agree.

It was only after seven days' travel, ducking friendly policemen and not-so-friendly chimera, meeting the occasional fae or dreaming human, feasting on stolen chocolate bars and the sweet



fantasies of mortals, that the two runaways found the dragon's track. A huge scorched mark in the center of a park marked a spot where the dragon had spent the night. Ulf had been all for charging off after the monster immediately, but Ismail had other ideas. "Let's spend the night here," he counseled, "sleeping where he slept. Perhaps we'll pick up something of his dreams. By doing so, we may learn his weakness."

So the two bedded down for the night amidst chimerical dragon-stink and closed their eyes. Almost immediately, Ulf began to dream dragon-dreams. They were dreams of pain and fire, showered with gold and hacked to ribbons with steel. More than one dream showed Anneke, here triumphant, there defeated. But one face appeared in every dream — the unsmiling visage of Duke Hamish. The light of his eyes and throne was cold in these dreams, colder than ice, and Ulf tasted the dragon's fear.

Ismail, for his own part, claimed in the morning to have dreamed nothing, but looked oddly at his friend all the next day.

Thus the two continued on their journey, which lasted several days more. Eventually, Ulf noticed that the country was becoming familiar. Soon the hills and roads resolved themselves into the land around the school where so much had happened, seemingly so long ago.

Ulf commented as such, and Ismail replied, "He's returning home. This is his third time doing so, you know —

third times are always endings." Ulf asked him how he knew such things, but Ismail just shrugged and said that it was magic.

It was that night that they found the dragon, finally, in the field where Anneke had fallen. He lay, his great bulk couched on the patch of earth where the trollish knight had fallen, snorting small jets of flame as he slept uneasily. He was huge! From snout to tail the dragon must have been a hundred feet, and Ulf despaired of ever defeating him. Then Ismail

nudged him. "I am with you. Anneke's spirit is with you. This deed is yours to do, and you shall do it in such glory that I swear to you, the songs I will sing of this night will echo down a hundred years. Go!"

And with his friend's encouragement echoing in his ears, Ulf drew the chimerical blade he had carried with him through all his journeys and poked the dragon squarely on the snout. A single drop of black blood welled up from the cut, and the dragon reared its head with a terrible roar. "WHO DARES?" the monster called to the heavens, and then he looked down and saw Ulf. "So you have returned, troll-child, returned to taste death! Well, I shall be merciful this night; yours will be less painful than your teacher's!" And then, like a striking serpent the great scaled head ducked, jaws open, directly at where Ulf stood.

But Ulf had prepared for this battle in his own way; he'd seen the dragon's dreams and witnessed its battles, and so he was ready. Even as the great maw crashed down, Ulf rolled to the right and came to his feet; his sword scored the dragon's cheek as the beast's head rushed past. The dragon howled again, and then the battle was joined in earnest.

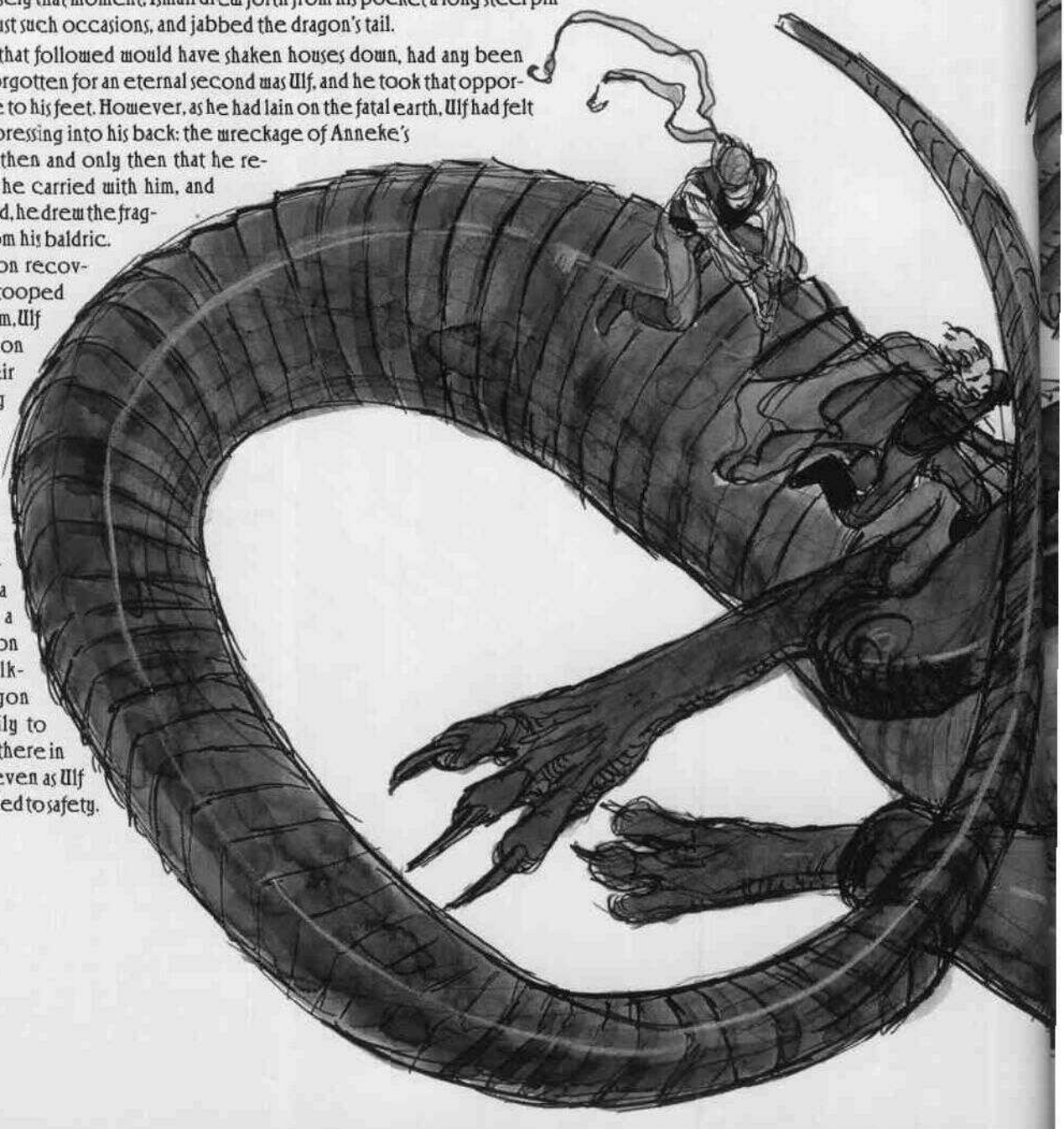
Oh, what a clash of arms that was! Despite sense, despite reason, despite even magic, Ulf was able to parry every blow the serpent struck, and give better than he got. Nor was it long ere Ulf became aware that others were watching his battle: Isidore and Melinda, and Desmond, and Sir Reginald, and all the other members of Duke Hamish's court. The duke himself came last of all and stood alone, his whip-thin blade drawn and shining in the light of dragonfire. But of Ismail, there was no sign.

Then came the moment the dragon had waited for. Ulf had foolishly pressed an attack until he stood on the very ground where Anneke had fallen, and, like her, he too slipped. The crowd gasped its horror; the dragon roared its triumph and prepared to lower a fatal claw.

And at precisely that moment, Ismail drew forth from his pocket a long steel pin that he kept for just such occasions, and jabbed the dragon's tail.

The scream that followed would have shaken houses down, had any been able to hear it. Forgotten for an eternal second was Ulf, and he took that opportunity to scramble to his feet. However, as he had lain on the fatal earth, Ulf had felt something sharp pressing into his back: the wreckage of Anneke's gift-shield. It was then and only then that he remembered what he carried with him, and dropping his sword, he drew the fragment of shield from his baldric. Even as the dragon recovered its wits and stooped again to devour him, Ulf cried out a curse on all dragons and their makers, and flung the broken metal into the beast's mouth.

The effects were both immediate and profound. With a screech like a thousand fingers on a thousand chalkboards, the dragon collapsed heavily to earth. It thrashed there in its death throes, even as Ulf and Ismail scrambled to safety.

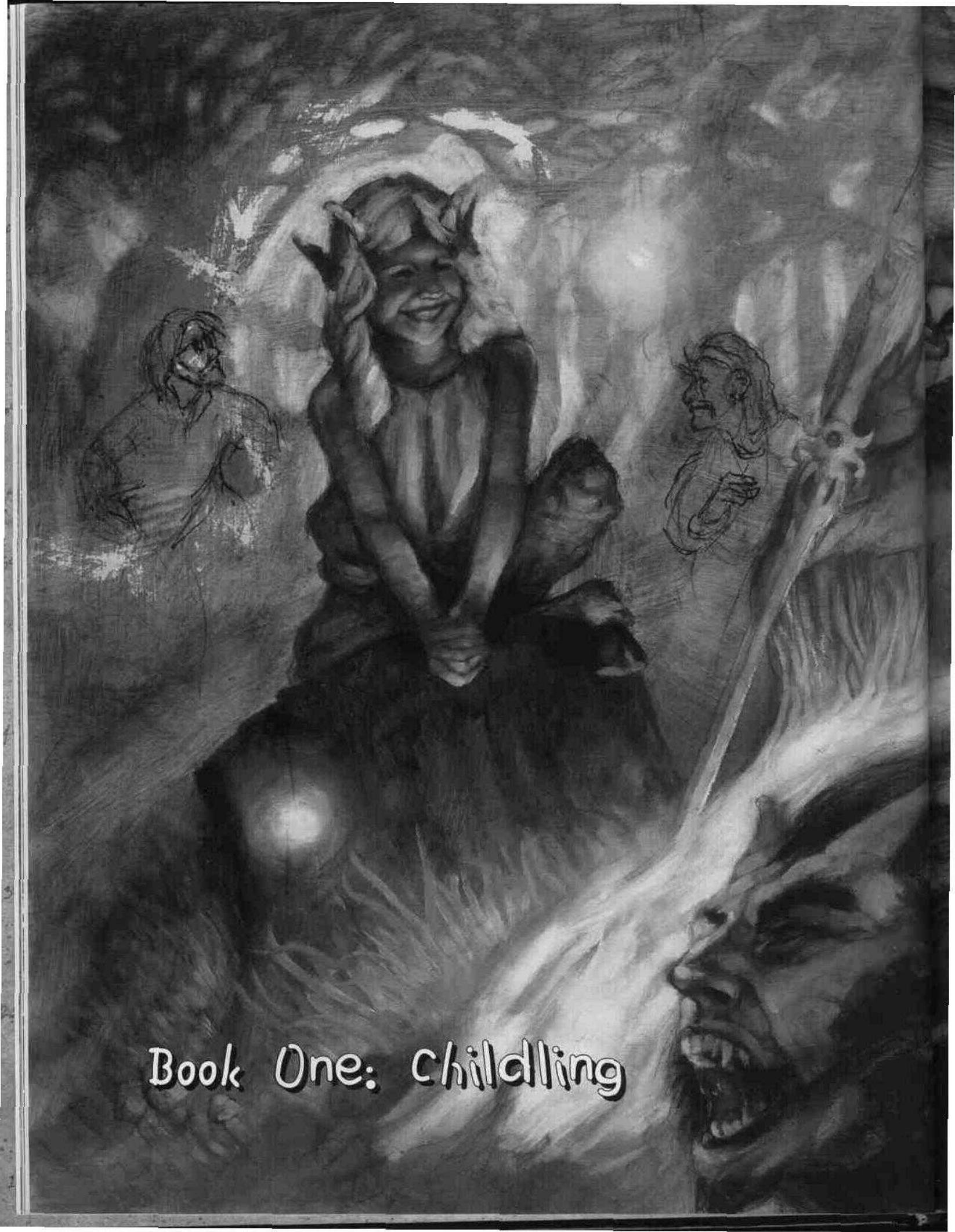


But what was more interesting, at least to Ismail, was that at the moment Ulf pronounced his curse, the duke thrust his sword into the ground and turned away, never to be seen again by fae or mortal. And in the celebrations that followed Ulf and Ismail's triumph, not one fae missed the duke's presence, nor did anyone *comment on it.*



And if one listens to the tale that Ismail made of that night, sung by eshu and whispered by sluagh time and time again over the years, you will hear other things: that Isidore Webbery told Ulf that the fatal shield had been his in a previous life, taken on the field of battle by Hamish's treachery; that the duke's blade, now scorched black with dragonflame, still rests in the hillside where Hamish thrust it, and none have been able to draw it forth; that Ulf had made for himself armor of dragonscale that no flame or blade could pierce; *and many other things.*

But the part of the tale that Ismail does not tell is that when the deeds of dragon-slaying and traitor-banishing were done, Ulf turned to his friend and in Justin's still small voice said, "Devin, *let's go home.*"


Book One: Childling

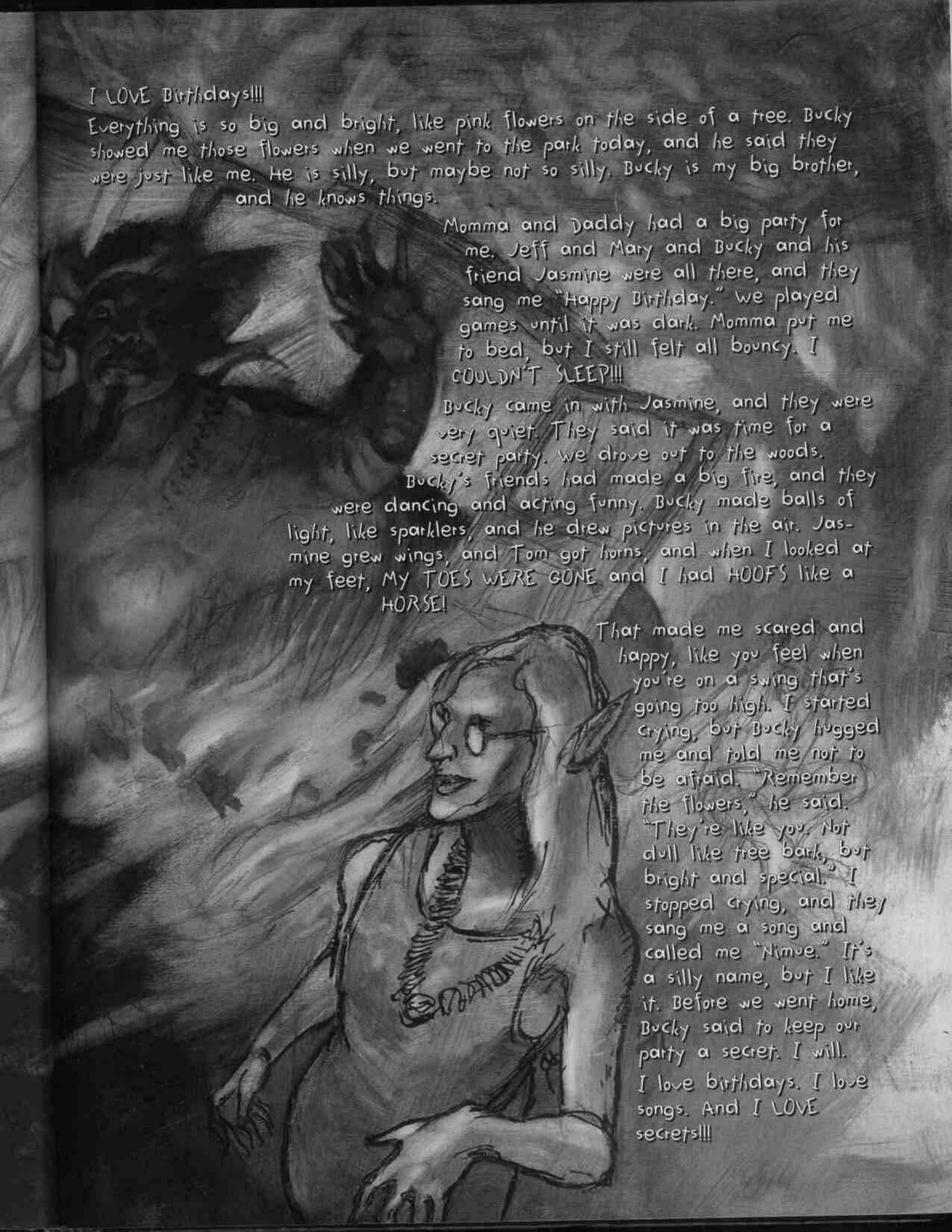
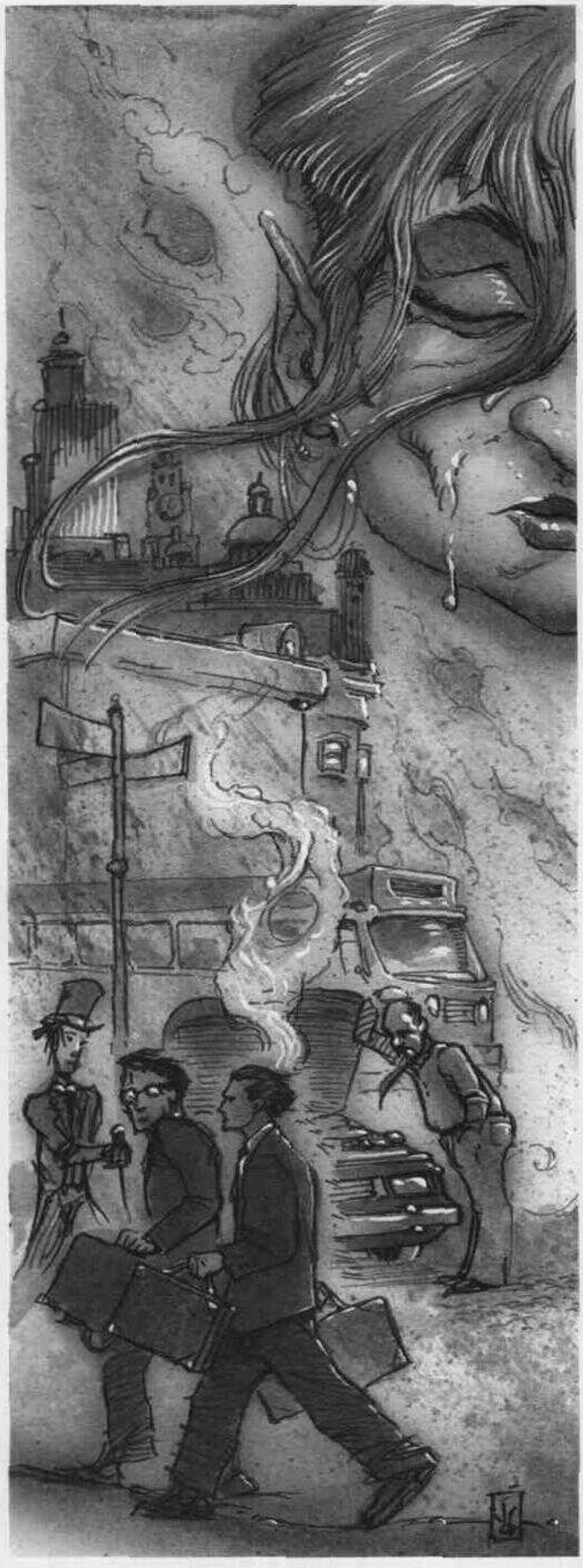

I LOVE Birthdays!!!
Everything is so big and bright, like pink flowers on the side of a tree. Bucky showed me those flowers when we went to the park today, and he said they were just like me. He is silly, but maybe not so silly. Bucky is my big brother, and he knows things.
Momma and Daddy had a big party for me. Jeff and Mary and Bucky and his friend Jasmine were all there, and they sang me "Happy Birthday." We played games until it was dark. Momma put me to bed, but I still felt all bouncy. I COULDN'T SLEEP!!!
Bucky came in with Jasmine, and they were very quiet. They said it was time for a secret party. We drove out to the woods. Bucky's friends had made a big fire, and they were dancing and acting funny. Bucky made balls of light, like sparklers, and he drew pictures in the air. Jasmine grew wings, and Tom got horns, and when I looked at my feet, MY TOES WERE GONE and I had HOOFS like a HORSE!
That made me scared and happy, like you feel when you're on a swing that's going too high. I started crying, but Bucky hugged me and told me not to be afraid. "Remember the flowers," he said. "They're like you. Not dull like tree bark, but bright and special." I stopped crying, and they sang me a song and called me "Nimue." It's a silly name, but I like it. Before we went home, Bucky said to keep our party a secret. I will.
I love birthdays. I love songs. And I LOVE secrets!!!


fig 7: Boggans—
-Handicrafts are Boggans specialty; they are especially renowned for their carpentry, weaving and leatherwork.
-These folk consider "hands on" work the only kind of honest labor, this ethic extends to their Musings & cantrips-
-Rustic by nature, these chaps can be clannish and disdainful of outsiders.
-Gossip is not a vice among the it is an art form.
excerpts from:
"My time with Bogg

Chapter One: The Dreaming

They had expected to see the grey, heathery slope of the moor going up and up to join the dull autumn sky. Instead, a blaze of sunshine met them. It poured through the doorway as the light of a June day pours into a garage when you open the door. It made the drops of water on the grass glitter like beads and showed up the dirtiness of Jill's tear-stained face. And the sunlight was coming from what certainly did look like a different world — what they could see of it. They saw smooth turf, smoother and brighter than Jill had ever seen before, and blue sky, and, darting to and fro, things so bright that they might have been jewels or huge butterflies.

— C.S. Lewis, *The Silver Chair*

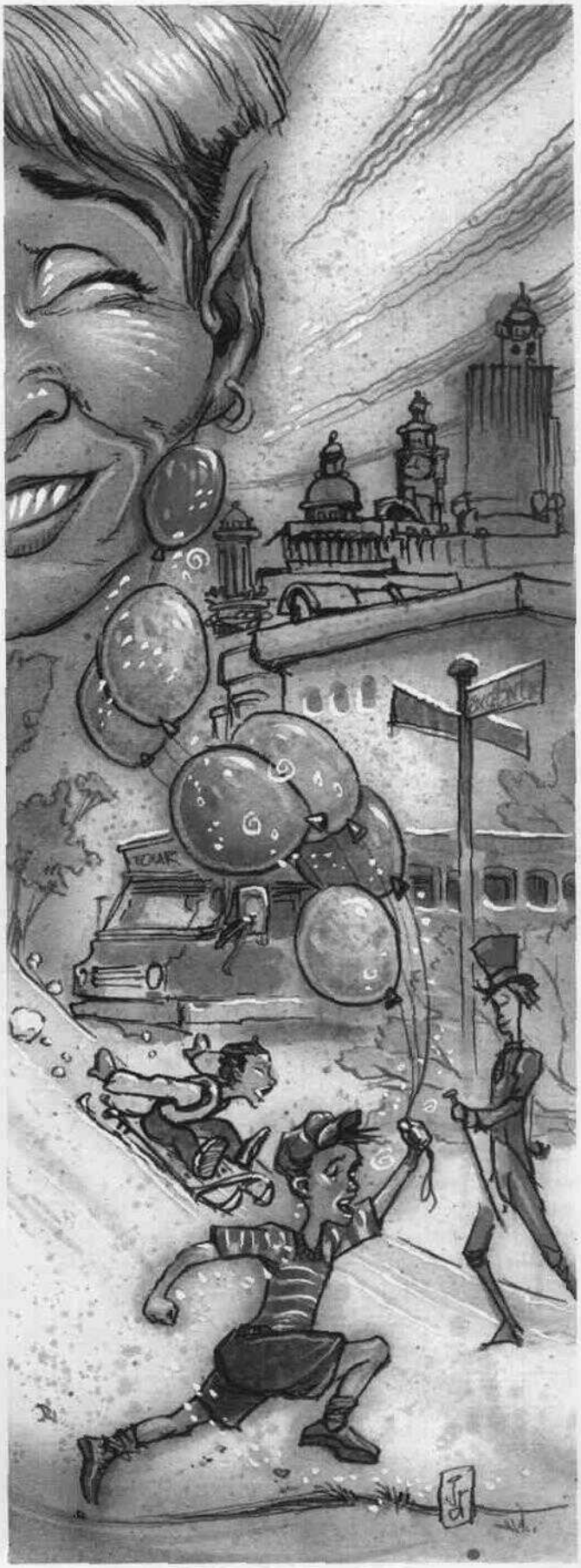


The World of Darkness

Fast food debris and crumpled newspapers skitter along the street, pushed along by the gray day s chill wind. Sales clerks and secretaries, released by the late hour from their cubicles, scurry out into the streets, navy and slate coats pulled tightly around them as they make their way to their high-rise boxes. Traffic stalls at each light, fuming clouds of exhaust half-hiding the plodding pedestrians. A vagrant skulks near a dumpster, his thinning hair plastered to his scalp by dirty snow. Meanwhile, high above the city, secure in glass and metal fortresses, captains of industry count their coins, greedy eyes shining in their sterile boardrooms. Arms dealers chuckle, waving fistfuls of money, little caring for the slaughter brought about by their sales. Goth children, swathed in black, pale faces searching for something to believe in, gyrate desperately to the music pounding away the emptiness. Gliding through concealing shadows, vampires smile sardonically at these wannabe dark souls, awaiting the feast that is to come. A beaten, abandoned child moans in her nightmares, pulling her cardboard box closer around her as she cries. Cityscape in early winter, the World of Darkness. Like our mundane world, but made a little darker, a little more terrifying.

The Enchanted World

Brightly hued wrappers and balloons dance in the wind, tumbling and rolling along the street. Pale and dark dolls march in time to music unheard as they enter their many-windowed homes. Vibrant metal bugs maneuver through elaborate rituals, their breath puffing merrily. An old satyr peers around the corner, laughing at the twinkling snowflakes that softly fall around him. Dreams take shape, born of hopes and fears. Greedy-eyed dragons soar aloft on the brisk winter breeze, alert for shiny coins dropped in the darkness below. An artist, inspired by the freshly fallen snow, begins to paint a scene of ancient snow-capped towers set amid a land of fantastic beauty. Pushed to the wall by terror, a child creates an imaginary fanged horror that stalks and frightens, always on the verge of pouncing. Children dance merrily in the snow, sharing rides on sleds as they whisk down steep hills, their screams of joy echoing throughout the park. Changeling cityscape in winter. Like, yet unlike, the rest of the World of Darkness, it is a little brighter, a little more colorful, but sometimes no less frightening.



To touch the Dreaming is to access the fountainhead of creativity from which all stories, dreams, arts and crafts spring. Changelings are part of those stories — though their bodies are of mortal flesh, their souls are formed of dreams. Every changeling who undergoes the Chrysalis brings a tiny part of the Dreaming back into the world. Like a butterfly emerging from a cocoon, her discovery of her changeling nature sets her soul aloft.

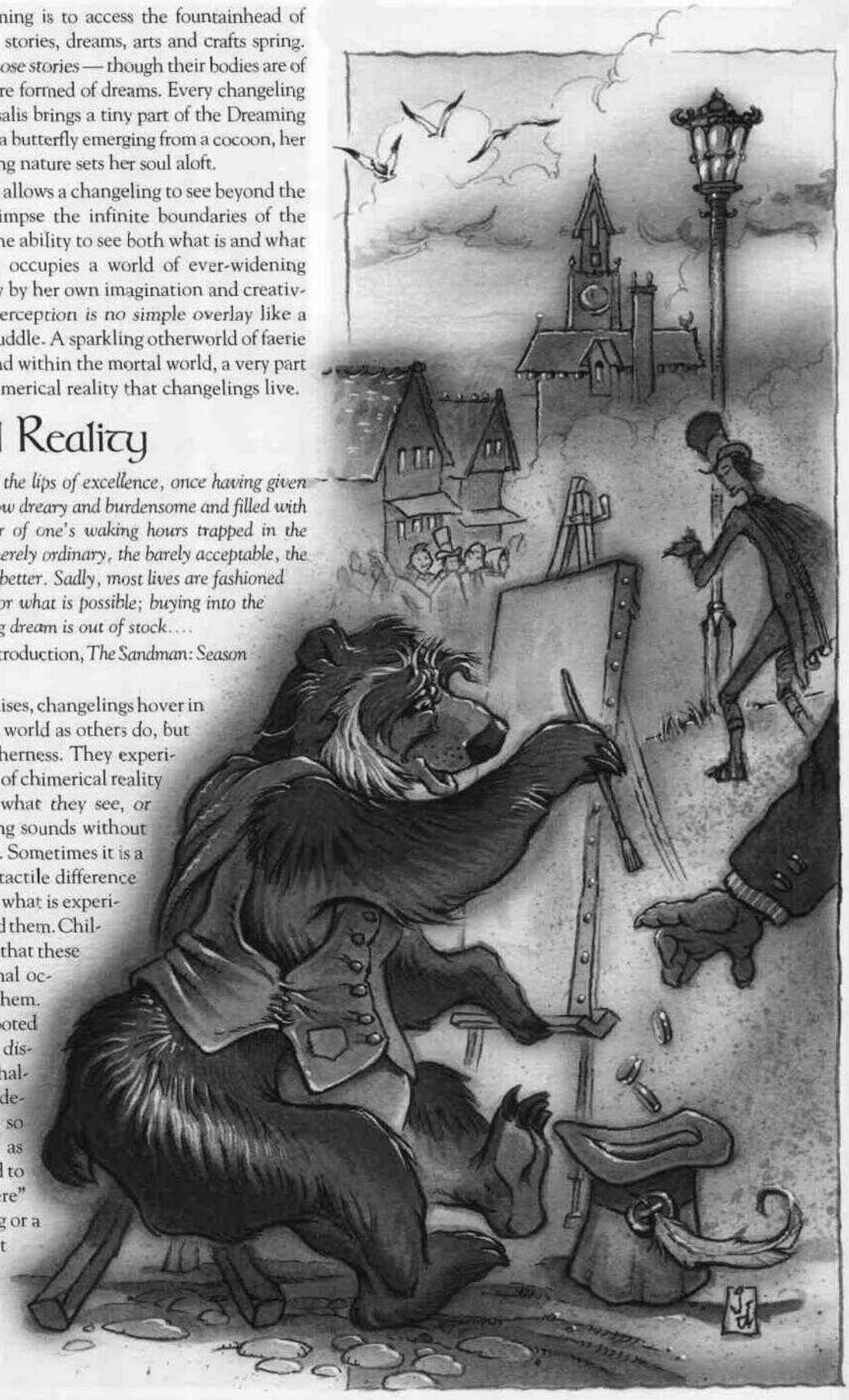
This transformation allows a changeling to see beyond the mundane facade and glimpse the infinite boundaries of the Dreaming. Gifted with the ability to see both what is and what might be, a changeling occupies a world of ever-widening possibilities, limited only by her own imagination and creativity. This difference in perception is no simple overlay like a rainbow oilslick atop a puddle. A sparkling otherworld of faerie magic exists alongside and within the mortal world, a very part of it. It is within this chimerical reality that changelings live.

Chimerical Reality

...once having tasted the lips of excellence, once having given oneself to its perfection, how dreary and burdensome and filled with anomie are the remainder of one's waking hours trapped in the shackled lock-step of the merely ordinary, the barely acceptable, the just okay and not a stroke better. Sadly, most lives are fashioned on that pattern. Settling for what is possible; buying into the cliché because the towering dream is out of stock....

— Harlan Ellison, Introduction, *The Sandman: Season of Mists*

Before their Chrysalises, changelings hover in a half-reality, seeing the world as others do, but touched by flashes of otherness. They experience momentary visions of chimerical reality without understanding what they see, or hear strangely compelling sounds without recognizing their origins. Sometimes it is a smell or taste or even a tactile difference that is incongruous with what is experienced by everyone around them. Children, too young to know that these alterations are not normal occurrences, simply accept them. Teens and adults, more rooted in the "real" world, often dismiss these experiences as hallucinations, frequently denying the occurrences so they won't be labeled as "weirdos." Some respond to the stimuli that "isn't there" and end up in counseling or a psychiatric ward. But what they experience is real — for changelings.



This illusionary fantasy world is called *chimerical* because unenchanted mortals cannot normally experience it. Although they occupy mortal flesh in order to stave off Banality, changelings' *true selves lie within* their fragile, englamoured souls. As changelings, they see the world around them from within a chimerical shell. The whole world has a chimerical reality for the fae. They do not shift viewpoints back and forth from the banal to the chimerical, seeing first a street with broken pavement and sagging storefronts, then changing with a blink to a vision of a golden avenue lined with palaces. Instead they normally see the true magic anima that exists within every object, place and person. They pick out the inherent nature of persons, places and things, weaving those perceptions into a greater whole.

Thus they do not see the tattered old book of fairy tales with the torn cover, but the warmth and pleasure countless children have derived from reading it. Each child has left some imprint on the book, some tiny spark of imagination or inspiration that the book evoked for her. Changelings see and revel in that residue, which may cause the book to appear new and crisp, with freshly painted colors. Likewise, they may smell luscious strawberries on an "empty" plate, feel the weight of velvet on what looks like a school uniform, and dance to a symphony played on crickets' legs.

Changeling Perspective

Nothing but recipes and worthless junk; greasy
old records of paid and due;
But down in the depths of a battered trunk, a
queer, quaint valentine torn in two.
— Ruth Comfort Mitchell, "The Vinegar Man"

When imbued with Glamour, changelings experience the world as a magical, mystical place filled with amazing and exciting things. They see things from a fae perspective that colors everything around them. Trees are not merely a collection of wood and leaves, but glowing green-topped pillars shot through with golden, life-sustaining sap. Moreover, should a changeling use her faerie sight to look deeply within the essence of the tree in search of its faerie nature, she might find the tree to be a resting dream-being, arms thrust skyward, feet planted within the warm earth. Butter knives might be silver daggers, and an old stuffed animal a prancing faerie steed, while an old raincoat becomes ornate armor. As most people cannot perceive such things, they dismiss changelings' reactions to their chimerical environment as playacting, miming or just plain craziness.

There are those who argue that chimerical reality is really a greater or more expanded reality. Neither compartmentalized nor tightly tucked into a common consensus of what is "real," this altered state of sensibility welcomes stories, tall tales, legends, myths, childhood playthings, imaginary companions, hopes and dreams. It also incorporates fears, monstrous horrors and the darkest imaginings of humankind. All exist within chimerical reality, and all are as real as any objects found within the boundaries of the mundane world. This "reality" is all that remains of the age of legends — the fragment of Arcadia still on Earth. As a faerie king once said, "Anything is possible within the Dreaming."

Interacting with the Real World

Changelings may live in a chimerical world of their own, but this is not to say that they don't realize that they also exist within a more constrained reality. If this were so, they wouldn't even be able to drive a car without running off the road. Kithain respond to stimuli that more mundane people cannot see, but this does not mean that they are unaware of real-world objects, people or dangers. They don't ride their faerie steeds along airport runways oblivious to the aircraft taking off and landing all around them, or ignore a mugger with a gun.

This is not meant to say that they have some sort of double vision that lets them see mundane and magical at the same time. Rather, the magical aspect becomes paramount, superseding the mundane reality of the objects and people with whom changelings interact, but not eradicating its presence. It is almost as if changelings' bodies remember the worldly details while their minds see beyond the ordinary to the essence within. A car is still a vehicle to be driven along streets, even if it appears to changelings that the car is glowing orange and fitted with spreading antlers on the hood.

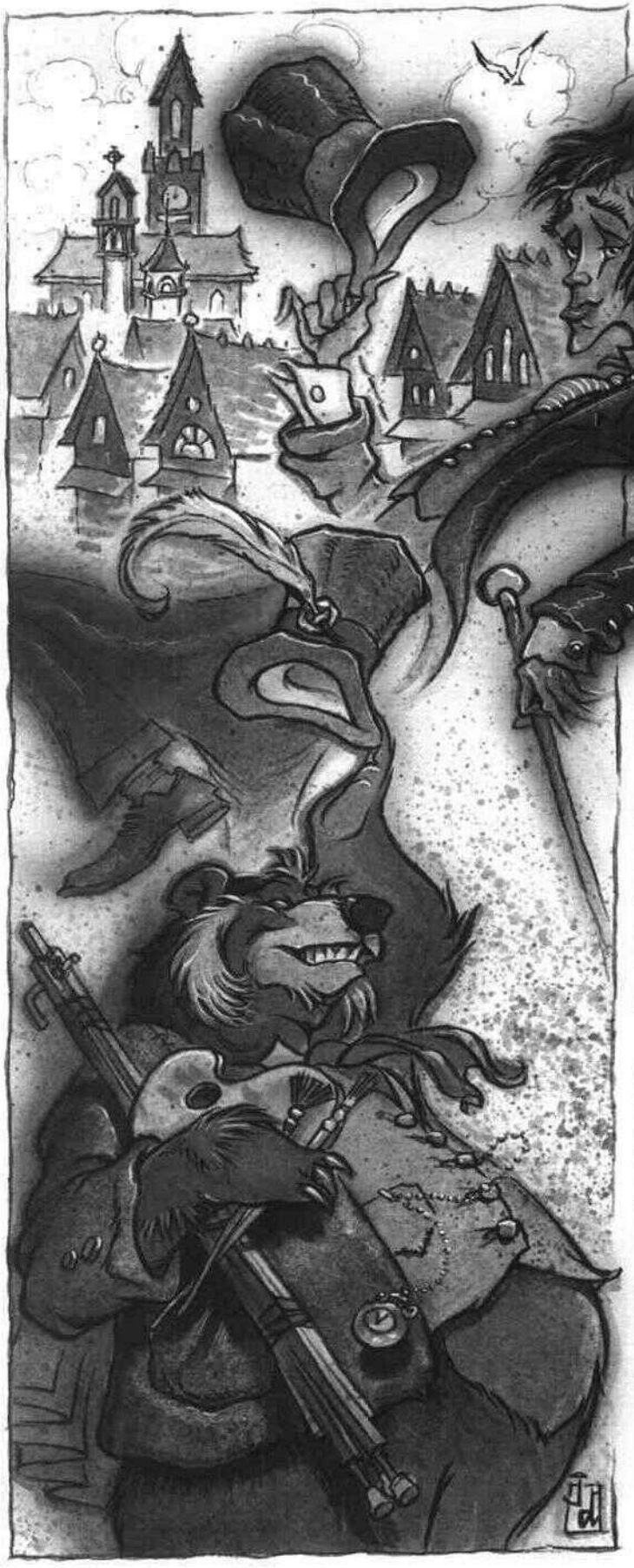
Solid objects exist in the mundane world and must be accounted for. This often causes problems for changelings whose faerie bodies encompass more mass than their mortal selves. This is especially true for kith such as trolls, whose chimerical bodies may take up far more space than their mortal shells. In such instances, a changeling who is imbued with Glamour will always defer to his faerie mien and will make every attempt to compensate for the larger mass; to do otherwise would be an act on par with disbelieving the existence of chimera. It is therefore possible for a seven-foot tall troll to climb into the back of a Volkswagen Bug, but in doing so he denies his faerie existence, thus giving in to mundane reality. Such acts can be dangerous for any changeling, for falling back on the mundane brings with it the inherent Banality of such an act.

Chimera

Dreams are but interludes which fancy makes;
When Monarch-Reason sleeps, this mimic wakes;
Compounds a medley of disjointed things,
A mob of cobblers and a court of kings:
Light fumes are merry, grosser fumes are sad;
Both are the reasonable soul run mad:
And many monstrous forms in sleep we see,
That neither were, nor are, nor e'er can be.
— Dryden, "The Cock and the Fox"

Sometimes creative thoughts and dreams take on solid form or are deliberately shaped into objects, places or creatures. The unreal given reality, these fanciful creations are called *chimera*. Birthed by changelings or other beings touched by the Dreaming during particularly intense moments, chimera may be either animate or inanimate.

Some are formed deliberately, while others spring into being at a thought. Others seem to come to life almost against their dreamers' wills. Chimera are seldom what their creators



expect; some may be beautiful and friendly, while others are dark, twisted and inimical. Chimera may even be dangerous to changelings, especially those given form through unresolved fears or vivid nightmares.

Regardless of how they come into being, chimera created within the confines of reality must relate to that world in some fashion. Inanimate chimera have little choice concerning that interaction. Animate dreams-come-true often take on lives of their own. On rare occasions, they can even become real to humans.

Inanimate Chimera

They are better than stars or water,
Better than voices of winds that sing,
Better than any man's fair daughter,
Your green glass beads on a silver ring.
— Harold Monro, "Overheard on a Saltmarsh"

While few chimera could be said to possess sentience, inanimate chimera have even less chance than animate ones to develop intelligence. Most often, inanimate chimera are found as objects that are used by changelings. These might be weapons or armor, clothing or jewelry, fine furnishings, golden tableware, even games and toys.

Some of these have a mundane reality as well, such as when a changeling creates a shining chimerical blade from an old stick or a wooden practice sword. She might also create a chimerical gown for a fancy dress ball using her skirt and blouse as a pattern over which to lay her dreamcloth. Certain changelings have an affinity for creating chimerical objects, utilizing their skills to forge chimerical blades or craft fanciful armor.

Personal Adornment

Chimerical clothing is probably the most common type of inanimate chimera. Whenever a changeling undergoes her Chrysalis, and discovers her fae mien, she usually finds that she is already clad in chimerical garb suitable to her new persona. It is as if part of her remembrance of who she truly is becomes more real through dressing the part. Somehow she remembers and recreates the garb in which her faerie self is most comfortable. Such clothing is known as *voile*.

Jewelry is often included with chimerical garb as part of the accessories, especially if it is used as a neckpiece, waistband, belt or hair adornment. Some voile sparkles with hundreds of chimerical gems or pearls strewn throughout the cloth. More often, however, jewelry is an afterthought, added when the changeling needs "a little something" to set off her finery. Those who have no access to treasures can still adorn themselves with inanimate chimera in the shapes of jewels, crowns, hairclasps, chains of office and the like. A little dreaming, a little crafting, and a new chimera is born.

Chimerical Weapons and Damage

Chimerical weapons such as swords, battle axes and the like are in a class by themselves. They have reality only to changelings and those mortals whom changelings have enchanted. Most are created wholly of dreams, having no reality outside their chimerical existences. They cannot be seen or felt by mortals. Some chimerical weapons are the result of weaving Glamour into real-world items in much the same way chimerical clothing is created. These items can be seen by mortals, who may wonder why someone is waving a wooden stick over her head and "pretending" to fence with it. The damage that both of these types of chimerical weapons inflict is chimerical (or "unreal") damage. While it feels very real to the changeling struck by such a weapon, and may even convince her that her arm or leg has been severed, her spine broken or her head crushed, the damage is not real in the same sense as deadly damage inflicted by real-world weapons.

Rather than bruising, cutting or penetrating, chimerical weapons slice away a changeling's Glamour, tearing pieces of her faerie mien asunder and rendering her unconscious from the shock. The pain is just as devastating as any caused by mundane weapons, but what the changeling feels is actually the temporary murder of the fae spirit within her mortal flesh. Many describe the sensation as a deadening of their senses, a tearing pain and a cold numbness seeping into their very bones — all feelings engendered by inrushing Banality.

Upon awakening, changelings "killed" with chimerical weapons recall only their mortal lives. They have no remembrance of their lives as Kithain or the existence of such things as changelings. Stripped of their Glamour, they have forcibly reentered the mundane world. They cannot see or interact with chimera — even their own chimerical clothing and weaponry — until they have become infused with Glamour once again and remember their fae heritage. A changeling who is so suddenly stripped of his Glamour may awaken to wonder why he is lying on a lawn in an unfamiliar area of town and clutching a butter knife.

When a real-world object serves as the basis for constructing a chimerical weapon, it is often not a dangerous object in and of itself. Thus a stick, string and feather might be chimerically crafted into a bow and arrows, or an unsharpened pencil might be recreated as a scimitar. Likewise, a carpenter's hammer could be a war hammer in its chimerical aspect, or a pen-knife could be a deadly sharp dirk.

It is rare, but not unheard of, for changelings to place a chimerical aspect over an actual mundane weapon. Chimerical damage is the accepted norm among Kithain, however. Those who kill other changelings gain Banality when they do so, for they have robbed the world and the Dreaming of one of its dreams. A real sword can kill a changeling just as easily as it can slay a mortal. A chimerical aspect appended to a real sword simply inflicts chimerical damage atop potentially deadly real damage (i.e., chimerical damage strips the fae of her identity while the sword's physical damage harms her body). Since a changeling may assert her will to cause real damage with chimera anyway, there is rarely any point to adding a chimerical aspect to a mundane weapon, unless the chimerical aspect has some additional effect. Carrying around six-foot swords that everyone can see usually attracts unwanted attention from law enforcement anyway.

Some changelings find that they emerge into their faerie selves clad not in finery, but in chimerical armor. While unusual, this often denotes a changeling whose martial abilities (and the need to use them) are extraordinary. Armor and weapons are the second most common chimerical items, and almost always need to be crafted rather than just appearing as part of a Kithain's garb. Armor may be worn over plain mundane clothing or paired with chimerical garb. As with chimerical clothing, the chimerical garb that is worn with armor is still usually laid atop real clothing. Some changelings prefer modern dress, and some voile is extremely modern, even futuristic.

Voile is not evident to mortals, nor is chimerical armor. Naked people walking to a ball create a stir; naked people jumping about and swinging imaginary swords while yelling battle cries upset the mundanes, and usually get changelings locked up in the nearest psychiatric ward. This can be easily avoided by wearing mundane clothes in addition to the voile.

Items, Objects and Places

Household items, such as luxurious pillows and draperies, fancy utensils and tablecloths, intricately patterned carpets and comfortable chairs may all be chimerically created. While these may be given chimerical aspects to hide the more mundane objects underneath, many are no more than the stuff of dreams given shape. So long as changelings are the only ones to use them, it makes little difference if these items are "real" in the mortal sense. If changelings can see and feel these objects, they can sit on, lie on, wrap themselves in and eat with them.

Likewise, entire buildings may be enhanced by fae Glamour, taking on the trappings of chimerical abodes, welcoming havens and friendly gathering places. More fanciful places, such as a castle under a lake, may be made up entirely of Glamour, dreamed into existence and sculpted by masters among the fae craftspersons and architects. Such dwellings cannot be seen or felt by those who have not been enchanted. They are not often

Chimerical Trappings

When creating or reawakening a freehold, a changeling must invest permanent Glamour (see "Freeholds," pg. 43). He may then shape the freehold to some extent, altering it to suit his needs and desires. Thus a duchess might create an aviary filled with chimerical birds, while the duke who rules after her might decide that the space could be used more enjoyably as a kennel. A third changeling might utilize the space to create a rock garden. It all depends on the owner's mood and preferences. Some never change things, feeling that what was good enough for the ruler 600 years ago is good enough for today. Even these traditionalists leave some imprint of their personalities on the freehold, however. Though they may leave things exactly as they found them, the freehold's current residents will find the contours and colors of chimerical objects often shift slightly to be as pleasing as possible. Such effects can be the flatware changing patterns, the garden's deep pink roses becoming lighter, or an uncomfortable chair "acquiring" a better cushion.

When several changelings band together but cannot find a freehold of their own, they may still use their Glamour to place chimerical trappings over a mundane site, be it a house, room, forest clearing or playground. This gives them a place of their own where they can feel comfortable. Because each changeling gives a tiny bit of temporary Glamour to the undertaking, the enchantment is stronger and more resistant to being canceled by banal mortals who walk through the vicinity. The changelings can derive no Glamour from the site, as it is not an actual freehold or glade. Nonetheless, it provides those who visit with a home, workplace or amusement area where they can relax and be themselves away from prying mortal eyes.

constructed in places where mundane foot traffic is frequent, lest a Banality-laden mortal stroll through, bringing them crashing to the ground.

Most chimerical structures are laid over already-existing buildings, many of which are old, abandoned properties that attract little attention. What looks like a run-down bookstore with a sign that always says "Closed" might be a snug fae pub or the home of a fae noble. To changelings, the building looks freshly painted, with shining, newly washed windows. Going one step further, changelings sometimes form entire towns or villages, though this has become increasingly uncommon in the modern era. Still, what looks like a ghost town to mortals might be a thriving Kithain community.

Old ruins can take on new life as they are rebuilt with the stuff of the Dreaming, and mushroom rings can be transformed into faerie dancing grounds. Such places may hold a sense of the otherworldly within them long after changelings have left, or their chimerical aspects may be dispelled by the disbelief of a single skeptic.

Chimerical conveyances are some of the rarest of inanimate chimera because they often have limited use. Like other objects, changelings can give their skateboards, motorcycles and cars chimerical aspects, changing their looks to impress, frighten or amuse other changelings. Such uses are far more common than imbuing a vehicle with powers from the Dreaming such as flight or the ability to climb sheer walls. Traffic jams are fairly banal events, meaning that the chimerical aspects of conveyances can disappear in a flash, and mortal disbelief must be overcome or the area flooded with Glamour to allow a Kithain to ride a magic carpet through the air.

Should mortal disbelief overcome a changeling's Glamour while she is flying on that magic carpet, she is immediately removed from the real world (as if Banality were protecting itself from the intrusion) and deposited somewhere within the Dreaming. Since the changeling is then effectively lost — for hours, days or even years — as she struggles to discover exactly where she is within the vastness of the Dreaming, most rarely chance such blatant shenanigans. Nonetheless, there are plenty of enchanted coaches and the like created to convey Kithain nobles to court in the style to which they are accustomed.

Of Tunnels and Doorways and Chimerical Dungeons

While it is possible to construct chimerical tunnels, doorways and even castles out of thin air, the open space for such things must exist. Solid reality must always be accounted for while in the mortal realm. Chimerical doorways cannot be placed in real walls and used to pass through them, though the illusion of a doorway can be made to appear. The wall is still solid despite the addition of a chimerical "decoration." Likewise, chimerical tunnels or dungeons cannot exist in solid earth. An underground freehold is possible only if it lies within an existing hollow space, such as a cave or mine, or because entering through the doorway of the freehold actually leads into the Near Dreaming. In the Dreaming, almost anything is possible. Chimerical dungeons within solid ground, staircases made of moonlight spiraling upward to the clouds, and flying houses made of candy canes are among the less fantastic structures found there.

Crafting Chimera

Nockers are master crafters when it comes to making chimerical objects and items, though boggans are also noted for their skill. Both kith take great delight in creating chimerical objects, but they are not the only changelings who can do so. Any changeling who possesses the skills can create chimera from the raw materials of the Dreaming. Creating exactly what

she has in mind is sometimes harder than it sounds, though, and many misshapen or partially formed chimera arise from practice sessions.

Many inanimate chimera are extremely short-lived or called up only at need. Exceptions to this are chimerical buildings or items that are in frequent use, such as clothing. Such chimera serve the purpose for which they were made and never grow beyond the control of their changeling masters. Others may take on sentience and escape into the Dreaming.

Animate Chimera

Since ever and ever the world began
They have danced like a ribbon of flame,
They have sung their song through the centuries long,
And yet it is never the same.

—Rose Fyleman, "The Fairies Have Never a Penny to Spend"

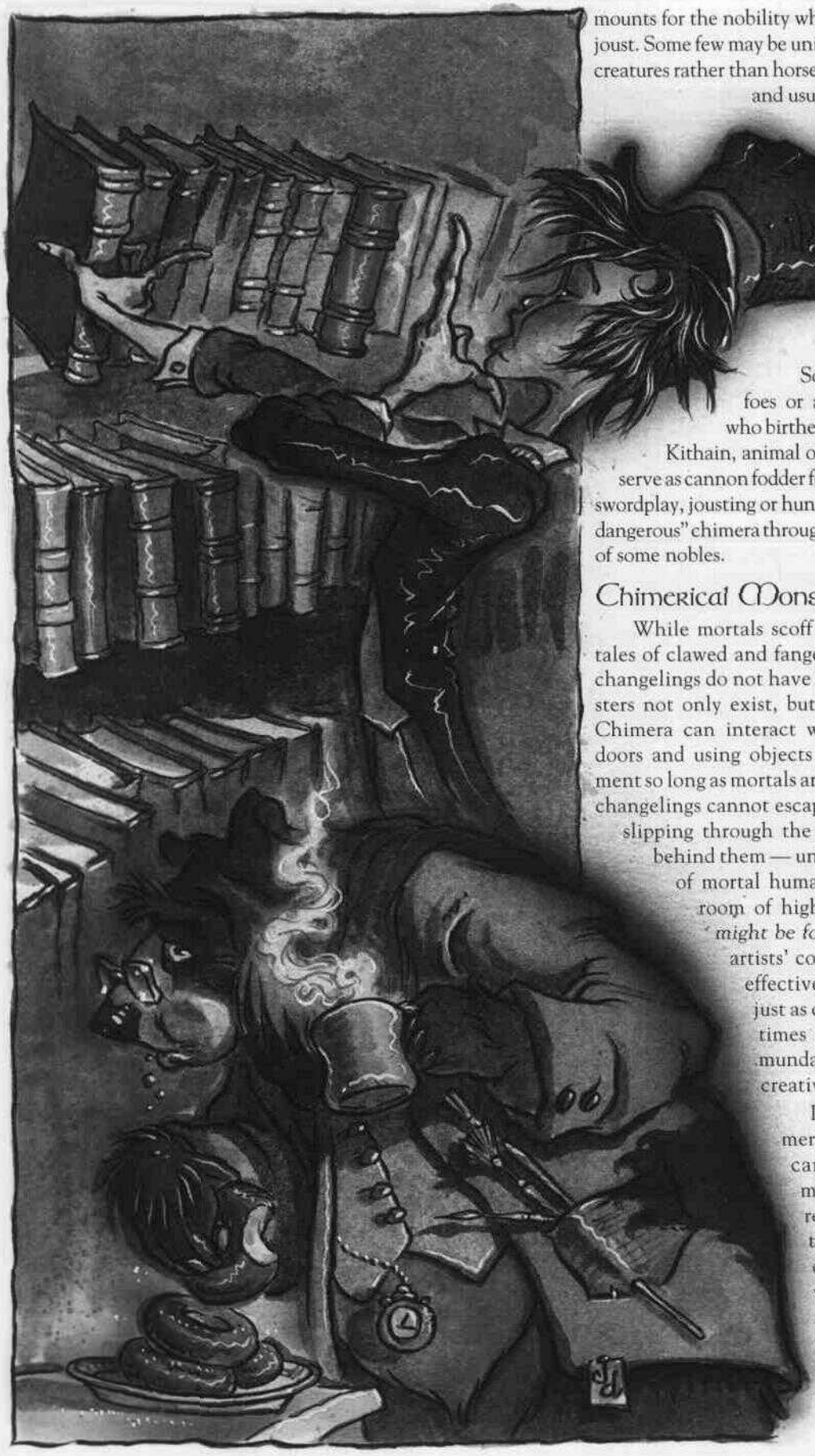
The other side of the coin is animate chimera. From imaginary friends and invisible playmates to animated teddy bears, childlings are especially fond of animate chimera that they consider safe and controllable. Of course, they are also fearful of chimerical monsters, which definitely are not cozy or friendly (except in the rarest of circumstances). Chimera do not take human form, though humanoid shapes such as gossamer-winged folk are popular — again, particularly among childlings, who thus "acquire" a brother or sister willing to play with them.

Friends and Helpers

Animate chimera are almost never created deliberately. Rather they spring from a changeling's unconscious mind. Many changelings create counselors for themselves, speaking to human-seeming, animal-like or fantastically shaped creatures, and revealing their problems and aspirations to them. Some of these chimera have the power of speech, which they may use simply to be reassuring or, in the case of sentient chimera, give good advice. These companion chimera may travel with those who dreamed them into being or may act as servants, entertainers, guards or decorative residents in a changeling's home.

A very popular form of companion (especially among the sidhe) is the fairy steed. These beasts are usually depicted as beautiful horses with flowing manes and tails. Decked out with chimerical finery, such as bejeweled bridles and saddles and covered with embroidered velvet saddle cloths, chimerical beasts provide proud





mounts for the nobility when they ride to the hunt or the joust. Some few may be unicorns, griffins or other fantastic creatures rather than horses, but these are far less common and usually do not last long as Banality erodes their delicate fae natures. Some among these chimerical beasts achieve sentience. These may assume the roles of counselors or leave their Kithain creators to travel into the Dreaming.

Adversaries and Foes

Some animate chimera become foes or adversaries to the changelings who birthed them. Whether given human, Kithain, animal or fantastic forms, they basically serve as cannon fodder for fae who want to practice their swordplay, jousting or hunting skills. Tracking a "wild and dangerous" chimera through the woods is a favorite pastime of some nobles.

Chimerical Monsters

While mortals scoff at Japanese monster movies, tales of clawed and fanged beasties, or the bogeyman, changelings do not have that luxury. Chimerical monsters not only exist, but can seriously harm Kithain. Chimera can interact with the real world, opening doors and using objects from the mundane environment so long as mortals are not present. This means that changelings cannot escape inimical chimera simply by slipping through the nearest door and shutting it behind them — unless the room they enter is full of mortal humans. Of course, fleeing into a room of highly creative mortals (such as might be found at an FX studio or in an artists' colony) may not prove to be as effective. Chimera thrive on Glamour just as changelings do, and can sometimes project themselves into the mundane world in the presence of creative mortals.

Like chimerical weapons, a chimerical monster's claws and teeth can rip away a changeling's memory of her true self while rending her faerie mien. Though this may seem a small penalty compared to a hero's "death" within the jaws of a dragon, the changeling still feels the pain as if it were real and loses her faerie identity. She might recover it given time and an

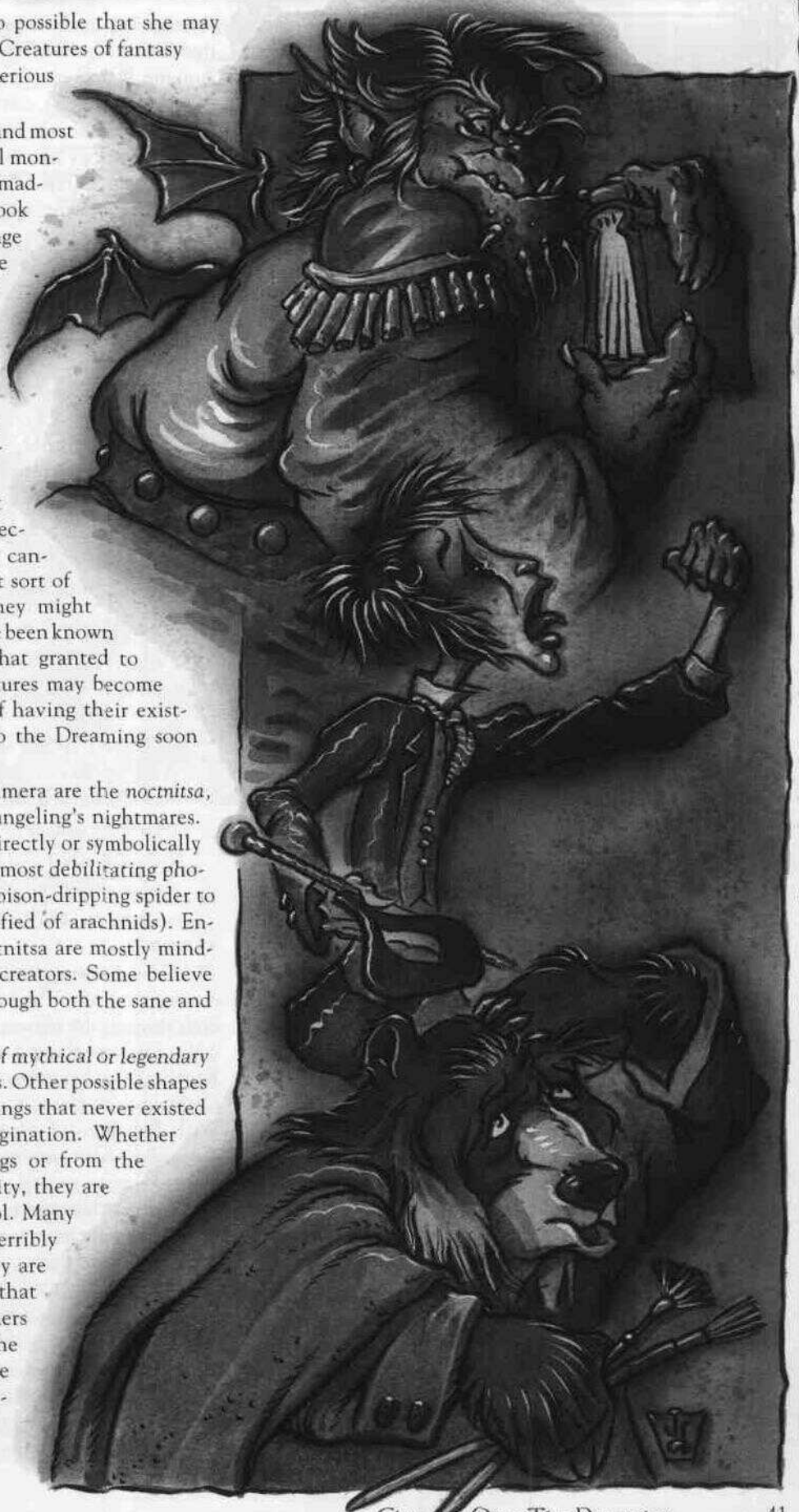
infusion of Glamour, but it is also possible that she may never remember who she really is. Creatures of fantasy monsters may be, but they pose serious *threats to changelings.*

Possibly the least controllable and most dangerous of foes are the chimerical monsters known as *nervosa*. Born from madness, these frightening beings may look like normal humans, animals or strange alien creatures — or they may have no bodies at all. By the nature of their very creation, these chimera are insane. Their actions make no sense, their powers may well be unfathomable, and the rules under which govern their existence often change from moment to moment.

Like the madness that brought them forth, nervosa rarely fit any recognizable patterns or shapes. They cannot be classified according to what sort of madness formed them or how they might react to different stimuli. Some have been known to develop intelligence beyond that granted to them by madness. Such rare creatures may become even more dangerous, or fearful of having their existences ended. Many disappear into the Dreaming soon after becoming self-aware.

Among of the most feared chimera are the *noctnitsa*, which take their forms from a changeling's nightmares. They usually assume shapes that directly or symbolically echoes a changeling's greatest and most debilitating phobia (such as becoming a gigantic poison-dripping spider to those who are pathologically terrified of arachnids). Endowed with obsessive malice, noctnitsa are mostly mindless, but driven to torment their creators. Some believe noctnitsa are a form of nervosa, though both the sane and the mad can birth them.

Many monsters take the form of mythical or legendary creatures, such as dragons or griffins. Other possible shapes are goblinoids, feral animals or things that never existed beyond the realm of human imagination. Whether these were created by changelings or from the collective subconscious of humanity, they are not usually under anyone's control. Many are truly fearsome, gigantic and terribly old. Some chimera claim that they are the remnants of fantastic creatures that existed before the Shattering. Others claim they were created by the sidhe to test their knights, and keep the peasants in line and begging for protection.



Seen and Unseen

Which is worse, the monster you can see or the one you can't? Some changelings fear nervosa who have physical bodies, because they can cause deadly injuries. Many changelings, however, believe that nervosa that have no bodies are the most dangerous and potentially the most unnerving. Imagine a creature that you know to be insane is following just behind you wherever you go. You can hear its footsteps, feel its breath upon your neck, smell its reek and sense its malevolent intent, but you can neither see nor touch it. Of course, it can't touch you either — unless the rules that govern its behavior abruptly change, and it decides to rip your head off when you aren't looking.

Banality and Things of the Dreaming

The child next door has a wreath on her hat;
her afternoon frock sticks out like that,
All soft and frilly;
She doesn't believe in fairies at all
(She told me over the garden wall) —
She thinks they're silly.
— Rose Fyleman, "The Child Next Door"

Banality is disbelief, pure and simple — disbelief in what people cannot see and hear, disbelief in magic, monsters and faeries. Disbelief in the extraordinary. It deliberately cuts off the mind from anything that might challenge preconceived notions. It is the stamping-out of individuality and childish whim, which kills creativity and denies that anything exists beyond what is evident and explainable. Intended to insulate mortals from the terrors of the World of Darkness, Banality erases beauty and vibrancy and dulls fears.

Just as humanity's beliefs and dreams created the Dreaming, its disbelief shattered the magic, ripping the Dreaming apart from the mundane world. That same deadening force continues to plague changelings. It can erode a changeling's sense of her fae soul, and harm those objects and creatures made from Glamour, sometimes destroying them altogether. Inanimate chimera possessed by a changeling (such as her clothing or weaponry) may be a little better protected. Those not actually among a changeling's accouterments, however, may be disrupted when exposed to too much Banality.

Because so many people carry the seeds of Banality within them, animate chimera avoid humans whenever possible. Most fade from sight whenever any humans are about, hoping to preserve themselves. These chimera can also be dispelled by the touch of Banality, which wounds them, ripping away the Glamour of which they are made.

Some mortals have no creativity at all. These deprived beings, known as *Autumn People*, actually suck the Glamour out of whatever they touch, leaving grayness and Banality in their wake. Autumn People are greatly feared by changelings (and intelligent chimera), for they are the antithesis of everything the Kithain hold dear. Persons with very high Banality, such as Autumn People or *Dauntain* (changelings who have rejected their faerie natures), can sometimes destroy chimera merely by being nearby. Chimera are fragile and ephemeral in the face of Banality, as they usually have only a small bit of Glamour to sustain them. This is another reason why sentient chimera often desert the mundane world in favor of the Dreaming.

The Mists and Enchantment

Banality has other effects as well. One of these is known as the *Mists*. When disbelief banished most of the fae from this world and destroyed much of the Glamour that sustained them, it also erected a "curtain" between the magical and the mundane. This nebulous, invisible shield keeps changelings from remembering Arcadia, causing their former lives as true fae to fade from recollection. The Mists also veil the activities of Glamour from mortals, destroying their memories of any supernatural occurrences they may have witnessed.

Places of Glamour

And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.
But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
...And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
— Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Kubla Khan, or A Vision in a Dream"

Though changelings are creatures of the Dreaming, they are barred from their homeland. Arcadia lies beyond their reach, both through the closing of all gates and roads that led to the realm (at least those from the Earth side), and through the Banality that changelings assume when they don mortal bodies to shield their faerie essence from the cold tides of disbelief. With Banality a constant threat to their physical essence, changelings have great need for places to which they can retreat. They also crave mental respite from the rigors of the mundane world, which threatens to eat away at their personalities at every turn. They must have some place that is tied to the Dreaming, a site that allows them to be what they truly are without hiding behind the mortal masks they wear in public. Changelings who have no havens of their own often find at least temporary shelter and companionship within a variety of refuges.

Many such places exist (though far fewer now than before the Shattering), all holding Glamour within them. Their ties to the Dreaming are closer than the rest of the mundane world's, and they maintain far more chimerical aspects than less "magical" spots.



Freeholds

I wander o'er green hills through dreamy valleys
And find a peace no other land could know
I hear the birds make music fit for angels
And watch the rivers laugh as they flow.
— Richard Farrelly, "Isle of Innisfree"

Over the centuries, Banality has eroded the natural places of faerie power that once proliferated the world. Gone are the enchanted forests, sacred groves, secret glens and faerie rings. Vanished are the great faerie castles and troll fortresses. The magic isles have disappeared beyond the Mists, hidden from even faerie sight by the clouds of forgetfulness. Most of the faerie roads, or *trods*, that once connected these faerie sites to Arcadia now lie closed by the weight of human disbelief.

Despite their rarity, some few places in the world still retain their original Glamour as well as their connections to the Dreaming (**see "Trods," pg. 45**). Changelings may find refuge from the incessant barrage of denial and rationality at these sites. Banality has little purchase here. Because of their freedom from the taint of disbelief, these Glamour-filled areas are called *freeholds*.

Touched by Glamour, freeholds exist within the real world. They have a mundane identity just as changelings do, appearing in the mortal realm as normal houses, storefronts or wayside inns. Many of them are shielded by wards of faerie magic that render them inconspicuous to the eyes of the unenchanted. Humans may routinely pass by a faerie tavern and see nothing but an abandoned building, dusty and in need of repair, and altogether unworthy of their attention or interest. In the same fashion, a duke's chimerical palace may have the "mortal seeming" of a spooky old Victorian house, causing feelings of uneasiness in any humans who come too close.

Freeholds form the underpinnings of Kithain society, and provide the basis for the feudal structure under which modern changelings live. The Glamour of a freehold provides power and influence to the nobles or commoners who claim dominion over it. Freeholds sometimes cross the boundaries between the worlds to have a chimerical existence within the Dreaming itself. Often these freeholds serve as gateways leading to the Near Dreaming.

Freeholds also serve as the heart of changelings' faerie existence. While most changelings still live in the mundane world, they usually consider a particular freehold to be their true home, the place in which they feel most comfortable and where they can be themselves without fear of attracting ridicule or denial from disbelieving mortals. A few changelings, particularly nobles, live full-time within the confines of a freehold, although such constant exposure carries with it the danger of becoming unable to cope with the "real" world.

Because freeholds have such value, changelings are deeply loyal to them. Many become obsessively concerned about every detail, sometimes turning trivial disputes over how to furnish their homes into major confrontations. Threatening a changeling's freehold is tantamount to a personal challenge. Defending a freehold is a changeling's most sacred trust.

The greatest concentration of Glamour within a freehold lies in its *balefire*, or *Ignis Vesta*. Considered the heart of the freehold, this chimerical flame is the focus of magic within the structure. So long as the balefire burns, a freehold remains in existence. Should the balefire ever burn out, the freehold may be lost to Banality. When the sidhe left at the time of the Shattering, many closed their freeholds, but left the balefires lit. The embers often smoldered, awaiting their return. During the Resurgence, many such freeholds reawakened, welcoming their sidhe residents back to the land. The source of all balefires in North America is the Great Balefire that burns in the sacred well under Tara-Nar, the stronghold of High King David. Ireland claims as its Great Balefire the ever-burning heart of Emain Macha, freehold of King Finn of Ulster.

Incredible effort is expended to create a freehold. After the site has been carefully chosen (a task that may take years or decades), the creator must bring balefire from another freehold and blend into it her own Glamour, which is permanently sacrificed to the effort. More often nowadays, freeholds are simply reawakened. These "sleeping freeholds" lie empty, abandoned at the time of the Shattering, with their balefires left as mere embers, awaiting the touch of changelings to fan the flames to life again.

Many changelings discover freeholds or are given them (either as a reward for services or as a part of vassalage to an overlord, or as an inheritance). When a changeling discovers or is given a freehold, she is required to swear an oath to protect the freehold and invest Glamour in the site. Once a freehold has been so claimed, no other may lay claim to it until the owner's death, unless she herself chooses to give it away. The owner of a freehold may gain Glamour from it or grant that privilege to someone of her choosing. Some changelings steal the Glamour from a freehold through a process called *Reaving*, but such conduct harms the site and could even destroy it.

The chimerical aspect of a freehold may have little to do with its mundane appearance. One duke's castle might be a run-down mansion set back amid moldering trees, while a duchess might create her palace from a disused warehouse or an abandoned church. To some extent the taste of the ranking changeling, who presumably owns the freehold, determines what its chimerical appearance will be. The Dreaming recognizes the changeling's right to make this determination and enforces it with Glamour.



One amusing aspect of freeholds which almost always astounds newly fledged fae is the "space inside versus the space outside" question. Whereas a freehold may have a mundane aspect similar to a railroad flat (so called because each room opens off the one in front of it like cars on a train) with 10-foot-wide rooms sandwiched between two other buildings, it need not be so crowded within. Indeed, walking through the door may lead a changeling into a grand foyer with a sweeping spiral staircase and a ballroom off to one side. Of course, to some degree the size of the freehold is determined by how powerful it is. A small freehold with only a little Glamour in it will never be as big as one with legendary power. Such space-bending is only possible if the entry to the freehold is in fact a doorway into the Near Dreaming, in which case nearly anything is possible within the bounds of the freehold. Freeholds that exist entirely within the real world are limited in space and size by the space that really exists.

Strangely, changelings who own freeholds have a similar effect on the Near Dreaming that provides an immediate backdrop for their structure. Thus, a theme of white and gold used to decorate a freehold in the real world might carry over into the Near Dreaming, where not only the freehold's chimerical aspect is white and gold, but so are the trees, grass, birds and animals that live nearby.

Freeholds are vital to changelings not only for the refuge and Glamour they provide. Most changelings consider a particular freehold their home. Though they may not actually live within the structure, they claim it as a place they can go to in time of need, where the other changelings will care about and defend them. Freeholds provide structures within where changelings can meet with one another, either formally or informally. Some of them serve as noble courts, and by extension, function as the seats of government for changelings in the area. Finally, freeholds serve as repositories for knowledge and treasures. Without a freehold, a changeling community may slowly wither like plants dying for water.

Glades

Whereas freeholds are constructed, *glades* are naturally occurring wells of Glamour. Some freeholds are created within glades, but not all glades are freeholds. These sylvan places are used mainly for retreat, quiet contemplation and the replenishment of Glamour. Found only in the most hidden parts of the world, glades exist because they were dreamed into existence. Such tiny pockets of paradise have been longed for by almost all of humanity, described by pulp writers and serious novelists alike, and occasionally "discovered" by religious sects. When found, they are cherished like no other spots on Earth, and their boundaries are fiercely protected.

Glades need not be small, nor are they always found within woodlands. They might be grassy hillocks, open fields, small orchards, mountain meadows, even pebble-strewn beaches beside rushing streams or hidden lakes. Whatever form they take, all have one thing in common: the sacred stone from which they derive their magic. Somewhat like balefire, the sacred stone serves as the heart of the glade, acting as the repository for Glamour. Less open to being claimed by a single individual, glades bestow their Glamour onto whomever dreams within them first (at least for that night).

Hiding the Sacred Stone

Most sacred stones are usually hidden entirely, or at least made less conspicuous, to preserve glades from plunder. A legend from Cornwall tells of Merlin's search for a great stone to act as the center of power for Stonehenge. As Merlin traveled through the British Isles in search of such a stone, he discovered that the keystone for a sacred site was not always the one on display. The legend says that the priests of a stone circle in Ireland watched with amusement as Merlin studied the great altar stone which formed the center of their site. The priests' amusement turned to grief when the great magician bypassed the altar stone in favor of a smaller, lesser stone that lay to one side of the great circle. Some say that the other stones wept before crumbling to dust when the sacred stone was taken from them and sent across the sea.

The sacred stone is not always the most eye-catching feature of a glade. In fact, though some glades boast circles of menhir (lofty single standing stones or altarlike table rocks), these are usually not the actual sacred stones. Such stones are impressive and attract a great deal of attention, but this is not to say that impressive stones are never the sacred stones of glades. The Lia Fail of Ireland is one such example, but these are less likely to be the true source of power simply because they garner so much attention. They are too obvious, and by that, they can be too easily stolen, robbing the glades of their power. Far more likely candidates can be found leaning against trees or nestled among roots, gathering moss.

Trods

The road was going on and on
Beyond to reach some other place.
I saw a tree that looked at me,
And yet it did not have a face.
— Elizabeth Madox Roberts, "Strange Tree"

Like a web of highways, trods once connected freeholds together and served as links to Arcadia and other points within the Dreaming. These magical paths, though far fewer in number than of old, still provide Kithain with a means of travel from one holding to another. For 600 years after the Shattering, few trods functioned. When Banality slammed the portals to Arcadia shut, most paths into the Dreaming sealed shut along with them. Those that remained open were often difficult to find, nearly impossible to open without the proper rituals and timing, and exceedingly dangerous to use. Nor did any of them lead to Arcadia anymore. Those seeking that wondrous land often found themselves trapped somewhere within the Deep Dreaming instead.

Roads of the Dreaming, trods (at least those within the Near Dreaming) allow changelings to travel from place to place and use their Arts freely without fear of Banality. Even when traveling from one freehold to another, changelings leave the real world when they first step onto a trod. The path leads through the Near Dreaming and emerges back into the real world at another freehold. Some trods suddenly end at particular locations within the Dreaming. Such locations may hold grave dangers for changelings unused to traveling the Dreaming after being cut off from it for 600 years.

Rarely does a trod lead directly from one place to another, and travelers do not appear instantaneously at their intended destination. Instead, those who use trods must undertake an actual journey, one which usually involves some sort of adventure. The Dreaming is made up of stories, after all.

The journey may be quick and easy, with the changeling arriving almost immediately, or it may be arduous, challenging and quite lengthy. Most travels via trod seem to take the same amount of time it would take to travel to the destination in the real world, though cantrips and other magical means can be used far more easily within the Dreaming to speed along travel. Also, particularly brave (or desperate) changelings can journey into the Far Dreaming to seek out shortcuts. Occasionally Kithain find that what seemed like a journey of several days or weeks took only moments in the real world. Such is the nature of time in the Dreaming.

Some trods are not always accessible. Many open only upon the utterance of a mystical phrase; others only allow entry during certain seasons or times of day. Some require some sort of sacrifice or a riddle to be answered before allowing themselves to be used. Whatever the conditions are that must be met before the trod can be traversed, there will usually be more riddles, puzzles or distractions along the trod itself.

When the sidhe returned upon the Resurgence, they moved to take over the trods that had blown open in response to the influx of Glamour that had allowed them to leave Arcadia. Quick to realize their potential, the sidhe secured trods to their newly reopened and reclaimed freeholds, assuring themselves of secret paths on which they could move troops, send secret messages, conduct trade and explore the Dreaming.

Some sidhe lords have encouraged certain of their subjects to set up homesteads within the Dreaming at points where trods terminate. These serve as homes, workshops where Glamour is more available and more easily used for crafting, markets for fae goods, secret rendezvous points and playlands where a Banality-ridden changeling may go to replenish her Glamour. Other homesteads have sprung up as well, peopled by changelings who have no ties to the nobles at all. Many of these commoners took up residence in the Dreaming in response to the return of the sidhe. Still other changelings have been in the Dreaming all along—and many of them resent the intrusion of this new wave of Kithain.

Trods come in all shapes and sizes. They may parallel roadways in the real world or ignore terrain entirely, drifting out over the sea or up into the sky. Some twist through mountain caverns or lead down to the bottoms of still, crystalline lakes. Once on a trod, changelings are hidden from the real world and do not interact with it. They have entered the realm of the Dreaming, and are now subject to its peculiarities.

Each trod has a different feel to it. This may be something as tangible as a sense of great coldness and a wintry aspect, or as nebulous as an almost-inaudible tune that hangs in the air. Trods often (but not always) reflect facets of those things or people who can be found along their length or at the end. Thus a trod that leads to a motley of pooka may have aspects that resemble colossal jokes and pranks, such as chimerical pies in the face for failing to answer riddles, or questions required for passage that only allow those who lie to go forward.

The Silver Path

The one aspect of every trod that remains constant is the *Silver Path*. Like a lifeline stretching the length of the trod, this silvery pathway becomes visible to travelers when they first step onto a trod. The Silver Path is a changeling's guide to his destination and affords him some protection from the dangers of the Dreaming. So long as a traveler remains on the path, chimerical monsters find it much more difficult to attack him. More intelligent monsters understand this, and many devise lures and cantrips to fool unwary changelings into leaving the path or believing that they have already strayed from it. As if this weren't difficult enough, many places exist in which the path seems to disappear or becomes extremely hard to follow. Often travelers discover that they must solve riddles, piece together puzzles or overcome guardians if they wish to remain on the Silver Path.

Those who become discouraged or believe they can find shortcuts through the Dreaming are almost certainly doomed. Nightmare realms and horrific creatures lurk within the Dreaming, longing for the taste of faerie flesh. Terrifying traps and horrible fates await the changeling who strays from the Silver Path. He may become lost somewhere in the otherworld, losing his mind in the process and becoming one more denizen of the Dreaming. Worse, he may be found (who knows how much later) huddled in mad terror near the entrance to the trod, his fae nature temporarily (or permanently) lost.

Wild Portals

Discovered only recently (or rediscovered), *wild portals* open onto paths that appear at first to be trods complete with Silver Path. In reality, they lead only to the wildest parts of the Far or Deep Dreaming. Such gateways betray their true nature in various ways. They may seem particularly crooked or shoddily built, be overgrown with foliage in a color unlike anything else in the vicinity, or have an odd smell. A careless changeling who steps through a wild portal (believing it to be the opening to an actual trod) quickly finds that she is lost in the otherworld. Stranded with no idea how to reach a true trod or return home, she can expect days (or years) of wild adventures as she tries to make her way through the chaotic realms that constitute this least understood part of the Dreaming.

No one is quite sure how wild portals come to exist. The Seelie claim that they are the work of the Unseelie, while the Unseelie blame it on the Seelie. These reports claim that powerful fae

deliberately created wild portals to entice their enemies, hoping to strand them in the Dreaming at particularly dangerous spots. Others maintain that wild portals are a creation of the Dreaming itself, a defense mechanism brought into play at the time of the Shattering. Wild portals were the last gasp of magic attempting to remain in touch with the mundane by creating new openings into the Dreaming when the old ones failed and closed.

The Dreaming

A flower has blossomed, the world heart core,
The petals and leaves were a moon white flame.
A gathered the flower, the colourless lore
The abundant measure of fate and fame.
— W. B. Yeats, "A Flower Has Blossomed"

The *Dreaming* is a realm that is separate from, yet tied to, the mundane world. Created by the dreams, creativity, fears and hopes of mortals, it has exceeded its original dimensions and become a realm of infinite possibility. Anything that can be imagined may be found somewhere in the Dreaming — the catch is one has to know where to look for it. The Dreaming exists alongside the mortal realm, interwoven with it, penetrating it in places and reflecting some aspects of its less magical neighbor.

Once the home of all faeries, over the last several centuries the Dreaming has become a place of strangeness to most commoners. Cut off from most of the realm since the Shattering, many are just now rediscovering it. Others, who had access to those few trods that remained open, are now exploring the Dreaming more fully. Most never move beyond the Near Dreaming, which retains some echoes of the nearby mortal realm. Almost all changelings enter the Dreaming through a trod. Some positively revel in their newfound homeland; others are beginning to understand that it poses as many dangers for them as the real world does.

The Dreaming and the mortal plane were once the same. The Sundering separated the two, creating a separate homeland for the fae. The Shattering isolated Arcadia and most of the Dreaming from the mundane world. The true fae, great faeries of old whose powers were legendary and whose bodies were made up of the very essence of the Dreaming, fled the mortal realm. Those who could not (or would not) escape remained, but were forced to undergo the Changeling Way in order to survive. Trapping their faeries souls within mortal coils was the only way they could survive the onslaught of Banality.

Whereas the greatest danger to changelings in the mortal world is Banality, the Dreaming exposes them to new threats that ironically are brought about by the *lack* of Banality. Monstrous chimera, able to exist in the Glamour-rich environment of the Dreaming, threaten changelings who deviate from set pathways. Shifting realities, which are possible only because there is no Banality to control them, confuse and disorient many travelers in the Dreamlands. Where changelings face the loss of their fae selves to Banality in the mortal world, the lack of Banality in most areas of the Dreaming can send them into Bedlam from an overload of Glamour. Their faerie souls must struggle to live in the mundane world, but their mortal essences suffer while in the Dreaming.

Those who study this magical realm have yet to even begin discovering the many and diverse places to be found within it. The nature of the Dreaming, with its shifting terrain, chaotic weather and unexplainable phenomena, makes such categorizing an impossibile task anyway. "Unlimited possibility" is often simply another term for "hopelessly confused." Despite the difficulty in determining just where one part of the Dreaming leaves off and another begins, fae scholars generally agree on a three-part division of the realm. These are known as the Near Dreaming, the Far Dreaming and the Deep Dreaming.

The Near Dreaming

The *Near Dreaming* is that part of the other realms that lies closest to the mortal world. It overlaps parts of reality, and in places even mimics certain features of the Earthly realm. Thus entering the Near Dreaming via a trod in the mountains may very well place the changeling in a Dreaming environment similar to the one she just left. Jagged peaks and cliffs make up the immediate terrain, and the trod itself conforms to a road or stream that cuts through the mountains found on the mortal side of the curtain.

Those parts of the Near Dreaming that do not echo the nearby mortal realms are sometimes shaped by the rulers of those lands. As the personality and well-being of the ruler affect her holding in the mortal world, so too they affect the part of the Dreaming that abuts her freehold or kingdom. Most freeholds have a chimerical existence within the Near Dreaming, allowing Kithain to enter a freehold from the mortal side, cross through the freehold and exit the dwelling into the Dreaming. Because of this two-sided existence, the freehold responds to the emotions and health of its ruler in both its mundane and magical aspects.

Other areas of the Near Dreaming may be shaped by various forces. Some respond to human-made items, taking forms similar to single buildings, parks or even neighborhoods. Generally, for this to happen, the construct in question must be the result of a great amount of imagination and emotion. A small clinic funded with money gathered by families of critically ill patients might call forth a chimerical building in the Near Dreaming, especially if the clinic becomes a reality after years of scrimping and dreaming by those who fund it. Not only have they made it a reality in the mortal world, they have created a dream of it within the otherworld as well.

The Near Dreaming can be entered through trods, which often run from one freehold to another. Since many freeholds exist within the Near Dreaming, even commoner changelings have become accustomed to using these real-world entry-and-exit paths since the sidhe opened them up for use.

Though the time it takes to travel remains approximately the same whether using a trod or more mundane means in the real world, many changelings have discovered that there are other modes of travel in the Dreaming. The lack of Banality makes using Arts such as Wayfare much easier, allowing quick travel from place to place within the Dreaming. Then there are magical beasts, some of whom have their own Arts or possess wings. These too may speed a changeling on his journey. Most importantly, however, the Silver Paths of the trods in the Near

Dreaming are almost always safer, wider, easier to spot and follow, and better kept than elsewhere within the Dreamlands. It is only near the furthest edges of the Near Dreaming that the Silver Path begins to fail.

Many areas of the Near Dreaming play host to freeholds or homesteads. The presence of changelings who watch over these areas tends to make them more stable and resistant to some of the weirder effects that plague the farther reaches of the realm. Despite this static aspect, however, the Near Dreaming cannot be mistaken for mundane reality. Colors are more vivid, scents sharper, tastes more tangy and weather more pure. A thunderstorm in the mortal realm cannot begin to compare to the flashing lightning, booming shocks of thunder, sheets of rain and driving wind that is the very essence of a storm in the Dreamlands. Everything chimerical is brought into sharper focus, while objects of Banality become hazy or fade away altogether.

Emotions are much purer here as well. Anger becomes a bright burning flame almost given a physical body, and gladness manifests as a tangible feeling that spreads from one person to another. Romance blossoms from the slightest gesture, and passions run hot; likewise, pleasure is far more enticing in the Dreaming. Unfortunately, the reverse is also true. Fear cuts like a white-hot knife, and hatred chokes with a taste like bitter ashes. Pain is also enhanced in the realm of Dreams, and damage inflicted on Kithain, whether by Arts, beasts or chimerical objects, becomes real upon entering the mundane world again.

Dangerous, but compelling and delightful, the Near Dreaming and its oddities are more recognizable and more easily assimilated by changelings than other parts of the Dreamlands. This is because some Banality seeps through from the nearby mortal realm, helping shape the chaos into patterns. Banality usually loses its power before having much effect on the farther reaches. Thus, the Dreaming becomes stranger and makes less sense the farther Kithain travel into it. Few attempt the trek beyond the Near Dreaming. Those who do are often deemed mad. If they return, they have often earned that label.

Far Dreaming

The *Far Dreaming* begins where the Near Dreaming leaves off, though the boundaries between the two are sometimes hard to judge. This part of the Dreamlands can only be reached through traveling along a trod, but even this can be perilous and confusing. Here the Silver Path becomes harder to follow and sometimes seems to fade out altogether or skip from place to place. Travel through the Far Dreaming is dangerous even along trods because of the realm's chaotic, unpredictable nature. Only very powerful trods extend this far into the Dreaming.

Among the many perils of this realm are the nightmarish creatures that lurk in the hidden places within the Far Dreaming. Strange things from Arcadia may be found here as well, released by the weakening of Arcadia's gates since their closure 600 years ago. Predicting their general natures, thought processes or reactions to changelings who might interact with them is almost impossible. While some might offer counsel or refuge, others could desire changeling slaves or see visitors to their territories as fair game for their own version of blood sport.

If experiencing the Near Dreaming is like being in a story, traveling the Far Dreaming is like falling into a myth or legend. Some changelings come to the Far Dreaming to escape the rulership of the nobility, though this can backfire as it is the sidhe who claim the most knowledge of this realm. Furthermore, those who remain too long within the Dreaming eventually succumb to Bedlam. Few but the most powerful fae or chimera can survive this mysterious realm long enough to set up residence within it. Those who do reside in the Far Dreaming leave their imprint on the surrounding territory. Sentient chimera roam many parts of the realm. It is difficult sometimes to tell whether the land responds to the needs of the chimerical beasts or the beasts gravitate toward comfortable terrain. Nothing is ever certain in the Far Dreaming, except that uncertainty underpins the whole region.

Nonetheless, Arts seem more effective here, with some classic cantrips evincing special effects rarely seen in the mundane realm. Wayfare cantrips may be accompanied by puffs of smoke, a clap of thunder or the sound of whooshing air; Sovereign effects may include a subtle halo of light or a just-audible fanfare when used. Whether this is the result of the presence of so little Banality, a property of the Far Dreaming itself or the result of changelings' overactive imaginations has not yet been determined.

This chaotic realm can be used to travel the world much faster than would otherwise be possible. Of course, getting lost is a distinct possibility as well. Some changelings who have traveled the Far Dreaming tell of experiencing what seem to be years of arduous journeys only to once again step through into the Near Dreaming and back to the mortal realm a few moments after they left.

The Far Dreaming is also the starting point for ancient gateways to the Deep Dreaming, though these gateways are almost always guarded either by magical beasts or traps and tests left behind by the sidhe to protect their realms. Here might be found a sphinx whose riddles hold the key to opening a gateway — or to a changeling's death. The riddles, however, need not make sense. Logic breaks down this far from the mundane world, and two and two do not always add up to four. Traps might only be sprung by those who actively search for them, and tests might be more concerned with evoking a reaction than doing the right thing. Then again, doing the wrong thing could lead to disaster. Creatures such as dragons and unicorns abound in this realm, many with powers never conceived of except in the oldest tales from which they sprang.

Deep Dreaming

The realms of the *Deep Dreaming* are the least structured. Only a handful of trods reach all the way to the Deep Dreaming, and those few can only be used by those who know the secrets of their opening. Insulated from Banality, the realms of the Deep Dreaming are in constant turmoil, responding to the needs of the moment. Rarely do these needs take into account visitors to



the realm. Rather they serve to protect the hidden places within the Deep Dreaming from intrusion, covering the routes to them with illusion or shifting realities to confuse those who do not belong there. Some residents may be caught within these fields of chaos as well.

It is believed that Arcadia lies at the center of this realm, but that may well be another illusion. None have managed to get that far, or at least none who began their journey from the Earthly realm have returned to say so. Arcadia may not even be the true homeland of the fae, but a shared illusion conjured by the Mists. There are many paradises within the Deep Dreaming, and a number of nightmare-inspired realms of hellish cruelty and nauseating ugliness.

Literally *anything* can happen here. The less logical things are, the more likely they are to occur. Dream logic (if there is such a thing) prevails within the Deep Dreaming because this realm is the physical and spiritual manifestation of the deepest well of the creative unconscious. Powerful mortal dreams that conflict with one another find expression here, sometimes within the same space. Like the landscape visited in dreams, seemingly unrelated places overlap one another with little reason for their juxtaposition. Things happen that in the waking world would have no connection to one another. There is almost no cause-and-effect here. Some actions have no consequence or related reaction, others come in response to consequences for what hasn't happened yet. People merge together into symbolic representations and assume relationships to one another that don't actually exist.

In a bizarre fashion, the Deep Dreaming is held together by "cosmic" connections, its essential patterns given meaning only by their proximity to each other. Some creatures and objects exist within the realm independent of the fae. They are a part of the area, and cannot be dismissed from it simply because a changeling doesn't wish to encounter them. On the other hand, reality is somewhat subjective after all. Changelings often find in this realm what they expect (or fear) to find. Whether or not those things existed before the changeling entered the area is open to debate. If someone can think of something, she can find it in the Deep Dreaming, almost as if it has been called into being in response to her thoughts. The scary part is that this welling up of creative Glamour doesn't always conform to its creator's expectations and conscious wishes. Instead, it takes on a life of its own, responding to a changeling's hidden wishes, deeply buried fears and illogic as much as to her desires. If the Near Dreaming is a story and the Far Dreaming a myth, the Deep Dreaming is the embodiment of dreams themselves, and dreams can rarely be controlled or directed — that's a function of Banality.

Eshu
EUROPE
Spirit
AFRIQUE
OCEAN ATLANTIQUE

Chapter Two: A World of Dreams

Who will go drive with Fergus now,
And pierce the deep wood's woven shade,
And dance upon the level shore?
Young man, lift up your russet brow,
And lift your tender eyelids, maid,
And brood on hopes and fear no more.
— William Butler Yeats, "Who Goes With Fergus?"

Born of imagination and nurtured in the flames of creativity, changelings are creatures of fire and passion, but also of deep sorrow and inexpressible longing. All these aspects of the creatures who are the modern-day descendants of the ancient races of faerie come to light in the pages that follow. In this chapter you will learn how changelings come into being, their complex history and their current society. Herein lies a netherworld made wholecloth from dreams, visions, illusions and hope.

Mortal World versus Magical

That is true beautie: that doth argue you
To be divine and borne of heavenly seed:
Deriv'd from that fayre Spirit, from whom al true
And perfect beauty did at first proceed.
— Edmund Spenser, "Amoretti"

The mortal and the magical worlds exist side by side in tenuous juxtaposition. Most of the time the two realms ignore one another, but now and then they collide. Boundaries slip and magical elements find their way into mortal consciousness, or denizens of the "real" world suddenly find themselves surrounded by strange and puzzling sights.

The fae are constantly striving to bring back the *Summerlands*, the halcyon country that once embodied the perfect union between dreams and reality — the realization of dreams. Some believe that in this way, the faerie realm of Arcadia will once again join itself to the human world, sparking a renaissance of magical possibilities that will rescue the mundane realm from its own downward spiral into stagnation and decay.

Although humans deny the existence of the fae, relegating them to the sphere of legends and fairy tales, the fact that these stories persist reveals a desperate desire to believe in the unbelievable. Many humans want to believe that wondrous creatures such as the fae exist, but lack the capacity to sustain faith in what they cannot directly perceive or embrace through reason. In fact, most mortals hardly remember what it is they long for, so bowed down are they by a banal world that tells them that searching for intangible or spiritual fulfillment is a waste of time and energy.

Role of Changelings

The World of Darkness has little room for dreams. Humans exist in a reality they can explain rationally but still cannot understand. All the "great" institutions conspire to tell them that the good die young, the brave come home in boxes and only the financially strong survive. Dreams — such as they are — come in sanitized, preprogrammed packages: the corporate dream, the jet-set dream, the dream of retirement and the virtual dream.

For most people, dreams are a luxury they cannot afford. The young have nothing to look forward to except unemployment or, if they're lucky, meaningless jobs for minimum wages. When a military career looks attractive, things are dull, indeed. The old face disappointment and a society that turns its back on them. Even those who have it made — CEOs, rock stars, drug lords, politicians — find themselves surrounded by tawdriness and mundanity. The high aspirations that once fueled human achievement and creativity have degenerated into the lowest common expectations.

The Light in the Darkness

Changelings radiate hope in a world buried in drabness. The embodiments of creativity and the power to dream, these remnants of the fae protect and nurture those fading shreds of wonder and imagination that still remain. Without them, reality would collapse under the weight of its own Banality, disbelieving in anything that could not be seen or touched or experienced by the physical senses.

In an older time, the fae served as muses to humanity, inspiring artists and musicians, craftsmen and philosophers, prophets and leaders to expand the boundaries of their minds and hearts to encompass new thoughts and works of beauty. Now, changelings fulfill an even more important purpose. In an era when science threatens magic, reducing it to a series of physiochemical reactions or a mechanical progression of causes and effects, changelings proclaim the reality of the inexplicable. They tip the balance of the senses, jar the edges of the mind and defy the "natural laws" that consign the creatures of the world to one fixed form.

Changelings announce to the World of Darkness that dreams exist. Like their name suggests, they represent the essence of mutability. Reality does not have to lie stagnant or conform to the rules. The children of the Dreaming, by their very existence, break the rules and shatter the conventions of everyday life. Their lives testify to the fact that what is does not have to be.

In the Gothic-Punk universe, changelings must tread carefully, for danger assaults them from all sides. Powerful forces exist that oppose any change to the status quo. Dreams are subversive, for they contradict the world as we know it. Changelings, even the most traditional ones, act as revolutionaries and rebels, undermining the stark determinism of modern life. They allow humans to indulge in rare moments in which it seems possible to cure the world's ills — to save the rainforests, feed the hungry, find homes for everyone — and bring the light of imagination into the shadowy corners of the mundane realm.



Keepers of the Dream

If changelings did not exist, the world would slowly and inexorably succumb to rampant disbelief, subsisting on a low-fat diet of facts and provable observations. Humans would continue to breed and jostle one another for living space, fighting wars to determine who gets the spoils of land and riches, but the hope that something more existed would be beyond their imaginations.

As exiles from a world they can no longer enter, changelings forever yearn for what lies just beyond their grasp. They are creatures of profound sadness as well as beauty, and not all the dreams they embody are happy ones. Yet it is this lack that drives them to seek the unattainable — to reunite Arcadia and the mortal realm, and thus create a new (or re-create a very old) reality in which dream and substance become one. This is the goal to which changelings dedicate their existences, even if they do not consciously realize it. They are the keepers of the memories of a time when anything could happen, so long as someone dreamed it into existence.

History of the Fae

I often think I would put this belief in magic from me if I could, for I have come to see or to imagine, in men and women, in houses, in handicrafts, in nearly all sights and sounds, a certain evil, a certain ugliness, that comes from the slow perishing through the centuries of a quality of mind that made this belief and its evidences common over the world.

— William Butler Yeats, "Magic"

Mythic Age

In the oldest time, the *Time of Legends*, the world of dreams existed alongside the mortal realm. No barriers separated the two realities, and magical energies coursed freely throughout the mortal lands. Wherever these energies touched rock or tree or beast, strange and fabulous creatures sprang into existence. The fae — the children of the Dreaming — passed unhindered between the borders of both realms, mingling among the human tribes that wandered the face of the land and teaching these short-lived, dynamic creatures the art of dreaming. This ability to shape new things from the fragmentary hopes and visions crafted in deep slumber helped to keep the connections strong between Arcadia, the realm of dreams, and the mortal world. By giving the secret of their lifeblood — dreams — to humankind, the fae sought to ensure their survival and proliferation. Born of dreams, they drew their continued existence from the power of the imagination to create them.

From time to time the children of the Dreaming would show themselves to mortals in various guises, for the forms of the fae were as fluid as the dreams from which they came. In some lands, the fae became as gods to the Sons of Adam and Daughters of Eve; their powers to beguile and enchant made them both loved and feared by all who encountered them. In Ireland, the deeds of the ancient fae who called themselves the *Tuatha De Danaan* inspired awe and wonder in mortal hearts, creating legends that persisted long after their departure from the physical realm.

Too many fae saw humans as mere playthings, conduits of dreams (or nightmares). The impressionable minds of mortals had no defenses against the fickle affections and angers of these godlike creatures. Just as humans learned to dream, they learned to fear their dreams as well. It was this fear that would become the undoing of the fae, for as the Golden Age of Legends gave way to succeeding ages of Silver, Bronze and Iron, humans learned to protect themselves from their fears. The act of self-preservation, understandable though it may have been, gave rise to the slow severing of the Dreaming from the mortal realm and brought forth the phenomenon known as the Sundering.

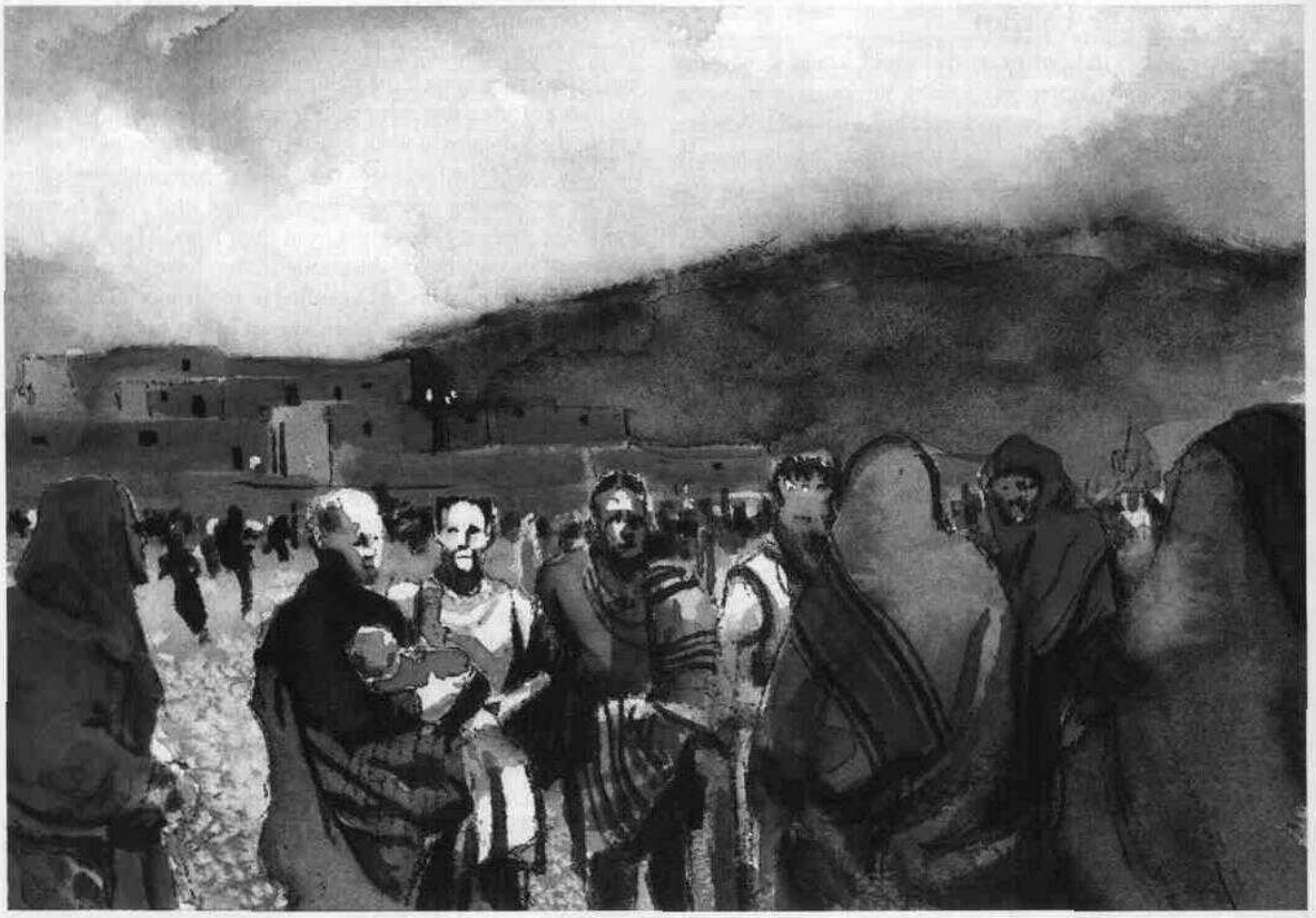
The Sundering

Some say that the *Sundering* arose simultaneously with the Iron Age, when humans learned the art of crafting durable weapons that could cause grievous harm to both mortal and immortal foes. Others claim that as soon as humans learned to dream, they also learned to disbelieve their dreams, denying by the light of day the phantasms that haunted their nights. As tribes grew into settled communities, cities anchored humans to one place, surrounding them with houses of wood or stone. Reality itself began to settle into a single, changeless form. Dreams — and True Dreamers — became the exception rather than the rule. Gradually the mortal realm and the Dreaming began to drift apart as humans placed barriers of disbelief and walls of explanations between themselves and the creatures born of their imaginations. The damage, however, had already been done.

Once given to humans, the power to dream could not be taken away so easily. Where once they controlled the visions of men and women, the fae now found themselves bound inextricably to the dreams of mortals. Their lives began to mimic the society around them, and fae existence soon mirrored the dreams of developing humanity. Faerie chieftains evolved into kings, faerie warriors donned the guises of knights, and faerie lands transformed into fiefs and estates. Likewise, the wars and conflicts between human tribes — now emerging nations — cast their dark reflections into the world of the Dreaming.

As a result, faeries began erecting defenses to protect themselves from the unwanted visions of mortal society. The Mists arose to cloud the minds of humans so that their dreams could not penetrate beyond the mortal realm into Arcadia. This only served to drive the two realms even further apart.

The establishment of the Inquisition in 1233 brought the Sundering to its culmination, as the Church's doctrinal purists sought to eliminate all undesirable supernatural elements — including faeries — from the world. To protect themselves from the gallows and the stake, the fae retreated further into the Dreaming, in some cases sealing themselves off from the mortal world altogether or limiting their traffic across the borders between the realms to certain times of the year such as Samhain (All Hallows' Eve), Beltaine and Midsummer's Eve. Other faeries sought their fortunes along the trods, fleeing their homes in Europe in search of new lands as yet untouched by Banality.



Tir-na-N'og

The Sundering first emerged in the primeval lands of Europe and the near East, where the empires of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece and Rome planted the seeds that would result in feudalism and the wave of "progress" known as Western civilization. Other parts of the world, particularly the continents of North and South America, did not experience the distancing of the Dreaming until much later.

In these lands, distant from the icy fingers of Banality, faeries and humans still lived in close harmony with one another. Each respected the society of the other and interacted peacefully (in most cases). North American faeries — called *nunnehi* — aided humans with their Glamour in times of need. In return, the human tribes honored the "invisible people" among them with their dreams and rituals. Some of the faeries of these lands performed special rituals to gift particularly worthy humans with children born of the Dreaming, children who grew up to be great leaders and ambassadors between the two worlds.

Legends of these western lands reached the beleaguered fae of Europe and the Mediterranean regions. The call of Tir-na-N'og, the Summerlands, drew some refugees from the Sundering to journey by trod to the bright, peaceful lands as yet untouched by disbelief and cold iron. Where the new arrivals came with peaceful intent, the native faeries welcomed them and drew up treaties of friendship, sharing their land with the strange Kithain and teaching them to how harvest Glamour from the new land. Soon, faerie fortresses rose atop jagged mountains and within virgin forestlands to rival the great palaces of the faeries who remained behind in Europe and Asia, struggling to survive in a world that was becoming increasingly hostile and full of Banality. This early exodus set the stage for the next phase of the death of faerie magic — the Shattering.

The Shattering

Eventually, the threads that connected the Dreaming with the mortal world stretched so thin that they began to snap, one after the other. This final severing of ties between the two realms became known to the fae as the *Shattering*, for it not only broke the tenuous ties between Arcadia and the human realm, it also shattered the dream that the Sundering could be reversed.

The term "Shattering" calls to mind one sudden, cataclysmic event — like an earthquake or the dropping of a nuclear bomb — but in actuality, the Shattering describes a process of small catastrophes as, one by one, the gateways that linked Arcadia with the mortal world grew brittle and crumbled, sealing off access to the Dreaming at their particular touchpoints.

Most lorists pinpoint the outbreak of the Black Plague in 1347 as the catalyst for the Shattering. Between 1347 and 1351, 75 million people throughout Europe — including one-third of the population of England alone — fell prey to this virulent disease. The wave of fear and despair that washed over the world at this time echoed across the Mists and reverberated into the faerie realms.

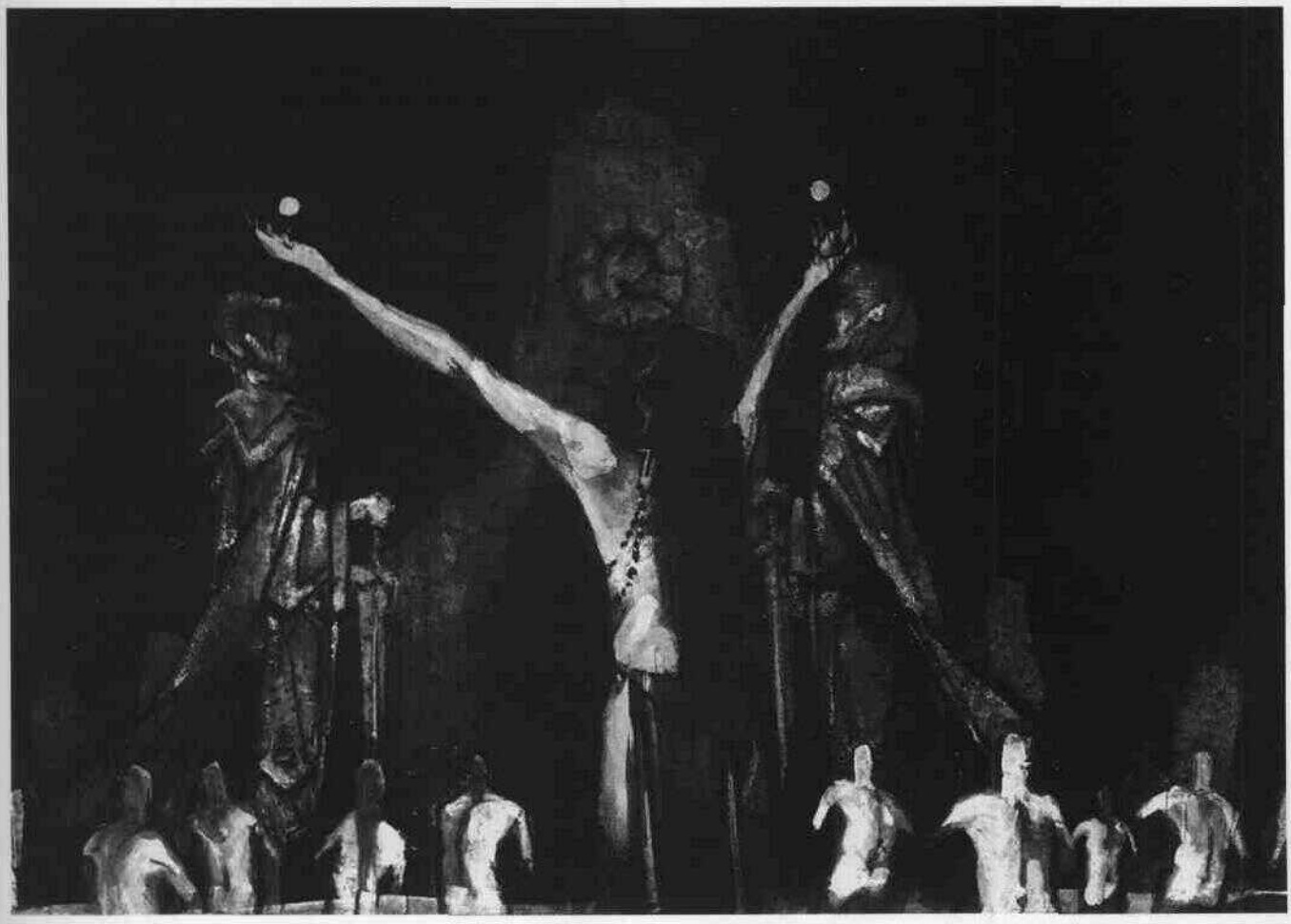
In the 14th century, the human world suffered the birth pangs of a new era. The prophets of reason, whose efforts would result in the Renaissance and the genesis of modern scientific theory, sought to rationalize away mysterious and uncontrollable events such as pandemics. The common folk took refuge in religion, forswearing their old beliefs in the supernatural for the comfort given to them by the Church, an institution which had no room in it for any magic other than its own.

As gateway after gateway faded into nothing or splintered into thousands of slivers that disappeared upon their first encounters with raw mortality, the children of the Dreaming realized that inaction would serve only to destroy them. In the years encompassed by the Shattering, all faeries made one of three choices that would forever determine their destiny.

Some retreated to their places of power, their freeholds or faerie glens, and performed great rituals of faerie magic to seal themselves off from the mortal world. Here the faeries known as the Lost Ones still dwell, lost within their own unchanging reality.

Most of the sidhe, with only a handful of exceptions, fled to Arcadia through the remaining gates. In some cases, fierce battles took place at the thresholds of crumbling portals as frantic sidhe fought for the right to cross into the Dreaming before the gateways closed forever. Faerie legends claim that Silver's Gate, along with its freehold, the Court of All Kings, was the last of these gates to fall and that its closing signaled the death knell of the Age of Faeries.

Many of the commoner kith — such as the eshu, trolls, boggans and pooka — found themselves trapped in the mortal world, left behind by a panicked nobility that cared less for the well-



being of its faerie subjects than for its own survival. These abandoned faeries sought to adapt themselves to the icy world of harsh reality. As Banality swept across the world, no longer hampered by the now-severed ties to the Dreaming, the fae who could not or would not retreat to Arcadia underwent a desperate transformation, covering their true natures with a veneer of Banality that allowed them to exist in a world that no longer believed in them. They became changelings, and for the next six centuries, they struggled to keep the fragments of the Dreaming alive.

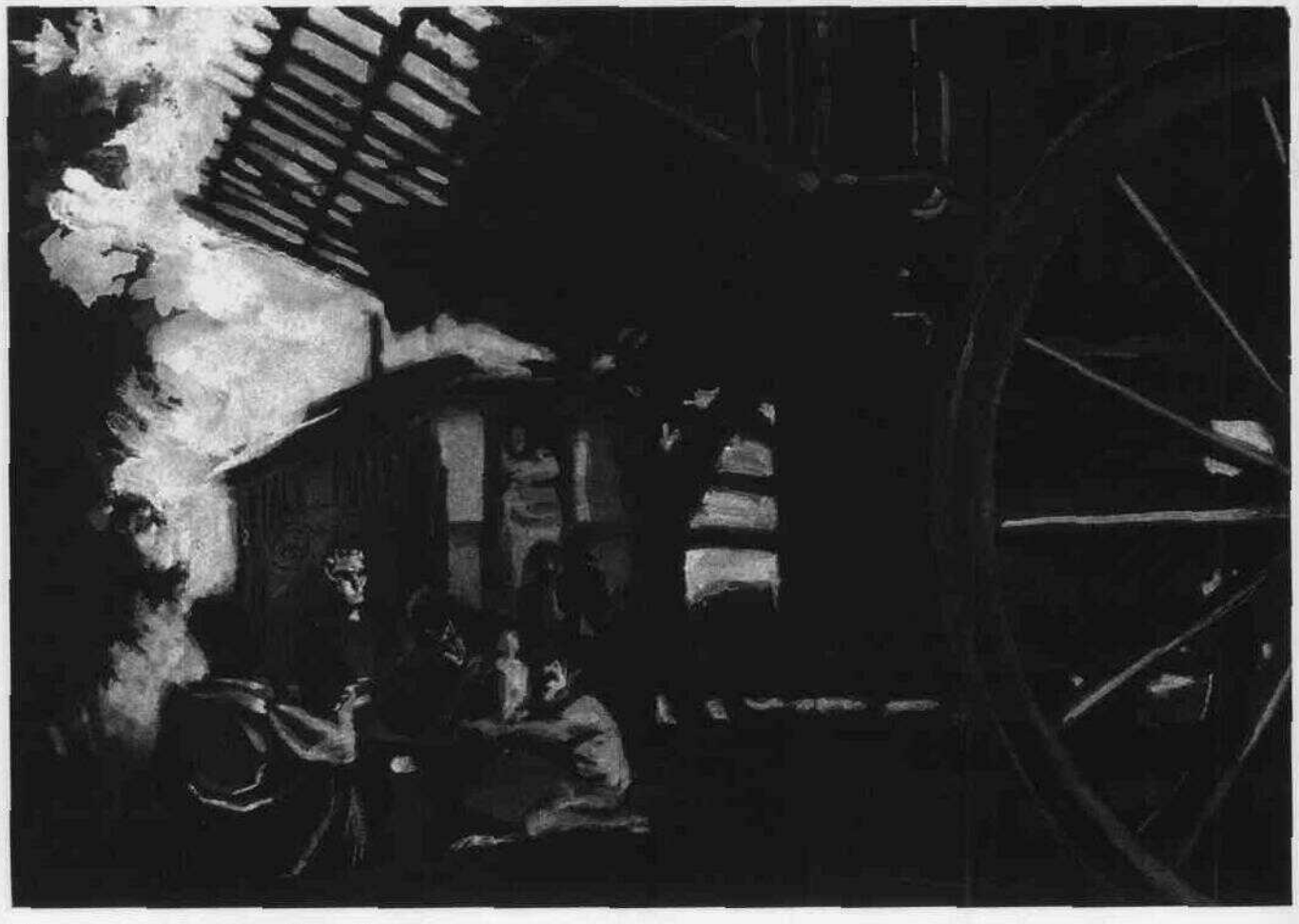
The Interregnum

Following the Shattering, the period known as the *Interregnum* saw great changes in both human and fae reality. Humanity rediscovered the ancient wisdom of the Greek and Roman thinkers, and slowly turned away from religious superstition to scientific experimentation and rationalism. The Age of Exploration and its companion Age of Invention fed upon each other; new worlds were discovered, and new ideas led to breakthroughs that made life easier and transformed peasants into workers and monarchs into industrial barons. Humanity entered an era of rapid progress and social upheaval.

Changelings, now encased in mortal flesh and only marginally connected with their faerie selves, experienced changes that were more devastating but no less challenging than those of human society. The departure of the sidhe left the commoner fae bereft of the social structures upon which they had come to depend. Gone were the noble houses, the lords and ladies, the faerie knights and the system of fiefdoms that had held faerie society together. Left to fend for themselves, changelings banded together in small groups for mutual protection, or else attempted to blend into human communities, hiding their true natures from humankind and, sometimes, from each other.

With the emergence of towns to replace feudal strongholds, many of these changelings took to the road. Unable to fit into the increasing urbanization of human life, they wandered from village to village, joining with traveling circuses, vagabond players and minstrel groups. In the company of these fringe elements of human society, many of whom were either freaks of nature or social misfits, the commoners found refuge, as well as outlets for their creative impulses. Among the underworld of performers, changelings also discovered a steady source of Glamour, enough to preserve their fragile attachments to the bits and pieces of the Dreaming that still remained despite the world's determination to extinguish it. Many of the traditions that now characterize changeling existence date from this time of wandering and redefinition, borrowing the terminology of the circus and the theater for many of their Arts and customs.

The old ways died hard, however, and many changelings still felt the need for a noble class to set the standards and provide a sense of structure in their shattered lives. Rising from



The Changeling Way

I made my song a coat
Covered with embroideries
Out of old mythologies
— William Butler Yeats, "A Coat"

In order to survive in a world saturated with Banality and severed from the Dreaming, the fae who were stranded in the mortal realm by the Shattering devised a means of protecting their fragile spirits. This process, known as the *Changeling Way*, consisted of creating a shell of mortality to serve as a house for the faerie spirit. Just as humans used clothing to shield themselves from the elements, changelings clothed themselves in mortal flesh as a buffer against Banality.

The first generation of Earthbound fae merely disguised themselves as humans, covering their raw faerie natures with layers of Glamour tinged with minute doses of Banality. In this way, they could pass themselves off as humans — albeit eccentric examples of the species. This method worked only so long as the camouflaged faeries limited their contact with mortals, thus minimizing their exposure to human disbelief. Adapting fully to the new environment necessitated finding a more permanent and durable solution.

Through trial and error, the stranded faeries discovered how to successfully implant their spirits into the bodies of young children or infants, fusing themselves with their hosts' mortality without displacing their souls. By beginning their lives in human flesh, changelings could avoid being destroyed by Banality. In order to accomplish this, however, the Kithain had to sacrifice their immediate knowledge of their true nature, forcing it into dormancy until it could safely emerge during the Chrysalis.

the ranks of the commoners, some Kithain assumed old noble titles and claimed abandoned fiefdoms, creating a subculture that took the place once occupied by the vanished sidhe.

The Compact

Before the Shattering, Seelie and Unseelie fae maintained a constant rivalry. Despite agreements between the two Courts which divided the year into two parts, with Seelie and Unseelie ruling respectively over summer and winter halves, conflicts often arose. The Shattering changed that aspect of changeling life as well. To survive, Seelie and Unseelie fae had to put aside their antipathies. In an unprecedented arrangement, known as the *Compact*, the Courts declared a truce and agreed to cease all hostilities against each other "for the duration." Seelie-ruled territories allowed Unseelie changelings to travel freely within their borders, while Unseelie freeholds opened themselves to Seelie visitors.

As the two Courts mingled more freely, each adopted some of the customs of the other, and changeling society soon became a mixture of Seelie and Unseelie concepts and behaviors. Law, formality and honor learned to coexist with disorder, chaos and impulsiveness — a dynamic blend of opposites that has persisted into the present.

Resurgence

The cold centuries passed slowly. For humanity, science and reason paved the way for the Age of Technology. One by one the mysteries of the universe fell beneath the onslaught of the microscope and telescope, revealing the microcosm of atomic theory and the macrocosm of an expanding galaxy. As avenues of wonder closed, explained away by one discovery after another, changelings huddled wherever small pockets of Glamour remained and whispered of the coming of Endless Winter, a time of ultimate triumph for Banality.

Then the miraculous happened. On July 21, 1969, millions of people all over the world watched their televisions in fascination as astronauts landed on the moon. Glamour rocked the world, released from centuries of confinement by the simultaneous reawakening of humanity's sense of wonder. From science's iron womb, magic — at least for a moment — was reborn.

A moment was enough. The upsurge of Glamour blew open the gateways to Arcadia, reopening faerie trods that had been dormant since the Shattering. Lost freeholds reappeared, their glory restored by the power of humanity's dreams of walking on the moon.

On the other side of the Dreaming, the rebirth of Glamour in the world resounded through the ancient faerie realms of Arcadia. The shining hosts of the sidhe returned to the world, pouring forth from the newly opened gateways to confront a reality far different from the one they departed centuries before. Most of these new arrivals came as exiles, the result of a tumultuous upheaval in Arcadia that caused the banishment of five of the 13 houses that originally fled the mortal world. The Mists clouded the memories of these returnees, leaving only the knowledge that they were thrust out of Arcadia as punishment for their part in some great disturbance in the faerie homeland.

Unfortunately, the groundswell of Glamour caused by the moon landing could not prevail for long against the accumulated centuries of disbelief that permeated the world. The doors to Arcadia slammed shut once more. The sidhe had to act quickly to prevent Banality from destroying them outright. They fell back on the tried-and-true method of switching bodies with mortals, sending a host of unwary mortals back through the gateways that had briefly sprung open. Since the Resurgence, most sidhe who have entered the world as outcasts and exiles still use this old method of protecting themselves from Banality, seizing upon convenient mortal bodies to house their delicate spirits. Although the true fate of such dispossessed human souls remains unknown, most sidhe believe that these mortals enjoy an



awakening in the Dreaming. In other cases, newly arrived sidhe avail themselves of the presence of very young children or unborn infants and insinuate their essence into the psyches of these impressionable beings, coexisting in symbiosis rather than taking outright possession of mortal souls.

Although the *Resurgence*, as the return of the sidhe came to be called, occurred everywhere, most faerie nobles reentered the world in those places where the pull of Glamour was strongest. Ireland, the British Isles and other places throughout Europe still radiated enough faerie magic to attract many of the sidhe, but the vast majority of nobles emerged in America. In 1969, the West Coast was experiencing a revolution in consciousness. In San Francisco, the Summer of Love was at its peak, making that city a beacon of Glamour that served as the focus for the returning sidhe.

From their points of entry, the sidhe spread quickly throughout a revitalized mortal world. A clarion call sounded, summoning commoner Kithain from their hiding places to resume service to the nobles. Reclaiming their old freeholds, the Resurgent sidhe moved with the confidence of their inborn sense of authority. Despite the fact that the world had known 600 years of change, the sidhe expected to reestablish the ancient kingdoms of the fae, abandoned so precipitously during the Shattering. They were met with unanticipated opposition from Kithain society.

For centuries, commoners had survived without the leadership of the sidhe. New leaders had risen to fill the void, and many common fae learned to do without leaders altogether. The feudal system, so dear to the Resurgent sidhe, had outgrown its usefulness. In its place, new forms of human government based on plurality, democracy, socialism and other populist systems undermined the strict hierarchy of nobles and commoners.

While some commoners rallied behind the nobility, others rebelled. An uneasy period of political maneuvering ensued, culminating in an event which forever stained the reputation of the nobility. In America, commoner leaders, summoned to a meeting on Beltaine under the pretense of establishing an accord with the sidhe, met death from cold iron in a wholesale slaughter that came to be known as the Night of Iron Knives. Any hopes for a peaceful settlement of the commoner-noble dispute died that night.

Accordance War

The power to dream, to rule
To wrestle the earth from fools.
Let's decree, the people rule...
— Patti Smith, "People Have the Power"

Commoners responded to the massacre with the uprising known as the *Accordance War*. Throughout the land, pitched battles between commoners and nobles resulted in the destruc-

tion of many Kithain and threatened to destroy the fabric of changeling society. For three years, civil war raged across the chimeric landscape, spilling over into riots and gang violence in the mortal world. Although the commoners fought desperately and had energy and spirit in abundance, military experience lay with the sidhe knights, who excelled in organized tactics.

The sidhe gathered under the command of the warchief Lord Dafyll of House Gwydion. A brilliant strategist and ferocious warrior who inspired fierce devotion in his armies and rabid hatred in his enemies, Dafyll led the shining host to victory after victory, methodically working his way from the Pacific coast eastward across the continent. At last, Lord Dafyll reached New York, where the commoners' forces met his armies with their fiercest battalions.

In a climactic battle on Manhattan Island, Dafyll's forces clashed with the Eastland Troll Army and the 4th Troll Commons Infantry. The Battle of Greenwich began in Central Park's Strawberry Fields but spread rapidly throughout downtown Manhattan, finally deteriorating into scattered bouts of street-fighting. The urban trolls harried Lord Dafyll's troops until they were forced to retreat and regroup, falling back to the subway station in Times Square. During the ensuing chaos, Lord Dafyll fell, mortally wounded by an iron blade. His enchanted sword Calibum disappeared somewhere within the dark tunnels beneath the city streets. Commoner troops searched in vain for the weapon, hoping to use it to rally their own forces. Some say Dafyll placed a charm upon the sword, hiding it from unworthy eyes until the coming of his rightful successor.

The death of Lord Dafyll gave new life to the rebel commoners, and motleys of redcaps and nockers took to the streets, seeking the lifeblood of any nobles they could find. In the midst of the furor, a new leader of the sidhe arose. His coming and the manner of his appearance brought about the means of ending the Accordance War.

The Rise of High King David

David Ardry's mortal host was born in the early '60s in upstate New York. The childling David and his sister Morwen spent their fosterage as part of a group of noble childlings sheltered from the worst of the Accordance War by True Thomas, the Grand Bard of the fae. After the death of Lord Dafyll, word reached True Thomas that his charges were in danger from a war party of commoners looking for noble blood. Fleeing these assassins, Thomas and his wards made their way to the heart of the enemy camp, seeking to hide themselves in plain sight, where their enemies might overlook their presence.

Their flight brought them to Times Square on New Year's Eve, where a patrol of redcaps spotted True Thomas in the throng of celebrants crowding the square. In the midst of the year-end revelry, the valiant bard used all of his powers to defend





his young wards against a superior-armed foe. During the one-sided battle, David Ardry felt a pull of Glamour so powerful that he could not refuse to follow it to its source. The young sidhe returned to the thick of the battle, holding aloft a glowing sword — the lost Caliburn — and fought beside True Thomas to turn away the attackers. Unnerved by the sight of the legendary weapon, now glowing with a brilliant golden light, the redcaps fell back in disarray. "Behold!" Thomas cried to friend and foe alike. "Thou dost look upon thy king!"

After their encounter with destiny, Thomas took David, Morwen and his other charges to the safety of Queen Mab's court in the Kingdom of Apples. Word had already preceded them that Caliburn had been found and that its wielder would become the long-prophesied High King of the faerie. Queen Mab refused to believe the tales at first, and scorned the young sidhe when Thomas presented him to her in her throne room. When she ordered the upstart childling removed from her presence, a magnificent gray griffin — the symbol of House Gwydion — materialized around David, sheltering him with its gigantic wings. "Can you now deny the fulfillment of the prophecy?" True Thomas's words rang out with the force of his *geas* of truth. "'The son of the Griffin and the sword that was lost shall come together in the apple bower.'" In the face of overwhelming proof, Queen Mab recognized David Ardry ap Gwydion as the rightful High King of the faerie.

For the next three years, David and Morwen lived with Queen Mab at her palace of Caer Loon in the Kingdom of Apples. During that time, the young king-aspirant worked to establish his right to rule both commoners and nobles. He met with opposition from both at first. The Accordance War still raged, though the omens surrounding David's discovery of Caliburn had broken the back of the commoners' cause. Despite his youth, David displayed an innate political acumen and a profound empathy for all fae, longtime resident commoners and newly arrived sidhe alike. Again and again he successfully answered challenges of wit and combat from nobles who insisted on testing his fitness to rule. He repeatedly sent emissaries to commoner leaders, pleading with them to make common cause for the survival and prosperity of all the fae. David's egalitarian viewpoints and his respect for the achievements of the commoners to preserve the Dreaming during the Interregnum eventually won the support of his most ardent enemies.

At long last, after three hard years of struggle on the battlefield and negotiations in courts and motley freeholds, the Accordance War came to an end. A true "accord" between nobles and commoners resulted in the hammering out of the Treaty of Concord. The terms of the agreement reaffirmed the sidhe's right to rule, but recognized the rights of commoners to an unprecedented degree. The monarchs of the kingdoms of the fae agreed to appoint commoners to their privy councils and to take advisement from groups of common fae. The Treaty of Concord also required nobles to appoint representatives from the commoner kith to positions in their courts.

Some say that the peace forged so carefully and with such acute vision represented the dream of High King David. Certainly, the young king served as chief architect of the Treaty of

Concord. Uniting the seven kingdoms of North America under his rule, David named his high kingdom *Concordia*, in honor of the treaty and the spirit of unity it represented.

The Present

Today, High King David rules Concordia from his fortress of Tara-Nar, a splendid chimerical palace built from his Glamour-filled dreams. Called "the Lion of Tara," "the Commoner's King," and "the Son of the Griffin," David Ardry ap Gwydion embodies the principles of ferocity in battle, liberality of thought and guardianship of all fae. His legendary honor and wisdom have endeared him to his subjects, bringing some of his most obdurate enemies to his support. He is never without Caliburn, the symbol of his authority and the proof of his destiny.

Assisted by his sister Morwen, who rules in his absence, High King David strives to exercise a benevolent and peaceful rule over the fae of Concordia. In his lands, the fragile strands of the Dreaming grow stronger. Though some voice disagreement for his policies, finding him either too conciliatory toward commoners or too supportive of the nobility, most fae in his lands enjoy the freedom to pursue their dreams.

Nature of the Fae

I cannot see fairies,
I dream them.
There is no fairy can hide from me;
I keep on dreaming till I find him:
There you are, Primrose! — I see you, Black Wing!
— Hilda Conkling (age 6), "Fairies"

Part flesh and part dream, changelings' appearances mirror their dual natures. Changelings see one another in their true forms, as embodiments of the Dreaming given form by the Glamour of faerie magic. This is their *fae mien*. Banality shrouds this form, however, hiding it from the world under a humanlike appearance, called the *mortal seeming*. Changelings do not shift between the two forms like shapeshifters. How a changeling appears depends on who perceives her and on her proximity to the Dreaming.

The Chrysalis

Oh, how is it that I could come out to here and be still floating,
And never reach bottom but keep falling through,
Just relaxed and paying attention.
All my two-dimensional boundaries were gone,
I had lost to them gladly
And I saw that world crumble and thought I was dead,
But I found my senses still working...
— The Byrds, "5D (Fifth Dimension)"

Changelings are both born and made. Born into the bodies of human infants, most changelings spend the first parts of their lives as normal children, sometimes reaching their teens or even full adulthood before the part of themselves that belongs to the Dreaming manifests. Regardless of when — or how — the changeling spirit emerges, this transformation begins with an explosive, often traumatic, inner awakening known as the Chrysalis.

Hints of the Dreaming

The *Chrysalis*, or moment of becoming, breaks the shell of Banality that hides a changeling's true self from the mortal world. Like the Big Bang that created the universe, this event propels the newly aware changeling headlong into her first real contact with the Dreaming. Assaulted from every side by a barrage of sights, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile experiences that contradict the harsh, cold reality of her life up to this point, the new changeling may believe that she is going mad. In a way, perhaps, she is — according to the world's definitions of sanity. But in another sense, somewhere in the depths of her psyche, she realizes that she has, at last, come home.

Many changelings grow up as misfits in their societies. Even as children, some undefinable essence clings to them, causing those who know them to label them "exceptional," "gifted" or — too appropriately — "fey." As children they are likely to have imaginary playmates (who might not be so imaginary after all), or insist on believing in magical worlds of dragons and superheroes long after their playmates have progressed to team sports and dating. As they grow older, these changelings-to-be continue to strike their families, friends and colleagues as eccentric, holding onto a whimsicality that prevents them from being fully at ease in the modern world. This sense of not-quite-belonging comes from the nascent Kithain soul, still quiet but now faintly stirring within the changeling's mortal flesh, waiting for the proper time and circumstances to make itself known.

Just as a dormant volcano puts out warning signals of an impending eruption, the Chrysalis announces its approach by enacting subtle (or occasionally not so subtle) shifts in the reality of the changeling. These can take the form of sudden flashes of impossible — to mortal eyes — vistas, hallucinations of mythical creatures in unlikely places (a unicorn in the boss's office), periods of personality dissociation or the feeling that another person has taken up residence in the mind. Few changelings realize at the time what it is that they are experiencing; some, in fact, seek psychiatric or medical help.

Dream Dance

When the time is right, usually at the most inopportune moment in a changeling's life, the warnings stop and the *Dream Dance* begins. This is the high point of the Chrysalis, when a new changeling's world takes a hard left. The volcano erupts, the earth trembles and rives apart, the tsunami strikes the shore, and cosmic fireworks announce the changeling's liberation from the tyranny of form and reason. Glamour rushes to surround the awakening changeling, engulfing her with the stuff of raw Dreaming, so that nothing she sees, feels, hears, smells or tastes bears any resemblance to the paltry senses that once connected her to the world outside her body. In fact, during the Dream Dance, the fledgling changeling has a hard time perceiving just where her physical body ends and where the world of experience begins.

The changeling plunges into direct confrontation with the Dreaming for the first time. Surrounded by Glamour, she sees her true fae self resplendent in the light of chimerical reality. The Mists that have clouded her mind until now roll away, revealing the world as seen through changeling eyes — a world formed by Glamour and infused with faerie magic. Visions of Arcadia, vignettes of earlier manifestations of her immortal fae self and sometimes vague glimpses into her future scroll rapidly through her mind, too quickly for her to take it all in or comprehend. Later, she may remember only fragments of these revelations.

Her waking thoughts and deepest dreams (or nightmares) coalesce out of the roiling pool of Glamour centered on her, becoming the chimeric partners of her Dream Dance — and attracting the attention of every changeling in the neighborhood. Often these chimeric creations invade the surrounding reality, overcoming the local Banality and giving rise to rumors of dragon-sightings in downtown Manhattan or sea monsters in San Francisco Bay.

Not all changelings can cope with the intensity of the Dream Dance. Some succumb to madness as the walls of their human facades come crumbling down around them. Others take refuge in Banality, forcibly denying the reality of their experience and refusing to accept that they are something other than "*normal*." A few turn against the Dreaming and everything connected to it, giving themselves over to the ranks of the Dauntain, the destroyers of the Dreaming.

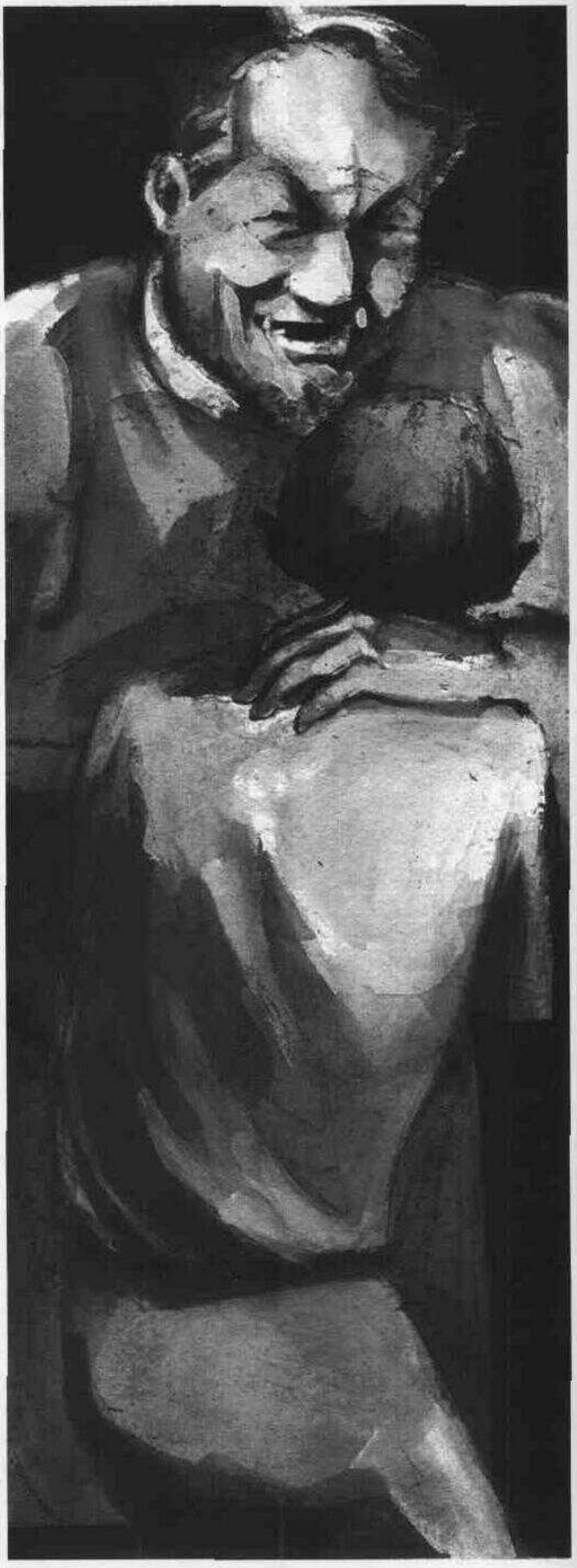
A changeling is at her most vulnerable during the Dream Dance. Helpless to make sense of the barrage of sensual and perceptual transformations that are exploding in and around her, she exudes Glamour like a beacon, allowing all Awakened creatures to home in on her location. This makes her easy prey for some of the less wholesome supernatural denizens of the World of Darkness as well as for those who hunt changelings.

Changelings in the area of an individual undergoing the throes of the Dream Dance have a duty to locate and protect their new cousin, and most willingly do so — if only to take advantage of the overflow of Glamour. This is often the first introduction a fledgling has to the larger changeling community, and to other changelings.

Fosterage

Once a changeling has undergone the Dream Dance and is aware that she is one of the exiled fae, she now has to find a place among those like herself. Usually, other Kithain — those alerted to her existence by the telltale surge of Glamour from her Chrysalis — bring the fledgling to the nearest freehold. There, she begins her education as a child of the Dreaming. She learns the reason for the overwhelming experience she has just undergone and discovers her true nature as well as her faerie *kith* (or race).

At the same time, the new changeling usually acquires a mentor, who "adopts" her and acts as her guardian and tutor during the first year or so after her Chrysalis. This period of *fosterage* takes its name from the medieval custom whereby nobles exchanged children so that alliances between new generations could form. Because the new changeling's mortal family (if she still has one) cannot understand the profound



revelations induced by the Chrysalis, the mentor and his companions become a second family to the fledgling. To protect the bond between guardian and ward, both parties swear an Oath of Fosterage. This is usually the first experience a changeling has concerning the power of the oathbond.

Usually the mentor is an older, more experienced Kithain, often a grump, but sometimes a wilder. The choice of the individual who serves in this position falls upon the ruler of the freehold which first sheltered the changeling. If the fledgling is a member of the nobility, the local lord often chooses a mentor. Although this relationship exists to benefit the fosterling by easing her into Kithain society, all too often local Kithain politics determine who receives the "honor" of taking a new changeling under his wing.

When a *motley* — a group of commoner Kithain — discovers a new changeling, it rarely delivers its prize into the hands of the nobles, preferring to foster her itself. In these cases, the mentor is the most influential member of the motley or the one who best suits the ward. Fosterage among commoners lacks the hierarchical nature of noble fosterage, and the new Kithain's guardian often acts more like a big brother or sister than a foster parent.

Although a guardian is the single biggest influence on a new changeling, often imposing his viewpoints and interpretations of Kithain society and interactions upon his ward, this does not mean that the ward becomes a carbon copy of her mentor. In fact, the reverse happens as often as not: the natural rebellion of youth asserts itself, and the new changeling patterns herself after the opposite of her mentor. Thus, a Seelie guardian can have an Unseelie ward, or a traditionalist noble can foster a changeling with strong anarchist tendencies. Despite these differences, however, unless the mentor abuses the bond between himself and his ward, a changeling often retains feelings of respect and affection for her first protector throughout her life.

Since the Mists separate a changeling's mortal kin from knowledge of the Dreaming or Kithain society, a guardian often makes his ward the heir to his estate and titles (if he has any). This custom assures continuity from one generation to the next.

The Saining

The period during which new Kithain adjust to their roles in changeling society typically lasts for a year and a day, and is divided into two distinct parts: the time of warding and the time of watching.

During the time of warding, guardians or mentors keep a close watch on childling or wilder fledges, taking responsibility for any transgressions of Kithain customs or traditions made by their wards. Gradually the restrictions upon new fledglings are relaxed, and they begin to interact more directly with their new surroundings and other changelings. This relaxing of supervision marks the beginning of the time of watching. Now the fledgling learns from hard experience, making her own mistakes and bearing the consequences of her actions.

Changelings who undergo the Chrysalis late in life, after they have reached adulthood in the mortal form, receive slightly different treatment. Rather than suffering through a period of adoption, these new "grumps" (as older changelings are called) are guests of a sponsoring freehold or motley. They still receive instruction about their faerie heritage and place in Kithain society, but their hosts make allowances for the wisdom and experience their human existence has taught them. For many new grumps, the transition between their former lives and their new existence comes as a relief, an explanation for all the nagging feelings of discomfort and displacement they felt in human society. For others, the upsetting of everything they have known places them in a precarious state of mind and only the most judicious treatment can help them acclimate.

When a new changeling has successfully survived both warding and watching, she undergoes a ritual called the *Saining* (literally, "naming") that initiates her as a full member of Kithain society. During this ceremony, seers versed in special Arts are able to part the Mists and discover the True Name of the new Kithain. This secret name defines each changeling's relationship to the Dreaming and embodies her essence. All changelings who have undergone their Sainings know that their True Names must be held closely and told to no one outside their household or motley. Knowledge of another being's True Name gives the knower power over that creature, so some changelings refuse to tell their True Names to anyone.

A sidhe changeling undergoes a variation on the Saining ritual, a secret ceremony attended only by members of the noble house that has sponsored the fledge. In addition to the naming ceremony, the newly awakened sidhe undergoes the *Fior-Righ*, an ordeal which tests her physical, mental and social prowess. The results of the Fior-Righ determine her rank and to which noble house she belongs.

Occasionally, noble houses deliberately plant one of their own into a mortal family and bide their time until the mortal host undergoes her Chrysalis. Under these circumstances, the house already knows much of the information normally revealed by the Saining, such as the changeling's house, character, strengths and weaknesses.

After her Saining, a changeling swears an Oath of Fealty to the lord of her freehold or to the motley which has adopted her. Depending on her skills and her willingness to do so, she may take service in the household of her new lord. The Saining marks the end of the Chrysalis for a changeling and the beginning of her life as a resident of both the mortal world and of her true reality, that of the Dreaming.

The Grip of Time

"You get the same as everyone else; a lifetime, no more, no less."

— Neil Gaiman, *Sandman: Brief Lives*

Before the Shattering, the fae who dwelled on Earth and in Arcadia were immortal, their natures part of a world of eternal Springtime and magic. The dreams of humanity created and sustained all of the Kithain, and made them as immune to the passage of time as any thought or dream could be.

With the coming of the Shattering that divided the Dreaming from the human world, the commoner changelings were

forced to seek shelter in mortal seemings against the cold claws of Banality. While the nobles of the fae withdrew to Arcadia and sealed the gates behind them, most remaining Kithain survived in mortal shells, although their memories of the faerie realm became clouded by Banality and much of the knowledge of Arcadia and the Dreaming was lost.

The commoners found their immortal natures tied to the lives of their mortal surrogates. As their mortal selves aged and died, the spirits of the fae passed on to other mortals in a cycle of rebirth that has continued to this very day. Their mortal lives were transient, but their fae natures survived, waiting and hoping for a sign, a chance to regain contact with Arcadia and the Dreaming.

An Indian Summer entered the Autumn of the commoners with the Resurgence. A flood of Glamour restored many of the old trods and freeholds to their former glory and awakened many sleeping fae to their true natures. The Resurgence also brought many exiled sidhe nobles back to Earth and gave them mortal seemings similar to those of the commoners as part of their punishment. The commoners have for the most part accepted their lot as immortal fae trapped within the mortal cycle of life, but the sidhe still cling to dreams of immortality and regaining Arcadia.

How Changelings Age

The seeming a changeling begins at is the mortal age at which he undergoes the Chrysalis and awakens to his fae nature. Thus, a childling is usually 12 years old or less, a wilder in his teens or early 20s, and a grump is older than that. There are some exceptions to these age groups among changelings, but most Kithain have seemings that fit close to their mortal age.

A changeling advances in seemings as he advances in mortal years, from childling to wilder to grump. Eventually grumps fall into the infirmity of old age and die, although a great many changelings are Undone by Banality long before their mortal seemings die natural deaths. Very few changelings pass peacefully into the Summerlands of old age. More often in this day and age they are Undone by the increasing Banality that tends to come with age, or die in violence against their enemies.

Most changelings fear the Forgetting or being Undone far more than mortal death, because they know that upon death they will continue on to the Summerlands and into life once again. Their fae nature can only be destroyed by pure Banality, such as cold iron. What a changeling fears most is having his immortal fae nature destroyed and lost to the world forever, denied even the chance to find the way back to Arcadia some day. The permanent loss of any changeling is a tragedy to all Kithain and a sign of Banality's increasing hold on the world as Winter draws nearer.

The sidhe fear the cold touch of death more than any other changeling, because their fate is not as certain as that of the other Kithain. Latecomers to mortal life, the sidhe have mortal seemings just as other changelings do. However, when they die, there is no sign of the sidhe being reborn into the mortal world as the other Kithain are. It may be that the sidhe, their punishment on Earth complete, return to Arcadia, enjoying Springtime for the rest of eternity. But it may just as easily be that death is the final punishment for the exiled sidhe, and that their fae natures are destroyed upon their mortal deaths, cast into Oblivion, never to be seen again. The mere possibility of such a fate is enough to chill the soul of any changeling. What happens to the fae spirits of the nobles when they die is a complete unknown, and that dark mystery frightens all of the once-immortal sidhe to the core.

Some scholars have suggested the scandalous theory that sidhe are reborn into the world, but as commoners, the better to teach the exiles some humility and empathy for the Kithain who were left behind to suffer the long years of the Interregnum. The sidhe put little stock in such an idea, coming as it does from the scholars and archivists of the disgraced House Liam.

Preventing Aging

Many changelings have sought ways to prevent the inevitable march of time from affecting their mortal seemings, to regain some glimmer of the immortality they once enjoyed, but these efforts have always ended in failure, sometimes tragically, as in the case of Lhandren, the legendary Lord of Foulness.

The only means to prevent aging for a changeling is time spent in a freehold. Of course, spending too much time in a freehold risks a changeling entering Bedlam, so most Kithain balance their time inside freeholds with time in the outside world. Generally speaking, changelings with regular access to a freehold are longer-lived than mortals, and the very oldest changelings play a complex game of dodge-ball with Bedlam, Banality and the clock that they are going to lose sooner or later — one of the reasons why the very oldest changelings all seem to be a little batty.

It is more typical to find nobles who have extended their lives through spending time in a freehold than it is to find commoners doing the same. Nobles fear the effects of death and aging more than most commoners do, since the commoners know they will come around again, sooner or later.

Síocháin

Figures of legend even among the Kithain, the *Síocháin* are fae who have achieved a balance between Banality and Glamour, between their mortal and fae natures. They have accepted both entirely, and, as a result, have regained their immortality.

Some changelings believe that the Síocháin are proof that one of the purposes of the exile on Earth is to teach the fae to live in both worlds and to integrate their faerie and mortal natures into one. They say that the nobility's fear of death and rejection of their mortal sides is the reason why they have lost their immortality; their own arrogance will not allow them to embrace the mortal side that may prove the key to eternal life.

Whatever may be the case, the eternal Síocháin remain silent on the matter.

There are legends of treasures that can slow or prevent aging in changelings, like the mystical Fountain of Youth, but so far as is known, none of these items have been seen anywhere outside of Arcadia, and may not even exist on Earth. Any such treasure would be the subject of a great quest on the part of the changeling who discovers its existence.

Effects of Aging

As time marches on, changelings suffer the same effects of age as mortals do. They also endure some specific effects associated with their fae natures as they age. This section details those changes.

Mortal Seeming

Most changelings live in the world of flesh, interacting daily with human society and its inherent disbelief in magical reality. To survive in a world that refuses to believe in the existence of trolls, boggans, redcaps and nockers, changelings take on the appearances of humans — adopting mortal seemings that hide their fae miens from mundane perceptions. Some hint of a changeling's true self always permeates this mortal mask, though. A troll might appear as an unusually tall or muscular human, while a deer pooka might have large eyes and extremely slender limbs. While changelings always perceive the fae mien of other Kithain, most humans see only the outer form, never realizing that the wild-haired, shaggy-browed musician they admire is actually a satyr whose faerie soul has serenaded crowds for hundreds of years.

As time passes, a changeling's mortal seeming changes just like any other mortal's body does. Children grow and become adolescents, then adults, and eventually grow old and pass from this world. The effect of being in a freehold halts a changeling's mortal aging as well as her fae aging, so childlings and wilders often have trouble in mortal society when years seem to pass for everyone but them and they never grow up (or do so half as fast as their friends and playmates do). This often leads to childling or wilders abandoning their mortal families and becoming "Lost Boys" (and girls) who run away from mortal society and spend all of their time living in freeholds, eventually slipping into Bedlam unless they are taken in or provided some kind of shelter in the outside world.

To prevent this fate, fosterage is used to provide these youths homes with sympathetic changelings or kinain who understand their fae natures, although this can sometimes cause problems with the human authorities. A childling fears few things as much as a Banality-laden representative of Child Welfare Services coming to call on his fosterage to find out why he is involved in such "strange" activities away from his natural parents.

Adult wilders and grumps often have similar problems when co-workers, friends and neighbors realize that there is something "strange" about the changelings, particularly if they retard their aging in freeholds. For a while, the lack of change is not noticeable, but when years go by and the changeling seems to age very little, there may be questions or idle curiosity to be concerned about.



The more time the changeling spends in a freehold to prevent aging, the more likely that someone in mortal society will notice something unusual. This can cause a changeling to be cut off from her mortal life, forcing her to spend more time in freeholds and taking a greater risk of slipping into Bedlam.

Fae Mien

A changeling's fae mien is her true self, the faerie soul hidden within a costume of mortal flesh. Unlike the pale shroud of skin which forms a changeling's mortal disguise, the fae mien partakes of immortality. To those with eyes that can perceive the Dreaming, the true form of a changeling shines through the false veneer of mortality. Changelings always recognize each other as denizens of the Dreaming.

Within the boundaries of a freehold, faerie trod or any place enriched by Glamour, a changeling's fae mien completely overwhelms her mortal guise, but even outside these protected environs, the faerie soul persists in announcing its presence to other changelings, who have no trouble distinguishing it from the mortal clothing it wears. Unless a changeling is overwhelmed by Banality or has deliberately rejected or renounced this part of herself, other Kithain can always see her for what she is — a vixenish pooka or a mighty troll warrior.

A changeling's fae mien changes when the changeling's physical age (*not* her chronological age) reaches the appropriate point in her life. Thus, a childling becomes a wilder when she reaches 13 physical years, even if she has been a childling for 20 chronological years or more from time spent in freeholds. She undergoes a rite of passage appropriate to the new stage of life that she is embarking on, and her new seeming is recognized by the rest of fae society. This process represents a changeling gaining in wisdom and experience, but also a slow and inevitable turn of the wheel toward Winter and the journey to the Summerlands.

For the Kithain, aging is more than a process of growing up and growing old; it is the accumulation of wisdom, experience and the Banality that often comes with the loss of childling innocence. It is part of the process of how a changeling becomes an elder in fae society, and eventually passes her wisdom and experience on through the Dreaming to her next mortal life.

Banality

I have lost my passion: why should I need to keep it
Since what is kept must be adulterated?
I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch:
How should I use them for your closer contact?
— T. S. Eliot, "Gerontion"

Disbelief threatens the very existence of changelings. The curtain of doubt and rationality that humans raised centuries ago to explain away their fears not only separates the mortal world from the Dreaming, it also erodes the spark of creativity that gives rise to hope and imagination. Changelings call this universal negation of the creative spirit Banality, for it seeks to reduce the marvelous to the mundane, the miraculous to the ordinary, and the unexplainable to the impossible. Many older Kithain refer to this destructive force of disbelief and cynicism as the Endless Night or the Long Winter, for it epitomizes darkness, dreariness and relentless cold. It is the death of the spirit.

Banality clouds the minds of mortals to the wonders of the world around them and blinds them to the possibilities for making their dismal lives better. Banality argues that things are as they are through a long, tedious process of cause and effect. Evolutionary processes and entropic decay only go in one direction, and all things will eventually come to a grinding halt with the death of the sun. Banality is the wet blanket of the cosmos. In more immediate terms, Banality prompts a jaded parent to destroy a child's belief in Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. It forces a talented student to lay aside his dreams of becoming a great writer or musician in favor of joining the work force because his advisors counsel him to make "realistic" decisions about his future.

Banality rules the World of Darkness, casting its icy shadow over urban landscapes and ruined countrysides. Contact with this malevolent force threatens to extinguish the flame of faerie magic. Held in its cold iron grip, the Dreaming fades and chimerical splendor devolves into tawdry wisps of foolery and idle imaginings. The Kithain fear Banality almost more than they fear anything else, even death, for on the day that the last shred of Glamour falls prey to its mindless rationality, the Dreaming disappears forever.

Glamour

In bright contrast to Banality, *Glamour* energizes the world around it, shedding light on everything it touches, transforming the most ordinary object into a thing of unimaginable beauty or indescribable terror. If matter (or whatever currently passes for matter) forms the building blocks of the mortal world, then Glamour comprises the basic stuff of fae reality. Glamour powers the Dreaming, gives life to chimerical creations, and invests physical substance with magical energy. Also known as "faerie magic," Glamour gives changelings the ability to create castles out of tenement buildings, weave grand illusions that are "real" to those who touch the Dreaming, and enchant mortals to do their bidding or to see the world as changelings see it.

Changelings depend on Glamour for the ability to sustain their fae mien and to cast their *cantrips* (or spells). Without a steady supply of this precious element, changelings soon forget their connection to the Dreaming and fade away into their mortal seemings and mundane lives.

In the World of Darkness, Glamour is a rare commodity. Banality has greatly diminished the supply of Glamour, and changelings spend much of their time searching for new sources and preserving what still exists. Most changelings believe that if they can increase the amount of Glamour in the world, they can reduce the effects of Banality and eventually return the world to its original, magical state.

Like most sources of energy or power, Glamour is imperceptible to normal senses. Lacking belief, mortals cannot see Glamour or anything created from it. Nevertheless, it is as real as atoms, wind or thought. Changelings, because they know that

Glamour exists, can sense its presence. All Kithain have some degree of faerie sight, or *kenning*, which enables them to perceive the currents of faerie magic, though those who possess the Kenning Talent (see pg. 140) are more skilled in its use than others. Kenning allows changelings to see through each other's mortal seemings and recognize their fae miens, as well as to locate freeholds and perceive chimerical creatures and objects.

The Undoing

Banality can so overwhelm a changeling that it divorces her completely from her faerie nature, driving out all memory of her true self and her link to the Dreaming. When this happens, a changeling slowly forgets that she was ever anything except a normal human. Her fae mien becomes so faded that other changelings have a hard time perceiving her as one of the Kithain. This catastrophe is called the *Undoing*, because it unravels the stuff of the Dreaming that surrounds a changeling until nothing is left but mortal flesh and a hollow soul.

A changeling's mortal seeming is her best protection from the dangers of the Undoing. By incorporating a small portion of Banality into her essence, a changeling can build up a tolerance for small amounts of Banality. Thus she can keep hold of her true self while going about her mundane existence, knowing in the back of her mind that she is one of the Kithain even as she waits tables or studies for her medical degree. Hiding behind a mortal seeming also camouflages a changeling from the active agents of Banality, who seek out those like her with the intent of destroying them or severing them from the Dreaming. Prolonged contact with Banality wreaks its toll on the changeling psyche regardless of the limited protection afforded by the mortal seeming, so most Kithain seek out every available opportunity to escape from the confines of mundane reality.

Cheating Banality

Hiding in plain sight of mortals has long been a custom of the fae, even before it was necessary. To amuse themselves, faeries would occasionally switch places with mortals, taking on the seemings of human infants or children (transporting the individuals so displaced to Arcadia) to experience existence in the flesh. Such children, however, were different from normal children, and some humans astutely recognized them as "changelings."

Later, when the Shattering threatened the continued existence of the commoners who remained in the world after the departure of the sidhe, these enterprising faeries realized that their best hope for survival lay in a variation on the ancient tradition of "changing" themselves for humans. By entering the bodies of unborn infants, commoners were able to begin lives as human infants, inuring themselves to the ravages of Banality until their faerie selves grew strong enough to spark the Chrysalis. When a changeling's mortal body died, her soul returned in a new body. Thus, the Changeling Way was born. Most commoners and a few sidhe (primarily from House Scathach) reincarnate in succeeding generations of human families, generally those with fae blood.

The disadvantage to placing a faerie spirit within a cocoon of flesh lies in the forgetfulness that accompanies the process. All changelings lose their memories of their true selves when they assume mortal seemings. Until a changeling undergoes her Chrysalis, she acts fully human, believing that she is nothing more. Occasionally, mortals who host faerie spirits are so engulfed by Banality that they never discover their true natures. Their untold stories remain forever clouded in the Mists between the worlds.

The Mists

A man breaking his journey between one place and another at a third place of no name, character, population or significance, sees a unicorn cross his path and disappear. That in itself is startling, but there are precedents for mystical encounters of various kinds, or to be less extreme, a choice of persuasions to put it down to fancy; until — "My God," says a second man, "I must be dreaming, I thought I saw a unicorn."

— Tom Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*

Born from a mixture of Banality and the ancient protections erected by the fae to hide themselves from the eyes and minds of mortals, the Mists stand as the greatest barrier (second only to Banality itself) between the Kithain and the Dreaming. Because they have made themselves part of the mortal world, all changelings suffer from the forgetfulness inflicted by the Mists. These clouds of disenchantment and befuddlement deprive most changelings of their memories of Arcadia, their past lives and even keep them from remembering their true selves.

Unless they work aggressively to retain enough Glamour to ward off the effects of the Mists, changelings quickly degenerate into their mortal forms, losing not only the physical evidence of their faerie natures but the memories that they were ever anything more than human. This state of partial amnesia leaves afflicted changelings with a gap in their minds that aches to be filled, driving many to search desperately for what is missing. For them, the hero's quest of self-discovery is a journey undergone many times, much like a recurring dream — or, in some cases, nightmare.

Occasionally the Mists part, revealing glimpses of a changeling's past. Most often, this occurs in dreams, for the dreams of the fae are, in fact, rare moments of contact with the Dreaming. Once in a great while, a changeling recalls something of her life in Arcadia or a snippet of information about one of her past reincarnations. Too often, however, the curtain drops, and the dreamlike memory dissipates under the harsh glare of Banality.

The Mists always hide the Dreaming or anything connected to it from the eyes of true mortals. The Banality inherent in most humans blinds them to anything that exists outside the normal parameters of their worldview. What they don't believe in, they don't see, or else they find some rational explanation for it such as a momentary hallucination or a "trick of the light." Unless deliberately enchanted, mortals remain wrapped up in their comforting layers of reality, logic and cynical disbelief.



The Kith

When a changeling emerges from her Chrysalis to take her place in the society of the Dreaming, she enters a new world with a new identity and the knowledge that she belongs to one of the many races of the fae. A changeling's faerie race is called her kith. Although there were hundreds of faerie kith before the Shattering, not all of them remained in the world. Of the ones that did not flee to Arcadia, only a few survived.

Changelings refer to themselves individually and in groups as *Kithain* or "the Kithain," a word derived from "kith" and denoting a member of a faerie race. Even before their Chrysalises, the mortal seemings of dormant changelings often reflect their kith, thus making it possible for Kithain to ken the presence of potential changelings despite the wash of Banality that hides the fae self from sight. This is not always the case, however. Sometimes a changeling's kith does not become apparent until her mortal body is exposed to the infusion of Glamour that announces the onset of the Chrysalis.

As a changeling ages and her Banality increases (as it inevitably does), her fae mien and mortal seeming come to resemble one another more and more closely. Eventually she succumbs to the fate of all changelings: Her fae self merges with her mortal form and her kith vanishes, forever swallowed up in the world of Banality — until mortal death brings about the faerie spirit's reincarnation and the dream begins anew.

The nine kith that comprise the majority of Western changeling races are:

• **Boggans** — Known as practical and home-loving helpers of those in need, boggans are also inveterate meddlers in the affairs of those they help. Quiet and industrious, they excel in accomplishing household or everyday tasks at an astounding pace.

• **Eshu** — Originating in Africa, the eshu now exist in all parts of the world. These perennial wanderers live for the stories they collect and tell. Their sharp wits and innate canniness make them shrewd bargainers, while their talent for being precisely where they need to be at the proper time sometimes leads their companions down unexpected paths.

• **Nockers** — The bizarre appearance and curmudgeonly attitude of these industrious changelings masks an overwhelming desire to tinker and build. Skilled crafters and smiths, nockers seek a perfection they can never achieve and often prefer the company of their creations to social interaction.

• **Pooka** — The pranksters of the changeling community, pooka share an affinity with animals and a love of tricks and practical jokes. Clever and deceptive in their speech, these roguish changelings never tell the complete truth.

• **Redcaps** — Hideous in body and in manner, redcaps not only give changelings a bad reputation, they glory in adding injury to insult. Their bloodthirsty behavior, coupled with their uncanny ability to ingest virtually anything they can fit into their oversized mouths, wins them few friends outside their own kith.

• **Satyrs** — Satyrs embody the essence of sensuality. Shameless hedonists, they live for carnal pleasures and sensual gratification. Nevertheless, they are valued for their wise counsel and musical talent.

• **Sidhe** — Epitomizing the beauty and grace of the "classic" faerie, these aristocratic changelings exude an aura of authority and nobility regardless of their true status in changeling society. Sidhe rarely question their right to rule.

• **Sluagh** — Secretive and sly, these odd changelings prefer darkness and hidden places. Able to speak only in whispers, sluagh collect information with a passion and disseminate it only for a price.

• **Trolls** — These giants of the fae possess incredible strength and determination. Once they give their loyalty, nothing can sway them from those they have sworn to protect. Honor walks in their footsteps.

The Houses

Sidhe who awaken to their faerie selves not only discover their kith, they also acquire knowledge of the noble houses to which they belong. When the trods opened in 1969, allowing many of the sidhe to return to the mortal world, five noble houses came through from Arcadia. Many of them retained the vague sense that their return was forced upon them, an exile from the Dreaming as punishment for deeds they could not remember.

Unlike the commoner kith, the sidhe have only been on Earth in substantial numbers since the Resurgence. Nevertheless, the five noble houses quickly reasserted their presence on Kithain society, restructuring it to fit their memories of the old days before their untimely departure. Today, in the aftermath of the Accordance War and the Treaty of Concord, these houses maintain a monopoly on the power structure of the Kithain.

Since the Resurgence, individuals from the eight houses remaining in Arcadia have arrived on Earth, either banished from the Dreaming as renegades and outcasts or else sent to fulfill specific purposes. Due to the action of the Mists, these solitary sidhe seldom remember the reasons for their appearances in the mortal world. Although these loners usually find sanctuary under the aegis of one of the established noble houses, they rarely rise to high positions in their adopted houses since their hosts can never be certain if they are giving shelter to Arcadian criminals or heroes on Earthly quests.

The noble houses take their names from their legendary founders, who imbued their lines with certain aspects of their personalities. Thus, members of one house share some characteristics, although individuals may vary widely from the stereotype.

Chapter Three: The Kithain provides a more detailed description of the five noble houses that make up the bulk of the sidhe.



• **House Dougal** — Known for its practicality, common sense and no-nonsense attitude, House Dougal values order and preciseness above the more "flighty" qualities of the other noble houses. Architects of sidhe society, these nobles seek to expand their domain through wise and prudent planning rather than through intrigue and manipulation.

• **House Eiluned** — House Eiluned has a reputation as the *House of Secrets*, and many of its members excel in the faerie Arts. Masters of intrigue and subtlety, they are valued for their arcane knowledge but distrusted for their secretive behavior. The reputation of their founder, the sorceress Lady Eiluned, has blackened that of the house as a whole.

• **House Fiona** — Passionate and headstrong, House Fiona bears a wild streak that shows even among its most conservative members. Indulging in all forms of sensual gratification, members of this house are notorious for their radical thinking and impulsive behavior. They are equally quick to love or anger, and give themselves utterly to whatever cause they espouse. Their hospitality toward commoners and nobles alike is legendary.

• **House Gwydion** — If the sidhe believe in their innate right to rule the commoners, the Gwydion sidhe believes it is their destiny to rule the sidhe. Members of this house demonstrate the best and worst aspects of true nobility. Valuing honor above all and dedicated to the defense of the Dreaming, they also demonstrate a tendency to violent outbursts that often lead to tragic ends.

• **House Liam** — Since their return, members of House Liam have developed a sense of duty toward mortals, protecting them from the abuses of Ravaging by the fae. Although they are gentle and soft-spoken, nobles of this house make fierce warriors when called upon to defend the helpless or the innocent. They often serve as sages and record keepers to other noble houses, despite the stigma of disgrace attached to their name.

Changeling Society

Newly awakened changelings not only discover their newfound identities as individuals, they also become aware that they belong to an entire society of the fae. Changeling society has its own structure, customs and laws, and each new Kithain must understand all of these aspects if she is to coexist amicably with others of her kind.

Most changelings, if they are not already inclined to the company of others, soon learn that their best chance for survival lies in making connections with other changelings. Left to their own devices, solitary changelings quickly succumb to Banality. Because it is so dependent on belief, Glamour must be shared to proliferate. A lone changeling cannot withstand the constant denial that surrounds him in the mortal world. (In this case, if a chimeric tree falls in a forest and no changeling witnesses it, not only does it not make a sound, it does not even exist!)

The basic units of changeling society are the noble household and the commoner motley. Members of these groups are usually bound to each other by oaths of some kind (see below). Both households and motleys eagerly seek out new changelings, since each Kithain represents a new part of the Dreaming that has come to life in a world bereft of dreams.

Usually centered around a freehold, households and motleys derive their power and influence from these pockets of the Dreaming. The protection of a freehold often constitutes the primary duty of each changeling group.

The "Other" Houses

In addition to the five predominantly Seelie Houses that entered the mortal world during the Resurgence, at least four other houses have significant presences on Earth. Members of the Unseelie Houses of Ailil, Balor and Leanhaun also left Arcadia, though they do not advertise themselves to the same degree as their Seelie counterparts. A 14th house, House Scathach, never left Earth but remained to share the fate of its commoner cousins, adopting the Changeling Way to ensure its survival and freely mixing its members' blood with humankind's.

Households

A *household* describes a group of changelings who reside together in a freehold and who serve the noble lord of that freehold, either as vassals or as retainers. Households subscribe to the feudal structure reimposed by the Resurgent sidhe. They ally themselves with the noble hierarchy and form the backbone of the Kingdom of Concordia and its subject kingdoms. Every household displays the coat of arms of its ruling lord or lady as well as a unique battle standard. A household lord must bear the rank of knight or better. More often, the rulers of households are barons or greater lords.

Kithain take great pride in their households, working to ensure their successes and increase their reputations. The achievements and glory of one member of a household brings fame to everyone in the group, while a household's honor likewise reflects upon all its members. Competition between households is common, and each usually has at least one major rival. Rival households seek every possible opportunity to confront one another, whether on the jousting field at tourneys, in open warfare or on the more civilized battlefield of courtly amours.

Although the sidhe rule most households, a few ennobled commoners maintain households that are as loyal, if not more so, to the social structure that empowers them.

Motleys

Groups of commoners form motleys rather than households. A *motley* consists of a loose confederation of Kithain, allied through ties of friendship or mutual survival. Most motleys exist outside the feudal structure, and a few actively oppose what they see as the oppressive rule of the sidhe. In fact, they offer themselves as an alternative to the dominant hierarchy. Motleys either function without permanent leaders, or their leaders are chosen by the members of the group.

Motleys first formed during the Interregnum, when the commoners who remained behind after the departure of the sidhe banded together in groups to weather the storm. Adapting to life in the mortal world by forming traveling circuses, freak shows and other itinerant groups, motleys proliferated Europe. Those commoners who relocated to the American continents brought with them the tradition of free association embodied in their motleys, thus helping to strengthen the idea of independence from divine rule that eventually sparked the New World's rebellion from Europe.

Most motleys base themselves in freeholds of one sort or another, working together to protect and maintain these havens from outside dangers as well as from the greedy desires of nobles seeking to increase their domains. Motley freeholds are called *mews*, and serve as open sanctuaries for all Kithain. Some motleys still maintain a modified form of the nomadic lifestyle of their circus origins, taking up temporary residence in convenient freeholds until forcibly evicted. Because of this practice, most households rarely leave their freeholds completely unguarded, lest they return from a tournament or some other group endeavor to find themselves displaced by a rowdy commoner motley.

The relationship between motleys and the local nobility varies from place to place. In general, nobles consider motleys as little better than gangs or, worse, as outlaw bands. The proliferation of motleys has, however, forced the nobility to recognize the power they represent among the Kithain. In most cases, nobles in any given fiefdom attempt to gain control of the motleys in their area, using them as pawns and catspaws to further their ambitions and political machinations.

Today, motleys serve as a powerful check on the power of the nobility. They represent the voice of the commoners, and provide visible proof that the Kithain do not need the rulership of the sidhe to survive and prosper. Many nobles consider motleys dangerous and try to break their hold on the common fae. Few motleys exercise any real influence over the conservative rulers of the kingdoms of the fae, but their sway among the hoi-polloi is growing daily.

Oathcircles

There exists a third form of changeling social unit, called an *oathcircle*, which often transcends or crosses the lines between households and motleys. Oathcircles comprise groups of friends who swear oaths of loyalty to one another. While freeholds may serve as bases for one or more oathcircles, some such groups have no permanent home.

Oathcircles usually arise from groups of changelings who enjoy each other's company and who share similar interests. Nobles and commoners may belong to the same oathcircle, sharing equal ties with each other regardless of their rank in Kithain society. Occasionally oathcircles form due to circumstance—fighting a common enemy, achieving a particular goal or undertaking a specific quest. In these cases, the oaths that bind members together may be temporary, but are no less strong for their finite duration. In addition to the responsibilities such a binding carries, oathmates are able to pool their Glamour, acting in concert to enhance each other's cantrips and increase their effectiveness as individuals and as a group.

In addition to households, motleys and oathcircles, changelings also frequently form secret orders and societies, as well as cliques for gathering Glamour.

The Courts

Even before the Shattering rendered changelings dual creatures of Glamour and Banality, the children of the Dreaming possessed a two-fold nature. Permeating all of faerie life on an individual as well as societal level, the twinned strands of Seelie and Unseelie enlivened the Dreaming with its *pas-de-deux* of contrasts between light and shadow, order and chaos, law and freedom. Eternal rivals for ascendancy in the fae world, the Seelie and Unseelie philosophies once engaged in a perpetual struggle for dominance. Now they exist in an uneasy state of truce, forged during the Interregnum, but liable to shatter as the pressures of the mortal world bring the sides closer and closer to outright conflict.

Each outlook has its own Court, and although all changelings possess both a Seelie and an Unseelie side to their natures, only one of these aspects rules the personality of a given individual. Thus, Kithain are labeled either Seelie or Unseelie depending on which Court they embrace and, therefore, which side of their personality they tend to favor. This is not secret knowledge; the Seelie and the Unseelie are known to one another, and this information affects dealings between individual Kithain.

A changeling's Court marks her in myriad ways. Though the indicators of Seelie and Unseelie behavior are not always clear-cut, it is usually not hard to tell which Court holds a particular Kithain's allegiance. The two Courts react to each other instinctively, sometimes based on the innate differences between them. Seelie Kithain distrust their Unseelie cousins, while Unseelie sneer at their Seelie counterparts. Circumstances and treaties may force them to tolerate one another, but a certain amount of prejudice and disguised hostility often breaks through the elaborate veneer of coexistence.

Before the Shattering, Seelie and Unseelie Courts alternated their rule over the fae. During the spring and summer, the Seelie Court held precedence and celebrated the pageantry of life and growth. In the dark months of autumn and winter, the Unseelie ruled, honoring the grand process of death and entropy. Together, the Courts symbolized the eternal cycle of life and death, growth and decay, fertility and fallowness. The transfer of power from Seelie to Unseelie took place at Samhain, while the Unseelie gave over their right to rule to the Seelie at the Beltaine feast. During the Interregnum, this custom ceased as both Courts were forced to band together to survive. Since the Resurgence, the Seelie sidhe have held power and are loathe to surrender it, even temporarily, to their Unseelie cousins.

In Concordia in particular and throughout the fae world in general, Seelie and Unseelie Kithain have had to put aside their



eternal rivalry in order to assure the survival of the Dreaming. This has led to some odd juxtapositions within changeling society. Occasionally a freehold's lord will belong to a different Court than most of his members, and an oathcircle will sometimes contain both Seelie and Unseelie members, all of them bound by oaths that transcend their different outlooks.

Although neat pigeonholing of the differences between Seelie and Unseelie Courts is almost impossible, there are a few general distinctions that differentiate one from the other. Seelie are associated with light, summer and daytime; Unseelie belong to darkness, winter and night. The Seelie Court represents orderly traditions and lawful behavior; the Unseelie Court is notorious for breaking old traditions, devising new ones and, in general, urging constant change. These are not always the hard-and-fast descriptors for determining a changeling's Court. Occasionally a Seelie changeling fosters radical notions, while a veteran Unseelie knight holds extremely conservative attitudes. What is certain is that the two Courts exist and are locked in an endless cycle of rivalry. Together they embody all that is both good and bad, light and dark, static and dynamic in changeling society.

On rare occasions a changeling switches from one Court to the other, usually as a result of some great personal transformation in her life. Changing Court is not done lightly, for in order to do so a changeling must forswear her old nature and surrender to the other half of her personality, taking on her Seelie aspect if she was formerly Unseelie or vice versa. This choice alters her place in Kithain society and transforms her perceptions of herself. Accordingly, changing Court usually takes place only at certain symbolic times of the year, such as during the Samhain or Beltaine festivities.

The Seelie Court

The *Seelie* have a reputation as the guardians of fae traditions. They see themselves as peacekeepers, proponents of courtly love, protectors of the weak and embodiments of the ideals of chivalry. They tend to be traditional and often conservative in their outlook, preferring the tried and true over the risky and innovative.

Most Seelie seek the reunion between the mortal world and the Dreaming, and would like nothing better than a return to the time before the two realms split apart. To this end, many members of the Seelie Court consider the gathering and preservation of Glamour to be their sacred duty, a process of reawakening in mortals the ability to dream. Though they may consider the Unseelie Court their greatest rival, Banality is their greatest enemy.

Seelie changelings place honor above most other virtues. For them, the concepts of oathbreaking, treason, cowardice and other dishonorable behavior comprise a litany of the most grievous crimes imaginable. In addition to honor, they value courage, truth, beauty, justice and other attributes of the code of chivalry.

The Seelie Code

• *Death before dishonor.*

Chivalry still lives. Honor is the most important virtue, the source of all glory. Personal honor must always be kept stainless. Sometimes death is the only path which can erase a mark of dishonor.

• *Love conquers all.*

Love lies at the heart of the Dreaming. True love transcends all and epitomizes what it means to be Seelie. Courtly love best expresses love in its highest form, although familial love and love of companions also serve as pure embodiments of that exalted virtue. Anything is permitted in the name of true love.

• *Beauty is life.*

Beauty is a timeless, objective quality that, while it cannot be defined, is always recognized for itself. Beauty is the muse of creation, the ultimate flowering of the Dreaming. Once found, it must be protected, for it is both eternal and fragile. To die in the service of beauty is an honor and a privilege.

• *Never forget a debt.*

One gift deserves another. The recipient of a gift is obligated to return the favor. Likewise, a curse should be returned in kind. An oath of friendship should be answered with a corresponding oath. Never refuse to aid anyone to whom you are indebted. Never forget a kindness... or a cruelty.

In many ways, Seelie Kithain concern themselves with the past. Bards and lorekeepers occupy places of honor in Seelie households. These keepers of legends and knowledge counsel their Seelie lieges with storehouses of information on how things used to be and on proper behavior in any given circumstance. Many Seelie, especially the noble sidhe, devote themselves so entirely to recreating the past that they affect the dress and manners of the Middle Ages, the period they last remembered from their time on Earth before the Shattering.

The Unseelie Court

Where the Seelie dedicate themselves to preserving the traditions of the fae, the Unseelie style themselves as mockers of those traditions. They stand for the principles of constant change and impulsive action. They have a reputation for fostering war and madness, despising those weaker than themselves, and valuing freedom and wildness over any chivalric code. The Unseelie see themselves as radical visionaries, bringing about vital change and transformation through whatever means necessary, including violence.

Most members of the Unseelie Court believe that the Dreaming has abandoned them, and, therefore, that they owe no special loyalty to it or to their lost home of Arcadia. Unseelie fae use Glamour for their own ends, to gain strength and personal power and to further their political ambitions. The Unseelie feel that they should be the masters, rather than the servants, of the Dreaming. Furthermore, most Unseelie hold the conviction that the fae should rule humanity, since that feeble race of short-lived mortals exists only to provide the Glamour necessary for faerie existence. Thus, many Unseelie changelings lord it over the mortals they come in contact with, often surrounding themselves with groups of enchanted and enslaved humans in order to feed shamelessly on their dreams.

Some Unseelie, like their Seelie kin, wish to return to the Dreaming, but only to increase their own power and to bring the Dreaming under their rule. Unseelie changelings consider Banality a powerful opponent, but do not fear it in the same way that the Seelie do. Rather, they would like to conquer and harness Banality, making it, like the Dreaming, serve their purposes. A few truly radical Unseelie changelings believe that Banality represents the wave of the future, the true synthesis of reality as opposed to the illusory flimsiness of the Dreaming. These ultraradicals think that their strength of will can overcome Banality, and use it as a potent weapon against their Seelie rivals.

The Unseelie forswear the past, looking instead to the uncertain future. They consider stagnation, worn-out traditions, repression, censorship and limitation to be crimes against the free exchange of ideas. They take on the roles of champions of freedom, harbingers of change, advocates of free thought and breakers of rules. Many show outward contempt for courtly ways, going to great lengths to mock the chivalric behavior of the Seelie. Other members of the Unseelie Court follow many of the traditional ways, but do so because they are free to make that choice, not because custom dictates their behavior.

The Unseelie Code

• *Change is good.*

Security does not exist. The slightest of circumstances can transform a king into a peasant. Nothing is certain in a world where change is the only constant. Embrace change or else fall before its onslaught. Chaos and discord rule the universe. Adapt or die.

• *Glamour is free.*

Glamour is worthless unless used. Hoarding Glamour makes no sense, since it is an eternally replenishable resource. So long as humans exist, there will always be dreamers — hence, there will always be more Glamour. Acquire it by any means possible, and you will never be without a constant supply.

• *Honor is a lie.*

Honor has no place in the modern world. It is a fairy tale constructed to cover the essential emptiness behind most traditions. Only through enlightened self-interest can any truth be attained.

• *Passion before duty.*

Passion is the truest state of the fae spirit. Follow your instincts and act on your impulses. Live life to the fullest without regard to the consequences — they will come about regardless of what you do. Youth passes quickly, so have fun while you can. Death can come at any time, so live without regret.

The Shadow Court

During the Interregnum, a tradition known as the *Shadow Court* arose. Established by the Unseelie to mimic the lost custom of alternating rule, the Shadow Court became the primary way in which Unseelie changelings could retain some vestige of their lost position as shared rulers of the fae.

Called together during the evening rites of the Samhain celebration, the Shadow Court rules the changeling community for one night only. During its brief reign, it bestows honorary titles which carry over for the Unseelie half of the year. It also openly mocks the Seelie traditions, providing sometimes humiliating or painful reminders to its rivals that an alternative path exists for the fae to follow. Most Seelie fae dislike being made fun of, but grudgingly put up with the Shadow Court as a harmless outlet for Unseelie proclivities.

The Shadow Court occupies the current status of a Mardi Gras-like celebration, allowing changelings of both Courts to cast aside their inhibitions for a single night and revel in their deepest passions and most perverse dreams without fear of censure or punishment. Seelie changelings pay homage to their Unseelie natures on this night, becoming their dark halves for the duration of the festivities. The fallen fae are also honored during this time, for the Shadow Court feels a special affinity toward the spirits of the dead, who are central to the Samhain rites.

What most changelings do not know is that the Shadow Court meets at other times of the year as well, and has its own secret agenda known only to its members. The honorary titles bestowed at Samhain make it obvious to all changelings who currently lead the mock court, but since these positions are only nominal, few Kithain take them seriously. The clandestine — shadowy, in fact — meetings of the Shadow Court take place under conditions of utmost secrecy, and only the Court's most trusted members attend.

Although most Unseelie rulers tend to be on friendly terms with the Shadow Court, and may even suspect it of existing as an independent entity apart from its annual incarnation at Samhain, the leaders of the Shadow Court do not consider themselves bound to notify their "allies" of their every action. In fact, keeping even Unseelie rulers in the dark about the workings of the Shadow Court ensures a low profile for its members, who like it that way.

The real purpose behind the Shadow Court lies hidden to most Kithain, and its sinister plans for the future continue to unfold, appropriately, in the shadows of changeling society.

The Medieval Paradigm

Faerie society draws heavily on the customs and traditions of 14th century feudalism. While changelings take part in the modern world and live their mortal lives surrounded by the fruits of 600 years of technological and political "progress," when they interact with the Dreaming, they return to a world garbed in the distant past. This persistence of medieval trappings among the fae occurs for a number of reasons.

Despite the fact that commoners have adapted outwardly to changing times, their souls continue to harken back to the era before the Shattering. Because of this, most changelings exist within an eternal time loop. While their mortal flesh undergoes a constant cycle of aging, death and rebirth, their ancient spirits find comfort in the familiarity of medievalism.

In addition, the mortal world continues to exercise its own power over the remnants of the Dreaming. Most fairy tales take place in a medieval setting, and humans who still entertain a belief in faeries imagine them existing in a world full of castles and mythical creatures. Thus, the forms common to the Middle Ages provide the path of least resistance for changelings.

Finally, the sidhe nobles who control faerie society were absent for the rise of democratic government, and many modern political trends make no sense to these traditionalists. Since the Resurgence, these rulers of the fae have structured their power bases along feudal lines, reverting to the framework that existed at the time of the Shattering. The feudal system, based as it is on the protection of the land, presents an ideal model for a society centered around the preservation of freeholds and other places sacred to the Dreaming.

Feudalism arose among humans during the Middle Ages as the culmination of society's slow transformation from a hunter-gatherer nomadic lifestyle to an agricultural, sedentary model. Although older cultures placed great value on the fertility of the land, the rise of towns and the growth of populations made the production of food the single most important concern of most people. Feudal society arose around the need to guarantee the safety of the land for the people who tilled the soil. In return for their protection, the common folk swore fealty to lords and knights, who were occupied solely with readying themselves for their duty as guardians of the land. A hierarchy evolved with the nobles and warriors ruling over the peasantry. Despite this rigid class structure, the system of vassalage created strong ties of loyalty between rulers and ruled. Knights had a solemn duty to protect those who labored to put food on their tables, while peasants had a duty to feed those who put themselves at risk to ensure the peaceful working of the soil.

Although six centuries of change and invention have made the feudal system obsolete in the mortal world, feudalism and vassalage still serve a purpose within fae society. The rarity of freeholds and places where Glamour still concentrates makes these sites vulnerable to greedy usurpers and unconscious bearers of Banality. Under a system of kings and nobles, knights and peasants, the fae on Earth are able to impose a stable superstructure upon their society, one in which freeholds enjoy the protection of those strong enough to defend their precious stores of Glamour and chimeric magic. In addition, the pageantry and stateliness of medieval times appeals strongly to the changelings' natural bent for elaborate ceremonies and rituals.

The Accordance War resulted in a modified form of feudalism as the overriding form of fae government. Not quite so rigid as Earthly feudal systems, fae feudalism still provides a solid framework in which changelings can relate to one another, secure in the knowledge of who they are and the place they occupy in their society. The constant hostility of the mundane world fostered a great need for stability in changelings, and the feudal system provides the Kithain with a necessary anchor.

A complex network of loyalties and oaths bind together the various rungs on the hierarchical ladder of changeling feudal

society. The swearing of an oath and the value of a changeling's word are sacred bonds, not taken lightly. Breaking an oath constitutes one of the highest crimes among both Seelie and Unseelie Kithain. All changelings within the society have certain duties and responsibilities delineated by the oaths they have sworn. Nobles and knights swear to protect those under them. Commoners swear to obey those above them. Transgressors meet with swift punishment, not only by the courts of justice but through social ostracism and rejection by their peers.

Even Unseelie lords demand loyalty from their subjects. Despite their promulgation of freedom and license, many of these Kithain are just as insistent on the obedience of their followers as their Seelie counterparts.

Commoners and Nobles

Commoners have lived on Earth since the beginnings of the fae. Trapped here after the Shattering, they survived by placing themselves in mortal forms, undergoing continual reincarnation. By being born and reborn into human families, they have both protected themselves from the worst effects of Banality and have developed close ties with humankind. Nobles, in contrast, are usually sidhe transported from Arcadia during the Resurgence, here for a single incarnation and determined to make the best of their time in the mundane world. Although a few sidhe have entered the world through assuming the bodies of unborn humans, all of them realize that they have only one life to live before their spirits travel to an uncertain fate. This distinction makes most nobles obsessed with gaining and maintaining power and prestige, and differentiates them from the commoners, who know that if they don't succeed this time around, they can always try again.

Nobles consider commoners to be lowly and tainted with the trappings of mortality. Commoners see nobles as arrogant and unfeeling, concerned only with power and status. Although some commoners and nobles may like and respect one another as individuals, in general, the two classes of Kithain share a mutual distrust and dislike. The Treaty of Concord enforced the feudal system on commoners, but most of them still do not fully adhere to all of its strictures, privately rebelling against the more onerous duties relegated to them as "lower" Kithain. Most commoners pay lip service to the local lord while reserving their own private opinions, considering themselves fully the equal of any noble.

Liege and Vassal

Noble society hinges on a hierarchy in which rank and title determine one's position in the greater community. Respect is given to those of higher rank and expected from those of lesser status.

Within a feudal structure, almost every noble owes fealty to a higher noble. Even the kings and queens of Concordia are vassals of High King David, the supreme authority of faerie society in America. In a similar fashion, every noble is someone else's liege. Only squires, who occupy the bottom rung of the noble hierarchy, have no vassals, although they may exercise some limited dominion over the pages beneath them.

Commoners fall outside the strict hierarchy of noble society. Traditionalists regard them as little better than peasants,



and therefore consider all commoners to be their subjects. In some cases, in the aftermath of the Accordance War, a few commoners have attained noble rank and have thus integrated themselves into the noble hierarchy. Despite this, nobles consider "titled" commoners to be upstarts and rarely take them seriously.

Although many nobles see the acquisition of power as their primary goal, others hold the bonds between liege and vassal as sacred, seeing in these oaths the symbols of continuity and stability that promote an atmosphere in which Glamour can be harvested and protected and in which the fae can survive. Even these nobles are not exempt from political intrigue and maneuvering, however, for feudal societies encourage just such arcane jockeyings to improve position and garner additional status.

Those at the top of the hierarchy go to great lengths to ensure that they remain there and do everything possible (short of outright theft) to increase their holdings and expand their power bases. Alliances shift and change between nobles as circumstances dictate, with only the laws of the Escheat to temper them. Those at the bottom of the social ladder seek to better themselves and attain higher status through achieving recognition and respect.

Rights and privileges play an important part in the relationship between lord and vassal. Lords exercise certain powers over those they command, but they owe their vassals certain obligations in return, such as protection and sanctuary against outside threats. Likewise, vassals owe their lords loyalty and service. If a lord abuses the rights of his vassals, they, in turn, can lawfully rise up against their lord and overthrow him or else appeal to their lord's liege to correct the situation. This interlocked system of rights and duties holds noble society together.

Noble Obligations

Changeling nobles owe their vassals certain obligations. Nobles cannot abuse their vassals or treat them as thralls, slaves or even servants. Nobles must protect those beneath them from outside harm, whether from rival houses or from the agents of Banality. A noble lord owes her vassals sanctuary in times of need. She must provide fair judgment over all disputes within her domain, and cannot decree punishments without rightful cause. A noble acts as administrator over the property of commoners residing within her fief; her justice is supreme, and no outsiders may usurp her decisions. Nobles also have the duty to provide for holidays and festivals for the celebration of Glamour and the strengthening of ties to the Dreaming.

Judgments deemed unfair or unjust may be appealed to a higher lord. Violation of a noble's rights gives her the power to turn against her liege, who has forfeited his honor by breaking his oaths of loyalty to the violated noble. While noble society does not condone abuse of vassals, despots do occasionally arise, and, unless they are successfully opposed, often continue to tyrannize all those unfortunate enough to owe fealty to them.

Commoners and Noble Justice

Since many commoners do not adhere to the feudal system, conflicts that arise between nobles and common Kithain present problematic situations which only the greatest of tact may solve. Commoners who reside within a lord's domain and who refuse to acknowledge the authority of that lord cause internal strife that must find some resolution. Sometimes differences between lords and commoners can be solved through mediation by an individual who holds the respect of both. On occasion, High King David himself has had to personally negotiate a settlement between unhappy commoners and a disgruntled noble. His willingness to do so has contributed to his popularity among all Kithain.

Rank and Privilege

The bestowal of titles and the attaining of ranks form the core of the feudal society of the fae. From king to squire, each rank has its own rights, responsibilities and treasures that symbolize its power.

• **King or Queen** — Among the fae, the resonance of the Dreaming creates a close relationship between the ruling monarch and the land. In many ways, the king *is* the land. The actions taken by a monarch, however inconsequential they might seem, affect her domain. Usually, a kingdom reflects the personality of its ruler. If a king becomes brooding or falls prey to despair, darkness and cold become physical manifestations within his realm. If a queen suffers from great depression due to an unrequited love, her land may know constant rains and flooding. An older king's aloofness brings an icy chill to his kingdom, while a young queen's unruly passion results in mayhem and chaos throughout her domain. In times of war, a king or queen acts as warlord over all the armies within the realm.

Kings and queens are addressed as "Your Majesty," or occasionally "Your Royal Highness" (this is more common for a prince or princess).

Royal Treasures: Kings and queens possess crowns that allow them to know the locations of all the pennons (the markers of their territories) in the kingdom, scepters that allow them to draw Glamour from any hearths of balefire in the kingdom, seals that can countermand any ducal signet's imprint, and a weapon that is considered an extension of the royal will.

• **Duke or Duchess** — These are the highest nobles under the king or queen. They hold title to large numbers of freeholds (ruled in their names by lesser lords). Their domains typically include entire cities or large rural areas. They may have up to five counts and barons as vassals. Some serve their king or queen as diplomats, traveling throughout Kithain society on missions of import and subtlety. In wartime, dukes and duchesses act as generals and marshals of their monarch's forces, serving as commanders-in-chief of specific armies.

Dukes and duchesses are addressed as "Your Grace."

Ducal Treasures: Dukes and duchesses possess signets that allow them to sign treaties, assign lands, make proclamations and issue writs. These contracts are legally binding only within ducal fiefs. In addition, dukes and duchesses possess pennons that allow them to establish freeholds as their personal fiefs, superseding any counts' claims. They also possess hearthstones that allow them to draw Glamour from any hearths in their fief. Finally, they carry weapons that symbolize their right to command royal armies.

• **Count or Countess** — These nobles rank just below dukes and duchesses, but are nevertheless accounted as powerful lords. Their lands are known as counties, and occupy significant portions of a city or smaller rural areas. Counts and countesses hold the fealty of one or two barons and a few powerful knights. Since they occupy a middle ground among the nobility, they often have a reputation for being schemers and plotters, ever envious of those above them and ready to manipulate those below them. Kings and queens usually keep a close watch on their counts and countesses. In wartime, these nobles act as subcommanders, regimental organizers and coordinators of rear-support activities. They do not normally take the battlefield themselves unless they are personally renowned as warriors.

Counts and countesses are addressed as "Your Excellency." Counts are occasionally called earls, although women holding this title are still called countesses.

County Treasures: Counts and countesses possess pennons that they use to identify their counties. Their rule is superseded only by dukes and kings. Counts also have potent hearths, and can demand tithes of dross from their vassals to help feed these hearths. Each count or countess carries a weapon used in service to her superiors.

• **Baron or Baroness** — Barons and baronesses generally hold title to only a single freehold. Many barons resent their lords, consider the counts immediately above them as greedy, and covet their liege's greater power and lands. Barons and baronesses cling to power tenaciously. Since they are closer to their followers than many other nobles of higher rank, they usually enjoy the support of their vassals. Baronies usually include three or four knights who owe direct fealty to their lord. Some barons also host a number of knights-errant who hold no other loyalties.

Barons and baronesses are addressed as "Lord" or "Lady."

Baronial Treasures: Barons and baronesses have only their own hearths and their knightly weapons. They do have the right to gather Glamour within their fiefdoms, and may demand small tithes of dross from their knights.

• **Knight** — Knighthood is both a title and a state of honor. Knights are the backbone of feudal society, serving their lords as warriors and couriers. Occasionally a knight also holds a small fiefdom directly from her baron. Nobles are usually knighted when they are acclaimed as members of the nobility. Knights without holdings are the lowest class of noble.

Knights are addressed as "Sir" or "Lady" (though some female knights prefer the title "Dame").

Knightly Treasures: A knight's weapon is the symbol of her honor, an extension of her personal will and protection. Legend holds that so long as a knight remains true to her lord, her sword will never break.

• **Squire** — Squires are not nobles *per se*, but are personal servants to nobles (usually knights). Most are in training to become knights and thus enter the ranks of the nobility. Although some squires attain fame fighting at the sides of their masters, they generally remain out of combat, providing support for their knights by retrieving or replacing lost weapons and rounding up wayward chimera. A squire has no treasures, as such, but receives a small allowance of dross from his or her knightly patron.

Squires have no formal term of address.

Retainers

Nobles have a host of underlings, called *retainers*, who tend to their needs and perform vital services for them. Retainers are similar to vassals but are not part of the noble hierarchy. Many, in fact, are commoners who have given their loyalty and service to their lord in return for a comfortable position in her court. Retainers are usually paid in some fashion, either with small treasures or with promises and favors. Some commoners eagerly seek out positions as retainers in order to reap the benefits of association with noble society. Most motleys look down on these "sellouts," feeling that they have sacrificed their personal freedom for dubious gain.

• **Heralds** — Heralds serve as messengers, diplomats and couriers to their lords. This gives them a certain amount of diplomatic immunity when interacting with the courts of other nobles, so long as they pay the proper respect to their superiors in status. Heralds often serve as spies, since their duties allow them to move about in various circles without arousing too much suspicion. Heralds often possess treasures from their lords that allow them to travel quickly from place to place. They are responsible for summoning up commoner levies when fiefdoms are endangered.

• **Seers** — These skilled enchanters act as advisors to their lords. Their responsibilities include keeping watch for magical attacks on their lords and fiefdoms, conducting rituals (such as the Saining ceremony), and advising their lords on the use of lore and chimera. Seers' command of magic sometimes makes them distrusted, though most of them are scrupulously honest in their dealings.

• **Chancellors** — Chancellors serve as their lords' right hands, governing their lieges' lands in their absence and helping protect the fiefdoms from attack. Their intimate knowledge of the workings of their masters' freeholds and lands usually earns them the trust and respect of their lords. Few chancellors abuse this confidence; in return, many receive almost as much honor as their masters.

• **Bards** — Bards serve as a court's storytellers and lorekeepers. Their persons are considered sacred, and bad luck follows those who knowingly strike a bard or engage her in battle

when she is unwilling. The words of bards are believed to be prophetic. Most bards refrain from speaking unless performing or specifically requested to contribute to a conversation, lest they unwittingly utter something that (by virtue of coming from a bard's lips) carries the force of prophecy. They are among the most respected retainers.

• **Jesters** — Jesters entertain the nobility and usher in Glamour on certain festive occasions. They also act as the watchdogs of Banality. Jesters often point out the foibles and failings of nobles in ways that amuse rather than humiliate, thus providing a graceful means for a wayward noble to correct her behavior. Jesters have a duty to sniff out the mundane and destroy it before it poses a serious threat to a fiefdom. They employ both cantrips and treasures to fulfill this important task.

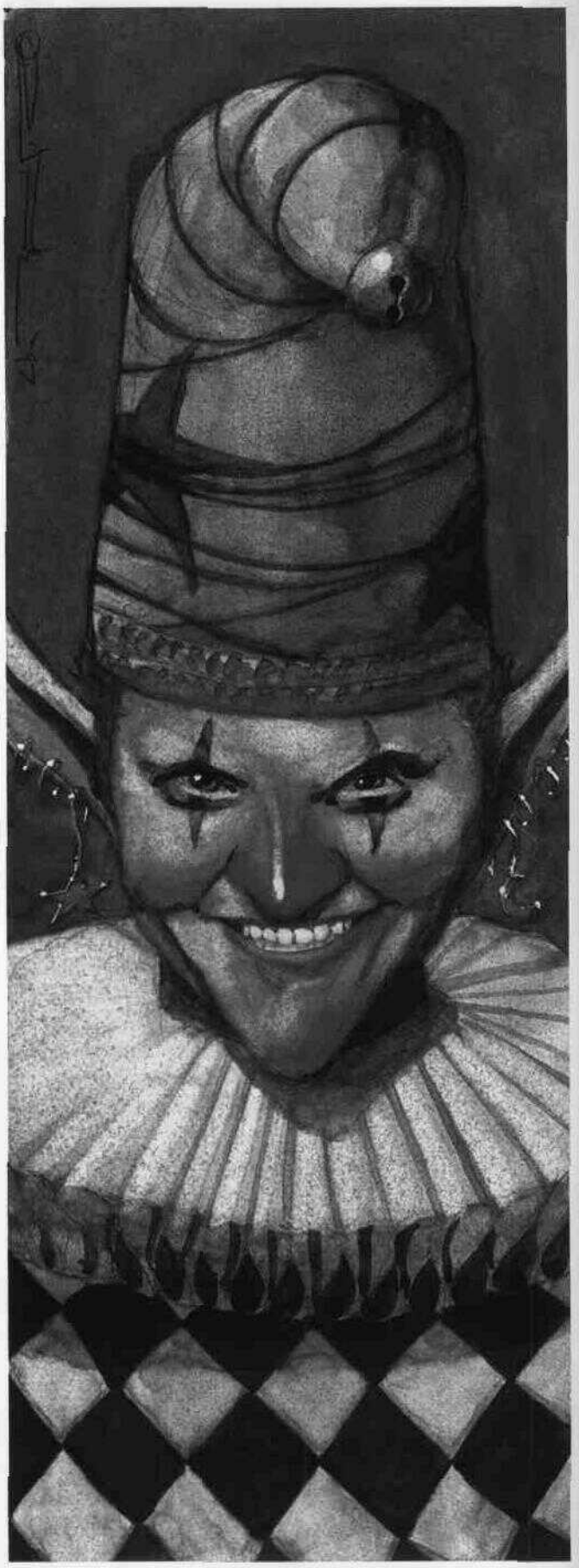
• **Troubadours** — Troubadours are the musicians and performers of a noble's court. They also lead the court in the practice of courtly love, acting as chroniclers and go-betweens. Often troubadours are themselves involved in the amorous machinations of the nobles. They perform their own works, the ballads of the past and specially commissioned songs in honor of their patrons or a paramour.

• **Scribes** — Scribes serve the vital function of transcribing not only court proceedings, but also of recording any memories members of the court may have of Arcadia or their past lives. This act is done in the old style, written on parchment and vellum with quill and ink in chimerical tomes bound in griffin or boar hide. Many scribes also illuminate their texts to create works of beauty and repositories for Glamour.

• **Stewards** — Stewards are responsible for a fiefdom's resources, organizing and governing their lord's assets. They control household finances, disburse chimerical and "real" weapons and guard court treasures. Stewards also train and manage a household's servants.

• **Reeves** — Reeves act as official liaisons between a noble and the commoners who dwell within that noble's fiefdom. They also fill the position of advocates for commoners, often appearing in court to press a commoner's claims or voice a complaint. Reeves take care of a noble's freeholds; courts usually have at least as many reeves as a noble has freeholds. Although they are merely caretakers, many reeves come to regard their particular freeholds as their personal property.

• **Thanes** — Thanes are commoner warriors who have sworn loyalty to their lords. They are charged with hunting for Glamour for their masters. Some lords see the advantage of placing bands of thanes on the field of battle, since these warriors are often more effective in war than noble knights. Many thanes who organized the resistance during the Accordance War now serve the lords they once opposed. The nobility's acceptance of these rebel leaders helped smooth relations with the commoners. Often, a noble will find support among commoners in her realm so long as she treats her thanes with honor and respect.



The Escheat

The traditions that make up the *Escheat* form the basic laws of Kithain society. Believed to have originated among those wise faeries who lived closest to the Dreaming, they were recorded after the Sundering as a way to ensure fae survival in the face of inexorable change. Passed down and enforced by the nobility, the Escheat's tenets are respected by both Seelie and Unseelie nobles (though each Court has variations on how it interprets each principle). Seelie nobles and their subjects generally follow the letter of the law, while Unseelie nobles and their minions tend to find the loopholes and work through them.

Unlike oaths (see below), the authority to enforce the Escheat is not backed by Glamour. Instead, it carries the force of law, tradition and custom. Occasionally the Dreaming works its own chimerical subtleties around the Escheat, making certain that its rules are kept or forcing those who break it to reap the consequences of their actions.

The six basic rights of the Escheat are detailed below.

• **The Right of Demesne** — A lord is the king of his domain. He is the judge and jury over all crimes, large and small. His word is law. A noble expects obedience from his vassals and respect from all others. In return, a noble respects those lords superior to him.

Reality: Nobility has had to make concessions in the face of modern ideas of democracy and popular rule. Most nobles rule through force, cunning, personal magnetism or custom.

• **The Right to Dream** — Mortals have a right to dream unhindered by our needs. The Dreaming will die if we steal directly from the font. No one is allowed to use Glamour to manipulate the creative process. Although you may inspire creativity in the mortal mind, it is forbidden to give direct instruction or to infuse a human with raw Glamour.

Reality: Most changelings interpret this as a prohibition against *Ravaging* — the forcible ripping of Glamour from beings. Many Kithain — particularly Unseelie — ignore this ban, seeking a quick fix or an easy way to instant power. Since this form of acquiring Glamour often permanently drains the victim, convicted Ravagers suffer harsh punishments as a deterrent to repeating their crime. Disturbing rumors claim that some changelings infuse mortals with Glamour, overloading the mortal souls with too much creativity and feeding from their brilliant dreams. This practice, if it exists, also violates this portion of the Escheat.

• **The Right of Ignorance** — Do not betray the Dreaming to Banality. Never reveal yourself to humanity. Not only will humankind hunt us down for our wisdom and our power, it will overwhelm us with Banality and destroy our places of power. The more humanity knows, the more ardently it will seek us, draining the world of Glamour and petrifying our essence with its basilisk's gaze.

Reality: Most changelings, both Seelie and Unseelie, respect this rule since it serves as protection against the forces of Banality. Glamour is hard enough to find, and expending it on mortals so that they can witness the Dreaming for themselves is wasteful. Some changelings enchant select humans in order to bring them into their freeholds as lovers or retainers, but they are careful to remove any evidence of their existence from the minds of these mortals when they return them to the mortal world.

• **The Right of Rescue** — All Kithain have the right to expect rescue from the foul grip of Banality. We are in danger together and must strive together to survive. Never leave anyone behind. Kithain are required to rescue other faeries or any creature of the Dreaming trapped by those who serve Banality.

Reality: Most changelings adhere to this principle. After all, they might need rescuing one day. Seelie and Unseelie will forget their differences and come to each other's aid when one or the other falls prey to the Dauntain or some other agent of Banality. While many changelings will try to rescue chimeric creatures such as unicorns or griffins, few risk themselves for minor chimera.

• **The Right of Safe Haven** — All places of the Dreaming are sacred. Kithain cannot allow faerie places to be endangered. All those who seek refuge in such places must be admitted. Freeholds must be kept free of both Banality and worldly violence.

Reality: Competition for the few freeholds that have survived the Shattering makes this tenet a hard one to enforce. Rival claims to the same spot of dream-infused ground often lead to warfare that encroaches upon its boundaries, although in most cases combat on the actual grounds of a freehold is restricted to chimeric battle. Some lords bar their freeholds to outsider changelings for fear that unwanted visitors may waste the Glamour inherent in their holdings. Despite the demands of hospitality and courtesy upon the domains of nobles, commoner freeholds are often more inclined than their noble counterparts to admit changelings seeking refuge.

• **The Right of Life** — No Kithain shall spill the lifeblood of another Kithain. No Kithain shall bring salt tears unto the earth. No Kithain shall take from the Dreaming one of its own. Death is anathema.

Reality: This tenet is almost universally upheld, particularly since the Dreaming itself seems to enforce it by inflicting Banality upon a changeling who takes another changeling's life. When two Kithain meet in combat, they usually wield chimerical weapons, although there are exceptions to this (such as nonlethal duels to first blood). No "real" damage is caused by such a chimerical battle. The loser, if "killed," merely dies temporarily to the Dreaming and returns to her mortal seeming until reawakened by an infusion of Glamour.



Customs and Traditions

Over the centuries, Kithain society has developed a number of customs, some borrowed from human cultures and others unique to the fae. These traditions define and lend color to the lives of changelings.

Oaths

Oaths are sacred vows that bind Kithain to one another in certain specified relationships or else obligate the swearer to undertake quests or journeys, fill certain roles, honor specified rights or refrain from certain actions. Some oaths bind one Kithain to another for eternity; others last for shorter periods of time. Many oaths, particularly those taken at Beltaine and Samhain, are sworn for "a year and a day." The whole of Kithain society helps to enforce oaths, but, more importantly, the weight of the Dreaming lends binding authority to these solemn vows.

The wording of oaths is very important, because it weaves Glamour into the bond that is formed by its speaking. Breaking an oath is not done lightly, for the consequences (usually specified at the time the oath is taken) assert themselves as soon

troubadours hover in the wings (if not on center stage), ready to serenade the beloved in private or proclaim the worthiness of the suitor before the audience of the assembled court.

The courting process consists of stylized flirtation. It is customary for the beloved to alternately accept and reject the suitor's favors, refining the art of teasing and encouragement to a high level. The suitor has no rights except those granted by the beloved, and is expected to prove her ardor at every possible opportunity. Love poems and songs, heroic deeds and interminable patience in wait for a smile or a kind word are all necessary steps of the lover's journey. Love that comes without a steep price, or that announces itself clumsily and without grace, is not worth having.

Courting usually takes place in secret, but sometimes it becomes a miniature drama, staged for all to see. Initially, the beloved should reject the suitor, citing political or personal differences as the reason. It then falls to the suitor to cajole, convince, woo or win a reversal of the beloved's decision.

If the process succeeds in evoking the full passion of amour (though not necessarily sexual congress) between suitor and beloved, the two swear oaths of love to one another. Until this bond is broken, lover and beloved remain inextricably joined in spirit to one another. Only Banality can separate them. Lovers assist each other regardless of personal risk, differences in Court or conflicting loyalties. In some cases, one lover will sacrifice herself for the other.

Patronage

Changelings often tend to focus their Glamour-gathering activities around certain arts that appeal to them. The art a changeling selects for this purpose is known as her *patronage*. Although childlings and wilders sometimes change their patronages from one art to another, grumps usually settle upon a single art and stick to it. Wilders tend to choose experimental arts to patronize; childlings prefer more direct and simple ones; grumps opt for more sophisticated or traditional arts.

Most Kithain indulge in their patronages at every opportunity, visiting places significant to their particular art or arts and collecting people who are practitioners of their patronages. The acquisition of items and people acts as a source of rivalry between changelings, allowing patrons of the same art to indulge in friendly competition to the benefit (usually) of their chosen art.

Cliques

Kithain often form groups known as *cliques* to share their patronage with others of like mind, increasing its enjoyment. Through patronage, Kithain inspire mortals to dream, and thus add to the supply of Glamour in the world. Therefore, patronage not only provides a pleasant pastime, it also makes a vital contribution to the Dreaming. Most changeling cliques know this, although they do not let the importance of their task get in the way of having a good time.

Cliques associated with traditional or medieval arts call themselves *noble patronages*, while those dedicated to modern or experimental arts are referred to as *vulgar patronages*. Both noble and vulgar cliques often give themselves formal or whimsical names, depending on the nature of the arts they patronize. Noble cliques include the Galateans, who patronize the visual arts of painting and sculpture; the Calliopians, who revere both the written and spoken word; the Terpsichoreans, who favor dance over other arts; and the Olympians, who admire athletes and bodybuilders. Vulgar cliques include the Groupies, who patronize rock and roll; the Anachronists, who prefer the ancient crafts of the common folk; the Zoetrope Society, which consists of film aficionados; the Mad Hatters, who find inspiration among the insane; the Daydreamers (a childling clique), who encourage the natural Glamour of human children; and the Hackers, who promote Glamour via the Information Superhighway.

The Importance of Holidays

Holidays and festivals occupy a central part of changeling life. These periods of celebration not only serve as times when mortals edge marginally closer to the Dreaming, they provide the Kithain with the opportunity to remember the traditions these holidays honor, thus bringing them in touch with their lost past.

Kithain use holidays as excuses to expend Glamour, putting it back into a world leeched of its revitalizing energy. In addition, they are often occasions when changelings and mortals may interact without fear of attracting too much Banality. During holidays, Banality and disbelief are at their ebb, since most celebrations have an innately supernatural aspect to them that defies reason. Children who believe in Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny are often joined at Christmas and Easter by adults who act as if they, too, believe in these symbols of gifts and replenishment. Humans, for these brief periods of revelry and celebration, allow themselves to experience the fires of their imaginations. Some changelings maintain that if everyday could be a holiday, mortals would slough off their cares and rationalizations and dream freely once again.

The changeling calendar consists of many festivals, which are often used, as they were in medieval times, to keep track of the passing of the year. Before the Shattering, the calendar marked the cycle of Seelie and Unseelie rule. Since the Resurgence, many of the old traditions have fallen by the wayside, but the forms remain constant as the dance of days continues its stately progress through the seasons. New holidays have risen up to take the place of old ones, but the procession of festivities goes on.

Changeling Festivals

During certain times of the year, those of the major festivals, all Kithain come together to celebrate the Dreaming. The following celebrations are held in common by both Seelie and Unseelie changelings, and constitute the major holidays of Kithain life.

- **Imbolc, February 2nd** — The balefire is the most important feature of a freehold, keeping out the cold wind of

Banality and preserving the Glamour that maintains the freehold. Imbolc is a festival celebrating the balefire and its replenishment after the long darkness of winter. Also known as Bard's Day, Imbolc marks great competitions among bards and other performers. Originally sacred to the Celtic goddess Brigid, patroness of fire, smithcraft and poetry, Imbolc honors the creative spirit.

On Midwinter's Night, special travelers, called firebrands, set out from Tara-Nar, carrying lanterns that contain fire from the Well of Flame beneath High King David's palace. The lanterns are used to replenish the balefire of every freehold during the Imbolc ceremony. It is considered a bad omen if the firebrands fail to make their appearance at a freehold before Imbolc.

• **Carnival, February 28th** — Formerly a wake for an old age and a birthday party for a new one, Carnival has risen in prominence since High King David assumed the throne. Now it celebrates the new unity between nobles and commoners. It is a night when kings and queens enchant entire cities, enabling the wholesale gathering of Glamour. Masked by the human Mardi Gras festivities, Carnival celebrations mark some of the Kithain's wildest parties.

Borrowing from such diverse sources as English Boxing Day and the ancient festival of Lughnasa, the ritual central to Carnival involves the elevation of a local mortal, befuddled by alcohol or dizzy with an overdose of Glamour, to the position of King or Queen of Carnival, while the local monarch takes the part of a jester. The new "monarch's" word is considered law, although in most cases, the chosen mortal is too addled by the effects of substance abuse to issue any commands which might have lasting repercussions. The "jester," on the other hand, is open to all the abuse of his or her new position. Some kings and queens dread the approach of Carnival, but put up with it as part of their duty as rulers.

There are only three laws of Carnival:

• There can be no retribution for any word spoken or deed done. A monarch cannot exact revenge against harassers.

• Carnival is sacrosanct; all who attend are welcome and safe. Anyone violating this principal is summarily subjected to any punishment decreed by the bleary-eyed Carnival King or Queen.

• Let merriment reign!

Carnival ends at sunrise on the following day. In most cases, the Carnival King or Queen is released from duty and sent home, none the worse for wear. In certain Unseelie demesnes, it is rumored, the mortal becomes a ritual sacrifice.

• **The Greening, April 4th** — Commonly celebrated in southern Concordia, the Greening is an informal festival commemorating the beginning of spring. It is also called the Festival of Crocuses, as celebrants weave these early spring flowers into their hair and clothes. Each childling receives a crown of woven grass, and wilders participate in morris dancing. It does not bode well for the coming year if no grass can be found for weaving into crowns.

• **Beltaine, May 2nd** — One of the two major festivals of the changeling calendar, Beltaine is a nighttime spring fertility festival which celebrates life and love. At one time, fae went out into the fields and formed tame chimerical beasts into a line between bonfires lit from the local freehold's balefire.

Beltaine once marked the formal beginning of the Seelie half of the year, during which time the Unseelie surrendered its power to the opposite Court. As such, Beltaine traditionally represents a time of peace and amity. The infamous Night of Iron Knives stands as a notable instance of the gross abuse of the Beltaine peace.

Beltaine also sees the blossoming of new romances, particularly between nobles and commoners. The bonfires serve as festival sites where passions run uninhibited. Many childlings are conceived during Beltaine celebrations; conception at Beltaine is considered particularly favorable, since the feast honors fertility and new life.

• **Highsummer Night, July 17th** — Staged to coincide with the hottest part of the summer, Highsummer Night epitomizes mirth and freedom. It also provides an excuse to gather Glamour from the "heat dreams" of mortals. During these celebrations, changelings are free to toy with any mortals they encounter.

Pooka consider this festival their special holiday and refer to it as "Pranksgiving." They hold a competition among themselves to see who can play the most outrageous practical joke on a human. The winner gains tremendous prestige. Highsummer pranks sometimes turn malicious, even though jests which result in loss of life or serious injury are regarded as inartistic and tasteless. Tangled romances, mistaken identities, transformations and thefts of heroic proportions have greater appeal for pooka.

Many Kithain weddings take place on Highsummer Night, though not so many as at Beltaine.

• **Pennons, October 4th** — Pennons celebrates the martial prowess of the Kithain. Its festivities include jousts, mock combats, displays of weaponry and the slaying of chimerical beasts. The name of the festival derives from the custom of bestowing a king's pennons — flags marked with royal crests — upon the festival's champions, who have the right to fly them for one year.

Artists, crafters and musicians also flock to Pennons, many seeking patronage from lords, who are likely to be generous on this festive occasion. Musicians find Pennons particularly rewarding. Troubadours compose songs on the spur of the moment celebrating the heroes of the various events, and stage their own competitions, along with storytellers, using words and music as weapons.

• **Samhain, October 31st** — A counterpart to Beltaine, Samhain is the second of the two major Kithain festivals. On Samhain Eve, the wall between worlds grows thin. This is a solemn time for Kithain everywhere. It is a night to strain against the Mists, to part them and remember comrades who have fallen. It is a night to honor ancestors who have been lost as well as mortal companions who have contributed Glamour through their creations and deeds.

Samhain also serves as a time for divination. In some courts, soothsayers perform auguries to learn the fate of lost friends and to divine messages about the coming year.



Before the Shattering, Samhain marked the beginning of the Unseelie half of the year, when the Seelie rulers turned over their authority to their opposites until Beltaine. Now that transference of power resides only in the form of the Shadow Court's one-night reign. Samhain provides a chance for the Unseelie fae to deride everything they despise about Seelie society. Unseelie changelings hold mock tournaments and courts, making fun of the monarchy and privy council. Seelie changelings are encouraged to adopt their Unseelie personas for this one evening and experience the other side of their fae natures.

Childlings often join with human children in trick-or-treating their way through neighborhoods, gathering Glamour from the real and imagined spookiness of the night and the enjoyment of their mortal companions.

In addition to the calendar festivals, Kithain also celebrate other special occasions. The Royal Lottery occurs whenever a monarch steps down, falls victim to Banality or dies a natural death, thus occasioning the choice of a successor. During this celebration, changelings come from far and wide to hear the dukes and duchesses proclaim candidates for the vacancy before the casting of lots by the nobility to choose who will rule. These events usually take place in the monarchs' glens.

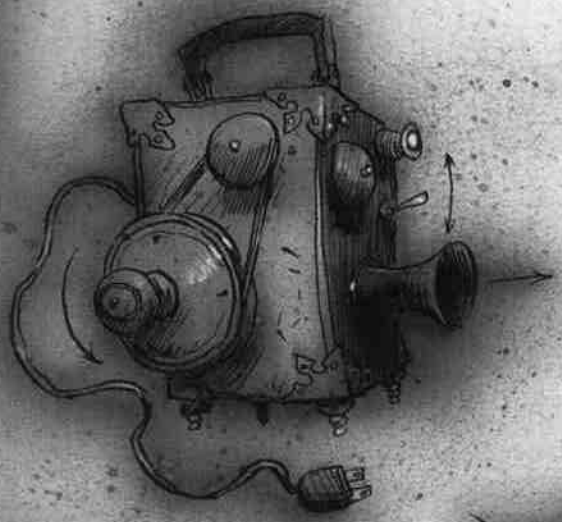
Weddings between Kithain give rise to great festivities. While some Kithain marry for life, others marry for a lunar year (13 full moons) or a year and a day. These marriages celebrate life and love in the same way that the Beltaine and Highsummer ceremonies do.

A wake occurs upon the death of a Kithain. When a common changeling dies, her spirit is lost to the Dreaming for a time before reincarnating in a new mortal body. Only the sidhe do not return in this fashion; some believe that a sidhe's spirit is lost forever, while others hold that a deceased sidhe is reborn as a commoner. Wakes are crucial whenever a changeling dies from Banality or from cold iron. The loss must be addressed in some fashion to prevent Banality from gaining a stranglehold on all who knew the lost Kithain. Wakes are blatant denials of Banality, combining joy and sorrow in a tribute to the lost spirit. All distinctions between Seelie and Unseelie are put aside during wakes, as each Kithain remembers the deceased and strives to keep some part of her alive in the Dreaming. Unfortunately many sidhe refuse to attend wakes; they dislike being reminded of their own eventual death and the uncertainty that follows.

Oathtakings also provide an opportunity for Kithain to gather together, usually in small, private ceremonies. It is considered an honor to receive an invitation to a formal swearing of an oath and to act as a witness to the solemn pronouncement of a binding vow. The most common oaths that are celebrated in this fashion include oaths of fealty, questing and true love.

fig 10 - Nockers -

Comparison showing a young "wilder" & older "grump" -







Nockers are able to create from the stuff of dreams, bending and twisting it to create simple, non-living chimera such as swords, armour, machinery, etc -

Chapter Three: The Kithain

What determines who we are? Although we try to control our identity, a host of factors influence what we will become. Our age, our education, our standard of living — all of these factors affect who we are. This is doubly true for changelings. Age carries with it certain expectations. A changeling's mortal background affects the facade she shows to the world. The heritage of her kith influences her faerie self. Identity isn't as simple as it may seem; it's built slowly over time, layer by layer.

This chapter shows several aspects of the identity of **Changeling** characters. Kithain can be defined in many ways — seeming, kith, age and house are just a few of the major factors in their lives. These descriptions are guidelines, the framework on which you'll build the role you play in the game. Don't take everything you see at face value, and *don't take everything here as absolutes. Feel free* to break any stereotypes you encounter. After all, you're creating a person driven by raw chaos and imagination. Why let something as banal as a rulebook limit you?

The Mortal Seeming

Trapped on Earth and exiled from Arcadia, changelings have adapted to a human world. Balancing a mortal life against a Kithain existence has a profound affect on a changeling's personality, but there are other factors as well. How a fae is perceived by her peers is strongly influenced by her age.

As part of their price for living in this world, changelings age at the same rate as the mortals around them. There are legends of fae who have lived for centuries, but the world discourages such a blatant display of magical power. Youth is highly prized in Kithain society. With youth comes innocence, trust and belief in the magical.

The Kithain have very pronounced expectations on how age affects identity. The age at which one undergoes the Chrysalis strongly influences how a changeling is perceived. All Kithain are considered to belong to one of three categories, which are collectively referred to as *seemings*.

Childlings

Childlings, the youngest of the Kithain, aren't always as innocent or naive as they seem. Though physically between the ages of three and 13, many are wise beyond their years. Some have lived countless lifetimes; they simply don't realize it in their current state. As outsiders to much of adult life, they often see things in adult society that their elders cannot.

In many ways, childlings are just like mortal children. The world is their playground. They love the spectacle and pageantry of faerie life. Their elders may mistakenly think of them as passive and peaceful, but with so much Glamour and energy coursing through childlings, they can be hellacious forces of chaos. The worst are vicious and feral; the best can be startlingly imaginative.

The wonder and innocence of childhood brings childlings closer to the Dreaming. Banality affects them the least of all changelings — they live in a never-ending faerie tale. Some may exist in a slightly dark or tragic tale, but even the grimmest are

suffused with magic. Unfortunately, this also means that childlings often have trouble being taken seriously by older changelings, especially those who worry endlessly about the troublesome game of life. Noble childlings encounter this difficulty as much as commoners do.

Confronted with mortals who insist they know what's best for them — such as teachers and parents — childlings are forced to hide their faerie identities. If the pressures of the mundane world grow too great for them, they have no choice but to run away from home and seek out a freehold that will look after them.

Childlings enjoy a certain degree of privilege in Kithain society. They're nurtured, taught and encouraged. Because they're learning, they're often forgiven for their misdoings. Inexperience, however, shuts them out from many adult activities. The solution is to live in a dream of their own. In their own private reality, playtime never ends.

Wilders

Anyone between the ages of 13 and 25 is considered a *wilder*. Typically, they are rebellious, devious and hedonistic. They are by far the most numerous of the Kithain. Because of this, they often strive to be the leaders of both the Seelie and Unseelie Courts. After all, the childlings are too young, and grumps obviously don't have the energy. What other choice is there?

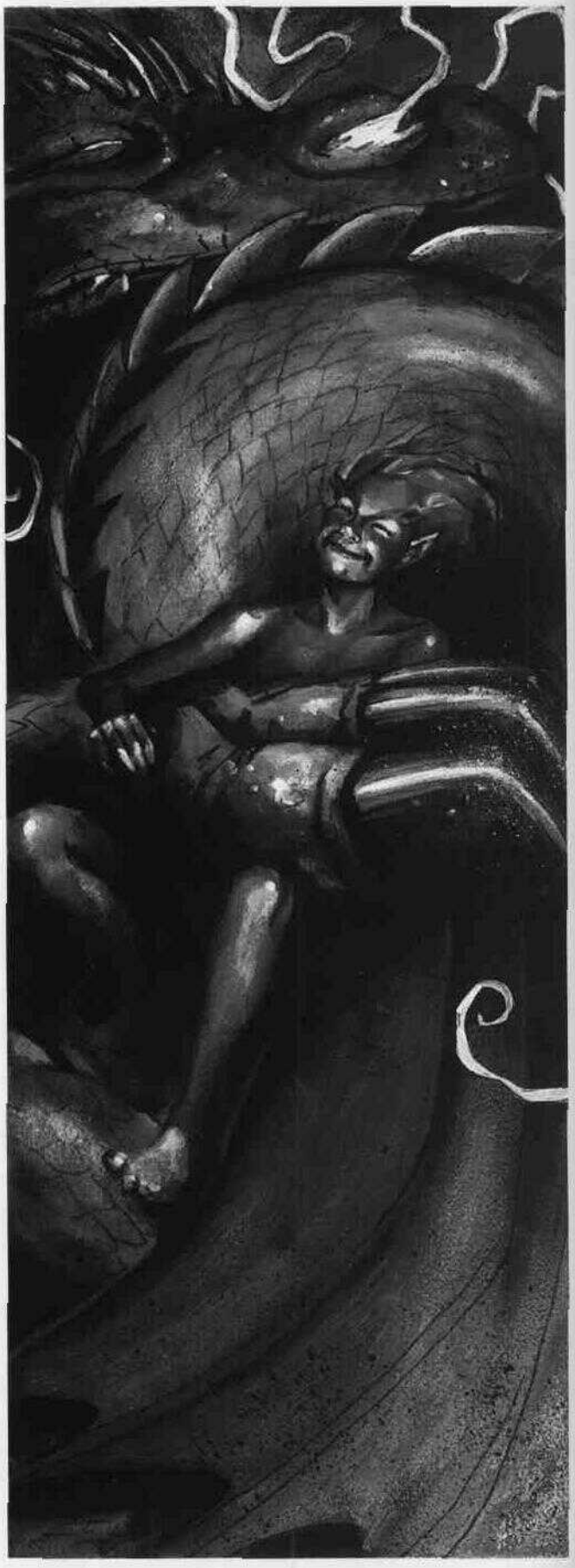
These wild, young Kithain have lost the naiveté of childlings, but they haven't yet succumbed to the cynicism of grumps. Nonetheless, they tend to be arrogant and full of themselves. Known for their daring and adventurous ways, wilders love to be young. Mortal culture fascinates them, especially its creative aspects. Their perspective on creativity becomes more acute, and the Glamour of music, movies or anything on the cutting edge draws them like moths to a chimerical flame. When the fires of creativity consume them, they fully realize what it is to be alive.

That flame can sometimes be a little too compelling. Burnout is a wilder's greatest fear. They don't want to miss a moment of their enchanted existence. After all, growing old brings with it Banality and eventually the Undoing. The most extreme wilders would rather die than lose the memory of what it is to be young and fae.

Living on the edge, wilders follow ambitions that propel them into positions of responsibility without authority. Rebelling out of desperation is the natural response. Those who still hang on to a second mortal life also feel a overwhelming need to escape. Those who don't are consumed by their passion. Either way, wilders live lives filled with constant energy and motion. Chaos and adventure fuels their very essence.

Grumps

Grumps are the "grown-ups" of changeling society. Having lost the innocence of their early years, many become irascible and bitter. They miss the pleasures and Glamour of



youth. Since Kithain are very sensitive to Banality, age destroys their idealism as they grow older. The average grump is still less banal than the average mortal, but by Kithain standards, they are seen as stubborn and sedate...and react accordingly.

One in 20 changelings is a grump. They prefer to be called *greybeards*, but among childlings and wilders, the name "grump" has stuck. By their late 20s, most greybeards fall before the onslaught of Banality and lose their changeling essence. The most unfortunate are Undone: they lose all memory of their changeling lives. If a greybeard has been able to hold off this fate for long, he has no doubt gained a degree of wisdom. The staunchest changelings find ways to stave off this slumber, even though they may find it difficult to set aside their mortal lives in the process.

Greybeards see themselves as the most reliable and responsible of the Kithain. They often assume the duty of caring for childlings, as wilders think they have more important things to do. They are also keepers of tradition and lore, and they are eager to pass on this knowledge to the young. If only the young would listen more often....

When the burden of the mundane world becomes too great, the easiest escape from ennui is the intrigue of the noble court. These fae see themselves as the movers and shakers in the higher echelons of the court, even if the wilders — or their rulers — think otherwise. Though they realize much of Kithain society is hopelessly antiquated, they have grown to appreciate it. There is wisdom in the rituals of the Kithain, and the greybeards treasure it.

Traits

A changeling's age also determines his starting Glamour, Willpower and Banality.

Childling

Beginning Glamour: 5
Beginning Willpower: 1
Beginning Banality: 1

Wilder

Beginning Glamour: 4
Beginning Willpower: 2
Beginning Banality: 3

Grump

Beginning Glamour: 3
Beginning Willpower: 5
Beginning Banality: 5

Kith

Legends tell that the fae were born of ancient dreams. Fantasies have shaped the natures of the kith we know today. Though the truth has been lost with the passing of years, we can still see the results. A changeling's kith reflects his kinship and knowledge, and it has a profound influence on his identity.

Each kith has certain abilities, affinities and weaknesses inherent to it. These are a part of fae heritage. A changeling's Court also has an effect on these. After all, each has learned to adapt (or exploit) its identity as best it can.

The following nine kith represent the changeling races of the Western world. They are by no means the only ones in the world, as each faction of humankind has its own particular reflection of the Dreaming. As one would expect, each kith also has its own culture, history and ethnic pride; the following only begins to describe their identities.

Each of the following kith descriptions is broken down into several parts. The following is a brief outline of what you can expect to find in each kith description.

- **Name and Pronunciation:** The name of the kith and its proper pronunciation. Do not take the pronunciations as gospel, however, as they tend to vary from kingdom to kingdom.
- **General Description:** A brief history of the kith, where they've been, and what they do now. It also includes something about their outlook on life.
- **Appearance:** The most common description of the kith. Many variations of these descriptions certainly exist; this, however, provides information about what you are most likely to encounter. These descriptions are of the kith's fae mien, not a mortal seeming. Though the mortal seeming can be quite different, there are usually close similarities between the seeming and the mien.
- **Lifestyle:** How this kith commonly lives as well as what its members are most often like as childlings, wilders and grumps. Remember that these are generalizations, and in a people known to embrace the mutability of dreams, variations always exist.
- **Affinity:** The kith's Affinity for a particular Realm. Whenever a member of the kith casts a cantrip involving that Realm, the difficulty is lowered by one.
- **Birthrights and Frailties:** The inherent strengths and weaknesses of the kith. Birthrights that have apparent physical effects (such as a troll's mighty strength, a sidhe's breathtaking beauty, or a pooka's animal features) do not function around mortals, while Birthrights with "non-apparent" effects (such as a sluagh's sharpened senses or a boggan's social radar) do. For the purposes of these descriptions, mortals are always assumed to be unenchanted. Mortals who are enchanted are the same as Kithain for the purposes of Birthrights functioning in their presence. Those Birthrights that allow a kith to never botch at a certain roll always function normally.
- **Quote:** A quote that could commonly be heard from one of this kith.
- **Outlook:** A look at the kith's general opinion on the rest of the fae.

boggans

(BOG-guns)

Boggans derive their greatest pleasure from work. An honest job, good company and a regular routine are all most boggans require. They're known throughout the society of the Kithain, for their hard work and integrity. It is said that a boggan is as honest as the dirt on his hands.

This honesty includes a need to help others. Boggan homebodies are known for their hospitality, and few can refuse to help a traveler in need. Wilders often take to the road to seek out those in need of help, even when this makes them seem like troublesome meddlers. Seelie boggans display altruism out of compassion and the goodness of their hearts: Unseelie boggans find themselves drawn to the needy out of opportunistic desires. Regardless of Court, this kith's philosophy of noble service glorifies helping others. Status among their kind is measured by the number of people they have "helped." Beneficiaries who grow complacent, however, are cut off quickly.



Boggans who prefer to stay at home value comfort and security. Whether that home belongs to them or someone else makes little difference. The more sedate types settle into pleasant lives in caretaking positions; carpenters, gardeners, cooks and barkeepers have all gained notoriety among their kind. As long as the people whom boggans help appreciate them, the simple folk do their best.

There is another reason why boggans humbly integrate themselves into households: They are notorious gossips. The secrets they just "happen to overhear" are considered just reward for their hard work. Seelie boggans insist that they gather this information out of simple curiosity. Unseelie tuck their information away to be pulled out on "special occasions." Whether motivated by altruism or greed, boggans have managed to turn a vice into an art form.

Despite this weakness, boggans are deservedly proud of their reputation as hard workers. Some have been known to work themselves to death to do a job correctly. Questioning the quality of a boggan's work is a sure way to send her into a rage. Though no one has actually seen an angry boggan stamp herself to death, some wilders have tried. A boggan who has done less than her best considers herself to be deeply in debt to those she has tried to serve.

The concept of debt is important to remember when dealing with boggans. Though they consider volunteer service to be the greatest of honors, most would sooner die than be in debt to anyone. Seelie boggans often refuse payment for their services, and may actually be offended by such offers. Unseelie boggans consider forcing others into positions of debt to be a true sign of power. It is dangerous to scheme for wealth, however. The most avaricious Unseelie boggans are referred to as *boggarts*, and are treated with disdain by other Kithain. A boggan's fear of indebtedness often keeps him from establishing close ties. Although they will cheerfully work with others, boggans rarely enter into oaths of any kind.

Anyone who thinks a boggan will always be subservient is a fool. Although a boggan devotes himself to the service of others, he always knows his own worth. Even when he is employed by others, a steadfast representative of this kith sees himself as the master of the situation. By rendering service to those in need, boggans gain a sense of nobility that no title or position can equal.

Appearance: Boggans are short of stature, with thick, downy hair and a tendency toward plumpness. They often have small, bright eyes, emphasizing their large noses. Their hands

are fairly large and callused, with agile fingers and gnarled knuckles. Boggans often have exceptionally thick eyebrows, which frame their eyes and grow wildly. Their skin is tanned, and darkens and wrinkles with age. Their attire is usually simple by Kithain standards.

Lifestyle: A warm hearth, a well-stocked kitchen, a comfortable bed — these are essentials in a boggan home. While some boggans are known for their talent in the kitchen or the parlor, many of them find jobs in professions like construction work and emergency services. Wherever there's honest work to do, boggans find themselves right at home.

• **Childlings** are mischievous and always running underfoot. They tend to gather wherever work is being done. They may not always be attentive while helping out, but they often learn their trades at an early age. Once the chores are done, they're eager to get into mischief.

• **Wilders** cannot but help but seek out adventure. Why hide under your mother's apron when there's a world to see out there? Despite their wandering ways, once they find a motley of adventurous Kithain, they stick with that group, and very little can drive them away. Of all the group, they're the most likely to worry about the wholesomeness of the food they purchase and the quality of the tobacco for their pipes.

• **Grumps** often settle into permanent residences where they can putter about. This is often be a place where they can support as many fae within a local freehold as possible. The level of comfort in this place is a prime concern for them.

Affinity: Actor

Birthright

• **Craftwork** — Boggans never shy away from hard work. In fact, it brings them together. They have a reputation for being swift and superior craftspersons. If unobserved, they can accomplish any task involving simple physical labor in one-third the normal time.

Because of their affinity for work, boggans can never botch Crafts rolls.

• **Social Dynamics** — Since they're often intimately acquainted with the workings of households, boggans have a heightened sense of the relationships between people. Gossip gets around even in the largest freeholds. Seelie pick up clues such as the subtle glances of would-be lovers; Unseelie tend to notice conspiratorial relationships and rivalries. A successful Perception + Empathy (or Subterfuge) roll allows a boggan to puzzle out a group's social dynamics. The difficulty can range from 5 (for a small traveling band) to 10 (for a royal ball brimming with intrigue).

This Birthright functions normally even when dealing with mortals and the unenchanted in social situations.

Attend to the words of William Surefoot as he roasts your dinner.

On Eshu — Watch these wanderers closely. They'll come trading tales for a warm hearth and a full belly, but they sometimes leave with full pockets, too.

On Nockers — I admire their diligence, but they tend to get carried away with their work. They really should learn to enjoy life more.

On Pooka — Irresponsible and foolish. They'll do their best to keep your spirits high, but they're rarely around when there's real work to be done.

On Redcaps — Redcaps have foul table manners and fouler attitudes. I'm glad I don't have to clean up after them.

On Satyrs — Well, they certainly are enthusiastic about seeking their...um, wisdom. Don't refill their wine glasses too often, or there'll be trouble, mark my words.

On Sidhe — The sidhe are all too often misunderstood. It's admirable that they carry the ideals of another world. It's too bad this one is so hard on them.

On Sluagh — They always know more than they tell. Listen to them closely. Show a little generosity, and they may repay you with a choice bit of news.

On Trolls — They value honor and duty. In my book, that makes them nobler than the sidhe.

Frailties

• **Call of the Needy** — Boggans cannot stand the sight of another person in need. When confronted by someone in legitimate need, a boggan must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) to avoid assisting that person in some way.

Quote: *Why, what has happened to you, my friend? Here, have a seat by the fire while I get you something warm to drink. Please, tell me all about it....*

Eshu

(EE-shoo)

Eshu embody the spirit of adventure. Originally descended from the dreams of the ancient tribes in Africa, India and their homeland in Chaldea, the eshu can now be found in any part of the world. When they left their homelands, the eshu set forth *into the world and wandered wherever their dreams would take* them. Consumed by wanderlust, they value traits that ensure survival on the road, such as charm, sharp wits and ingenuity. After millennia of such travels, they have learned to adapt to and to adopt the cultures they have encountered. This has made their talents for songcraft and storytelling truly amazing.

The reputation of the eshu proceeds them. Learning to live by her wits, a wise traveler always looks for an angle. If this means running a good scam, so be it. For the eshu, this works both ways. If someone else manages to out-scam an eshu, he's certainly worthy of respect. Such tricksters are grudgingly rewarded for their accomplishment; after all, how else are the eshu to learn new scams?

An eshu's curiosity and vanity can get him into all sorts of trouble. For this reason, eshu are slow to trust and tend to keep their own counsel. Their sacred ceremonies are held away from other Kithain, and only a few fellow travelers are invited to attend. An invitation to an eshu festival is an honor that's difficult to achieve.

Consummate talespinners, bards, traders and con artists, the restless folk use the wisdom of a thousand journeys to guide their Arts. Performance art suits them well, for eshu consider the spirit of the moment to be everything. Anyone who provides an eshu with new tales, good songs or dances, a blissful liaison or strong drink is treated as a dear companion...until the spirit of the moment has passed. Inspired by this bliss, they move on and seek even greater adventures. Other Kithain might think them fickle, but who cares? One who cannot follow the path is best left behind.

Eshu follow those paths with pride, and impressing others is important to their kind. Mere survival is not enough — an eshu must have class. Dignity is everything to them, even if it involves an odd definition of "self-sufficiency." An eshu will go without food and shelter if accepting it means *giving up her pride.*

Whenever possible, these Kithain dress in splendid garb and jewelry, which others consider exotic or flashy. To blend in, they sample the local arts and fashions and quickly learn to emulate them. Once they feel they have learned enough, they take the knowledge with them. Whether rich or poor, each eshu carries with him the collected wisdom of all his travels. Regardless of who others may call dukes or kings, eshu consider themselves princes of the road.

Appearance: Although eshu of all racial stocks exist, most have dark complexions, black hair and black or deep blue eyes. They tend to be tall and muscular, with long limbs and narrow features. Whatever fashion they follow, eshu are always dapper and charming, though they tend to favor scarves and silks with a Middle Eastern or African flavor. It is said that the dawn of time itself can be seen by staring into an eshu's eyes.

Lifestyle: Eshu are always on the move. Their wanderlust takes them anywhere and everywhere. Reporters, gamblers, dilettantes — any trade that allows for travel suits them well.

- **Childlings** make better followers than leaders. Always attentive and polite, they are full of questions and observations. They're primarily loners, though, and will never follow the same adult for long. Many prefer to live as runaways or stowaways.
- **Wilders** believe that the greatest adventures are yet to come. A young hero might style himself as anything from a modern-day African deity to a resourceful wanderer. Any legend of a great hero is a challenge for him to exceed.
- **Grumps** tend to prefer a few locations to which they return again and again. They learn to settle at each place longer and trade stories of deeds that have already been done; their bardic circles are legendary.

Affinity: Scene

Birthrights

- **Spirit Pathways:** Eshu have an amazing sense of direction and exquisite timing; they always seem to arrive at their destinations at the most opportune moments. The path an eshu follows is always the most interesting route possible, filled with danger and challenge. Seelie triumph righteously over adversity; Unseelie leave bitterness and misfortune in their wake. Either way, the stories are always worth the trouble! No matter what she encounters *along the way, an eshu will always find her* way to her destination...eventually.

• **Talecraft:** Whenever an eshu encounters a true adventure, he becomes wiser and his repertoire of stories grows. Eshu characters gain an additional experience point for any session in which they learn a fantastic new story or perform an incredible feat. (Tricking a chimerical dragon or outwitting a lofty noble are two examples of such feats.)

Eshu can never botch rolls involving Performance or Empathy.

Frailty

• **Recklessness:** Confidence and curiosity are inborn traits. Eshu cannot resist a challenge, gamble or quest if there's a way to come out of it alive. They're not stupid — they won't take on suicide missions — but they do believe their luck can carry them through any hardship.

Quote: *That sounds like quite an adventure, but I have a tale to top that one! Pass me some of that spiced wine, and I'll tell you....*

Hear the tales of Hazim Rashad, a courier of the Kingdom of Apples.

On Boggans — I have never understood commoners who are content to live in one place and serve but one freehold. Their hospitality, though, is wondrous.

On Nockers — Cynical artisans who have no recourse but to get caught up in the world of their creations. Too bad. The real world is far more fascinating.

On Pooka — A pooka generally makes an outstanding traveling companion, even if he has an odd way of showing you respect.

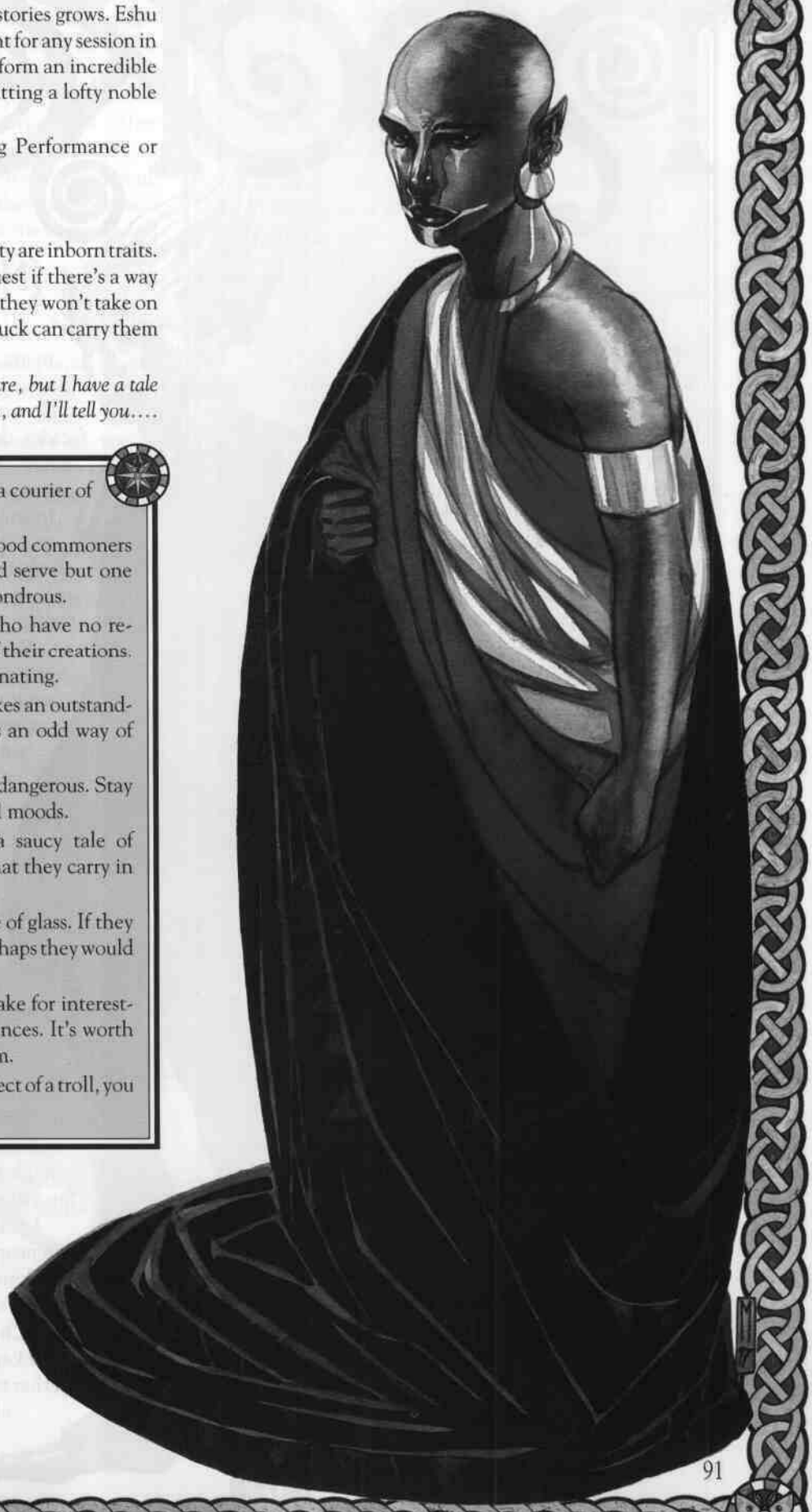
On Redcaps — Hideous, brash and dangerous. Stay out of their way, and beware of their foul moods.

On Satyrs — Always ready for a saucy tale of romance or a wild party. Be careful of what they carry in their wineskins, though.

On Sidhe — Their dreams are made of glass. If they studied this world a little more closely, perhaps they would not live in so much pain.

On Sluagh — Whispered secrets make for interesting stories, and they are very good audiences. It's worth the effort to coax a tale or two from them.

On Trolls — Once you earn the respect of a troll, you can trust him with your life.



Nockers

(NOCK-ers)



Nockers are master artisans. Their skill and inventiveness are legendary; so is their cynicism and bitterness. Typically, they are highly critical of their rulers and eminently sarcastic of the people around them. Most nockers dislike having to deal with "imperfect" things, including people. Most prefer to surround themselves with treasures of mechanical wonder and ingenuity, instead. Things are much more reliable than people, and they're much easier to fix. Nockers are also known for their great talent for crafting chimerical inventions.

A nocker's standards of perfection are impossibly high. These Kithain got their name from their habit of constantly rapping on things to inspect their quality. Unfortunately, they treat others the same way. They continually "knock" others by insulting them, testing their reactions and trying to find their faults. While this is a great way to test machines, it doesn't work as well with people. As far as nockers are concerned, they've elevated ridicule to a high art form. This hardly improves their popularity.

Nockers are also fiercely individualistic. Once one has selected her tastes in artwork and craftsmanship, she immediately condemns everyone else's. When she works, she develops a style of craftsmanship that defines the work as hers. Anyone else's attempt is second best. Then again, a nocker's creations are an expression of her identity: if her work is no good, then she's no good.

Nockers have other weaknesses, but they will never admit to them. They usually yearn for an escape from their flawed lives: music, treasure and even courtly love attract them. Denied ambitions stir the passions they bury beneath their work. Romantics pity nockers. Their cynical facades, the romantics say, hide the fact that they can never attain what they truly desire. In fact, if they did attain their desires, it would cease to be so appealing. In any attempt at romance, a nocker will wear at the minor flaws of a relationship until the magic is gone. Tinkering is the only surcease from a life trapped in such an imperfect world. The dream is everything; reality is a disappointment.

Pursuing their obsessive and passionate natures, nockers lose themselves in creation. Their greatest creations are in the chimerical world. It's hardly surprising that they excel at creating things that could never be. Their mundane lives may never mirror the vision of their art, but not for lack of trying. Whatever their chosen mediums, they strive to make their dreams real.

Appearance: Although a far cry from the deformed stereotype of legend, nockers are nonetheless grotesque in their own fashion. They tend to have thick reddish skin, pointed ears and knotty digits. Their faces look like masks of overdone stage makeup: pasty-white complexions with red noses and cheeks. Their translucent white hair frames prominent brows that crown their beady, ratlike eyes. A nocker's rarely seen grin reveals rows of pointed teeth. Their court clothing is typically clean and smart, second only to the sidhe in fashion and complexity. Curls, spirals and swirls are nockers' favored patterns.

Lifestyles: Nockers deal better with machines than people, and drift to wherever they can get more work done. Programming, engineering and mechanical work are all ideal occupations.

• **Childlings** carry an imp of the perverse. They will tinker with machines to destruction. Most would rather take things apart rather than fix them. How else are you going to find out how something works?

• **Wilders** get their kicks from the modern world — cars and computers are all the rage. All the machines they experiment with seem second-rate; there's always room for a few "improvements." Unseelie solve this with more tech; Seelie deconstruct modern devices into classical components. Regardless of Court, wilders are eminently critical of other people's designs.

• **Grumps** slowly lose their edge and take it out on everyone around them. They settle into positions of authority from which they can drive younger Kithain insane with their continuous criticisms and interference.

Affinity: Prop

Birthrights

• **Forge Chimera** — Nockers can create simple, nonliving chimera. If an artisan has basic working knowledge of how a device operates, she can conceive of how to build a better version. In general, her creation cannot involve electricity, magnetism or chemical reactions, though Storytellers can feel free to allow nocker characters to break this rule for extremely creative devices.

To create chimera, the nocker needs raw chimerical material and a forge or machine shop of some kind. The creative process is represented by extended rolls of Intelligence + Crafts. The difficulty and number of successes depends on the size and complexity of the project. With five successes at a difficulty of 5 a nocker can create simple items (doors, baseball bats); 10 or more successes at a difficulty of 9 can result in large or highly complex items (siege engines, semi-automatic knife-throwers, and so on).

Nockers must have some degree of privacy when constructing chimera. While it is possible for Kithain to be present, a nocker cannot work with chimerical materials in the presence of mortals.

• **Fix-It** — Nockers are masters of machines, and everyone knows it. A few harsh words or well-timed threats can intimidate a malfunctioning machine into working properly. A nocker can fix nearly any mechanical device by making a successful Intelligence + Crafts or Intimidation roll. The difficulty can range from a 5 (for simple, familiar problems) to as high as 10 (a complex machine that's really acting up). This takes time and a lot of hostility, but nockers generally have both in spades. Many a balky engine-block has been frightened into working properly by a nocker simply growling at it.

In addition, Seelie and Unseelie craftspersons can choose different specialties during character creation. Seelie can choose one anachronistic device (waterwheels, steam engines, pulley systems) and get a -1 difficulty on any roll to fix, manipulate or control that device. Unseelie get the same bonus with one type of high-tech or modern device.

This Birthright functions normally when in the presence of mortals.

Be patient with Drago McHenry. He seems to be having a little trouble with the duke's '57 Chevy.

On Boggans — Heh! They think they're so good at what they do. Sloppy, rustic folk. You want something done right, do it yourself.

On Eshu — Yabber, yabber, yabber. They'll talk your ears off about places you'll never see. Tricky #@&*#s!

On Pooka —Frivolous! Wasting their time on pranks and nonsense. What's that gonna get 'em?

On Redcaps — I guess I can get along with them...until they get pissed off.

On Satyrs — They seem to think that the glamorous life means sleeping around and swilling wine. They deserve what they get: trouble!

On Sidhe — They always seemed a little distant to me, but I'm not gonna turn down a fat commission from 'em!

On Sluagh — Buncha freaks. Most of 'em need to get a tan. Then again, most of them need to get a life. What's to trust?

On Trolls — They aren't as bright as they think they are. If you want to associate with trolls, make sure you're on their good side.

Frailties

• **Flaws** — Nockers are cynical because they're such perfectionists. They can always see ways for things to work better, but they can never quite achieve their ideals. Some say this is a curse from the First Artisan; others claim it's a karmic debt for their attitude problem. Regardless, anything a nocker creates will have one trivial (but irreparable) flaw. This serves as a constant frustration to the artisan who's crafted it. Even if the nocker scores five or more successes on a creation roll (a complete success), there will still be an elusive, annoying fault.

Quote: *Yeah, that's what you think! What would you know about @#%&*? I don't take advice from someone who smells as bad as you do! Now either quit stinking the place up, or have a bath in my lye-scrubbing machine!*

pooka

(POO-kuh)



Pooka are among the most charming and congenial of the Kithain. However, they're also rapscallions, scoundrels and ne'er-do-wells known for their deceitful, devious, eccentric and mischievous ways. If eshu are reckless, pooka are demented. Their lives are a constant barrage of pranks, lies and wild stunts. They love to play and hate to work. Faerie lore claims that pooka are descended from innocent dreams of long ago, when mortals watched animals at play and wished they could be so free as well.

Everything is larger than life for pooka. They find it difficult to take mundane life seriously, and they'll do anything to discourage the sadness that it brings. If they carry a piece of that sadness deep within their hearts, you'd never guess it. Pooka's lives are a blur of happy chaos. They chase away doldrums with an almost desperate effort. No joke is too low if it gets a laugh.

Truth is anathema to a pooka. Anything she says will be peppered with lies to make it more interesting. After spreading foolishness and misinformation, she'll retreat to a safe vantage point where she can watch the fun. If the object of her pranks is angered, the pooka will be confused. Maybe the focus of her attention needs a little help with his sense of humor. Maybe it'll take a little more work to "cheer him up." Or perhaps he's afflicted with a deadly curse: He's mundane. Mundanity is disturbing to pooka, and they have an overwhelming fear of becoming banal. Their eccentricity is their easiest escape.

The mortal world is a mystery to them — they're exotic creatures who share a primal affinity with the animals they resemble. They excel at shapechanging, and even their mortal seemings always carry some signs of their bestial alter egos. In fact, a pooka can take on the form of his chosen beast. This increases his opportunities for mischief.

A changeling's animal affinity will often tie into her environment. Pooka who dwell in the city often take the forms of dogs, cats or even rats, while country pooka may emulate horses, wolves or wild hares. Most are mammals, but a few avian and reptilian pooka do exist. Eshu have told tales of lion, kangaroo and platypus pooka, but few believe them. Many do believe, however, that stories of animal tricksters throughout the world were no doubt inspired by these fae.

For all their mischief, pooka have a strong sense of nobility. Seelie pooka are loyal friends and courageous in battle. If one of their pranks causes real pain, they are genuinely sorry. Unseelie pooka can be vicious and feral, but most do their best to fit in with their Seelie brethren. In fact, their streak of mischief results in them pretending to be Seelie on occasion! Flocks, herds and parades of pooka travel about, enacting plays and carnivals for fae and mortals alike. Wherever they go, they bring laughter, deceit and confusion. Welcome to the greatest show on Earth.

Appearance: Whatever forms they choose, pooka are usually cute. Though their appearances are manifold (depending on the nature of their animal affinities) they are often furry, with elongated animalistic features and even actual animal ears.

Lifestyle: Whether they live as actors, clowns, jugglers, court jesters or stand-up comedians, pooka somehow manage to eke out a living doing what they love. Perhaps that's the biggest prank of all. Seelie drift toward promising mortals who need a little cheering up; Unseelie act as confidants to those who can ensure their survival. In the city, one can expect them to see them around universities, the city parks or maybe the bohemian part of town. In the country, be sure you're kind to the animals you meet.

• **Childlings** are little angels, especially when they think they're going to get caught. Seelie childlings are like playful baby animals, always causing trouble and trying hard to avoid punishment. Unseelie childlings are destructive little beasts, but soon learn the fine art of making sure the Seelie get blamed.

• **Wilders** have a notoriously crude sense of humor. Imagine a class clown who'd seduce your best friend's S.O. while planting a stink bomb in the school's ventilation system. When his pranks are going really well, he'll even get a luminescent gleam in his eyes. Be careful when a wilder pooka starts to sharpen his claws.

• **Grumps** age gracefully. Most of them settle down to jobs in which fools can make an easy living. While their sense of humor never fades, it does become more subtle. Greybeard pooka tend to prefer elaborate pranks that can take weeks to orchestrate properly.

Affinity: Nature

Birthrights

• **Shapechanging** — Each pooka has an affinity with an animal of her choice. When completely alone, she can shapechange into that animal (or back from it) in one turn. Shapechanging costs a point of Glamour, but reverting back is free. The pooka has all of the animal's natural abilities (claws, speed, leaping, etc.), although it's only possible to assume the forms of mundane beasts. Even the large and scary forms tend to be far more playful than deadly, even when a fight breaks out.

Changelings can't ken the animal form of a pooka in her mortal seeming. They really don't need to see the animal form to figure it out, though: a pooka often shares a few of the animal's more endearing qualities. A cat pooka, for instance, might lick her fingers after a meal, or purr when stroked. In her faerie mien, she might have little ears and a long swishing tail.

• **Confidant** — The innate charm of a pooka breaks down the barriers of even the coldest people. Adding a faerie's curiosity to that makes him an outstanding confidant. Once during a conversation, a pooka may roll Perception + Empathy (or Subterfuge) to get a changeling or mortal to spill her guts; the difficulty is the "victim's" Willpower. Each success allows a truthful answer to one personal question. This isn't an instantaneous effect, though. It takes time, effort and roleplaying to coax out the information.

This Birthright functions normally at all times, even with mortals.

A pooka can never botch an Empathy or Subterfuge roll.

Behold the wit and wisdom of Runcible Shaw, Chronicler of Peculiar Events.

On Boggans — Never around when you need them, and when they are, they're so stingy! Why the last one I met only gave me three helpings of dessert.

On Eshu — Hang around these guys and you'll have a fairly calm life. Couldn't think of a safer way to travel cross-country.

On Nockers — Nockers have such a wondrous *joie de vivre*. Hearing them regale us with their great praise for everything is a delight. Do tell us what they said about boggan craftsmen again!

On Redcaps — Um...here. Light the fuse on this and give it to that redcap over there. He'll be ever so thankful. *I'll just wait behind this troll.*

On Satyrs — Their festive occasions definitely need a few pooka around to liven them up. Spike the punch, and watch the fun begin!

On Sidhe — So regal. So elegant. It must be wonderful to be the center of so much intrigue and politics.

On Sluagh — Outspoken and cheerful.

On Trolls — If ever you get into more trouble than you can handle, stand behind one of these.

Frailties

• **Lies** — People may trust a pooka, but no one in their right mind would believe one. They're infamous for their elaborate lies. No matter how important a issue may be, a pooka must always mix in a lie. It's her nature. A pooka must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) to tell the whole truth.

Different pooka have different styles of lying. Some Seelie pooka always say the opposite of what they mean, while many Unseelie purposefully tell the truth now and then to throw listeners off-guard. Unseelie pooka sometimes couch their lies very carefully — if an Unseelie makes his Willpower roll at the beginning of a scene, he can mix lies and truth freely. This can make him even more dangerous....

Quote: *Of course, it was then that I realized that I had to save them all. It's amazing what super glue will do to the scabbard of a broadsword....*

REDCAPS

(RED-kaps)

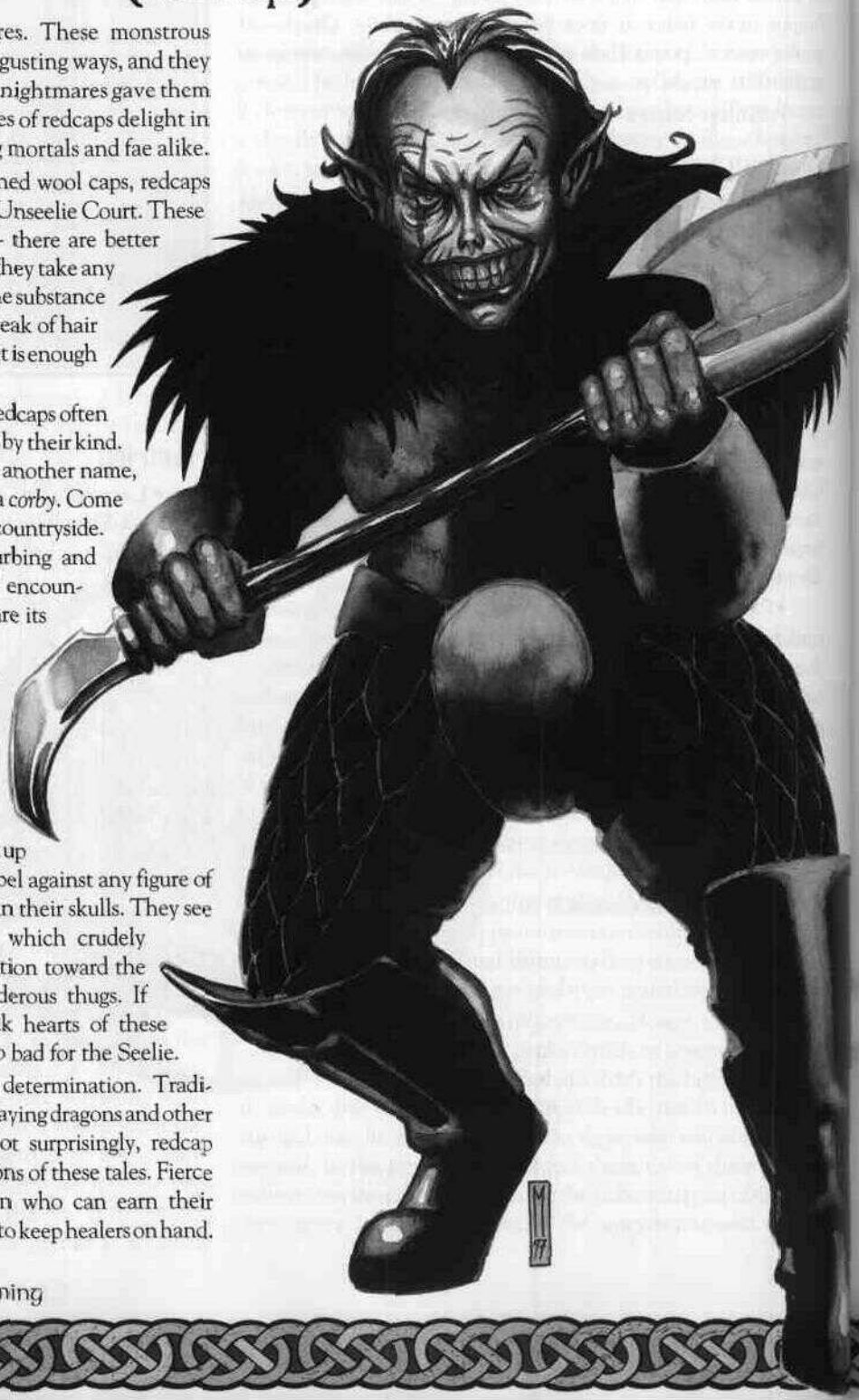
Redcaps are the stuff of nightmares. These monstrous Kithain are feared for their vulgar and disgusting ways, and they *revel in the terror of others.* It is said that nightmares gave them form, and many Kithain believe it. Hordes of redcaps delight in taunting, insulting and just plain abusing mortals and fae alike.

Originally named for their bloodstained wool caps, redcaps have always been devoted servants of the Unseelie Court. These days, wool caps are considered quaint — there are better things to do with blood. In modern times, they take any opportunity to paint the town red...with one substance or another. The sight of a shocking red streak of hair or a bloodstained shirt under a leather jacket is enough to disturb the staunchest of fae.

Regardless of their other affiliations, redcaps often consort with local mortal gangs dominated by their kind. While the mortals may know this gang by another name, the entourage is known to changelings as a *corby*. Come nightfall the corby of redcaps ravages the countryside. A corby is a traveling freak show, disturbing and unnerving the staid and sedate mortals it encounters. Spreading mayhem and destruction are its highest ideals.

Unlike trolls, redcaps don't intimidate people with brute strength. Attitude is all they need. A bad attitude is the essence of a redcap's being, and the brutal visage of his fae mien reflects this. Violent tempers and atrocious manners show them at their worst, though few of them can back up their attitude with cleverness. Redcaps rebel against any figure of authority that can't flatter them or crush in their skulls. They see themselves as oppressed at every turn, which crudely justifies their dirty fighting, harsh retribution toward the mortal world, and violent lives as murderous thugs. If there's a redeeming quality in the black hearts of these *bastards, few Seelie fae have noticed.* Too bad for the Seelie.

Staunch Unseelie admire redcaps' determination. Traditional lays and songs tell of redcap heroes slaying dragons and other beasts that have threatened the fae. Not surprisingly, redcap troubadours have their own intense versions of these tales. Fierce redcap bodyguards are prized by Kithain who can earn their respect, although such masters are advised to keep healers on hand.



The appetites of redcaps rival their ferocity. Renowned for their eating prowess, redcaps often indulge in gorging contests that would make a shark vomit. Sometimes this even involves food. Some Kithain refer to them as "bulldogs" or "pit bulls," and attest that a redcap's will is as strong as his bite. Those actually bitten by redcaps shudder at the memory. In bygone days, these fae bit off body parts of their victims as trophies and wore human bones as testimonies to their ferocity. The victims of such attacks seldom survive this practice.

Seelie redcaps are rare, but they do exist. They're endangered, largely because Unseelie redcaps everywhere despise them and hunt them down. A Seelie redcap's tiresome idealistic speeches about chivalry often fills them with wrath. Heroic and steadfast, Seelie redcaps live for the thrill of chivalrous battle and to fight against impossible odds. This is the primary reason many of them are killed by roving packs of Unseelie. The lucky ones are only maimed before they descend into an Unseelie Legacy of bitterness and anger.

Each corby of redcaps has its own particular idiom, and in the mortal world, each gang goes by a different name. Some prefer anachronism, living as bandits along the roads and byways. Most prefer a more modern life, roaming the streets in packs. Regardless of their preferences, redcaps make sure to let everyone know of the violence they have at their command.

Appearance: Redcaps tend toward stocky builds, with grayish, mottled skin and thick, bandy legs. Even Seelie redcaps have horrid, bloodshot eyes, skeletal noses and rubbery, wrinkled faces. Worst of all are their ghoulish mouths, filled with yellowed, crooked, flat teeth used for grinding and ripping.

Lifestyles: The more violent the neighborhood, the more comfortable a corby of redcaps will be there. The thought of living outside a city can be chilling to some. Running a gang is a respectable job; joining a gang is sometimes a matter of survival. Those who can find time away from their corbies might work as boxers, muggers or streetwise artists.

• **Childling** redcaps are bullies, and the tyranny of the playground is their law. Their hobbies are more sadistic than deadly. The pain of others fills them with glee.

• **Wilders** are worse. As gangsters, vandals and malcontents, they live to ruin the lives of others, even in the simplest of ways. Body-piercing and tattooing are competitive art forms among them, and they prefer to adorn themselves with needles, chains, bolts and screws. A redcap's first piercing is a rite of passage, regardless of whether or not it involves her consent.

• **Grumps** earn the admiration of the Unseelie Court, and they demand respect with violence, arrogance and threats. Some gangbangers make the mistake of challenging these old bastards, but few survive. Their prowess in battle is truly astounding and utterly ruthless.

Affinity: Nature

Birthrights

• **Dark Appetite:** Redcaps can literally eat anything. They can chew through cars and eat their way through walls. Their bulldog teeth are brutally flat and hard as steel; their digestive systems (thankfully) remain a mystery. Most prefer human or animal meat, but when hunger strikes, anything will do. We do mean *anything*.

As long as a redcap can put his mouth around something, he can eat it. Large objects can be chewed into smaller pieces. Digesting something particularly vile or tough (such as wood, steel, romance novels or toxic waste) requires the expenditure of a point of Glamour. Keep all arms and hands away from redcaps at all times.

Any time a redcap attempts to use this Birthright in combat, he must spend a point of Glamour, just as if he were trying to eat something not normally edible. The base damage for a redcap bite is Strength + 2 (difficulty 5). Additionally, the redcap may try to sever an opponent's limb. Severing a limb with this ability requires five successes on a Dexterity + Brawl roll (difficulty 8), or three successes if the victim has been grappled first. This attack inflicts a minimum of three Health Levels of damage if successful, in addition to any damage rolled.

• **Bully Browbeat:** Redcaps can intimidate anything, even imaginary or chimerical objects. The difficulties of all Intimidation rolls are reduced by one. A successful roll causes chimera to obey without question; sentient creatures can resist with Willpower (rolled at a difficulty equal to the redcap's Willpower).

This Birthright functions normally at all times, even in the presence of mortals or unenchanted supernaturals.

Frailties

• **Bad Attitude:** No one likes a redcap, not even other redcaps. Some noble freeholds try to ostracize or kill redcaps just on general principles. As part of this stigma, they suffer a +2 difficulty (or greater) for any roll involving a social situation other than browbeating.

Quote: *You trying to start something with me? Bring it on, punk! Heh, heh, heh! I'll paint the walls with your blood!*

Don't move. Danny Sandbags, a squire to Sir Du Bois, is going to give you his opinion.

On Boggans — If you ever need laundry done, go to one of them. Too bad they're so easily shocked by bloodstains.

On Eshu — You're a fool if you gamble with an eshu. They've got some great stories from the battlefield, though.

On Nockers — What a pain in the ass these guys are! Bitch, bitch, bitch. I'll give 'em something to cry about!

On Pooka — Hmmm.... Oh, sorry. I was just thinking about those traps I set.

On Satyrs — If you're looking for some strong brew or a babe, these guys will hook you up.

On Sidhe — Stay clear of the sidhe. They may look weak, but they'll turn you into sushi with their blades. And if they sic the freehold on you — sucks to be you.

On Sluagh — And they say *I'm* sick? Have you seen where sluagh live?

On Trolls — Tough in a fight. Dumb, but tough. Your best bet is to try to outnumber them.

SATYRS

(SAY-ters)

Wild and passionate, satyrs satisfy their lust and desires with abandon. These fae insist that wisdom is found in passion. If it's true, then satyrs are by far the wisest of the Kithain. While others may decry their earthy ways, they'll come around sooner or later for advice, a bit of support or a down-and-dirty good time.

Satyrs are well-known for their lack of restraint. A goat will cheerfully tell a redcap where he can ram his axe and then gallop away laughing his head off. Their stamina is also legendary. Whether partying, drinking or charging into battle, satyrs have definite physical advantages over their kin. Though not as beautiful as the sidhe, they never lack for lovers. They claim it is because of their open minds and bold attitudes, but many changelings think the Gift of Pan has more to do with it.

Life for a satyr is not all lust and roses, though. Most satyrs enjoy solitude and scholarship. Friendship and intellectual exercise also sustains them. They make good confidants and excellent philosophers; indeed, their mental contests can rival their drinking ones. Poetry, debate, philosophy, music — these quieter pursuits fascinate them. Once the contemplation grows too extreme, however, they're eager to experience the other side of life again. Living their lives to the fullest, they'll embark on another infamous carnal spree. More often than not, they'll bring their intellectual companions along in an effort to broaden their horizons.

Although very affable, satyrs can also be quite clannish. Their kith bands, called *tragos*, are extended families. Friends and lovers, playmates and enemies may come and go, but tragos endure. If a satyr dies or falls to Banality, her trago holds an epic wake with endless songs and frenzied dancing. Separating a goat from her trago is almost impossible. Only the foulest of crimes could lead to exile.

Truth is nothing to them without beauty, and they have a soft spot for precious things. They are not materialistic, however; it is easier for them to collect people to play with until their amusement is satisfied. This can get rather difficult if the playmate gets attached. As good as satyrs are with ideas, feelings are a mystery to the goats.

Satyrs' passions often run unchecked because they don't know how to control them. A Seelie satyr may try to understand a jilted lover, but can never fathom the reason for her pain. An Unseelie satyr pities his lover, then freely Ravages her in service to his passion. Either way, this can be dangerous. When the Song of Pan is playing, chaos flows freely, and the aftermath can be fatal. Answering the call of passion, satyrs follow their own wisdom.

Appearance: Satyrs are lean and furry; both sexes wear their hair long and rarely shave. Goats are shamelessly forward in their ways, and prize sensuality in all its forms. They have furry legs, cloven hooves and small horns jutting from their foreheads. What few clothes they wear are usually durable and easy to remove.

Lifestyle: Music is a common passion for goats, and making a living by it is an ideal lifestyle. Wineries, brew pubs, bars and nightclubs attract herds of satyrs. Pushing their stamina to the limit, they work hard for all the pleasure they can get from life.

- **Childling** satyrs are also known as "fauns." Learning the essential skills in life — like singing, music, running and wrestling — are among their primary concerns. Their musical performances are usually exquisite. Childlings have four soft tiny nubs for horns.
- **Wilders** are the very essence of fae chaos: lecherous, rambunctious, and wild. Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you'll be old. Each pair of nubs grows together to form two horns. The size of a male's horns are a source of pride, as well as the brunt of numerous jokes. Six inches is about average for a male's display of virility; a female's horns are a bit smaller.
- **Grumps** seek wisdom to escape from the sadness of their lost youth. Although they enjoy a good drink and a spirited debate, they know their best years are behind them. When a greybeard's sorrow becomes too great, his trago takes him out for one last epic fling. The grump dies at dawn the next day. The horns of a greybeard satyr are impressively large, and they often curve back along the top of the head like a ram's.

Affinity: Fae

Birthrights

- **Gift of Pan** — Dionysian revelry is high ritual to these fae. Singing, music and dance can be used to stir fae and mortals alike to the height of carnal passion. Anyone who fails a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) is swept away by hidden desires and the activities of the evening.

After an hour or two, the Banality of the those in the area slowly drops. Everyone involved, mortal or not, has his permanent Banality lowered by one for as long as the satyrs continue to perform. Tragos can combine their efforts to lower Banality even further. Each satyr fueling the fire can lower the revelers' temporary Banality by one more, to a minimum of 2. These effects last only for as long as the satyrs continue to entertain. Lost Banality returns at a rate of one point per hour.

• **Physical Prowess** — All satyrs add one to their Stamina, even if this increases it above 5. This bonus is in effect at all times. When they call upon the Wyrd and take their faerie form, or when not in the presence of mortals or the unenchanted, their goat legs can carry them at shocking speeds. Each turn, they can move 25 yards + three times their Dexterity.

Regardless of form, satyrs can never botch Athletics rolls.

Frailties

• **Passion's Curse** — Passion has its unpleasant moments as well. Satyrs are prone to wild mood swings, especially when they're drunk. With the slightest of provocation, they may explode into a torrent of fury or a fit of weeping. Furthermore, on the rare occasions when they try to resist temptation, the difficulties for all Willpower rolls are increased by two.

Quote: *Oh, yes, all wisdom is found in passion. By the way, your eyes look lovely by firelight....*

Have another drink while Gregorius Galli speaks to you of the Kithain.

On Boggans — They work hard, but comfort is their highest goal. I suppose that's the life they want. I don't think it's much of one.

On Eshu — Yeah, their stories are great, but their conversations are even better. Talk to one about his travels, and you'll learn a hell of a lot.

On Nockers — Their cynicism doesn't last forever, and if they get behind a task, they'll work their asses off.

On Pooka — Save for their annoying pranks, they can be useful if you know how to work with them.

On Redcaps — What a shame. They think they know passion, but they only know anarchy.

On Sidhe — I'll never understand them. One minute, they're fragile and delicate; the next, they're the greatest of heroes. How odd.

On Sluagh — Their wisdom is dark and painful. Too bad they're too entrenched in their sorrow to see the truths of life.

On Trolls — You want to see nobility? Witness the devotion and honor of a troll.



SIDHE

(SHEE)



As exiled nobility, the sidhe remember a time when they ruled proudly in a living dream. Known and feared as the Good Folk, their whims enchanted and terrified mortals for millennia. Now that tale has ended. The gates to Arcadia have closed, the song has ended, and their new kingdom grows cold. For sidhe, the age of wonder has died, *and they mourn its passing.*

This mourning, however, has not ended their lives. Though they fear death like few faeries ever could, they are facing their fate with regal bearing. While others consider them cold and arrogant, the sidhe refuse to lie down and die. For them, the dream is still alive, and they strive to awaken the world from its slumber. The very presence of a sidhe inspires supernatural awe. The sight of a sidhe in her true form captures the hearts of mortals and the essence of the Dreaming.

Faerie passions run deep — love or vengeance is never forgotten. The ideals of the sidhe are even fiercer, and cost them dearly. Such passion has its price, though. Even Seelie heroes would rather destroy themselves in a blaze of glory than fade away. Their less energetic brethren lose hope and become self-indulgent, letting their freeholds fall into despair as easily as they fall into melancholy. Others become Unseelie tyrants, ruling through cruelty and intrigue. Though exotic in their beauty and lost in their ideals, a few travel among commoners. No matter what path they choose, sidhe are far from human and always stand out among those with whom they associate.

The blessing and curse of the sidhe is to live deeper in the Dreaming world than most fae ever will. This walking dream-state gives most sidhe a glazed look and unfocused air. Bards' songs say that the eldest sidhe live in the past, present and future all at once. Sidhe are also notorious for switching between

Courts without warning. Considering their whims, it's no wonder few changelings trust them.

Banality is a deadly curse, and sidhe suffer more from it than any other Kithain. Death is an even greater fear, for sidhe are not believed to be reborn as other changelings are. In these dark times, most never return from death; and it is speculated that the few that do are reincarnated as commoners — for them, a fate worse than death. Faced with this dire fate, they resent the Arcadian sidhe for exiling them from paradise. The most hopeless of the Earth-bound sidhe quest in vain for Arcadia or throw themselves into orgies of Glamour-gathering to sustain themselves. The thought of simply fading away is too much for them, and they will do anything to stay alive. Tormented by their dreams, the beautiful sidhe are outsiders in a human world.

Appearance: The sidhe resemble humans of unearthly beauty; their bodies are perfect, their features pleasing and their hair richly colorful. They are ethereal and carry a hint of sadness even when they laugh. Tall and lean, they are fierce and regal, with tapering pointed ears, angular features and a commanding gaze. Their eyes are of odd yet striking colors, such as violet or silver. They rarely wear anything but the finest clothing.

Lifestyle: Just as the sidhe have positions of esteem in the courts of the Kithain, they tend to hold valuable positions in the mortal world as well. Wealth and privilege are common to them, and they are expected to live affluent lives. Those who cannot often become resentful and fall into a very Unseelie state of mind.

• **Childlings** know of the blessings of their inheritance from a very early age. The best of them act like perfect little gentlemen and ladies, but the worst of them are spoiled rotten and throw tantrums when things don't go their way.

• **Wilders** know they have the opportunity to indulge their every whim outside of court. Although high spirited and presumptuous on occasion, they are watched carefully once court begins. Seelie wilders are overconfident that their chivalry and nobility will prevail; Unseelie wilders are rebellious and scheme for power.

• **Grumps** fully realize the weight of their lofty positions. Many carry the burden of memories of years gone by. They pine for their glory days and grieve the mistakes they have made. Their greatest release from this weary introspection is the intrigue of the court.

Affinity: The sidhe have not spent enough time on Earth to aquire an Affinity.

Birthrights

• **Awe and Beauty** — Sidhe get two extra dots of Appearance during character creation, even if this increases scores above 5. They cannot help but stand out in a crowd.

The fury of a sidhe scorned is a majestic and terrifying sight. When one is impassioned, all of her Social rolls (especially Empathy or Intimidation rolls) are at a -2 difficulty. Anyone who tries to attack an angry sidhe head-on must make a Willpower roll; the difficulty ranges from a 6 (for the average sidhe) to an 8 or 9 (for one of suitably high station).

These abilities only affect other Kithain and the enchanted, unless the sidhe calls upon the Wyrd.

• **Noble Bearing** — Whether heroes or villains, all sidhe are dignified. Any cantrip that would directly make them look foolish immediately fails.

Sidhe cannot botch Etiquette rolls.

Frailties

• **Banality's Curse** — Sidhe are truly not of this world. The taint of Banality affects them more strongly than it does other fae. Each temporary point of Banality that a highborn gains becomes two points. If a sidhe character must make a roll at a difficulty equal to her Banality (or a roll that's resisted by Banality), treat it as one level higher.

Sidhe are also prone to fits of depression. The weakest of them can overcome these fits by changing their Legacies back and forth. When this happens, the spell must last at least from moonrise to moonrise or sunset to sunset. Strong-willed sidhe escape this mania by retreating further into their Legacies; Seelie become impossibly idealistic and Unseelie sink to the very depths of villainy. Their great extremes can make them almost unendurable.

Quote: *Who am I? I am the center of the storm, I am a master of the sword. Draw your blade, cur, or die where you stand.*

You may be seated while Erioch Evenstar has an audience with you.

On Boggans — It is quite helpful to have gentle and honest commoners. Be careful of what you say around them, though.

On Eshu — They may boast and brag, but you should never refuse their tales from afar.

On Nockers — Their skills are useful, even if their attitude is grating.

On Pooka — Fates forefend! Why do they work so hard to ridicule the noblest of the fae?

On Redcaps — Unpleasant, untrustworthy and crude. They're little more than common thugs.

On Satyrs — They're good for a brief dalliance, but otherwise, they're not as deep as they make themselves out to be.

On Sluagh — It is certainly better to be the recipient of their information than the subject of their curiosity.

On Trolls — Honest, fierce and devoted — these are the qualities of a staunch man-at-arms.

SLUAGH

(SLOO-ah)

Called the underfolk by many, the sluagh are often pariah even among other fae. Though rumors persist of undergound catacombs and mazelike lairs, most sluagh prefer crumbling Victorian mansions to dank sewers. Places dark and forgotten attract them. Those who intrude into their inner sanctums often leave with nightmares. Just as they value secrets and mysteries, sluagh treasure their privacy, and do a great deal to foster reputations that discourage visitors.

Loremasters say that these Kithain were once Russian faeries who lived under mountains or mortal hearths. Now they live out of sight in the cracks of the world, hidden until they choose to venture out, sometimes to court, sometimes to mortal environs. Whether they live in parlors or crawlspaces, sluagh are unsettlingly polite and have a great love of formality. Such is even more unnerving to the other kith; boggan rumors hint at secret sluagh rituals, sacrifice and wild carnage under the earth. The underfolk enjoy the effect they have on outsiders, and are amused at the reputation they have acquired. Even redcaps fear their clammy touch.

Despite their preference for quiet, adventurous sluagh do visit the surface courts, cultivate friendships and enter oathbonds with outsiders. They will go out of their way to aid or protect an outsider who has shown them respect and friendship. These good deeds are frequently misinterpreted by other suspicious changelings, so such relationships are often brief. Still, even sluagh who find a clique they can trust need to have a secret place to which they can retreat.

The underfolk collect information (secrets are better, though), and barter their knowledge to interested parties. Revelation is joy; the more unsettling the revelation, the greater the joy. While Seelie use their knowledge for more noble ends, Unseelie can make a crooked living through blackmail. Secrets are but one commodity to them, though. Broken toys, strange knickknacks and anything resonant with nostalgia makes for an excellent item of trade. Outsiders are mystified by the value sluagh place on these items, but then again, perversity is the sluagh's trademark.

Though it is said that all sluagh follow Unseelie ways, they rarely throw in behind either Court, keeping instead to themselves. Among their own kind, these kith are generous and almost painfully formal. They regard each other with deep respect, and band together against outsiders if need be. Shrouded in mystery, the sluagh hold the secrets of their kith closest of all as they cultivate their image. In darkness they thrive.

Appearance: Sluagh are pale and grotesque, yet oddly compelling. Some unfathomable deformity seems to cling to them like leprosy. They lack teeth and have small, tired, mysterious eyes. They carry a vague odor of decay, a smell that grows more pungent with age. Sluagh favor archaic clothing, usually black and always intricate.

Lifestyle: The most civilized sluagh frequent dusty mansions, antique shops or musty libraries. The most decrepit seek out the underworld, lurking in sewers, crawlspaces and forgotten places beneath metropoli. They are shy, yet territorial, demanding adherence to extensive rules of etiquette and protocol other fae don't fully understand. Hermits and recluses by nature, they don't like to be disturbed without good reason. They always maintain private spots to which they can retreat, even if they are in motleys.

- **Childlings** are street urchins who take very poor care of their appearance. Their clothes are torn, their hair is disheveled, and they arouse great sympathy for their suffering. They delight in all that disgusts human children, and hold a strong affinity for hidden places.
- **Wilders** are the guardians of the uncovered spots of the world. As they grow older, their skin grows paler and their hair turns jet black. They have dark hollow eyes and elongated limbs, fingers and toes.
- **Grumps** age at an alarming rate. Their skin hangs on them like it is somehow too large for them, their hair is soon streaked with shocking gray, and their bodies become warped, stooped and crooked. Oddly enough, they seem to enjoy this. Sluagh prize decay in many forms, and this is but one more.

Affinity: Prop

Birthrights

- **Squirm** — Dislocating body parts is a popular amusement for these desiccated creatures. Confining them is almost impossible. Although they cannot change their shape or mass, underfolk can contort into disquieting shapes with unnatural ease. This

requires a few minutes of entertainment and a roll of Dexterity + Athletics; the difficulty ranges from a 6 (escaping from ropes) to a 10 (worming through the bars of a locked cell). The only substance that can completely imprison them is, of course, cold iron.

A sluagh cannot use this Birthright in the presence of mortals or the unenchanted.

• **Sharpened Senses** — The unusual upbringing of these fae heightens their senses. Subtract two from any Perception roll a sluagh makes (to a minimum of 3). They may see through illusory magic by making a roll of Perception + Alertness (difficulty 7).

This Birthright always functions normally.

It is impossible for sluagh to botch Stealth or Alertness rolls.

Listen closely and you may learn a thing or two from Elspeth Danvers, Collector of Antiquities.

On Boggans — How ambitious! To creep and listen and gossip!

On Eshu — Their stories are their secrets, warm living things, not the cold knowledge we drag from the grave. Listen well when they speak.

On Nockers — How singularly insecure they are, eternally seeking praise. The best one might hope for is to learn some new profanity.

On Pooka — Good for a laugh, even if they do live in a world of lies.

On Redcaps — These pit bulls know only madness, not fear. I know things that would leave them shaking.

On Satyrs — They believe knowledge is hidden only in joy and lust. They do not know the wisdom of silence and sadness.

On Sidhe — They are not without their shame, the mightiest of all. If you knew what I know of them....

On Trolls — So stoic and brave...what hides in your heart? What pain do you bear?

Frailties

• **Curse of Silence** — Sluagh cannot speak above a whisper, no matter how hard they strain to be heard. Since they dislike social situations and hold to very odd rules of etiquette, add two to the difficulty of all of their Social rolls.

While a sluagh may not appear to whisper to mortal ears, the individual in question is usually quite soft-spoken.

Quote: *Why did you come here to my attic and disturb my rest? Are you here to find something from long ago? Be careful you don't open something you can't close....*



TROLLS

(TROLS)

Duty, strength and honor are the hallmarks of a troll. Warriors without peer, they hold to the old ways of plain speaking and simple truths. Honor is a way of living to them, and once they have pledged their support to someone, they dedicate themselves fully. Many trolls expect the same honesty from all fae, and are often disappointed as a result. In fact, many fae think of the trolls as being naive for this very reason, especially when it comes to trust. A troll's devotion is not easily dismissed, however; they're also seen as patient, reliable and chivalrous.

Trolls consider dedication to be the measure of their worth. If a trolls breaks his word or betrays a trust, he weakens until he has atoned for his offending deed. In addition, trolls cannot use their great strength without just cause. Taking such an unfair advantage over an adversary would be unchivalrous, after all. Legends tell that the trolls were actually the first noble kith; when the sidhe appeared, a great war began. The trolls lost, and as a result, swore loyalty to the sidhe. Since then, serving as guardians has been their destiny.

This kith has an impressive reputation largely because of their Seelie brethren. Seelie trolls are often referred to as "giants," and their mortal seemings are usually ruggedly proud and handsome. Bravery and stoicism define their character. Always seeking civility, they typically use formal titles when addressing others and dedicate their souls to those they respect. In romance, they are ardent suitors who go for all the courtly trimmings. In loyalty, it is nearly impossible to sway a Seelie troll's beliefs once they are established. They prefer spartan quarters and simple living; recognition of service is reward enough to them.

Yet there are limits to what a troll will endure. The mockery of a pooka or a nocker will hardly rouse a troll, but if a troll's patience is broken, she will fly into a monstrous rage, destroying everything and everyone until she calms or is taken down. Even the most foolish pooka watches closely for the darkening of a troll's visage. These fae can also be stubborn. Changing a troll's mind can be as difficult as moving a mountain.

A kingdom is safe as long as its trolls can be trusted. When a troll's lair starts to degrade, others begin to worry about his well-being. A troll's eyes begin to darken as he starts to question trust and honor. This is the beginning of a troll's descent into his Unseelie Legacy. Most trolls try to bear this temptation with epic stoicism — once the descent has begun, others will not trust him as much. If he fully acknowledges a betrayal or rejects his beliefs, his faerie mien changes, and his visage becomes hairy and coarse-featured. At this point, he is recognized as an Unseelie troll. The worst of Unseelie trolls are typically referred to as "ogres." Once Unseelie, a troll will begin to associate with disreputable fae, and the triumph of maligned villains over celebrated heroes will fill him with self-worth.

For this reason, Seelie Kithain speak highly of trolls, and acknowledge their worth among the Kithain. They're too valuable to lose to the Unseelie Court. Trolls are more than the guardians of the people and places they protect; as staunch defenders, they are also seen as guardians of the values of honor and chivalry.

Appearance: Trolls are large, ranging from seven to nine feet tall, with thick bones and weightlifters' muscles. Seelie giants carry an air of nobility; though many favor a Nordic look, they tend to have slaty blue skin and thick black hair. All trolls, however, have icy blue or pale green eyes. Trolls have large powerful jaws, wolflike teeth and small ridged horns on their foreheads.

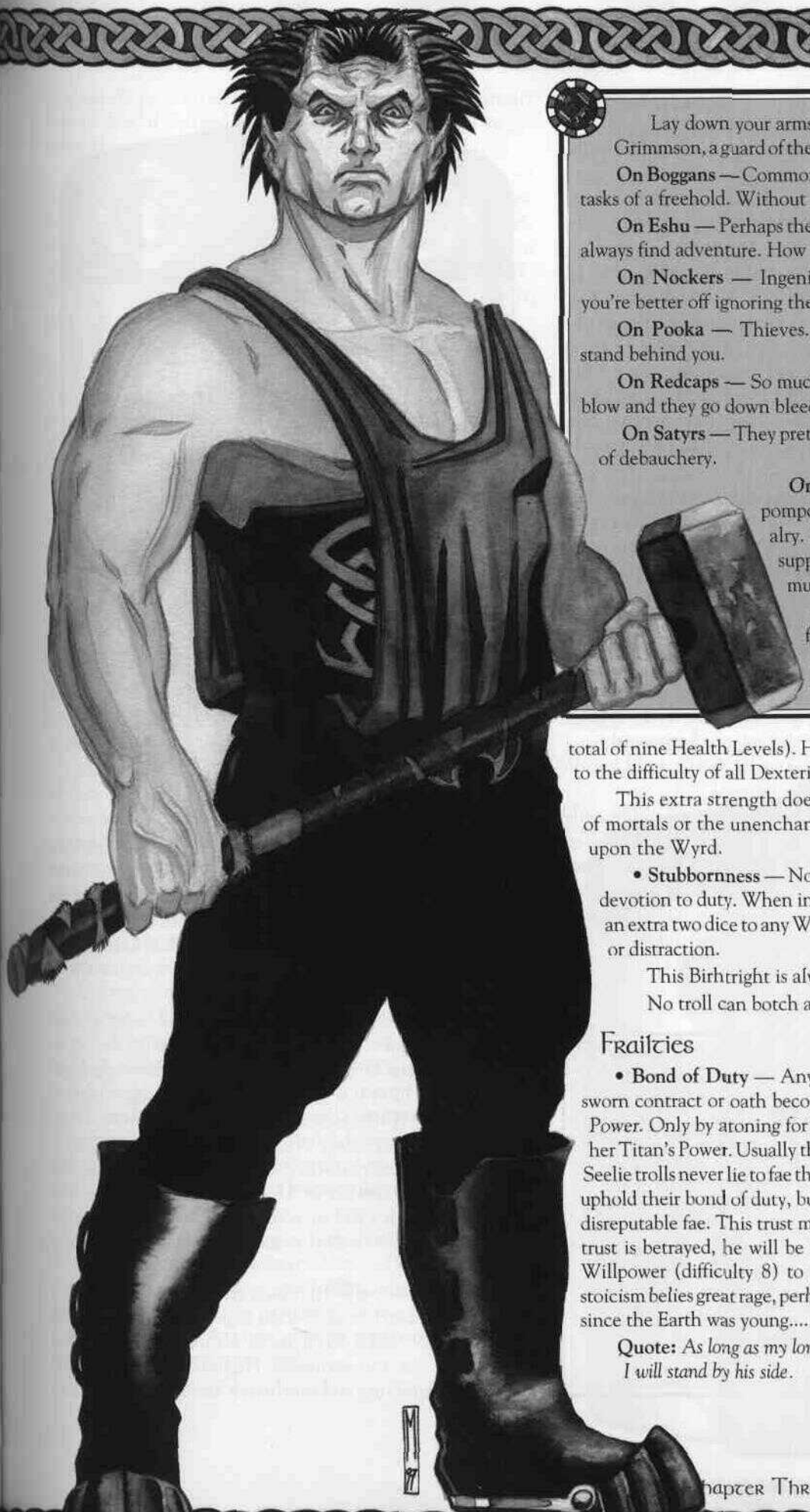
Lifestyle: In mortal life, trolls choose honest professions where they can put their skills to use. Athletics and police work are two such callings. Their tastes are spartan, and they greatly prefer work to relaxation.

- **Childlings** grow up fast. They learn that the ways of children are weak, and they take on honorable duty at an early age. Childhood is something best left behind. Stoicism is embraced.
- **Wilders** test their strength and abilities to the limit. Great adversity inspires them to great tasks. They are incredibly modest about their accomplishments, however, and are always struggling to out-do themselves.
- **Grumps** are slower than their younger brethren, but possess superhuman strength. After a career of service, they choose one person or place to protect until the death. No force on Earth can move a greybeard troll who has made up his mind about something.

Affinity: Fae

Birthrights

- **Titan's Power** — Wilders gain an additional Bruised Health Level and an additional dot of Strength during character creation, even if this raises this Trait above 5. Grumps get two extra dots in Strength and two additional Bruised Levels (for a



Lay down your arms and lend an ear to Eric Grimmson, a guard of the Freehold of the Setting Sun.

On Boggans — Commoners take care of the essential tasks of a freehold. Without them, where would we be?

On Eshu — Perhaps they're a bit dishonest, but they always find adventure. How I envy that!

On Nockers — Ingeniously clever, I'll admit, but you're better off ignoring their complaints.

On Pooka — Thieves. Liars. Fools. Never let one stand behind you.

On Redcaps — So much sound and fury! One solid blow and they go down bleeding.

On Satyrs — They pretend to be wise to justify a life of debauchery.

On Sidhe — They may be pompous, but they do uphold chivalry. If a sidhe is strong, you must support him. If he falls, then you must replace him.

On Sluagh — If their information is so trustworthy, why do they all have to whisper and hide?

total of nine Health Levels). However, greybeards also add +1 to the difficulty of all Dexterity-based rolls.

This extra strength does not function in the presence of mortals or the unenchanted unless the troll has called upon the Wyrd.

• **Stubbornness** — Nothing can interfere with a troll's devotion to duty. When in the service of a cause, trolls get an extra two dice to any Willpower roll to resist temptation or distraction.

This Birthright is always in effect.

No troll can botch an Athletics or Alertness roll.

Frailties

• **Bond of Duty** — Any troll who dares to renege on a sworn contract or oath becomes sickly and loses her Titan's Power. Only by atoning for her lapse of trust can she regain her Titan's Power. Usually this involves fulfilling a new oath. Seelie trolls never lie to fae they are protecting; Unseelie trolls uphold their bond of duty, but usually prefer to support more disreputable fae. This trust must extend both ways; if a troll's trust is betrayed, he will be filled with anger, and must roll Willpower (difficulty 8) to avoid becoming violent. Their stoicism belies great rage, perhaps one that has been with them since the Earth was young....

Quote: *As long as my lord requires the service of my blade, I will stand by his side.*

Houses

Politics and intrigue are meat and drink to the sidhe. Divorcing a highborn from his political affiliation is nigh-impossible. When a house suffers, all sidhe within that house suffer. In fact, most sidhe in the world today have been exiled from Arcadia because of their house affiliations.

This affiliation can define a sidhe's personality, his politics and his approach to rulership. Although commoners can swear allegiance to a house or even receive titles in one, their bonds are never as strong as that of the sidhe. Fealty to a house is a measure of honor and pride. Even the circumstances under which a Seelie sidhe becomes Unseelie can be influenced by this alliance. During character creation, commoners can have membership in a house, but only with the permission of the Storyteller.

Each house bestows a certain benefit (called a *Boon*) to the Kithain who support it. However, for each Boon bestowed, there is also a *Flaw*, a disadvantage that the members of the houses must endure. Many houses have conditions that they require of their members; upholding these is second nature to the highborns.

There are also countless stories explaining why the houses returned to Earth during the Resurgence. Unseelie believe that the sidhe fled Arcadia because it was dying. Extremists even believe that by questing throughout the mortal world, changelings may find a way to restore the balance between the two worlds and reopen the gates of Arcadia. Seelie and Unseelie debate how this balance should be restored.

Some sidhe have memories of being sentenced to exile, but always have distorted memories of who or what exiled them. Perhaps it was the High Lords of Arcadia or the High King...or perhaps it was for another reason. The answers are hidden in dreams, yet the ruler of each house has an explanation that he or she firmly believes. Whether these explanations are true is highly debatable. *The rationales for the exile* of the houses are detailed below.

The Nine High Lords

Nine lords watch over the Earth-bound houses of the sidhe. Five are of the Seelie Court, three are of the Unseelie Court, and one is a madman who claims to speak for the Shadow Court. Though it is rare for all nine to gather together, collectively they speak for their respective families. Each holds a great measure of influence within the Parliament of Dreams, the august legal body of Kithain society. Each has developed an entourage to travel across the terrestrial sphere to gather information about house politics. In defiance of the Arcadian sidhe who exiled them, they refer to themselves as the High Lords of the Fallen World.



House Dougal

The members of House Dougal are perfectionists known for their technical acumen. Lord Dougal, the founder of the house, was a great faerie smith who devised a way to weave Glamour into steel, making it safe for faeries to use. Some say that Lord Dougal himself stayed behind on Earth during the Interregnum because of his fascination with metalwork and machines.

Members of this house are very precise, both in word and deed. When a plan is made, they insist that it be carried out to the letter. Efficiency is considered the highest of virtues. Very few of them rule, preferring instead to make sure everything runs like clockwork. Because of their orderly disposition, they often work as clerks and barristers, although they perform their tasks with an intellectual flair. The rare member of House Dougal who does rule usually governs his fief in a very matter-of-fact, practical manner, but tends to deal with problems better in theory than in practice.

This ideal of perfection puts them at odds with many other fae. Few can live up to their expectations, which tends to make these sidhe even more elitist. They take their amusements far too seriously. Higher mathematics, mechanics, architecture and smithwork are common vocations

for them. They're no strangers to hard work, and they firmly believe that "if you want something done right, you've got to get House Dougal to do it."

When reality fails to live up to their ideals, sidhe of House Dougal tend to display one of two solutions. Their first reaction is to roll up their sleeves and redouble their efforts. In fact, they can display an amazing display of willfulness when they're desperate to make an ideal work. Should this fail, they fall into their Unseelie Legacies until they find something that stirs their idealism again.

Their penchant for precision also presents a curious weakness. When witnessing a well-maintained machine or a masterpiece of engineering, they can become enraptured. Some attain a state of reverie and can contemplate such things for hours. Through hard work, perhaps, reality can be fixed to imitate the ideal.

The blazon of House Dougal is *or*, an arm embowed maintaining a hammer sable on a chief gules three cogwheels *or*. (Three gold gears on a red field above a black arm and hammer on a gold field.)

Boon: Members of House Dougal are strong-willed and known for their ability to invest Glamour into everything they do. Once per story, a member of this house can convert a portion of her temporary Glamour points into temporary Willpower points (up to the level of her permanent Willpower). This must be done during some sort of physical exertion: working, exercising or participating in combat.

Flaw: Physical reality seems flawed to these fae, just as they are flawed. Only through hard work can they overcome these flaws. Sidhe of this house always have a physical handicap that must be compensated for. This is usually something that can be corrected by cunningly crafted smithwork: a mechanical leg for a club foot, an intricate eyepiece for poor vision, and so on. These handicaps are present, though not always as visible, in *their mortal seemings.*

Exile: During the Resurgence, the sidhe of House Dougal were exiled to Earth because of their fascination with technology. The current ruler of the house tells a story of building a massive siege engine, just prior to the resurgence, to defend the gates of Arcadia from mortal invaders. The threat was highly exaggerated, and the havoc wrought by the infernal device disgraced them. Sidhe troubadours tell and retell legends of the mechanical monster created by High Lord Donovan. Each tale ends differently, as no one can fully remember it.

High Lord Donovan currently resides in a freehold built around a factory in the western lands of the Kingdom of Apples. While the factory itself is an empty husk in the mortal world, within the Dreaming, it is a fortress of chimerical inventions. A dozen nockers apprentice within the Freehold of the Forge each year.

House Eiluned

This house has always been tainted by the scandals of its founder, Lady Eiluned. As the creator of the so-called "House of Secrets," she conspired with many dark and mysterious beings and powers to gather magical knowledge. Although many now work as counselors or advisors for the Seelie Court, some whisper that Eiluned will eventually become an Unseelie house. Regardless, sidhe of this house seem to enjoy the best of both Courts.

Eiluned sidhe are valued for their extensive occult knowledge, their uncanny ability to gather secrets and their preternatural talent for intrigue. Fiefs ruled by House Eiluned are filled with mystery. There are accusations that House Eiluned voluntarily accepted exile on Earth as punishment for a horrible and forgotten crime. Members of the house counter that their Seelie affiliations prove they are innocent. This doesn't prevent Eiluned sidhe from falling into their Unseelie Legacies, however.

Eiluned sidhe know darkness as well as they know light. When an Eiluned sidhe needs to work with treacherous or unscrupulous characters to gather secrets, she is capable of deliberately becoming Unseelie until she gets what she wants (see pg. 108). This state must last either from moonrise to moonrise or sunset to sunset (that is, at least a full day). If the changeling doesn't get the secret she lusts after, she cannot become Seelie again until she learns the truth.



House Eiluned's blazon is per chevron, sable and argent, two decresents and a pentacle counterchanged. (Two silver crescent moons on black above a black pentacle on silver.)

Boon: All members of this house have an impressive talent for magic. All cantrips cast by Kithain of House Eiluned automatically gain an additional success.

Flaw: Members of this house have an overwhelming curiosity and are attracted to mysteries and conspiracy. An Eiluned must spend a point of Willpower to avoid meddling in a mystery or becoming involved in a plot. Some even have a treacherous streak, briefly becoming Unseelie to form a dark alliance and then turning Seelie to prove their innocence. The Kithain distrust many of them; the difficulties of all their Social rolls are increased by one.

Exile: There are three stories concerning the reasons of House Eiluned's exile to Earth. The first relates to the curse of an ancient artifact rescued from the soul forges of Western Arcadia. The second concerns a pact with an ancient order of warlocks. The third says that a promise has been made between the ruler of the house and a pretender, an alleged Unseelie High King in exile.

It is said that High Lord Ariadne dreams in a chariot that exists only within the Dreaming. She is rumored to emerge only when the moon is full. The physical substance of this conveyance changes each month, and tales are told of the fell beasts of burden that draw it. Each month, she retires for a full week to a place of secrecy, where she gathers the knowledge assembled by her entourage.

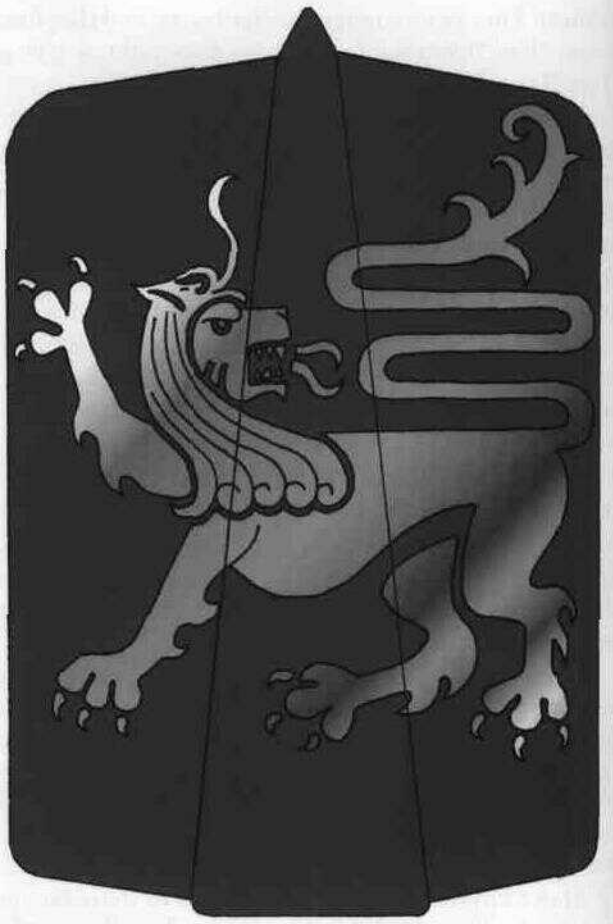
House Fiona

Sidhe are creatures of extremes, and the nobles of House Fiona are no exception. Lady Fiona and the sidhe of her house stayed on Earth during the Interregnum so that they could continue to explore its pleasures. Some even say that the house's founder rejected the call of Arcadia because of the love of a mortal man. This would not be surprising in the least; Fiona thoroughly immerse themselves in Earthly pleasures.

Fiona sidhe are overly fond of food, drink, drugs and sex, and are often called away from higher pursuits by appeals to their baser needs. Anything that gives them a rush is fine with them. When the chance to indulge presents itself, they descend into their Unseelie Legacies until their lusts are slaked.

These reckless nobles continually flirt with disaster. They love to taunt the status quo, even going so far to aid their enemies to bring about a little discord. Still, when called upon to fight, this passion takes a different focus; Fiona fae are fierce warriors who live for the fury of battle. Many are addicted to the tumult of the battlefield. The thought of dying in battle, and tempting fate by fighting recklessly, fuels this passion even more.

House Fiona claims to have hundreds of traditions and customs that are strictly obeyed, even though no two members of the house can seem to agree on what they are. Thus, each member lives by her own rules and her own code of honor. Theirs is also the most accommodating of all houses. Fiona



rarely pull rank on commoner Kithain. For this reason, its members are beloved by commoners, and fiefs ruled by House Fiona are happy ones, if a bit on the wild side.

The blazon of House Fiona is gules, a lion passant reguardant argent. (A silver lion walking on a red field, looking back over its shoulder.)

Boon: Defiant to the last, Fiona sidhe are renowned for their great courage. Though they understand fear, it does not control them, even in the face of death. Any attempt, natural or magical, to generate fear in them automatically fails. Only threats to a lover's life can frighten a Fiona, and they often succeed very well.

Flaw: Sidhe of this house have an overpowering attraction to danger. Even if the object of their pleasure is somewhat safe, they can find a way to make it dangerous. This is especially true of their romantic trysts, which are usually epic and almost always tragic. Creatures of pure ethereal beauty, they tend to fall in love with outlaws, strangers, wanderers, mortals and other "unacceptable" types. Often such loves become true and complete passions that cannot be denied. Some of them overcome this Flaw, but only by becoming hateful toward all romance. The most tortured become obsessed with preventing it from occurring to anyone they know.

Exile: The love story of Lady Fiona and her mortal lover has been told, retold and changed a thousand times. Like many Arcadian tales, no two versions are the same, as no one can fully

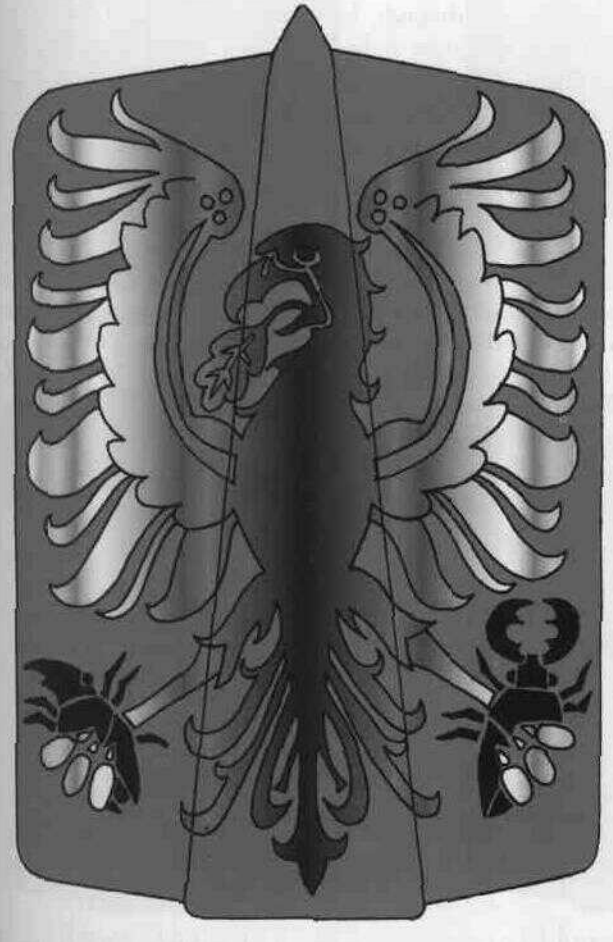
remember the details. In every version, Lady Fiona dies tragically, and the fae of her house descend from Arcadia to attend her wake. Each year on the same day, a sidhe troubadour speaks to her in dreams.

Another legend tells that the current High Lord of House Fiona was exiled from Arcadia by a jealous rival. Placing the honor of his house at stake, he challenged this rival to a duel. In losing, he sentenced the 13 members of his entourage to Earth. Nonetheless, many Fiona sidhe insist that they left Arcadia to show their fealty to Lord Rathsmere and their contempt for the High Lords of Arcadia.

Lord Rathsmere is renowned for his prowess as a swordsman, and his base of operations is the Freehold of the Questing Blade in southern France. There, he is training an elite entourage of sidhe for what he believes will be the battle to retake Arcadia. As part of this training, he tells numerous tales about forgotten creatures banished by Arcadia during the Resurgence. When presented with a sidhe who possesses exemplary skill at arms, he dreams a quest for the warrior concerning one of these legendary creatures.

House Gwydion

House Gwydion is perhaps the most "noble" of all the houses. While other houses retreated to Arcadia long ago, the Gwydion sidhe chose to face the Sundering head-on. Gwydion sidhe believe that their lord and founder has been reborn again and again as a noble sidhe. He is said to have been resurrected as a paladin serving Charlemagne and a major-general serving Napoleon. Rivals swear that he must have aided Machiavelli as well.



Members of House Gwydion are conservative, duty-bound Kithain who place the well-being of their kingdoms above their own. Unfortunately, they let everyone else know this. Their rule is often marked by extreme arrogance, and they categorically state that only members of their house are fit to rule. From there, each member of House Gwydion proceeds to state that she is more fit to rule than her brethren. The internecine feuds that result can only be halted by one thing: a threat from outside the house. The members then band together to prove the superiority of House Gwydion. When the threat ends, it's back to business as usual.

Their anger, like their rivalry, is legendary. When confronted with something that offends their honor, they have been known to go berserk. Furthermore, when a fae of House Gwydion is presented with a rival that he cannot overcome, he becomes Unseelie until he can find some way (any way, no matter how base) in which he can triumph. Once triumphant, he returns to his typical Seelie arrogance.

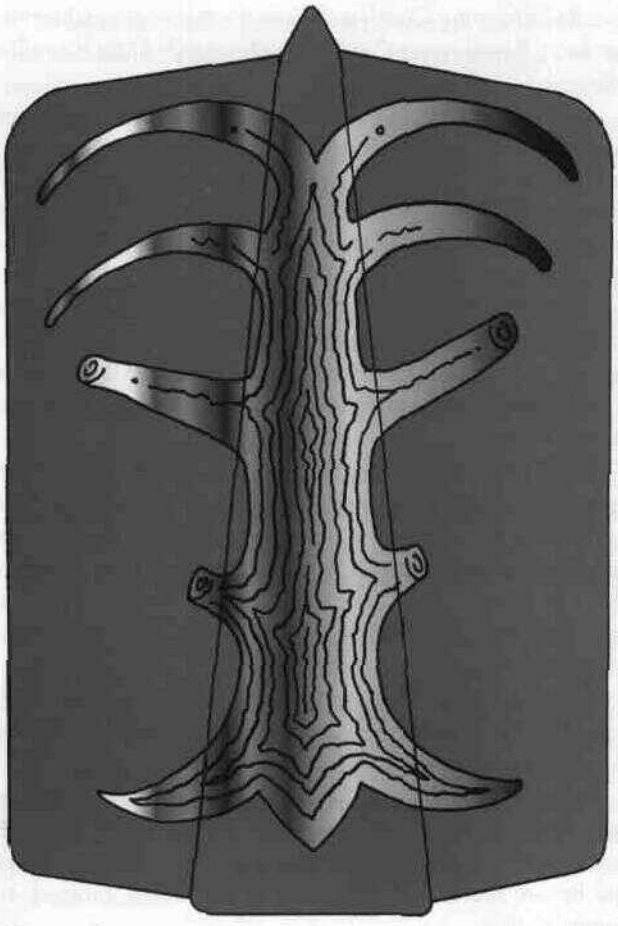
The blazon of House Gwydion is *vert, a falcon maintaining* an oak leaf *or*. (A gold falcon, facing left with a gold leaf in its beak, wings raised, legs splayed, against a green field.)

Boon: With a successful Perception + Kenning roll, members of House Gwydion can sense if someone is telling the truth; the difficulty is the subject's Willpower. For some reason (perhaps by an ancient pact), members of House Eiluned are immune to this.

Flaw: Although they are great warriors, sidhe of this house are prone to great rages. Whenever they reach the Wounded Health Level (from either chimerical or physical damage), or when their honor is insulted, they must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 5). Those who fail fly into a berserk rage and attack anyone near them, ally or enemy. While berserk, they ignore all Health Level penalties until they reach Incapacitated.

Exile: Kithain of House Gwydion insist that they returned to Earth by their own choosing. Enemies attest that a high-ranking Seelie in Arcadia exiled them to Earth as punishment for their arrogance. In the mundane world, they reasoned, Gwydion sidhe would be forced to live up to their bold claims.

High Lord Ardanon claims to be descended from the founders of the mythical land of Ardenmore, despite the evidence repeatedly presented by loremasters that such a land never existed. Within a castle in northern Germany, he dreams each night of a faerie's quest in Arcadia. Whether these stories are true is highly dubious, though he has carefully documented every one. When the Bedlam evoked by these stories becomes too strong, he moves like a force of nature to descend upon a random freehold to demand hospitality and question them on recent politics. Then he returns to the Freehold of the One True Dream to continue his tales.



House Liam

The quietest (and some say the wisest) of all the house founders, Lord Liam was exiled to Earth for his eloquent defense of mortal folk. Centuries ago, the earliest Kithain held a great contempt for humans. Many saw them as the cause of rapidly spreading Banality, and some argued that revenge against them would remove this curse from the world. For many years, Liam stood alone against those who argued for retribution against humans. The outrage against Lord Liam was so great that all who supported him were condemned by the High Lords of Arcadia, and his followers were exiled to Earth.

Members of House Liam don't see humans as perfect — far from it. They do, however, believe that humanity has earned the right to exist undisturbed. They fiercely despise Ravaging and Banality; their peaceful demeanors can turn wrathful when they encounter such.

Kithain of House Liam do not advertise their allegiance. Other houses revile them, although Gwydion sidhe will not allow Liam sidhe to be mistreated. Exiles or not, they're still sidhe. Despite their secrecy, House Liam is the most widespread house, and its members travel all over the world. Liam sidhe serve as sages, loremasters and storytellers who remember the earliest fae societies.

House Liam can rarely rule openly, but they accept just about any changeling under their banner. Despite this, even the most common changeling would never accept a title in the house. They do quietly hold claim to some territories, but many of these are barren and despoiled urban fiefs.

Liam's blazon was struck and discredited when the house was exiled. The symbol has since been erased from all faerie records, although certain members of Liam still possess shields displaying the heraldry of the house: an oak tree blasted and eradicated, argent. (A silver oak tree with bare branches and exposed roots on a blue field.)

Boon: Liam sidhe find it easy to affect mortals with Glamour. The difficulty to affect any mortal (whether casting a cantrip or enchanting) is always lowered by one.

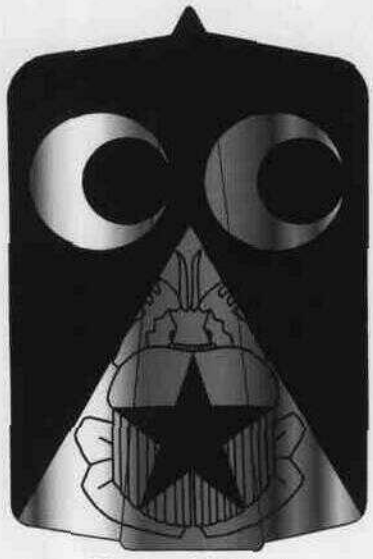
Ban: Because of their mortal affiliations, Liam sidhe begin with one extra point of permanent Banality. Furthermore, these sidhe are known as oathbreakers. No other changeling will honor their oathbonds, hospitality or justice. Liam fae are frequently the target of discrimination.

Exile: There was no need to pronounce exile upon House Liam. The silent followers of this fallen house took up the quest to return to Earth when the opportunity presented itself. Once the gates of Arcadia opened, they fled to where they could hide from persecution.

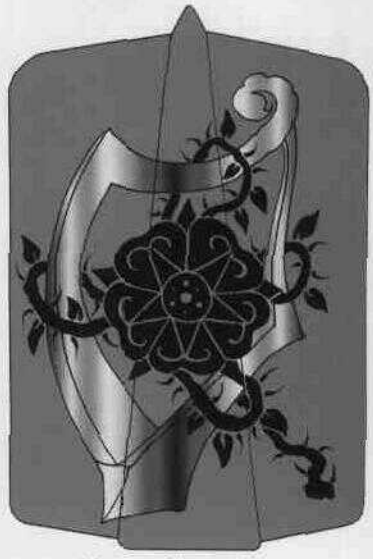
The current ruler of this house, High Lord Noman, is a beggar who wanders throughout the world. Each night, he dreams of another member of his house in danger, and he quests in secrecy to render aid. It is said that he carries a treasure that allows him to display a different face every week. Behind the mask is a visage that he will only reveal to the Nine High Lords and the Parliament of Dreams.



House Ailil



House Ciluned



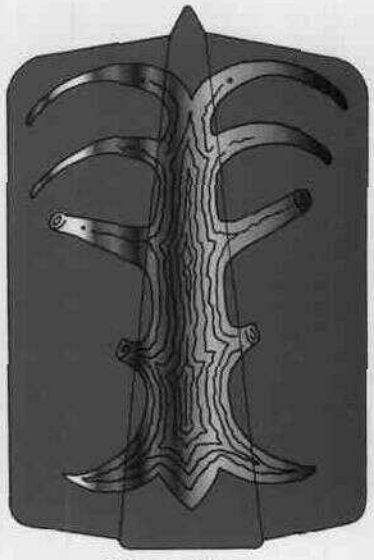
House Leanhaun



House Balor



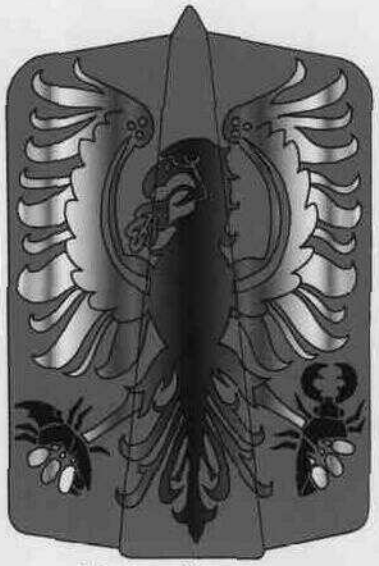
House Fiona



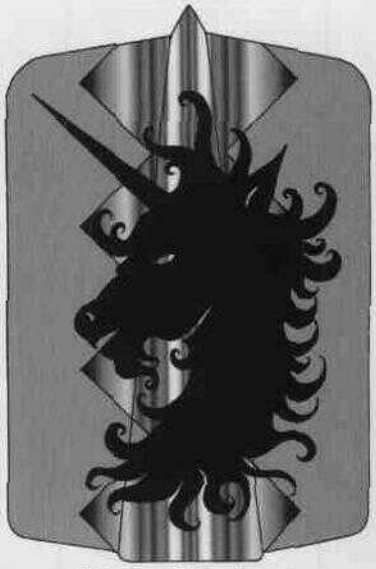
House Liam



House Dougal



House Gwydion



House Scathach

GOD, I *HATE* BIRTHDAYS! I DON'T TELL ANYONE WHEN MINE IS, BUT THEY ALWAYS KNOW ANYWAY, AND THEY ALWAYS SING ME SOME SHITTY SONG. IT MAKES ME WANNA PUKE.

I CAME DOWN TO HARD TIMES LOOKING FOR THAT CUTE BUZZBOY FROM LAST WEEK, BUT JUST MY LUCK, HE'S AWOL. COLBERT AND HER DIPPY SIDHE FRIENDS STAND IN THE CORNER, BUT I'VE GOT NOTHING TO SAY TO THOSE GINKS. STUPID BLUEBLOODS LOOK FIT TO SHIT THEIR PANTS. THEY DON'T THRASH, THAT'S FOR SURE, AND IT'S A BET THEY DON'T PARTY. MAKES YOU WONDER HOW — AND *IF* — THEY EVER GET WILD. ARE THEY BORN WITH RECTAL IMPLANTS? I'LL BET THEY ARE.

NO LIVE BAND TONIGHT, JUST PIPED-IN SHIT. NO WONDER THIS PLACE IS DEAD. THIS SUCKS. I'VE GOTTA FIND ANOTHER CLUB. THIS ONE'S A LOSS. EVEN SO, I'VE GOTTA ADMIT THE DJ'S GOOD. HE'S GOT THAT NEW BLACK FLAG ALBUM GOING, THE ONE WHERE THAT GUY'S PUNCHING THE MIRROR. I KNOW HOW HE FEELS. OVER IN THE CORNER, COLBERT'S FRIENDS ARE COVERING THEIR EARS. GOOD! THE SONG WOULD SCARE THEM IF THEY UNDERSTOOD THE WORDS. *RISE ABOVE!!* SCREAMS THE GUY WITH THE MIRROR, *WE'RE GONNA RISE ABOVE!!*

WORDS TO LIVE BY.

MAYBE THIS CLUB'S NOT SO LAME ANYWAY.

BOOK TWO: WILDER


NO


Laughter
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fig 3
Pooka

Chapter Four: Character Creation

In **Changeling**, you play the role of a fictional character that you create. Before you even begin the game, you must design your character from scratch, including her history, personality, appearance, lifestyle, profession and goals. The more detail you put into your character, the more fun you will have playing her. This chapter guides you through that process and offers suggestions on how you can flesh out your character and make her believable and whole.

On Creating a Character

Characters are the pivotal point for the story that will develop through the course of your chronicle. Their interaction is the fulcrum over which the events in the story balance. Before you begin to play, you must tackle the most important aspect of the game: character creation. Without the characters, there is no story. This phase sets the foundation for your part in the game. The more time and thought you invest in your character, the more depth he will have and thus, the more fun you will have playing him.

Take your time. Be creative. Think of the diverse and wonderful array of people that you have met in your life and their quirks, aspirations and speech patterns. **Changeling** is not about who can create the most powerful character the fastest. It is about developing a story of fantastic proportions with all the little intricacies and surprises of real life. It is about creating your own myth, your own legend. Your story starts with your character.

Getting Started

Before you begin to build your character, think about the following points:

• Your character will be a changeling, a faerie who has been forced to assume a mortal body and cope with mortal society. Most beginning characters have little knowledge of changeling society and may have only recently experienced their Chrysalis. All new players are advised to read **Chapter One: The Dreaming**, **Chapter Two: Setting** and **Chapter Three: The Kithain** in this book before beginning character generation.

• You can create a character of any age, race, sex and culture.

• All characters are unique. There are exceptions to every rule. As long as you can justify a departure from the norm within your character history, your Storyteller may consider allowing it. Your Storyteller will serve as your guide through character generation, and has the final word in approving all aspects of your character.

• **Changeling** is a game, and as such, it has rules. These rules help to standardize the course of events within the game and to describe your character. You will assign numerical values to most of your character's Traits. These will be used during the game to keep your character's successes and failures consistent with her strengths and weaknesses. The exact method for this is detailed later in this chapter.

The Role of the Storyteller

It is the Storyteller's responsibility to guide the players through the character generation process and to educate them on the nature of the World of Darkness and changelings. The more prepared the players are to begin building their characters, the easier the process will be. The Storyteller should take the time to answer their questions and to address their concerns. Without players and good characters, there is no story to tell.

If there are players new to **Changeling**, the World of Darkness or roleplaying in general, consider making the first "game session" just a time to explain a little about what this is all about. The Storyteller should describe the world in which the troupe's characters live and give examples of some of the types of events their characters might experience. When they are ready to begin character creation, the players will need copies of the character and personal history sheets. They should take a moment to look over these sheets and ask questions. Then, the Storyteller can guide them through the character creation process step-by-step. This may take an hour or an evening. However long it takes, it is well worth attention and time.

Once the players have completed their characters, they will need an explanation of the rules system. It will help to use their characters as examples and to run them through several sample challenges. A short, sample scenario will illustrate the rules of the game to them, much in the way playing a practice or open hand when learning a new card game gives everyone a better feel for it. During this practice scenario, the players can become comfortable with describing their characters' actions and rolling their Dice Pools to determine success or failure. Although the rules are neither complicated nor difficult, players will benefit from a practice scene in which they can actually work through the mechanics.

When everyone feels comfortable with the rules and the general nature of roleplaying, you can begin running preludes for the characters. Preludes are the players' introduction to the game as well as their characters' introduction to the chronicle. They are described in more detail later in this chapter.

Step One: Character Concept

Where to Begin

Start by formulating a basic concept for your character, a general idea of what she is like. Think less in terms of fine detail (that comes later) and more in broad brushstrokes, something that you can build a story on.

Examples:

- A young street tough who likes to get into fights, has no respect for mortals and uses his Glamour to take advantage of them whenever he can.
- A noble who feels that the Escheat must be upheld, whatever the cost, and any who transgress must be punished to the full extent of changeling law.
- An older intellect who has lived a full life and is ready to settle down into scholarly pursuits, but situations keep forcing her out of her shell and into scraps and trouble.
- A medical student who isn't thrilled with the discovery she's a changeling, and wishes she could just go back to being a regular person.
- A high school student who wants nothing more than to be grown up and treated like an adult, but who always seems to say and do the wrong things.
- A criminal who has recently experienced his Chrysalis and feels that this only makes him more powerful and less bound to obey the law.
- A young professional who has recently experienced a tragedy in her life that made her re-evaluate her priorities, adjusting them more toward helping others and experiencing life rather than on advancing her career or her position in the Seelie Court.

Kith

Now you must decide what type of changeling you would like your character to be. Most player characters will be from the nine Western kith. Your character's kith will be closely linked to her personality. Each kith has its own distinctive outlooks and idiosyncrasies. Look over the options offered in **Chapter Three**, and choose one that you feel you would most enjoy playing.

Court

Choose whether your character is Seelie or Unseelie. This choice expresses, in broad terms, her world view. The Seelie Court is born of the stuff of dreams, while the Unseelie Court spawns from the darkness of nightmares. **For a more in-depth explanation of the two Courts, see page 71**

Legacy

Every changeling has both a Seelie and an Unseelie Legacy. They describe the two fundamental facets of her personality. Only one is dominant, however, with the other lying dormant or just beneath the surface. This is determined by your character's Court. For example, if your character's Court is Seelie, then her Seelie Legacy is the dominant one. **Further information and types of Legacies can be found on page 129**

Seeming

Your character's seeming reflects her mortal age, as well as inflicting certain personality and physical characteristics upon her. There are three different seemings, each encompassing a certain age bracket: childling (mortal birth through approximately age 12), wilder (13-25) and grump (26 and older). More **information on seemings can be found on page 85**

House

Sidhe nobility have divided themselves into different houses or affiliations. Each of the five noble houses has distinct philosophies and bestows a certain reputation upon its members, whether those members deserve it or not. To belong to a house is to espouse its beliefs and dictums. Your character's personality will suggest which house she belongs to and, in turn, her affiliation with that house bestows Boons and Flaws on her.

Only sidhe are traditionally considered true nobility and able to belong to houses. With the end of the Accordance War, however, many commoners joined houses or were awarded membership in them. Not all sidhe choose to join a house, preferring to remain unaffiliated. While this can hinder their chances for advancement in the court hierarchy, these sidhe frequently no longer care about the trappings of court politics.

If your character has no affiliation with any of the houses, write "unaffiliated" on your character sheet in the appropriate blank.

A complete listing and explanation of each of the five houses can be found in Chapter Three.

Step Two: Traits

In this stage of character creation, you assign the numerical *values that represent your character's* Attributes and Abilities. You are given a specific number of points to purchase levels of efficacy in each of the various types of Traits. How you divide these points between them determines where your character's strengths and weaknesses lie.

Attributes

A character's *Attributes* define her inherent characteristics. These are the *Physical*, *Social* and *Mental* capacities with which she was born. The most basic of all the Traits, they deserve more thought than any others.

- **Physical**: These Traits describes how strong, nimble and sturdy your character is. They define the strengths and weaknesses of the body; action-oriented characters usually have these as their concentration.
- **Social**: Your character's Social Attributes measure her appearance and her ability to relate to others. They are the primary concentration of politically oriented characters.
- **Mental**: Mental Attributes represent your character's thought capacity, including such things as memory, perception, learning potential and the ability to think quickly. Characters who are smart or intellectual concentrate on these.

Before you start to spend points on Attributes, you must first prioritize the three Attribute categories: Physical, Social and Mental. Think about whether your character is accomplished in problem-solving or prefers to let her fists do the talking. Is she a social creature or a brainy wallflower? She will be good in the primary category, average in the secondary category and poor in the tertiary category. The priority you establish determines how many points you have to spend in each category.





Spending Points

Once you have prioritized the Attribute categories, you are ready to begin spending points. When you do, you will be purchasing "dots" in the Traits listed under each category. One point buys one dot in a Trait.

Attribute Points

- **Primary**: You may distribute 7 points among the Traits listed under your character's primary Attribute.
- **Secondary**: You may distribute 5 points among the Traits listed under your character's secondary Attribute.
- **Tertiary**: You may distribute 3 points among the Traits listed under your character's tertiary Attribute.

All characters start with one free dot in each Attribute. Divide your points within an individual Attribute category based on your character concept. Later you may change your mind about these ratings, or have to change them due to other aspects of your character. Worry about that when it comes due — for now, just focus on setting your character's ratings according to your concept.

Abilities

Abilities define what your character knows and can do rather than how strong, personable or smart she is. They describe *Talents*, *Skills* and *Knowledges* for which she has an aptitude or training.

- **Talents**: These Abilities are intuitive and internal. Most of them cannot be practiced, studied, or learned from a book, although there are exceptions. More often than not, they are gained through direct experience.
- **Skills**: This category includes any Ability that must be learned through practice and hands-on application. It takes more practice and trial-and-error to learn more.
- **Knowledges**: These represent Abilities that require the rigorous application of the mind. Generally, a character has learned them through school, books and mentors. On the rare occasion, they can be self-taught.

As with Attributes, you must prioritize between the three categories of Abilities (Talents, Skills and Knowledges). Consider what type of expertise your character would be most proficient in (primary), in which she will be average (secondary) and in which she will be below average (tertiary).

Spending Points

Once you have assigned a priority level to each of the categories of Abilities, you are ready to begin spending points. When you do, you are purchasing dots in the Traits listed under each Ability category. One point buys one dot in a Trait. Unlike Attributes, you may not, at this time, give your character more than three dots in any one Ability Trait. Later, you will be given

the opportunity to raise them, but for the sake of balance, you must abide by a ceiling of three dots in each Ability Trait.

Ability Points

- **Primary**: You may distribute 13 points among the Traits listed under your character's primary Ability category.
- **Secondary**: You may distribute 9 points among the Traits listed under your character's secondary Ability category.
- **Tertiary**: You may distribute 5 points among the Traits listed under your character's tertiary Ability category.

You may divide your points within an individual Ability category however you see fit as long as you put no more than three dots in any one Ability. Later you may change your mind about these ratings as your initial ideas become more fleshed out.

Step Three: Advantages

Your character's *Advantages* encompass her *Backgrounds*, those things from her environment that she draws on for information and aid, and her *Arts* and *Realms*, the components of her faerie magic. You do not prioritize the different categories of Advantages as you do Attributes and Abilities. Instead, you have a designated number of points to assign within each category.

Backgrounds

Each character gets five points to allocate among the various Backgrounds. You spend points to buy dots within these Traits. One point buys one dot.

Your Backgrounds, like everything else, should fit with the concept that you have chosen for your character. They can be used to round her out and should be explained in detail in her history. Some of the Backgrounds will require some development, such as Treasures and Companions. Because your Background ratings may change before you have fully completed your character creation, don't worry about defining them in detail right now. Come back to them later.

The Storyteller may wish to restrict certain Backgrounds, depending on the nature of the chronicle. Conversely, the Storyteller may require that you take certain ones in order for your character to fit in with the chronicle. **Backgrounds are detailed fully later in this chapter.**

Arts and Realms

Arts are special secrets and powers that allow changelings to cast cantrips, or faerie magic. You have three points to spend in Arts. Before choosing your character's Arts, it is recommended that you read **Chapter Five: Arts and Realms**. The Arts themselves are described there in detail, as are the rules for casting faerie magic.

Realms describe the subjects a changeling may affect when casting her cantrips. You have five points to allocate among the Realms. Before choosing your character's Realms, it is recommended that you read **Chapter Five: Arts and Realms**.

Step Four: Tempers

Three types of Traits make up the Tempers: Willpower, Glamour and Banality. They are segregated from other Traits because they fit into the rules system somewhat differently than the other traits. If you have not already done so, write down the ratings for these Traits from your character's seeming. These values are mostly static, and there is no point-spending involved. **(See page 87 for the Temper ratings of each seeming.)**

Willpower

Willpower rates how much self-control and free will your character has. Willpower is essential for controlling one's temper, resisting temptation and persevering despite opposition. Your character's permanent Willpower rating cannot exceed 10 dots. **(See "Willpower" on page 150.)**

Glamour

Your character's Glamour rating measures the magical force she can evoke through her Arts and Realms. Her permanent Glamour rating can never exceed 10 dots. **(See "Glamour" on page 151.)**

Banality

Banality indicates how infused and tainted your character has become by reality and the disbelief of humanity. The older a changeling's seeming, the higher her Banality rating. **(See "Banality" on page 152.)**

Step Five: Birthrights and Frailties

Depending on your character's kith, she will have certain Birthrights and Frailties that may affect some of her Trait values. Take a moment to look again the Birthrights and Frailties for your kith in Chapter Three; you might need to make some changes to your Trait values. For example, satyrs add an extra dot to their Stamina Trait because they are so physically sturdy, while sidhe get to add two dots to their Appearance rating to reflect their unearthly beauty.

Step Six: Freebie Points

Now the real fun begins! You have 15 freebie points that you can spend to raise any Trait on your character sheet, with the exception of Banality. Freebie points, however, do not have the same value as the points you were spending earlier. As the chart shows, different types of Traits now cost more.

You may boost your Attribute ratings, raise Abilities over three dots, or pick up new Traits with the expenditure of freebie points. You may not, however, increase any Trait to more than five dots or add to the Banality Trait. Tempers cannot be raised above 10.

Freebie Points

Traits	Cost
Arts	5 points per dot
Attributes	5 points per dot
Glamour	3 points per dot
Realms	3 points per dot
Willpower	2 points per dot
Abilities	2 points per dot
Backgrounds	1 point per dot

Step Seven: Merits and Flaws

Merits and Flaws represent aspects of your character's personality and history. They are supplemental Traits used to add spice to your character. Although their use is optional and at the discretion of the Storyteller, they can be a useful tool for creating an interesting character. When you take a Flaw for your character, you earn more freebie points that you can spend on any Trait. Merits, rather than earning you freebie points, cost freebie points. Merits and Flaws may only be added during the freebie point phase of character generation. **See page 153 for the complete listing of Merits and Flaws.**

Step Eight: Specialties

All of your character's Traits should now be set. At this point, you can go back and look at any Attribute or Ability Traits in which you have four or more dots. If you like, you can choose *specialties* for your character in these Traits. This is optional, although recommended to further refine your character. Some Abilities, such as Science, Performance or Crafts, may require that you specialize at a certain level. A listing of potential specialties is included with the description of each individual Trait later in this chapter.

Step Nine: Musing/Ravaging Threshold

Most changelings have a preferred method of gathering Glamour, called a *Threshold* (*Ravaging* for Unseelie and *Musing* for Seelie). Does your character like to find Glamour by watching children play, or does she prefer to rip it from someone being frightened by a horror movie? **More information on Thresholds can be found in Chapter Seven: Glamour Systems.**

Step Ten: Spark of Life

It's been said the devil's in the details. Details are what make your character a complete and unique individual. The following areas are crucial to determining what your character



is like as a person. You do not necessarily need to write these down, but spaces are provided for them on the personal history sheet, and it is recommended that you do so. If nothing else, think about them — not only now but throughout the career and life of your character.

Appearance

Your character's physical appearance makes her Traits visible to other characters. You may be asked to give a general description of her to aid other players in imagining the story. Attempt to turn the concept and relevant Traits of your character into aspects of her appearance. Certainly, there will be obvious differences between a childling and a grump, but it is up to you to describe those differences.

Choose your words carefully when writing your character's description. High Dexterity can be described as a slender, agile frame or long-fingered hands. It is much more evocative to say, "Shara moves with catlike grace," than to say, "Shara is very dexterous." Include references to clothing, hair color, eye color, body size and any scarring or tattoos. The more detailed the description, the easier it will be for other players to imagine your character as you intend her to look.

A changeling has both a faerie appearance and a mortal appearance. These will differ greatly in many cases, and it is important to know what your character looks like to both mortals and to other changelings. The changeling appearance tends to be more colorful and remarkable, whereas the mortal appearance may be dulled and seem haggard in comparison.

Example mortal seeming: Maribeth appears to be in her early 20s, of average height and slender build with long, agile fingers and hands used to holding her beloved violin or her favorite poetry books. Her high cheekbones, deep-set eyes and thin lips give her a slightly mystical appearance that some find appealing. Her poker-straight brown hair is forever escaping whatever headband or hairclasp she uses, and a few wistful strands drift around her face. Her cloud-gray eyes are clear and miss little around her. Soft-spoken and shy around people, loud noises startle her, and she dislikes being the center of undue attention, preferring to watch from the background. Nervous smiles flit across her pale face, and most people think she would be a great deal prettier if she smiled more. Her clothes are frequently plain and always seem a little too large for her.

Example fae mien: As a sluagh wilder, Maribeth (also known as Melinda) grows even more thin and pale, almost ghostlike. Her high cheekbones and deep-set eyes now give her a slightly starved look. Her gray eyes take on a slight glitter, especially when a good idea comes to her. Her soft-spoken voice sinks into a whisper that some sluagh find difficult to hear. Her brown hair darkens and lengthens to her waist; she frequently puts it in a braid, and any loose strands look more alluring than wistful. Her fingers look like the frame of a fan, and scramble over her violin like pale spiders. Her shy manner is reminiscent of a retiring Victorian lady, and she often wears long, dark-colored Morticia Addams'-style dresses and veils.

Quirks

By giving your character quirks and idiosyncrasies, you can add a great deal of depth and interest to her. Write a few sentences describing the unique and possibly odd things that define your character. A quirk could be a twisted sense of humor, a gentleness toward animals, or a habit of grunting when answering yes to a question. It could include mannerisms such as constantly twirling a curl around her finger, or walking around with an unlit cigarette hanging out of her mouth.

Motivations and Goals

What drives your character? What makes her laugh, makes her cry, makes her angry, makes her nervous, makes her afraid? What gives her hope? In what does she believe? Does she have an obsession or a higher purpose? Jot a few notes about your character's goals and motivations. Thinking about these will help you get under her skin as you start to roleplay her.

Mortal Identity

A changeling character is born mortal and lives a mortal life until the day she experiences her Chrysalis and becomes aware of her faerie nature. Throughout their lives, changelings must cope with the mortal world and survive within it. A very important aspect of your character is her identity in normal society.

Some changelings completely remove themselves from mortal society, spending most of their time in freeholds. This is very dangerous, as the balance between their fae and mortal natures must be maintained or they risk slipping into Bedlam. Changelings must carefully balance their mundane and fae lives; even the sidhe must have *some* time out of the freehold.

What is your character's mortal life like? Where does he work or go to school? Where does he live? Does he have mortal friends or business associates? Does he have mortal family? What was his mortal childhood like? What were his parents like? Was he abused? Did he have brothers or sisters? Was he adopted or raised in an orphanage? How does your character feel about mortals? Did he turn his back on his mortal family and friends after his Chrysalis?

Changeling Identity

Much of this has already been determined by your choice of Traits, especially Backgrounds and Abilities. However, there are other aspects of changeling life you should think about. From the moment a changeling experiences her Chrysalis, her life changes irrevocably. One thing in particular that you must choose for your character is her faerie name. All changelings have a True Name or a soul name that is different from the name given them by their mortal parents. Later in life, a changeling may decide to use a nickname based on his True Name, but few ever give out their True Names to anyone other than their most trusted allies because of the power they hold over them.

Were one or both of your character's parents changelings or kinain? How old was she when she experienced her Chrysalis?

What was her reaction to her new changeling self — excitement? horror? fear? How active or interested is she in changeling politics and court? How does she feel about the Escheat and whether or not it should be upheld? Does she have any prejudices against other kith, and if so, why? What does she do to strengthen the Dreaming? Does she have an outstanding *geas* that has carried over from a past life or her time in Arcadia? What is it, and what is the story behind it?

Equipment

If there are any mundane possessions that you want your character to have (such as a Walkman, pocket knife, apartment or vehicle), you should work out the details with your Storyteller before play. Otherwise, you will have to acquire the equipment during the course of the game. This can take time and is not automatically successful.

Almost any mundane item that fits your concept can be obtained with Storyteller approval, provided that your character has sufficient dots in the Resources Background. Special chimerical items and treasures can only be gained by possessing a particular Background.

Questions and Answers

The following questions should give you something to think about when fine-tuning your character. Browse through them and see if they inspire anything that you can add to your character's history to make her a more rounded persona.

- What is your character's passion? What is her favorite thing to do in her free time?
- What does your character *really hate*? What will she never, ever do?
- What was the most shameful thing she ever did? The one thing she regrets?
- What is her greatest hope?
- What is her greatest fear?
- Where does she stand with regard to her sexuality, the sexuality of others and social issues related to sexuality?
- How does she feel about killing people? Has she ever killed anyone? Would she?

Character Creation Chart

Character Creation Process

- **Step One: Character Concept**
  - *Choose* concept, court, Legacy, house (if applicable), seeming and kith
- **Step Two: Select Attributes**
  - *Prioritize the three categories:* Physical, Social, Mental (7/5/3)
  - *Choose Physical Traits:* Strength, Dexterity, Stamina
  - *Choose Social Traits:* Charisma, Manipulation, Appearance
  - *Choose Mental Traits:* Perception, Intelligence, Wits
- **Step Three: Select Attributes**
  - *Prioritize the three categories:* Talents, Skills, Knowledges
  - *Choose* Talents, Skills, Knowledges (13/9/5)
- **Step Four: Select Advantages**
  - *Choose* Backgrounds (5), Arts (3), Realms (5)
- **Step Five: Finishing Touches**
  - *Record* beginning Glamour, Willpower and Banality as determined by your seeming.
  - *Record* kith Birthrights and Frailties
  - *Spend* freebie points (15)
  - *Choose* Merits and Flaws

Legacies

See also *Legacies*, pp. 129-135.

Seelie Legacies

Bumpkin: Common sense and practical wisdom are best.
Courtier: The social whirl is both a battlefield and a workshop.
Crafter: You craft joy yourself, with your own two hands.
Dandy: You crave to be the center of attention.
Hermit: Reclusive and forlorn, you avoid the company of others.
Orchid: Better safe than sorry; to be pure is to be unsullied.
Paladin: Struggle and competition are your meat and drink.
Panderer: You seek to please.
Regent: The weight of responsibility rests upon your shoulders.
Sage: If knowledge is power, then knowledge shared is even better.
Saint: You feel the pain of the world and yearn to fix it.
Squire: You are there to serve.
Troubadour: Life is an art form, love is its practice.
Wayfarer: You wander free and confident, for the world is your playground.

Unseelie Legacies

Beast: You must be obeyed.
Fatalist: Nothing ever makes you happy.
Fool: Always the clown, you refuse to take anything seriously.
Grotesque: You delight in disgusting others.
Knave: You like to push others to their limits.
Outlaw: You take what others work for.
Pandora: Your curiosity will be your undoing.

Peacock: You are the most wonderful creature in the world.
Rake: Your greed can never be satisfied.
Riddler: The truth is best obscured.
Ringleader: You are leader, and others would do well to agree.
Rogue: You foment chaos for your own amusement.
Savage: Civilization and laws are crutches for the weak.
Wretch: You are worthless, beneath contempt.

Seemings

See also *Seeming*, pp. 85-87.

• **Childling:** Though you are little more than a child in mind and body, no one can deny the wisdom behind your eyes.

Temper Scores — Glamour: 5, Willpower: 1, Banality: 1

• **Wilder:** You are a teenager in attitude and appearance. Radical and experimental, you chase after the stuff of new dreams.

Temper Scores — Glamour: 4, Willpower: 2, Banality: 3

• **Grump:** You are a full-grown adult, seen by most changelings as "over the hill." Despite this, you are respected.

Temper Scores — Glamour: 3, Willpower: 5, Banality: 5

Kith

See also *Kith*, pp. 87-105.

• **Boggan:** Quiet, conservative folk who like to involve themselves in others' affairs.

• **Eshu:** Wanderers, vagabonds and storytellers, they spend much of their time on the road, spreading the stories of the fae.

• **Nocker:** These dark and brooding creatures are widely known for their smithing and craftsmanship.

• **Pooka:** Tricksters and rapscallions to the last, these shapeshifters never pass up an opportunity to play a prank.

• **Redcap:** Brave but brutal bullies infamous for their rapacity...and for the peculiar nature of their sustenance.

• **Satyr:** Though driven by their passions, these changelings possess an inner wisdom.

• **Sidhe:** Beautiful and terrible, sidhe are the noble ruling kith of the fae.

• **Sluagh:** The whisperers in the night, these arcane changelings concern themselves with learning dark secrets.

• **Troll:** Huge and terribly strong, trolls are known nearly as much for their honor and steadfastness as for their strength.

Houses

See also *House*, pp. 106-110.

• **Dougal:** Practical and straightforward, House Dougal is known for its skill with machinery and knowledge of metalwork.

• **Eiluned:** Mysterious and wise, House Eiluned is known for its knowledge of the stars and understanding of Glamour.

• **Fiona:** Adventurous and unpredictable, House Fiona is known for its passion.

• **Gwydion:** Noble and conservative, yet given to terrible tempers, House Gwydion is known for its wise and fair rulers.

• **Liam:** Brooding and dark, House Liam is known for its advocacy and guardianship of humanity and its deeply held moral and ethical ideals.

Backgrounds

See also *Backgrounds*, pp. 146-150.

• **Chimera:** Chimerical objects you own or chimerical creatures with which you are allied.

• **Contacts:** Information sources available to the character.

• **Dreamers:** Mortal artists whom you patronize.

• **Holdings:** Faerie freeholds you claim as your own.

• **Mentor:** Another changeling who advises and supports you.

• **Remembrance:** Your connection to the Dreaming and the unconscious knowledge of the fae.

• **Resources:** Mortal wealth, belongings and monthly income.

• **Retinue:** Enchanted humans and retainers with whom you associate.

• **Title:** Your rank within the nobility.

• **Treasures:** Glamour-imbued items that you possess.

Arts

See also *Arts*, pp. 171-188.

• **Chicanery:** Allows the casting of cantrips associated with trickery and befuddlement.

• **Legerdemain:** Allows the casting of cantrips involving pranks and illusion.

• **Primal:** Allows the casting of cantrips involving healing and resilience.

• **Soothsay:** Allows the casting of cantrips associated with luck and prophecy.

• **Sovereign:** Allows the casting of cantrips associated with command and rulership.

• **Wayfare:** Allows the casting of cantrips involving movement and travel.

Realms

See also *Realms*, pp. 188-189.

• **Actor:** Describes your affinity with people.

• **Fae:** Describes your affinity with fae and changelings.

• **Nature:** Describes your affinity with things of the natural world: animals, plants, air, water, fire, earth.

• **Prop:** Describes your affinity with manmade things, from necklaces to matches to computers.

• **Scene:** Describes your affinity with a particular location or setting.

• **Time:** Describes your affinity with the realm of time.

Example of Character Creation

Angie is creating her first **Changeling** character. She takes a moment to ask Ian the Storyteller about any general requirements for her character, learning that the new chronicle will be taking place in southwestern Virginia, in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Ian requests that Angie create a character who would fit into a more rural setting. Angie gathers her tools — the **Changeling 2nd edition** book, blank sheets of paper, a pencil and copies of the character sheet and personal history sheet — and sets to work.

Concept

Angie first thinks about a general concept for her character. She decides that she wants her character to be female, a responsible yet fun-loving young adult who is rather athletic in nature and coaches children's sports for a living. She sees her character as one of life's cruise directors, determined that everyone enjoy themselves and ensuring that everyone plays by the rules to create an atmosphere that fosters fun. Angie likes "Emma" for her character's name.

She decides Emma's kith is satyr, because of the kith's rather physical nature and also because satyrs embody the fun-loving side of her character. Next, she considers the two Courts and chooses Seelie, because she wants her satyr to have a relatively positive and sensible outlook.

For her Seelie Legacy, Angie has some trouble. She reads and rereads the options, debating between Saint and Sage. In the end, however, she chooses Bumpkin because of its intrinsic practicality and down-to-earth common sense. She feels this will serve her character well in her mortal profession as a coach and in her overall goal to be the "hostess with the mostest." She picks Savage as her Unseelie Legacy, thinking that a character with such a penchant for fun could easily turn uncontrollable if she were to lose her pragmatism.

Emma's career makes her seeming an easier choice. Angie makes Emma a wilder, a young adult who has survived the insecurities and perils of puberty to emerge with a strong sense of self. She decides against affiliating Emma with a noble house; Emma is just a commoner, and would not likely have had the opportunity to distinguish herself enough to be a part of one.

Attributes

Now Angie can now begin to spend her points and assign Emma her Attributes. Angie wants Emma to be more of a physical character than anything else, an athlete and a coach. She names the Physical Traits as her number one priority for Emma. She decides that Social Traits would also be important to Emma and places those second, with Mental coming last.

Angie looks at the three Physical Traits (Strength, Dexterity and Stamina), and tries to decide which of them is most important for Emma to do well in. She has seven points to spend, and decides to put three in Dexterity and two each in Strength and Stamina.

Next, Angie divides her five points among Emma's Social Traits (Charisma, Manipulation, Appearance). Without much difficulty, she decides that Charisma is by far the most important Trait for Emma to have and puts three points in it. She divides the remaining two between Manipulation and Appearance, buying only one dot in each.

Looking at the Mental Traits and her three points to spend, Angie considers just buying one dot in each of the three Traits. After more thought, however, she changes her mind and decides that Emma would likely have stronger Perception than she would Intelligence. Angie decides to spend two points in Perception and puts the remaining point in Wits. Emma may not be all that smart (Intelligence), but she is aware of what's going on around her (Perception) and able to react with relative speed to problems (Wits).

Abilities

With Emma's Attributes established, Angie is ready to prioritize the Abilities. She considers the three categories (Talents, Skills and Knowledges), and knows without a doubt that Knowledges will be tertiary. She gives some thought to the other two, looking at the lists of Traits that go with each, and decides that it makes sense for Emma to have Talents as her primary Ability category. Emma tends to react to things instinctively, without much thought, and relies on her innate aptitudes more than any training or education. Angie's priorities end up as Talents, Skills, then Knowledges.

Angie concentrates on spending her 13 points among the Talents. She immediately picks Athletics out as the most important for Emma, and spends three points on it, bringing it up to the maximum value allowed during character generation. Next, she singles out Alertness and buys two dots in it, claiming Emma's experience coaching and competing in team sports as her justification. For the same reason, she spends two points in Dodge. Angie now has six points left to spend. She puts two in Empathy, since Emma deals with people on such a personal level, and two of them in Kenning to allow Emma to sense the faerie things and people around her. For the last two, she spends one in Persuasion, for convincing the teams she coaches to win and behave, and one in Intimidation, for when those times Persuasion doesn't work.

Moving along to Skills, Angie decides to spend three of her nine total points in Etiquette, something Emma undoubtedly learned as she was planning and hosting banquets and dances for her friends. She puts two points in Drive so that Emma can drive the team bus to games and safely take the kids to and from the field. Angie looks over the others, and decides to buy two points in Stealth. She laughs to herself as she imagines Emma sneaking up on a pair of young teammates smoking behind the bleachers. Her last two points she spends in Leadership, knowing that it fits Emma's personality to be a leader of sorts.

Angie has five points to spend in Knowledge Traits. She chooses to buy three dots in Enigmas; while Emma may not be all that smart, she does have a knack for coming up with team strategies and working crossword puzzles. She puts one

point in Law, due to Emma's responsibilities as a coach and as a member of changeling society. The last point she spends in Medicine, knowing that with a team of unruly kids, someone is bound to get hurt.

Advantages

Angie reads all the available Backgrounds carefully to determine where to spend her five points. First, she decides to put one point into Resources; although Emma is not rich, she does have an income. Next, she peruses Treasures and ventures to put two points into it, creating a water bottle that automatically heals one level of damage whenever a mortal or a changeling drinks from it. She also decides that she would like for Emma to have a Companion, so she puts her last two points in that. She thinks about what she would like, and comes up with a large, colorful bird that talks and retrieves golf balls for Emma. Angie jots down the bird's name — George — and a few notes regarding his personality. Later, before play begins, she wants to write a more in-depth description of him.

Angie thoroughly reads all the Arts and Realms descriptions before she begins to allocate points to them. Once done, she begins with Emma's Arts, immediately putting two points in Primal due to her athleticism and Primal's connection with the body and other things physical. The next choice comes less easily, but in the end, Angie decides to give Emma one point in Wayfare, another Art that somehow seems related to physical movement.

For Realms, Angie concentrates two points in Actor based on the amount of time Emma spends around mortals and two points in Nature, again to reflect Emma's connection and affinity for all things physical and natural. The last point she puts into Fae. As the self-appointed cruise director for her oathcircle, Emma would undoubtedly have learned some influence within the Realm of Fae.

Tempers

Because Angie did not remember to mark her Willpower, Glamour and Banality ratings on Emma's character sheet, she quickly looks up the section on seemings. She takes her point values from those listed under "wilder." She gets two dots in Willpower, four dots in Glamour and three dots in Banality.

Birthrights and Frailties

Angie now looks over the pages on satyrs again, rereading the sections on Birthrights and Frailties in particular. She discovers that Emma gains an extra dot in Stamina because of her kith. Angie also notes her other Birthrights and Frailties on her character sheet for easy reference.

Freebie Points

Angie takes her 15 freebie points and tries to decide where Emma's Traits are lacking. She spends five of the points to buy another dot for Emma's Appearance and five for a dot in Intelligence. This leaves her with five to spend. Angie chooses to raise Emma's Willpower by one dot at a cost of two freebie points, and to raise her Glamour by one dot at a cost of three freebie points. That done, all of Angie's original freebie points are spent.

Merits and Flaws

One Flaw in particular stands out as Angie peruses the list. She decides to give Emma the *Dark Secret* Flaw (1 point). She has an idea as she reads over it, and determines that when Emma experienced her Chrysalis, she awakened as Unseelie. Still a childling at the time, Emma ran away from home to live in the forest, little more than an animal, entrenched in her Savage Legacy. As the story unfolds in her mind, Angie decides to go back and change the Treasure Background she originally chose to a Mentor Background, leaving it at two dots. She slowly weaves a history for Emma in which a Seelie Mentor, another satyr, found Emma on the verge of death, starving and barely able to survive in her new environment. Through careful and gentle coaxing, Emma's mentor managed to tame her wild nature, bringing her over in time to her current Seelie Legacy. Angie then takes *Mild Phobia* (1 point Flaw), claiming that Emma is terrified of a return to her Unseelie side, and *Compulsion* (1 point Flaw), stating that Emma now has a driving urge to prove that she is just as civilized as anyone else, perhaps moreso.

Through the acquisition of these three Flaws, Angie has earned three extra freebie points to spend on Emma. She decides to purchase *Acute Senses* (1 point Merit), justifying acute hearing with the time she spent in the wilderness. Finally, she spends the last two freebie points to give Emma one dot in the Survival Skill.

Specialties

Emma has four dots in both Dexterity and Charisma, and Ian the Storyteller suggests that Angie choose specialties for these. For Dexterity, Angie picks *Catlike Reflexes*, feeling that it makes sense with Emma's good Perception and satyr kith. For Charisma, Angie chooses *Diplomatic*, knowing that Emma works hard to live up to social norms and not make anyone angry with her.

Musing Threshold

Since Emma is of the Seelie Court, she has a Musing Threshold. After looking over the choices, Angie chooses *Foster Trust* as a reflection of Emma's nurturing nature.

Spark of Life

Angie now begins to fill in the gaps about Emma, touching up here and cleaning up there. She takes a moment to imagine Emma in her mind and then to write down what she looks like in both her satyr and her mortal forms:

Mortal:

Emma's heather-blue eyes gaze out from a heart-shaped face that seems more wholesome than attractive. Her short brown curls appear to have been blowing in the wind, uncombed and unruly. Emma stands up straight, an air of pride showing in her carriage. When she moves, her long limbs swing freely with the grace and ease of an



athlete. Her health shows in the pink of her cheeks and the easy smile that spreads across her face at regular intervals.

Fae:

Emma has high Amazonian cheekbones and piercing blue eyes that seem able to peer into the darkest night and see with utmost clarity. A mixture of browns, reds and golds, her short curls wave around the bases of her rippled horns, which rise from her forehead to curve back into sharp points. Emma never stands still for long, her movements controlled and purposefully graceful, hinting at an energy lying just below the surface, ready to erupt from her at any moment. Well-toned and sturdy, Emma's satyr legs are covered from her hips down to her mahogany hooves with miniature curls of the same colors as those on her head. Emma's laugh is deep and hearty, though somewhat restrained, coming straight from her gut.

Once Angie has written Emma's descriptions, including her usual choice of attire and any weapons or items she might be carrying, Angie can establish quirks for her. Angie thinks for a moment and decides that Emma tends to be rather soft-spoken and reserved. This conflicts somewhat with her satyr kith, but that seems to be quickly developing as Emma's main life-conflict. Her fight against the savagery that lurks inside her causes her to suppress her more natural satyr instincts, expressing them only when she can be completely in control of the situation and her emotions. Emma's going to experience a personal crisis every time her passions start to exert themselves. Angie feels that this will make Emma interesting to play.

Angie further decides that Emma's only two goals in life are to make others happy and to fend off the savage beast that is a part of her nature. Her motivations nearly always include an attempt to avoid anything that might ignite her more powerful emotions and to keep her satyr mood swings under control. Other than that, her desire to prove to everyone that she is civilized and cultured is key to her personality.

Next, Angie spends some time determining what Emma's life was like before she experienced her Chrysalis and ran away from home to live in the woods. She gives Emma a younger sister and two loving parents who were crushed when their eldest daughter suddenly disappeared. She also works on Emma's current mortal life, the name of her team and the community where she coaches.

This part moves faster as Angie discovers that the pieces are beginning to fall into place. She works on Emma's changeling history, writing a short description of Emma's mentor and about her feelings during and shortly after her Chrysalis. She also chooses a faerie name for Emma, Emhalynna, and decides that Emma abandoned her mortal name when she was rescued by her mentor. She writes down "Donna Francis" as Emma's mortal name, in case it should ever be needed during the game.

She makes a list of appropriate equipment that Emma would have. Then, taking a deep breath, she looks Emma over one last time. With a smile, she turns Emma over to Ian for his approval and prepares to roleplay Emma's prelude.

Changeling
The Dreaming™

Name: Emma
Player: Angie
Chronicle: Blue Ridge Mt. Chronicle
Court: Seelie
Legacies: Bumpkin/Savage
House: Unaffiliated
Seeming: Wilder
Kith: Satyr
Motley: None

Attributes

Physical

Strength	●●●○○
Dexterity (Catlike Reflexes)	●●●●○
Stamina	●●●●○

Social

Charisma (Diplomatic)	●●●●○
Manipulation	●○○○○
Appearance	●●○○○

Mental

Perception	●●●○○
Intelligence	●●○○○
Wits	●●○○○

Abilities

Talents

Alertness	●●○○○
Athletics	●●●○○
Brawl	○○○○○
Dodge	●●○○○
Empathy	●●○○○
Intimidation	●○○○○
Kenning	●●○○○
Persuasion	●○○○○
Streetwise	○○○○○
Subterfuge	○○○○○

Skills

Crafts	○○○○○
Drive	●●○○○
Etiquette	●●●○○
Firearms	○○○○○
Leadership	●●○○○
Melee	○○○○○
Performance	○○○○○
Security	○○○○○
Stealth	●●○○○
Survival	●○○○○

Knowledges

Computer	○○○○○
Enigmas	●●●○○
Gremayre	○○○○○
Investigation	○○○○○
Law	●○○○○
Linguistics	○○○○○
Lore	○○○○○
Medicine	●○○○○
Politics	○○○○○
Science	○○○○○

Advantages

Backgrounds

Companion	●●○○○
Mentor	●●○○○
Resources	●○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

Arts

Primal	●●○○○
Wayfare	●○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

Realms

Actor	●●○○○
Fae	●○○○○
Nature	●●○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

Other Traits

Dark Secret (1 pt. Flaw)
Mild Phobia — her Unseelie side (1 pt. Flaw)
Compulsion — prove she is civilized (1 pt. Flaw)
Acute Senses — hearing (1 pt. Merit)

Glamour

● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

Willpower

● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

Health

		Real	Chimerical
Bruised		❑	❑
Hurt	-1	❑	❑
Injured	-1	❑	❑
Wounded	-2	❑	❑
Mauled	-2	❑	❑
Crippled	-5	❑	❑
Incapacitated		❑	❑

Ravaging/Musing Threshold

Foster Trust

Banality

● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

Birthrights/Frailties

Gift of Pan (Name passions by singing or playing), **Passion's Curse** (swings; +2 difficulty to Willpower rolls)

Experience: ☐

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Changeling
The Dreaming™

Character History Sheet

Mortal Name: Donna Francis
Faerie Name: Emhalynna (Emma)
Mortal Age: 22
Mortal Profession (if any): Coach at Wilkerson Grade School

Chimera/Companions/Treasures: George: large red and green bird; talks and retrieves golf balls; sarcastic, playful, loves Emma, craves attention, sleeps a lot.

Description

Mortal: Emma's heather-blue eyes gaze out from a heart-shaped face that seems more wholesome than attractive. Her short brown curls appear to have been blowing in the wind, uncombed and unruly. Emma stands up straight, an air of pride showing in her carriage. When she moves, her long limbs swing freely with the grace and ease of an athlete.

Changeling: Emma has high Amazonian cheekbones and piercing blue eyes that seem able to peer into the darkest night and see with utmost clarity. A mixture of browns, reds and golds, her short curls wave around the bases of her rippled horns which rise from her forehead to curve back into sharp points. Well-toned and sturdy, Emma's satyr legs are covered from her hips down to her mahogany hooves with miniature curls of the same colors as those on her head.

Personality

Quirks: Can't sit still for long, soft-spoken, reserved

Motivations & Goals: Avoid situations that might trigger her stronger emotions, fight her Unseelie Legacy, prove to the world that she is cultured and civilized

Identity

Mortal: Loving mortal parents, younger sister (Tara), coaches the Wilkerson Grade School Tigers (basketball, track, football, soccer); Emma never returned home after her Chrysalis

Changeling: Emma's traumatic Chrysalis threw her immediately into her Unseelie Legacy (Savage) at the age of 10. Emma ran away from home and lived for a short time in the national forest. She found it difficult to survive there and almost died. Her mentor (Velderon) is a kind and cheerful satyr grump with a good head on his shoulders. He found Emma and, over time, coaxed her out of her Unseelie Legacy, teaching her to survive in the world of the Kithain.

Equipment

A variety of sports equipment, first-aid kit, an old school bus that she bought used from the school and painted bright purple, rented apartment

Oathcircle

Other Notes

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The Prelude

The *prelude* is your character's introduction to the chronicle, combining past history, personal details and the Chrysalis itself. A short game session (or portion of a game session) in which the Storyteller and the player play out one-on-one, the prelude gives both player and character a chance to get their feet wet before plunging into the game.

During your prelude, you may want to go through one or two typical scenes in the character's mundane pre-Chrysalis life to contrast mortal existence with the colorful and dream-filled life of a changeling. If any time has passed for the character between her Chrysalis and the current date of the chronicle, you may also do one or two short scenes portraying events that have happened since.

You may find that some of your initial choices weren't right for the character as more history develops through the course of the prelude. In this case, feel free to change them as long as it doesn't affect the final point cost spent on your character. Unless the Storyteller grants you permission, you can't have any extra freebie points to reconfigure your changeling. The Storyteller may, however, grant an experience point or two for roleplay that occurs during the prelude, at her option.

The Oathcircle

Once everyone has finished their preludes, they should get together with the Storyteller to figure out how their characters are affiliated with one another. They may be complete strangers at first, or they may all have been members of the same oathcircle, motley or household for years. If the Storyteller chooses, the actual formation of the group and the circumstances surrounding it may constitute the first story of your game. If the troupe's characters have been together for any period of time prior to the beginning of the chronicle, then the players must all agree on the nature of the group they would like to form.

Here are some questions regarding pre-established oathcircles that the troupe should think about. Some of the answers will be determined by the chronicle, or the Storyteller may choose to dictate them.

Where is the oathcircle based?

Not all groups are based around a freehold. Where does your group generally hang out? Does it move around from city to city, or do you all live within a few blocks of each other? Where you set your chronicle will have a powerful effect on the tone it will take. Both the troupe and the Storyteller should carefully consider this choice.

Does the oathcircle have a freehold?

Having a central base that needs protecting and where characters can regroup often keeps a chronicle going and offers story options. Is there a local freehold where most of the group's activity is based? Do they hang out at a freehold under the protection of the local noble, or do they have one all their own? Is the freehold a forest glen, a mansion or a coffeehouse near a university?

What are the goals of the oathcircle?

Not all groups have formal goals, but a common enemy or problem may become the focus of a story or even an entire chronicle. This is one way to bring a group together, though many groups form out of friendship and shared experience rather than through the introduction of a common foe.

Who are the oathcircle's enemies?

What are the motivations of the group's enemies? If they are not changelings, what are their powers? Has the group come in contact with Dauntain or Prodigals? Many of the oathcircle's enemies will likely be kept secret by the Storyteller at first, to be revealed later during the chronicle. This question merely helps to determine any history that the oathcircle might have with antagonists of which it is aware.

Who are your friends and allies?

Who are the friends and allies of the oathcircle? Is there anyone whom the group protects, or is protected by, and if so, why?

Legacies

For changelings, life is a balancing act, whether it be between Banality and Bedlam, faerie and mortal, or Seelie and Unseelie. *Legacies* represent both the most basic aspects of a changeling's personality and the duality of it. All changelings have both a Seelie and an Unseelie Legacy. Choosing Legacies for your character is one of the most important aspects of character creation. Your character's Legacies will be your guide to roleplaying her nature.

Changelings walk a fine line between their Seelie and Unseelie Legacies. Each and every one of them knows this. The two sides are considered halves of the same whole. At one time, the Seelie and Unseelie Courts worked in harmony. The Seelie Court ruled half the year, from Beltaine to Samhain, at which time they turned the throne over to the Unseelie Court for the second half of the year. A changeling's Unseelie Legacy was not originally something she abhorred or feared. It was merely viewed as a natural part of herself, the part that was less restrained, more sensual, and sometimes more exciting.

After the Shattering, a great deal more tension developed between the two Courts. Both have their own ideas of how the Dreaming should be protected and preserved, or for that matter, whether it even deserves to be. Many Unseelie Ravage the Dreaming, taking what they can get from it. They feel that since the Dreaming abandoned them, they owe it no loyalty and seek to bring on the Long Winter in order to get it over with as soon as possible. Seelie believe that the Dreaming must be preserved, and that acting in its guardianship or even dying for it is one of the highest honors. Of course, each changeling is a unique individual and has her own perspective between these extremes.

A changeling's primary Legacy is that which coincides with his current Court, whether it be Seelie or Unseelie. The other becomes secondary, but still has its affects on the character's personality, asserting itself from time to time, especially during stressful situations. You may wish to consider and incorporate aspects of your secondary Legacy while playing your character. Keep in mind, however, that the secondary never overrides the primary.

At times, a changeling may switch from one Court and Legacy to the other, especially as the result of a traumatic event. Most changelings cannot consciously shift from one to the other and usually prefer to stay in their present Courts, their current Legacy dictating their feelings on the matter. The change, when it occurs, is a natural event, sometimes gradual, sometimes sudden. It is caused by a shift of identity in the Kithain. The Storyteller decides when and if it would be appropriate for a character to change Courts, and it should always be accompanied by negative repercussions to the character. Such repercussions might include the creation of harassing chimera, the character's motley rejecting him, or unwanted attention from other changelings and antagonists in the Near Dreaming.

Most changelings go their entire lives without changing Courts. Some changelings sit so close to the middle that it is often difficult to tell which Legacy is dominant at any given moment. The majority tend to go from one extreme to the other with little need to guess which side they're on now.

Quests and Bans

Listed beneath each Legacy's description is the Quest and Ban of that Legacy. The Quest explains what your character must do to fulfill her Legacy, or in game terms, regain lost Willpower. The Ban is a specific action that a character with that Legacy would make every effort to avoid, since it runs counter to her Legacy. These are merely offered as roleplaying guides, although your Storyteller may wish to enforce them in your game.

The Storyteller is the judge in all questions regarding Quests and Bans. She determines when a character's actions justify the reward of a Willpower point as dictated by his Quest. She also decides when a character's violation of his Ban will cause him problems. A character who consistently violates his Ban may negatively affect the amount of Willpower he can earn through his Quest. Losing Willpower this way is a means of encouraging players to remember and apply their Bans when roleplaying their characters, but should only be used in the most extreme cases.

Characters who ignore their Quests and Bans may be affected in other ways besides Willpower. Changelings are more in tune with the Dreaming than any other race, and the Dreaming sees through all their masks to their true natures. Legacies are not merely psychological profiles, but also indicative of a changeling's archetypal connection with the Dreaming. Kithain who reject their true natures are behaving in a manner counter to the nature of the Dreaming, and the Dreamrealms may well exact a toll from those who violate the fundamental truth of their own existence. This counter-reaction may take the form of hostile attention from chimera, subtle changes in the changeling's faerie seeming, or in the distortion of the changeling's perception of the Dreaming.

The Storyteller may use her discretion when assigning the Dreaming's response to a character's violation of his Ban. The toll should be consistent with the character's Legacy, however. For example, a Paladin who regularly avoids conflict and challenge may find himself faced with belligerence at every turn — street thugs singling him out, or the lady behind the counter suddenly becoing surly as he steps up. A Regent who shirks his duties and responsibilities may find whatever what he wears quickly becomes tattered and dull. A Grotesque who consistently shows his softer side may find roses and daisies growing in his hair.

Seelie Legacies

A changeling's Seelie Legacy falls toward the lighter side of gray. Although Seelie fae can be just as conniving and manipulative as Unseelie, they tend to have less selfish motivations, and they definitely work within and bow to the authority of the Seelie Court. As you choose your Legacy for your character, consider why she behaves the way she does, as this will be useful in determining how you roleplay her.

Bumpkin

Solid and practical, you approach every problem with common sense and pragmatism. You bring the conversation back to the point and ask the questions that get the right answers. Always prepared, you think about possible scenarios in advance and take precautions against them. You love solving problems, both your own and those of others. You become frustrated with people who don't seem to think quite as logically as you do.

Quest: Whenever you successfully apply a practical solution to any problem, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never miss an opportunity to solve a problem through practical application of logic and common sense.

Courtier

Somewhat the social butterfly, you use wit, charm and flirtation as tools to lighten the mood. You live for social interaction. You are a student of etiquette and a lover of dances, parties and courtly gatherings. Your tact and grace often place you in the position of diplomat. Because your goal is harmony, you are deeply concerned with politics, ritual, custom and the preservation of order. Often working behind the scenes, you soothe hurt feelings and encourage others to relax and have a good time.

Quest: You regain Willpower whenever you deflate a volatile situation and return the gathering to peace and harmony.

Ban: Never purposely make anyone angry or upset.

Crafter

The urge to improve things burns strong within you. You see everything in terms of what you can do to make it better. Nothing brings you greater joy than creating something beautiful or useful out of the ugly and useless. You are never without a project of some sort, whether it is a painting, a sculpture, an organization, or the training and molding of a less-than-perfect individual. You enjoy the process, but can't wait to see the finished product.

Quest: Whenever you create something of lasting value, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never miss an opportunity to put your touch on something and improve it in some way.

Dandy

A social climber at heart, you are an expert at court etiquette. Your goal is to get as high up the ladder as possible. Court intrigue and gossip feed you, and you can always be found at the periphery of any trouble, watching and listening to see what you can learn and possibly use for your own benefit at a later time. Somewhat of a snob, you look back down the ladder with disdain, especially at those who might take your position from you. However, you know better than to burn your bridges. As a result, you tend to play the diplomat. You will do anything to make yourself look good, often helping others and taking risks in order to do so.

Quest: Whenever you succeed in strengthening your hold on your current position or in getting a promotion, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never miss an opportunity to ingratiate yourself to one of your superiors.

Hermit

You are reclusive and ascetic by nature, preferring your own company to that of others. Introspective by nature, you view everything from a very personal standpoint. When in public, you tend to be quiet, speaking only when spoken to, unless your input has such extreme relevance that you feel you *have* to say it. One of the benefits of this is that others tend to see you as wise, since when you do speak, your words often make a profound point that was overlooked. Despite your desire to be alone, you are drawn out by the need to watch and learn. Your curiosity about the nature of things and your place among them keeps you from being totally isolated.

Quest: You regain Willpower whenever you find the solution to a problem through inner reflection rather than brash action.

Ban: Rarely speak unless the situation is dire and you feel that your viewpoint has not already been expressed.

Orchid

Up until now, you have lived a pampered, protected life, whether it was in Arcadia or in your mother's arms. Suddenly you have been forced out into the light and faced with the harsh realities of the world. You find it difficult to trust anyone, and yet you fervently wish for someone to come along and take care of





you. You have no experience dealing with the dangers and hurts of the real world. Wide-eyed and innocent, each new disaster threatens to shatter your world. You let others make your decisions for you, not out of preference, but rather as a result of the insecurity you feel when faced with problems.

Quest: Whenever you escape a frightening situation with your sense of well-being and innocence intact, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never trust a stranger; never reveal yourself to anyone.

Paladin

You are the quintessential competitor, and your story is that of the brave, stalwart athlete or hero. Constantly searching for new challenges to overcome, new adversaries to wrestle, new causes to fight for and protect, you live for the chance to slay the monster, fulfill the quest or win the game. Without the thrill of striving against others (or yourself), life quickly becomes dull and meaningless.

Quest: Whenever you successfully overcome a truly challenging situation, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never refuse a fair challenge.

Panderer

You love to see other people happy, and do whatever you can to encourage them, whether through playing matchmaker or refilling a drink. Perhaps you live vicariously through their experiences, or perhaps you just feel that others sometimes need a little push from you to find *their* fulfillment. *You spend more time on this* than you do pursuing your own interests and gain great pleasure from it. A skilled manipulator, you work most of your magic from behind the scenes, dropping hints or subtle encouragement.

Quest: You regain Willpower whenever you cause someone else's happiness or fun without them realizing your part *in it.*

Ban: Never do anything that you know would undermine another's happiness.

Regent

Nobility in its purest sense, you are the ruler, the patriarch or matriarch. You are the judge and the legislator who sorts right from wrong. More than any other, you feel the heavy burden of duty and obligation. Often, you have to deal out punishment. Although you despise it, it is a necessary part of your responsibilities, and you perform it with as much wisdom and fairness as you can muster. You have resigned yourself to the fact that regency is a lonely and often misunderstood mission, and you do not let your own personal feelings interfere with the charge of your station.

Quest: You regain Willpower whenever you resolve a situation through the strength of your leadership.

Ban: Never compromise or shirk your duty or the laws by which you live, whatever they may be.

Sage

You are the advisor, the wise one, the teacher. You have traveled many places and seen many things. You have learned, and you willingly share your insights with others. The quest for *knowledge and wisdom is paramount* to your goals in life. You see something to be learned in every situation. Like the old man on the mountain, you don't force your wisdom on others, but share it with an open heart to any who wish to learn. You can often be found in quiet consultation with a confused wilder or telling stories and anecdotes to childlings.

Quest: Regain Willpower whenever someone follows your advice and succeeds at his chosen task.

Ban: Never stand in another's chosen way, for the path to wisdom is different for everyone.

Saint

You feel the pain of those around you and strive to ease their suffering. You give freely of your time, your belongings and whatever you have in order to help others. This often places you in a position of martyrdom, so complete is your altruism. Your own happiness is secondary to that of others. You can become so obsessed with your cause that you endanger yourself. However, you would never do anything that might bring harm to others.

Quest: Whenever you protect someone else or alleviate their suffering, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never knowingly cause distress or harm to anyone.

Squire

Rather than stepping out into the limelight, you prefer to support and help those who do. You are Tonto to the Lone Ranger, Watson to Holmes, Kato to the Green Hornet. You care nothing for glory or recognition, but merely seek the chance to be a small part of the process. You abide by the words of your present hero, and no task is too menial for you if your hero requests it.

Quest: You regain Willpower whenever you play a supporting role in an accomplishment, but take no credit for it.

Ban: Never contradict or undermine your current heroic companion.

Troubadour

You walk in a fog of pink and lilac optimism, feeling emotions more strongly than others and expressing them at every opportunity. You are an idealist who believes in the potential for a perfect world, a perfect love, a perfect life. You step into every situation with enthusiasm and wide-eyed wonder, anxious to experience the thrill of the moment. When you love, you love with abandon. When you cry, your tears would fill an ocean. *When you are happy, you make sure everyone knows* it. Forgiving and loving, you rarely find it in yourself to hate anyone, seeing them instead as just another fascinating piece of your glorious world-view.

Quest: Regain Willpower whenever you complete a task in the name of a higher ideal (love, friendship, romance, etc.).

Ban: Never hide your feelings.

Wayfarer

Your story is that of the endless wanderer, the great explorer and adventurer who has a love in every port and rarely stays in any one place for long. You live by your wits, though your restless nature often lands you in dangerous situations. A reactionary, you act first and think later. This sometimes saves you; other times, it gets you in trouble. Impatient and easily bored, you are always looking for the next adventure.

Quest: Whenever you survive a life-threatening scene through your own cleverness, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never plan for the future.

Unseelie Legacies

The darker side of faerie nature manifests in a changeling's Unseelie Legacy. Being Unseelie is much more complex than just being evil or vile. Unseelie Kithain can be equally as noble and honorable as their Seelie brethren. The difference lies in their motives and methods.

Beast

You seek to conquer all who oppose you, destroying them if possible. Your world view is defined by those who bow to you and those who get eaten because they didn't. To you, all exists at and for your pleasure. You play people off each other, like chess pieces on a board, with no consideration for anyone's needs but your own. You take what you want without asking, and you destroy those weaker than yourself for amusement.

Quest: Whenever you remove significant opposition to your goals, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never retreat; never compromise your territory.

Fatalist

Like Pooh's companion Eeyore, you have a less-than-optimistic view of the world. You expect things to go wrong, and you take a dark and sullen pleasure when you are proven right. Because everything is doomed to end disastrously, there is no reason to struggle. You have no hope for a bright future, but rather are resigned to inevitable gloom. You find comfort in your pessimism, because you know you'll never be disappointed. Even when things turn out to have a happy ending, you know that it's only a temporary illusion and the real disaster is undoubtedly following right behind.

Quest: Regain Willpower when your warnings for doom turn out to be correct.

Ban: Never laugh except in bitterness and sarcasm.

Fool

You are the divine trickster, the clown, the one who laughs last and loudest. *Because you believe that there is no meaning* in the world, no underlying reason for anything, you take great pleasure in spoiling people's well-laid plans by sticking the proverbial monkeywrench in the works. You almost feel it a duty to play the agent of chaos, knocking others off their pedestals of dogma and making them eat their spouted words of honor and

nobility. Sometimes you work for weeks, months or even years formulating your pranks, laying the foundation and setting the trap so that when your prey steps into it, they fall all the harder.

Quest: Regain Willpower whenever you manage to deflate the ego of someone you have labeled as self-righteous.

Ban: Never search for the "whys" behind your life; there are none.

Grotesque

You love disgusting others and go out of your way to push their buttons. You prey on the sensibilities of others, with a blush or a shocked gasp for your applause. The more extreme the reaction, the happier you are. You make it your life's work to discover what upsets people and then inflict it upon them. A master of insults, you cut right to the heart, throwing out all propriety and etiquette in favor of shock value. Nothing is too low for you, from bodily noises to insulting someone's mother.

Quest: Whenever you cause someone to falter or lose his composure, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never display an overtly pleasant or appealing side of yourself.

Knave

With a sparkle in your eye, you cajole, encourage, tempt, trick and manipulate others into exploring their darkest desires. You are the pusher, the perverter, taking the sweet and turning it into the sordid. You see yourself as a teacher of sorts — you teach people what base and feral creatures they really are. There's nothing you love more than to corrupt the innocent and do it with such panache that they often never even realize they've been compromised.

Quest: You regain Willpower whenever you cause someone to do something she would normally be opposed to and she enjoys it.

Ban: Never protect anyone from the harsh realities of life.

Outlaw

You look out at the world and see an ocean of mindless automatons that haven't the slightest clue of what it's all about. You believe it's your duty to take advantage of them. How else are they ever going to learn? A thief and a cad, you take what you want from others without a moment's hesitation or guilt. If your victims are stupid enough to be victims, then you see no reason not to use and abuse them. You feel no pity for people — they've made their own beds, and, by golly, they can lie in them.

Quest: RegainWillpower whenever you commit a completely selfish act that hurts someone.

Ban: Never do anything that helps others more than it hurts them or helps you in the long run.

Pandora

Like Pandora, you just can't seem to keep your box shut. You open your mouth and trouble flows from it in great crashing waves. You just can't help yourself. You love to get someone in trouble by revealing their secrets for them. Furthermore, your curiosity often overcomes you, especially if you have been forbidden to go somewhere or do something. The more someone insists that you shouldn't do something, the more it makes you want to do exactly that.

Quest: You regain Willpower whenever you survive something dangerous that you were strictly forbidden to do or warned against.

Ban: Never keep a secret; never obey an order.

Peacock

You are the most attractive, smartest, best person in the world, and you want to make sure that everyone knows it. If you're not the center of attention, you're not happy. As long as you are being heaped with praise and adulation, you're the most gracious, modest-seeming person around, but as soon as attention is diverted from you, you become vicious. You are not above tantrums and fits of violence in order to draw others' notice. Jealousy rules your choice of friends and enemies.

Quest: Whenever you conclusively prove that you are the best at something, you regain a Willpower.

Ban: Never admit failure or fault.

Rake

You are a greedy sensualist, a miser, a glutton, an obsessive collector and a hoarder of experience. You care little for other people, except as objects to collect and use at your whim, pretty things to set around and provide you with pleasure. You revel in material gratification and show off your good taste at every opportunity. Sharing is not a word that you recognize, however. You flaunt what you own, be it the beautiful woman on your arm or the glittering diamond on your finger, but you would never consider giving a gift to anyone or helping the needy.

Quest: Regain Willpower whenever you succeed in your pursuit of pleasure.

Ban: Never give anything away without either hope of reward or a hard fight.

Riddler

You are an enigma, the mystery that no one can figure out. You are in love with secrets and never give a truly straight answer to any question. You obscure everything in double entendres, mysterious terms and outright lies. You take joy in confusing and confounding others, satisfying your own need to feel that your intellect is superior to theirs. You are especially careful to shroud your own psyche in deepest mystery, and your greatest fear is that someone will learn what you're really like.

Quest: Whenever you manage to confuse or mislead someone, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never allow others to discover the truth about you or your origins.

Ringleader

You have your gang and you rule them with an iron fist. You work hard to build and strengthen your organization, preaching loyalty and submission to the cause you embody.

You will not stand for your law or authority to be undermined. While you understand that a group is more powerful than any one individual, you do not consider yourself equal to your band of followers. You are the head, and they are the arms and legs. They are your tools, and you use them at your whim to further your own goals.

Quest: Regain Willpower whenever you accomplish something as a direct result of the devotion of your followers.

Ban: Never allow any one person to endanger the whole of your organization or your goals.

Rogue

You don't need to work; so many others out there can and will do the job for you. Others see you as a leech, but while they're licking their wounds and cleaning their boots, you're spending your share of the pot. All things considered, you prefer taking the path of least resistance. There's always some gung-ho hero ready to leap to the fore and do all the dirty work. Why not let him? And so what if you're there with your hand out when it's time to reap the reward. You didn't *ask* that guy to do it; you just didn't offer to help.

Quest: Whenever you achieve something that you do not really deserve, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never work.

Savage

For you, the only viable way to live is like the animals in the forest, eating what you can catch, mating when the urge strikes, and fighting to establish superiority. Everything else is senseless. Civilized conversation, etiquette and technology — wastes of time. Modern inventions only distract you from your true nature, and keep you from satisfying the instincts that burn in your soul. You long for a return to the days of primal self-indulgence and the law of nature. In the meantime, you just live your life as if they were already here, feral and proud of it.

Quest: Regain Willpower whenever you conquer "civilized" foes through your own cunning and might.

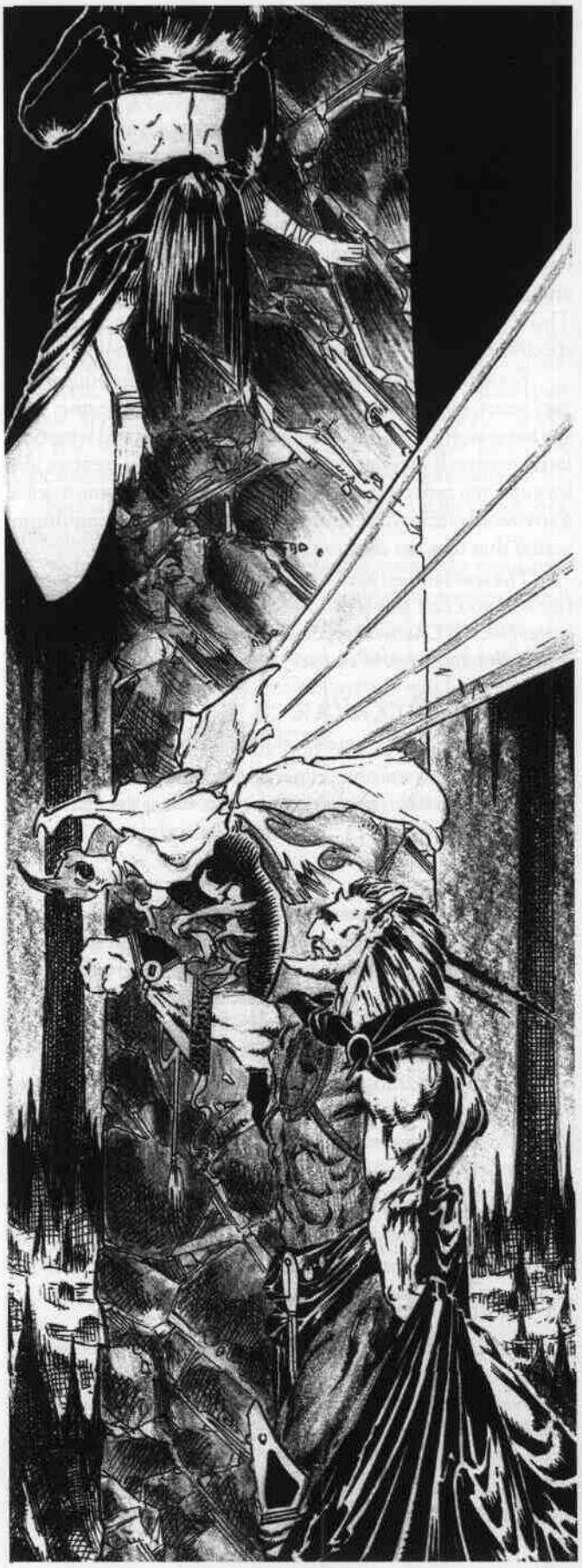
Ban: Never indulge in civilized folly.

Wretch

You have no positive self-image, and assume that everyone else hates you as much as you hate yourself. Perhaps you are the wallflower who never gets asked to dance or the loser who was never invited to birthday parties; regardless, you believe that everyone hates you and that you are a pitiful outcast. Sometimes you seek pity and aid from others. Other times you seek to punish them for their pity and aid, being especially hard on anyone that shows you compassion and caring.

Quest: Whenever others vilify you as worthless or throw up their hands in despair of ever getting through to you, you regain Willpower.

Ban: Never admit to success.



Attributes

Specialties

For each Attribute rated 4 or higher, a player may select a *specialty*. A specialty shows that the character has developed an expertise in a specific sub-category of that Trait. In rules terms, this means that the player gets to reroll any 10s scored on actions directly involving the specialty. The player not only keeps the first success, but now has the opportunity to possibly roll another. For each 10 she rolls, she may reroll and try to get more. This only applies if the character is attempting an action that specifically involves the specialty, not just the Trait.

For example, a character with four dots in Intelligence is very smart, but if your character has the specialty *Creative*, then she has concentrated her intelligence in that area and is particularly creative. If she is attempting to come up with a creative idea for a gift, you can reroll any 10s. If, however, she is trying to solve a crossword puzzle, you cannot because she is not attempting an action that uses her creativity.

The specialities listed with each Trait are just a few suggestions. If you can think of something that fits your character better (such as Charisma specialty *Flirting*), go for it — once your Storyteller approves, of course.

Physical Attributes

These Traits describe how strong, nimble and sturdy a character is; they are the primary focus of an action-oriented character. Physical Traits represent the strengths and weaknesses of the body.

Strength

This Trait measures brute strength. It represents your character's ability to lift, carry loads and cause physical harm. A person with a high Strength rating is usually larger and bulkier than someone with a lower rating. In brawling and melee combat, your character's Strength Trait is added to her damage Dice Pool.

Specialties: Lifting, Long Jumping, Strong Grip, Sustained Carrying

- • **Poor:** weakling, lift 50 lbs., carry 20 lbs.
- •• **Average:** normal, lift 100 lbs., carry 50 lbs.
- ••• **Good:** athlete, lift 250 lbs., carry 125 lbs.
- •••• **Exceptional:** weight-lifter, lift 400 lbs., carry 200 lbs.
- ••••• **Outstanding:** Olympian, lift 650 lbs., carry 300 lbs.

Dexterity

This Trait measures general physical prowess, speed, quickness and agility. It indicates your character's capacity for moving precisely and with grace. Dexterity includes hand-eye coordination, fine motor manipulation, reaction speed, reflexes and finesse.

Specialties: Catlike Reflexes, Fleet-Footed, Flexible, Light Touch, Steady Hand, Sure-Footed, Swift

- • **Poor:** butterfingered, clumsy, inflexible, accident-prone
- •• **Average:** ordinary, unrefined, passable, fair
- ••• **Good:** natural grace, coordinated, flexible, agile
- •••• **Exceptional:** athletic, gymnastic, trained, dexterous, professional
- ••••• **Outstanding:** awe-inspiring grace, gold medalist, surgeon's touch

Stamina

Stamina measures general health, pain tolerance and endurance. It determines your character's staying power, both physical and mental. Two of its most important elements are the will to live and downright stubbornness.

Specialties: Determined, Enduring, High Pain Threshold, Tireless, Tough

- • **Poor:** sickly, frail, wimpy, vulnerable, fragile
- •• **Average:** moderately healthy, confident, consistent
- ••• **Good:** resistant, sound, hearty, robust, sturdy
- •••• **Exceptional:** steadfast, resolute, committed, determined
- ••••• **Outstanding:** hell-bent, unyielding, relentless, do-or-die

Social Attributes

Your Social Traits describe your character's looks, charm and familiarity with personal interaction. They are vital in determining your character's appearance, persuasiveness and adaptability in social situations.

Charisma

This Trait measures your character's magnetism and natural charm. It represents her aptitude for enticing, bewitching and captivating others without having to try. Charisma determines whether others like and trust your character.

Specialties: Amusing, Confidant, Diplomatic, Eloquent, Persuasive, Trustworthy

- • **Poor:** wallflower, dull, boring, lackluster, uninspiring
- •• **Average:** friendly, agreeable, inoffensive, tolerable
- ••• **Good:** trusted, fun, gregarious, genial, pleasant
- •••• **Exceptional:** magnetic, alluring, persuasive, winsome
- ••••• **Outstanding:** irresistible, commanding, compelling, captivating

Manipulation

This Trait measures your character's ability to get results when attempting to force, cajole or trick another person into doing something. Manipulation works on friends and foes alike, though it may be more difficult on the latter. If your character fails her attempt to manipulate someone, the target may well realize what was happening and become angry. No one likes to be manipulated.



Specialties: Cunning, Deceitful, Glib, Patient, Persuasive, Subtle, Underhanded

- • **Poor**: reserved, innocent, taciturn, submissive
- •• **Average**: bluffing, socially adept, evasive, swindling
- ••• **Good**: devious, slick, resourceful, eloquent, crafty
- •••• **Exceptional**: influential, scheming, calculating, maneuvering
- ••••• **Outstanding**: puppeteering, controlling, Machiavellian, conspiratorial

Appearance

This Trait measures more than just physical beauty. Any physical feature — animation, expressiveness, cuteness, vulnerability, etc. — that others find enticing could be considered part of your Appearance. It can be vital in some situations, for like it or not, we're all influenced by the way people look. The Appearance Trait is used to determine first impressions.

Specialties: Bold Demeanor, Fragility, Glamourous, Sex Appeal, Style

- • **Poor**: homely, undesirable, unsightly, repulsive
- •• **Average**: plain, unnoticeable, inconspicuous, dull
- ••• **Good**: attractive, pretty, comely, appealing
- •••• **Exceptional**: alluring, delightful, beautiful, seductive
- ••••• **Outstanding**: awe-inspiring, bewitching, gorgeous

Mental Attributes

The Mental Attributes represent your character's total mental capacity, including such things as memory, perception, logic and the ability to learn.

Perception

This Trait covers everything from searching for something to picking up on the subtle details in the environment and intuitively putting them together to come up with a reasonable assumption. Perception determines your character's sensitivity to the world around her. Often it includes her use of insight to understand what she perceives.

Specialties: Detail-Oriented, Empathic, Intuitive, Keen-Eyed, Paranoid, Sharp Hearing

- • **Poor**: oblivious, insensitive, self-absorbed
- •• **Average**: awake, curious, alert
- ••• **Good**: keen, watchful, wary, observant, attentive
- •••• **Exceptional**: sensitive, discerning, perceptive, intuitive
- ••••• **Outstanding**: vigilant, instinctive, presentient, clairvoyant

Intelligence

This Trait measures raw mental processes: memory, retention, judgment, reasoning, understanding and critical thinking. It represents your character's ability to learn and think, and it caters to carefully reasoned judgments rather than snap decisions. Low Intelligence can indicate a character who lacks the

capacity to understand complicated issues and learns very slowly, whereas a high Intelligence character is a sophisticated savant capable of evaluating many different levels of an argument or problem. A character with high Intelligence can often discern truth from lies, or at least when she has time to think things over.

Specialties: Creative, Discerning, Logical, Pragmatic, Scholar

- • **Poor**: IQ 80, slow, confused, simple
- •• **Average**: IQ 100, unimaginative, studious, thoughtful
- ••• **Good**: IQ 120, smart, quick, rational, cognitive
- •••• **Exceptional**: IQ 140, ingenious, logical, discerning
- ••••• **Outstanding**: IQ 160+, genius, brilliant, erudite

Wits

The Wits Attribute describes your character's ability to react quickly and correctly in pressing or stressful situations. It indicates her overall sharpness of mind and cleverness. A character with a low Wits rating, like the veritable "deer in the headlights," may be easily caught off-guard, tricked or surprised. Those with a high Wits rating are seldom waylaid by sudden changes.

Specialties: Clear-Headed, Clever, Insults, One Step Ahead, Survival

- • **Poor**: gullible, dull-witted, absent-minded, easily distracted
- •• **Average**: *slow, lagging, sluggish, lackadaisical*
- ••• **Good**: flexible, reactionary, impulsive, quick
- •••• **Exceptional**: shrewd, direct, extemporaneous, sharp
- ••••• **Outstanding**: instinctive, spontaneous, immediate, pre-emptive

Abilities

Specialties

If your character has four dots in an Ability, you may choose a specialty. This represents that the character has developed an expertise in a particular sub-category of that Ability. (See *Attributes*, above.) Certain fields of study are so broad that by the time your character reaches the Expert plateau (4 dots) in the Ability, he will have to specialize. The specialties listed with each Trait are offered as suggestions. Feel free to come up with others for your character, dependent on the approval of your Storyteller.

Talents

Talents are intuitive Abilities. They are almost never learned through direct training (though a few, like Brawl, are exceptions). It is assumed everyone has some small capacity for each one, whether you have purchased dots in them or not. Thus, if your character wants to make a stab at using a Talent that he has no dots in, you can roll a Dice Pool equal to the number of dots your character has in the appropriate Attribute; like most things in life, there's no harm in trying to use your Talents thusly.



Alertness

This Talent indicates your character's awareness of the world around her. She is practiced in keeping one ear to the wind and one eye to the sky, even when distracted with other things. Alertness is a measure of how well your character picks up on subtle details and changes in her environment.

- • **Novice**: You are more alert to changes than most.
- •• **Practiced**: You are watchful and attentive.
- ••• **Competent**: You are highly vigilant.
- •••• **Expert**: You are truly cautious, rarely letting down your guard.
- ••••• **Master**: You are aware of *all* that goes on around you.

Possessed by: Detectives, Guards, Hunters, Reporters, Thieves, Warriors

Specialties: Ambushes, Crowds, Danger Sense, Searching, Streets

Athletics

Climbing rocky cliffs, leaping chasms or playing brilliant games of badminton are all Athletics-based feats. This Ability describes your character's general athletic prowess in both team and individual sports. It assumes a familiarity with the rules and play of the sport in question.

- • **Novice**: You are first pick for teams at neighborhood football games.
- •• **Practiced**: You are a regular on school or community athletic teams.
- ••• **Competent**: You are a coach or serious competitor.
- •••• **Expert**: You are a vigorous trainer, a professional or just accomplished.
- ••••• **Master**: You are a world-class or Olympic athlete.

Possessed by: Aerobics Instructors, Dancers, Jocks, Marathonists, Most Children, Sports Enthusiasts

Specialties: Acrobatics, Dancing, Mountain Climbing, Swimming, Track & Field, Team Sports

Brawl

Brawling is the ability to fight without a weapon, including basic hand-to-hand maneuvers such as punching, kicking, grappling, throwing, scratching and biting. Brawling can get quite ruthless, and sometimes inflict serious damage if done properly. For purposes of roleplay, a character should gain a specialty when she reaches the Expert Level in Brawl.

- • **Novice**: You took a course in basic self-defense.
- •• **Practiced**: You could hurt someone.
- ••• **Competent**: You can take someone down quickly without doing permanent harm.
- •••• **Expert**: You are a black-belt or licensed to kill.
- ••••• **Master**: You are world-renowned; your hands are registered as lethal weapons.

Possessed by: Bouncers, Cops, Martial Artists, Spies, Thugs, Warriors

Specialties: Any Martial Arts Style, Boxing, Dirty Fighting, Knights, Wrestling

Dodge

Whether your character dives for cover, ducks a punch or sidesteps an arrow, he knows the best way to avoid injury is not getting hit. Dodge simply describes your character's ability to get out of the way of any incoming attacks.

- • **Novice**: You know what to do if someone screams, "Duck!"
- •• **Practiced**: You know when to stay down and safe.
- ••• **Competent**: You are accomplished and experienced at duck and weave.
- •••• **Expert**: You are exceedingly difficult to hit.
- ••••• **Master**: *You can sidestep bullets.*

Possessed by: Bouncers, Criminals, Ghetto Rats, Street Fighters, Warriors

Specialties: Duck, Dive, Find Cover, Slippery, Sidestep

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to pinpoint what others are feeling. Through an awareness of their facial expressions, body language and tone, your character gains a sense of the other person's general attitude, including her emotional state and her motives. With high levels of this Trait, your character can sometimes tell whether someone is lying or not. Successful use of this Talent prior to attempting to Persuade, Intimidate or use Subterfuge on that same person reduces the difficulty number on the second action by one; failure increases the difficulty number by one.

- • **Novice**: You are sensitive and understanding.
- •• **Practiced**: You are aware of the feelings others are trying to hide.
- ••• **Competent**: You are amazingly insightful into others' motivations.
- •••• **Expert**: You are especially sensitive to lies and subtle emotions.
- ••••• **Master**: You read people like they were open books.

Possessed by: Actors, Con Artists, Mediums, Parents, Pick-up Artists, Psychologists, Teachers

Specialties: Desires, Emotions, Fears, Falsehoods, Legacies, Love Connections, Motivations

Intimidation

The art of intimidation takes many forms from subtle threats to outright physical harm. Choice of method depends on the time, the place and those involved. Characters with this Talent know how to get what they want from others, when they want it.

- • **Novice**: You back wimps into corners.
- •• **Practiced**: You win an occasional stare-down.
- ••• **Competent**: You have an unsettling gaze.
- •••• **Expert**: You are an above-average drill sergeant.
- ••••• **Master**: You intimidate redcaps.

Possessed by: Businesspeople, Bouncers, Cops, Detectives, Nobles, Warriors

Specialties: Political, Social, "The Look," Veiled Threats, Violence



Kenning

Kenning is faerie sight, the ability to sense Glamour in whatever form it takes, be it a chimera, a changeling or a freehold. Among other things, this Talent allows a changeling to recognize a changeling who has slipped into the Mists or who has yet to achieve Chrysalis, sense the relative power of a chimera, and locate freeholds and trods.

- • **Novice**: Glamour tickles you, and you can see powerful chimera.
- •• **Practiced**: You can locate freeholds with ease.
- ••• **Competent**: You recognize "sleeping" changelings.
- •••• **Expert**: You can detect even the slightest traces of Glamour.
- ••••• **Master**: You are sensitive to Glamour even at great distances.

Possessed by: Certain Powerful Chimera, Psychics, Small Children, Changelings, Some Kinain

Specialties: Cantrips, Chimera, Changelings, Enchantment, Trods

Persuasion

This Trait represents your character's ability to win others over to her way of thinking. The method used may involve subtle mental and emotional seduction or even outright begging, pleading and cajoling. People with high Persuasion ratings tend to be natural leaders and advocates.

- • **Novice**: You can be convincing through a concentrated effort.
- •• **Practiced**: You pinpoint the hole in another's position.
- ••• **Competent**: A professional debater, you are always on top of any argument.
- •••• **Expert**: You make others feel guilty for even disagreeing with you.
- ••••• **Master**: You say "Jump," and they say, "How high?"

Possessed by: Businesspeople, Demagogue, Orators, Politicians, Protesters, Visionaries

Specialties: Emotional Appeal, Fast-Talk, Guilt, Logic, Sympathy, Wordplay

Streetwise

The streets can be a major source of information, aid and money, but their culture and rules of conduct are as complex as the noble courts. The Streetwise Talent indicates how versed your character is with the local rumor mill, street slang and street etiquette. It represents her savvy when among the less desirable elements of society, and determines not only how well she can survive but thrive and fit in among them.

- • **Novice**: You know who sells what, from drugs to contraband.
- •• **Practiced**: You are accepted as one of the gang.
- ••• **Competent**: You are a mover and shaker, active in street politics.
- •••• **Expert**: You are respected, protected, trusted or feared on the street.
- ••••• **Master**: You know what happened, who did it and where they hid their stash.

Possessed by: Bartenders, Bookies, Criminals, Detectives, Gang Members, Homeless People

Specialties: Fencing Merchandise, Illegal Acquisition, Information, Local Area Knowledge, Gangs

Subterfuge

This Trait determines your character's ability to conceal his motives and feelings. Moreover, it allows him to decipher the motives of others and use their own plans against them. Subterfuge is the fine art of lying, deceit and underhanded manipulation. Characters skilled in this Talent know how to call upon their best theatrics to influence situations and divert the blame without others realizing they've been manipulated.

- • **Novice**: You rarely get caught in a lie.
- •• **Practiced**: Diversionary tactics are second nature to you.
- ••• **Competent**: You can cleverly hide the truth without resorting to lies.
- •••• **Expert**: You are capable of complicated plotting and manipulation.
- ••••• **Master**: You deceive with impunity.

Possessed by: Casanovas, Compulsive Liars, Con Men, Lawyers, Politicians, Spies

Specialties: Diversions, Intricate Fraud, Little White Lies, Seduction

Other Talents: Artistic Expression, Carousing, Diplomacy, Fortune-Telling, Instruction, Interrogation, Intrigue, Intuition, Mimicry, Scrounge, Seduction, Style, Ventriloquism

Skills

Skills are Abilities that your character has learned through direct instruction. They require that he have some formal training in the area. If your character wants to attempt a feat involving a Skill he has no rating in, roll a Dice Pool equal to the number of dots your character has in the appropriate Attribute and increase the difficulty number by one. Your lack of practice and expertise hinders your success.

Crafts

This Skill imparts knowledge of artisan techniques in such fields as woodworking, leatherwork, glassblowing or gem cutting. With Crafts, your character can create lasting pieces of art and functional objects from various materials. The quality of these products depends on the number of Successes achieved on the roll. A character should specialize when she reaches the Expert Level in this Skill, if she hasn't already chosen her field.

- • **Novice**: You know the basics and can make something that works.
- •• **Practiced**: You can add a personal touch to your creations.
- ••• **Competent**: You are respected among other artisans.
- •••• **Expert**: You create items of lasting and increasing value.
- ••••• **Master**: You are a Michelangelo in your field.

Possessed by: Artists, Craftsmen, Designers, Inventors

Specialties: Carpentry, Leatherworking, Machinery, Pottery, Sculpture, Woodcarving, Sewing

Drive

The Drive Skill represents your character's ability to operate motor vehicles, though it does not mean that she is familiar with all land vehicles. The Storyteller may raise or lower difficulty numbers based on your character's experience with a particular type of vehicle. It also implies that your character has earned a driver's license, although this need not necessarily be the case. At higher levels, you can attempt to avoid someone who's tailing you (if you know they're there), and it allows you to attempt some stunts.

- • **Novice**: You can drive an automatic automobile.
- •• **Practiced**: You can operate a manual/shift transmission.
- ••• **Competent**: You are a professional trucker or chauffeur.
- •••• **Expert**: You are a race car driver.
- ••••• **Master**: You are a professional stunt driver.

Possessed by: Bus Drivers, Chauffeurs, Cops, Drug Runners, Taxi Drivers, Truckers

Specialties: Curves, Evasion, Speed, Stunts, Sudden Stops, Traffic

Etiquette

In social and courtly situations, Etiquette can go a long toward keeping your character in the good graces of those around her. It describes how mannered your character is and how well she fits in at court, among her peers and at social functions. It is used during such actions as properly addressing a baron, approaching a redcap without insulting him, and eating with the correct fork at the charity dinner.

- • **Novice**: You know when to shut up.
- •• **Practiced**: You fit in well most of the time.
- ••• **Competent**: You rarely makes a faux-pas.
- •••• **Expert**: The social graces come naturally to you.
- ••••• **Master**: You could take tea with High King David in the afternoon and barhop with the redcaps the same evening without missing a beat.

Possessed by: Courtesans, Diplomats, Executives, Idle Rich, Nobles, Dilettantes

Specialties: Business, High Society, Particular Kith (Eshu, Sidhe, etc.), Seelie or Unseelie Court

Firearms

Skill in Firearms means that you have a broad knowledge of all guns, from a simple .22 to an Ingram Mac-10 submachine gun. It does not include the ability to operate heavy artillery. Firearms includes the ability to care for and repair guns.

- • **Novice**: Relatively able, you have had a few lessons.
- •• **Practiced**: You are an amateur enthusiast who practices regularly.
- ••• **Competent**: You win skeet-shooting and target competitions.
- •••• **Expert**: You are a professional, cool and steady.
- ••••• **Master**: You are an expert marksman.

Possessed by: Cops, Criminals, Detectives, Gang Members, Hunters

Specialties: Fast Reload, Machine Guns, Pistols, Quick Draw, Rifles

Leadership

This Skill represents your character's ability to organize and lead others. It describes to what extent she is a natural-born leader as well as her knack for emitting an aura of authority. It expresses a combination of natural ability and a command of those qualities most often assigned to leaders: confident, assertive and decisive.

- • **Novice**: You can lead small groups.
- •• **Practiced**: You are a dominant, take-charge kind of person.
- ••• **Competent**: You can lead a diverse group.
- •••• **Expert**: A born leader, you attract followers with out trying.
- ••••• **Master**: You are a leader of nations with a broad level of influence.

Possessed by: Cops, Executives, Gang Leaders, Military Officers, Nobles, Coaches

Specialties: Commands, Dictatorial, Friendly, Military, Noble, Oration

Melee

The ability to fight with a weapon is valuable in the World of Darkness. Proficiency in this Skill allows your character to use hand-held weapons. Examples of such weapons include knives, sai, saps, tonfa and swords. While Melee seems archaic in mortal society due to the prevalence of firearms, wielding most chimerical weaponry requires some expertise in it.

- • **Novice**: You know the basics, but your trainer can still put you down.
- •• **Practiced**: You have military or knight's training.
- ••• **Competent**: You can slash and parry with the best of them.
- •••• **Expert**: You make a worthy opponent; trolls are grudgingly impressed.
- ••••• **Master**: You are a deadly opponent; dragons live in fear.

Possessed by: Cops, Fencers, Martial Artists, Knights, Nobles, Thugs

Specialties: Axe, Club, Disarming, Knives, Rapiers, Swords, Quarterstaff, Found Weapon (Frying Pan, Broken Bottle, etc.)

Performance

The Performance Skill covers a broad range of artistic expression, from acting to storytelling. It assumes that your character has the basic knowledge necessary and a certain talent in the field she has chosen. As well as defining your character's expertise and creative talent, this Skill also represents her ability to captivate an audience and her stage presence, two relatively nebulous qualities. It assumes some knowledge about the technical side and the society of your character's chosen field. Characters who take this Skill should specialize when they reach Expert Level.

- • **Novice**: An amateur, you still get a little nervous in the spotlight.
- •• **Practiced**: A natural crowd-pleaser, you can retain an audience's attention.
- ••• **Competent**: You know how to work an audience.
- •••• **Expert**: You are a world-renowned artist.
- ••••• **Master**: You could be the next Elvis, Mozart or Clark Gable.

Possessed by: Actors, Comedians, Mimes, Musicians, Storytellers, Vocalists

Specialties: Acting, Enchant Audience, Evoke Emotion, Instrument (specify), Storytelling, Voice

Security

With the Security Skill, your character has a proficiency with the tools and techniques required for lock-picking, hot-wiring cars, designing and deactivating burglar alarms, and opening safes. It can be used to conduct criminal activities or, on the other side of the coin, to prevent and investigate breeches of security. The more dots your character has in Security, the more sophisticated the systems with which she is familiar.

- • **Novice**: You can handle simple locksmithing.
- •• **Practiced**: You know how to hot-wire cars.
- ••• **Competent**: You can disable or design effective house alarms.
- •••• **Expert**: A safe-cracker, you can outwit laser security and cameras.
- ••••• **Master**: Fort Knox *was* unbreachable....

Possessed by: Cops, Criminals, Detectives, Locksmiths, Security Specialists

Specialties: Design, Electronics, Fast, Hot-wiring, Safe-cracking

Stealth

Stealth is the ability to sneak about or hide without being noticed. Certain situational modifiers may be applied by the Storyteller and it is often rolled versus a difficulty number equal to the Perception rating of the person that isn't supposed to notice.



- • **Novice**: You can hide in the dark.
- •• **Practiced**: You can hide in shadows.
- ••• **Competent**: You can walk silently on carpet.
- •••• **Expert**: You can walk silently on dry leaves.
- ••••• **Master**: You can camouflage yourself anywhere.

Possessed by: Assassins, Criminals, Hunters, Reporters, Spies

Specialties: City, In Crowds, Follow, Hide, Wilderness

Survival

This Skill describes your character's proficiency at surviving in unfamiliar or dangerous environments. Inherent in it are the abilities to find shelter, scavenge or hunt food, and protect oneself from native predators and threats. It also encompasses tracking and finding safe passage through the area. The character should specialize at four dots in this Trait.

- • **Novice**: A good Boy Scout, you can survive a five-mile hike.
- •• **Practiced**: You can use odd materials from the environment.
- ••• **Competent**: You acclimate quickly to the surroundings.
- •••• **Expert**: You are at home in nearly all environments.
- ••••• **Master**: You never break a sweat or go hungry.

Possessed by: Explorers, Hunters, Park Rangers, Tribesmen, Warriors

Specialties: Arctic, City, Forest, Hunting, Jungle, Scavenging, Tracking

Other Skills: Animal Ken, Archery, Brewing, Climbing, Cooking/Baking, Disguise, Electronics, Escapology, Falconry, First Aid, Gambling, Hypnotism, Pickpocket, Piloting, Psychoanalysis, Repair, Ride, Sleight-of-Hand, Throwing, Torture, Traps

Knowledges

Academic in nature, the Knowledge Abilities all represent expertise that your character has acquired through study and training, often having spent years at it. Most of them are considered professional fields, and more than likely will determine the mortal job held by your changeling. Knowledges are Abilities that require rigorous application of the mind, not the body. If you have no dots in a Knowledge, you *cannot* attempt a roll involving it. The only exception to this might be if the Storyteller determines that the action pertains to trivial information that anyone has a chance of knowing.

Computer

Your character understands how to operate and possibly even program a computer. At higher levels, this may also include knowledge of designing and building a system, as well as

complicated hacking. Any attempted use of a computer requires that the character have this Knowledge.

- • **Student**: You can boot up a game.
- •• **College**: You can use word processing programs and link to the Internet.
- ••• **Masters**: You are a competent programmer or software designer.
- •••• **Doctorate**: You are an experienced hacker who knows the ins and outs of most systems.
- ••••• **Scholar**: You could probably create artificial intelligence.

Possessed by: Hackers, Office Personnel, Programmers, Students

Specialties: Graphics, Hacking, Programming, Retrieving Data

Enigmas

This Knowledge represents a knack for piecing together and remembering information vital to many kinds of problem-solving. It assists your character in solving the mysteries created by the Storyteller. It is essential for divining secret pathways, understanding esoteric knowledge and answering the riddles of mystical guardians.

- • **Student**: You can complete a jigsaw puzzle.
- •• **College**: You can guess the outcome of a mystery novel.
- ••• **Masters**: You can solve Rubik's Cube in an hour.
- •••• **Doctorate**: You find three correct answers to every riddle.
- ••••• **Scholar**: You understand the deepest mysteries of life and the universe.

Possessed by: Crossword Devotees, Detectives, Game Players, Mystics, Zen Enthusiasts

Specialties: Crime Mysteries, Cryptography, Life, Riddles, Verbal, Visual

Gremayre

This Knowledge represents the character's understanding of faerie magic and lore. It can be used when creating oaths or working enchantments, or even to create new Arts. Gremayre gives a character essential comprehension into the in-depth workings of all things relating to the Dreaming.

- • **Student:** You grasp only the most simple concepts of faerie magic.
- •• **College:** You can tell one cantrip from another.
- ••• **Masters:** You understand many of the inner working of Glamour
- •••• **Doctorate:** You are well on the way to discovering lost Arts.
- ••••• **Scholar:** You know the deepest secrets of the Dreaming.

Possessed by: Scholars, Sorcerers, Changeling Kings and Queens

Specialties: Oaths, Cantrips, Enchantment, Glamour, The Dreaming



Investigation

Whether your character is tracking down a lost relative or investigating a crime scene, this Knowledge allows her to recognize potential clues and know the procedure for procuring information and records. It provides the ability to procure evidence, perform forensic analysis and predict crime patterns.

- • **Student**: You are an amateur detective.
- •• **College**: You are a police officer.
- ••• **Masters**: You are a private detective.
- •••• **Doctorate**: You put Mulder and Scully to shame.
- ••••• **Scholar**: You would impress Sherlock Holmes.

Possessed by: Detectives, Insurance Investigators, Intelligence Agents, Reporters

Specialties: Criminal Psychology, Document Research, Forensics, Serial Killers, Trailing

Law

This Trait deals with knowledge of legal rights, jurisprudence and jargon. A high level in Law does not necessarily mean that the character is certified to practice law. Many criminals and lay people have learned about the judicial system through self-study or personal experience.

- • **Student**: You have some practical knowledge, or you watched "Court TV."
- •• **College**: You studied pre-law, or used to sit in on court.
- ••• **Masters**: You are an established lawyer, or have made serious study.
- •••• **Doctorate**: You could sit on the bench.
- ••••• **Scholar**: The next Supreme Court seat could be yours.

Possessed by: Cops, Court Clerks, Criminals, Detectives, Legislators

Specialties: Kithain Law and Custom, Court, Contract, Criminal, Defense, Divorce, Litigation, Police Procedure, Prosecution

Linguistics

Languages supplemental to your character's native language must be purchased through this Knowledge. Each level of Linguistics allows your character to speak another language fluently. It also gives the character an understanding of general linguistics and the structure of language. With this Ability, your character can attempt to identify accents or read lips.

- • **Student**: You speak one additional language.
- •• **College**: You speak two additional languages.
- ••• **Masters**: You speak three additional languages.
- •••• **Doctorate**: You speak four additional languages.
- ••••• **Scholar**: You speak five additional languages.

Possessed by: Diplomats, Interpreters, Scholars, World Travelers

Specialties: Curse Words, Diplomatic, Perfect Accent, Slang, Technical

Lore

Every supernatural group within the World of Darkness hoards its secrets from the others. Lore provides for your character's knowledge of a particular "hidden" subculture or organization, such as Kindred, Garou or Mages.

When you purchase Lore for your character, you must name which subculture that Lore is in. You may purchase Lore as many times as you can afford. For example, Mage Lore and Kindred Lore are considered two separate Traits, and each type of Lore is treated as its own Knowledge. Likewise, knowing about mages does not necessarily entitle to know about vampires; each Lore type must be bought separately.

Listed below is a sampling of variations from which you can choose when detailing your Lore Trait. This is not a comprehensive list, and your Storyteller has the final approval on any Lores not mentioned. Changeling Lore provides your character with specific information and details from changeling history. Dreaming Lore offers an understanding of the Dreaming, its properties and landscape. General Occult Lore refers to knowledge related directly to mortal cults, religious practices and mystical beliefs, such as voodoo, black magic and mysticism.

- • **Student**: You possess dubious and sketchy information.
- •• **College**: You are confident in your knowledge... you think.
- ••• **Masters**: You know some concrete details.
- •••• **Doctorate**: You learned some things that weren't meant to be known.
- ••••• **Scholar**: An expert, you may be considered a liability by the subjects of the Lore.

Possessed by: Mentors, Mystics, Scholars, Spies

Variations: Changeling, Dauntain, Dreaming, Garou, General Occult, Mages, Wraiths, Vampires

Medicine

Medicine is the study of the human body and the various techniques used to cure its ills. This Knowledge incorporates an understanding of the structure and functions of the body, the uses of medicine, and the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. Many methods exist for treating patients, including acupuncture, aromatherapy, homeopathy, chiropractics, medicinal herbalism and standard medical practices. A character may specialize in any of these fields or assume an overall understanding of many healing methods. Medicine also implies a certain understanding of pharmaceuticals.

- • **Student**: You can perform first aid and know techniques for stress relief.
- •• **College**: You could work as a paramedic.
- ••• **Masters**: A doctor, you can diagnose and treat.
- •••• **Doctorate**: You are a specialist, such as a surgeon.
- ••••• **Scholar**: You have renowned healing abilities.

Possessed by: Doctors, Health Food Fanatics, Hypochondriacs, New Agers, Nurses, Paramedics, Pharmacists

Specialties: Bedside Manner, Diseases, Emergency, Homeopathy, Neurosurgery, Pharmaceuticals

Politics

An understanding of Kithain politics is essential for any changeling involved in the machinations of court. This Knowledge represents a familiarity with the political structure of the day, including an understanding of who is in charge and how that person got there. It also relates to mortal politics, and can be extremely useful when dealing with mortal authorities.

- • **Student**: You are on the peripheral or a casual observer.
- •• **College**: You are a gossipmonger or a political science major.
- ••• **Masters**: You are an activist or serve in city politics.
- •••• **Doctorate**: You serve as a baronial advisor or have a seat on the Senate.
- ••••• **Scholar**: You are a court historian; Machiavelli would be impressed.

Possessed by: Courtesans, Lawyers, Lobbyists, Nobles, Politicians, Protesters

Specialties: City, Congress, Heraldry, Neighborhood, Seelie Court, Unseelie Court

Science

The Knowledge of Science quantifies your character's understanding of the basic sciences: physics, chemistry, botany, biology, geology, astronomy and others. In particular, it defines the useful application of science to make things. A general expertise in all fields is considered applicable to levels one through three. Once your character has four dots, she should specialize in a particular field.

- • **Student**: You can make smoke bombs with a chemistry set.
- •• **College**: You understand the major theories and applications of science.
- ••• **Masters**: You could teach high school science classes.
- •••• **Doctorate**: You might win a Nobel Prize one day.
- ••••• **Scholar**: You rival Albert Einstein.

Possessed by: Engineers, Inventors, Pilots, Researchers, Technicians

Specialties: Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Engineering, Nuclear Physics, Relativity

Other Knowledges: Alchemy, Area Knowledge, Art, Astrology, Bureaucracy, Cosmetology, Demolitions, Finance, Genealogy, Geography, History, Journalism, Literature, Military Science, Philosophy, Poisons, Psychology, Sign Language, Taxidermy, Theater, Theology

Backgrounds

Background Traits describe the special advantages your character derives from her environment, including possessions, contacts and influences. Before randomly dumping points into whatever looks good, think about how your character came to possess these particular things. This will help you to flesh out your character and establish a more complete history and background for her.

You can use your character's Backgrounds to obtain information, resources or favors. Some of them can be rolled in combination with an Attribute to determine the success of certain actions, such as bullying another changeling into following your orders (Manipulation + Title) or obtaining an important bit of information (Charisma + Contacts).

Chimera

This Background is a catch-all for both chimerical items and chimerical companions that a character can possess. When purchasing this Background, the play must designate one or both of these options on the character sheet. This can be done by simply writing Chimerical Companion or Chimerical Item in the appropriate space. Characters who choose to take this Background for both may take up to five dots in both options.

Chimerical Items:

Every changeling instinctively creates a chimerical suit of clothing when she experiences her Chrysalis. Any chimerical items she owns beyond that must be bought by sinking points into the Chimera Background. The level of this Background that the character possesses determines what chimerical items the character may possess.

- • **Basic**: You own a chimerical conversation piece.
- •• **Minor**: You own a chimerical item with some benefits.
- ••• **Useful**: You own a useful chimerical item.
- •••• **Significant**: You own a powerful chimerical item.
- ••••• **Incredible**: You own a chimerical item of legendary power.

Chimerical Companions:

Companions are the living chimera either born of a changeling's unconscious nature or purposely created through the sculpting of Glamour. Players should consult their Storytellers as to the type of Companion they have. Players should also be aware that higher level Companions have minds and personalities of their own, which may come into conflict with the character's goals. The number of dots a character has in Chimerical Companion determines how many points he has to create a companion based on the rules for chimera creation in **Chapter Seven: Glamour Systems.**

- • **Basic**: You have a simple chimerical creature as a companion. (10 Points)

Examples: A small patch of mold that bubbles obscenely on your shoulder, a speck of light that flitters around your head, or a sock puppet named Bob that curls up to sleep in your pocket.

- •• **Minor**: You have a semi-intelligent chimerical companion with language capabilities and its own personality. (15 Points)

Examples: A small jeweled dragon with a smoking problem, a giant teddy bear with a Brooklyn accent, or a talking moon cat.



••• **Useful**: You have a chimerical companion that can speak and communicate quite well, and that has a mind of its own, often being more of a nuisance than a help. (20 Points)

Examples: A speed demon that looks like a chimerical sports car, a talking chimerical ferret that hoards shiny objects, or a small green alien that sniffs at everything it sees.

•••• **Significant**: You have a highly intelligent chimerical companion that can be of great help to you. (30 Points)

Examples: A griffin that can fly, a unicorn that can appear to mortals, or an owl that quotes Shakespeare and knows the trods well enough to serve as a guide

••••• **Incredible**: You have a chimerical companion with a sharp and quick mind and extensive magical abilities. (50 Points)

Examples: An ancient djinn that can affect both the Dreaming and the real world, or a dragon with a broad variety of Redes at its disposal.

Contacts

Your character knows certain people in useful places to whom she can turn for information and assistance. The Contacts Background defines how influential these people are and how helpful. Major contacts are friends on whom your character can rely to provide her with accurate information in their fields. When creating your character, you should describe her contacts as completely as possible, with profession and area of influence.

This Trait also gives your character a number of minor contacts. When your character wants to get in touch with a minor contact, roll a Dice Pool equal to the number of dots you have in Contacts (base difficulty 7). For each success, she can touch base with one of her minor contacts. At that point, she can attempt to bribe or charm the contact into giving her what she needs.

• **Basic**: You have one major contact.

•• **Minor**: You have two major contacts.

••• **Useful**: You have three major contacts.

•••• **Significant**: You have four major contacts.

••••• **Incredible**: You have five major contacts.

Dreamers

Changelings gather Glamour from the Dreamers they inspire or find along the way. This Background represents the number of Dreamers your character knows and from whom he draws Glamour. These Dreamers can be used to perform a number of services, although they are not nearly as loyal or efficient as a Retinue (see the Retinue Background below).

• **Basic**: You benefit from one Dreamer.

•• **Minor**: You benefit from two Dreamers.

••• **Useful**: You benefit from four Dreamers.

•••• **Significant**: You benefit from six Dreamers.

••••• **Incredible**: You benefit from eight Dreamers.

Holdings

Your character has inherited a faerie freehold. Such freeholds are greatly coveted by other Kithain, and you may be required to spend much of your time protecting it from squatters and other greedy changelings. Most freeholds are held by nobles, but some freeholds belong exclusively to commoners. In rare instances, a freehold may be secreted away and held by an individual, but if the nobility discover it, they will more than likely come to take it away.

The Trait rating not only reflects the size of the freehold, but the amount of Glamour that may be gained from it each day.

- • **Basic**: You are in charge of an insignificant freehold that produces one point of Glamour.
- •• **Minor**: You are in charge of a small freehold that produces two points of Glamour.
- ••• **Useful**: You are in charge of a medium-sized freehold that produces three points of Glamour.
- •••• **Significant**: You are in charge of a large freehold that produces four points of Glamour.
- ••••• **Incredible**: You are in charge of a huge freehold that produces five points of Glamour.

Mentor

Changelings tend to look after one another, educating and protecting those who have recently experienced their Chrysalises. The relationship between a changeling and his mentor is often very close. A mentor can serve as an invaluable guide to changeling society.

Mentors may also protect a changeling from danger and inform him of social opportunities. However, a mentor may expect some favors in return for the information or assistance she provides. This could be as simple as cleaning her manor or as perilous as protecting a faerie glen from Unseelie redcaps.

- • **Basic**: Your mentor knows little of import.
- •• **Minor**: Your mentor has some noteworthy pieces of information to share.
- ••• **Useful**: Your mentor has significant secrets to share.
- •••• **Significant**: Your mentor has extraordinary knowledge to pass along.
- ••••• **Incredible**: If your mentor doesn't know it, no one probably does.

Remembrance

Remembrance defines your character's connection to the Dreaming and her unconscious knowledge of the fae. Most Kithain have very little memory of their faerie selves or of the past lives they have lived. Those with high levels of Remembrance still retain some memories or have periodic flashbacks of previous lives.

Anytime the character is interacting with changelings or other creatures of the Dreaming, roll a Dice Pool equal to his Remembrance rating. The number of successes can be added to the character's Etiquette Dice Pool when interacting with the person or creature. This number of successes can also determine how well a character understands the unwritten laws of faerie society and the Dreaming. In the latter case, the Storyteller may offer hints as to how the character should behave in a given situation.

- • **Basic**: You may remember hazy bits of information when triggered by an event or other reminder.
- •• **Minor**: You can glean reasonably accurate information with a reminder.
- ••• **Useful**: You have access to worthwhile lore; you experience flashbacks that deliver information without a reminder.
- •••• **Significant**: You are able to remember remarkable information, including memories of important events from your past lives.
- ••••• **Incredible**: You have an astounding wealth of information available to you, including large portions of your past lives or even entire lifetimes.

Resources

The Resources Background quantifies your character's financial resources or access to such funds. The resources are not always completely liquid, but your character can sell them to gain money. It may take weeks or even months to do so, depending on how much needs to be sold.

This Background also determines your character's monthly income. Your Storyteller may ask you to define the source of your character's income, because the well might "dry up" depending on the circumstances of the chronicle.

- • **Basic**: You might have a small savings, an apartment and a motorcycle. (Assets: $1,000 — Income: $500/month)
- •• **Minor**: You might have an apartment or condominium and a reliable rustbucket. (Assets: $8,000 — Income: $1,200/month)
- ••• **Useful**: You might have a large savings and own a house and a nice car. (Assets: $50,000 — Income: $3,000/month)
- •••• **Significant**: You are well-off and might own a large house or rundown mansion and a new car. (Assets: $500,000 — Income: $9,000/month)
- ••••• **Incredible**: You are a millionaire. (Assets: $5,000,000 — Income: $30,000/month)

Retinue

Your character has one or more enchanted humans or retainers under his sway. This Retinue answers to your character and is under his control, either through enchantment or by some more mundane method of control. They will tend to be loyal to him, although some may betray him if they are ill-treated.

Members of a changeling's retinue are not infallible. You should define them clearly and assign each a weakness. For instance, one might be very loyal, but not very skilled. Another might be powerful, but have a very independent mind. Retinue are meant to be characters in and of themselves. They should not be abused.



- • **Basic**: You have one member in your retinue.
- •• **Minor**: You have two members in your retinue.
- ••• **Useful**: You have four members in your retinue.
- •••• **Significant**: You have six members in your retinue.
- ••••• **Incredible**: You have 10 members in your retinue.

Title

This Trait denotes your character's rank in changeling society. Not all Kithain have a title; in fact, few rise above the rank of squire, if they attain any title at all. The Title Background bestows little in the way of actual power, but is the most important source of social influence. The holding, land that is bequeathed to a noble, is covered separately under the Holdings Background, and it is quite possible to have a landless baron or even duke.

Usually only sidhe are granted titles, though it is possible for commoners to gain titles, especially those of squire and knight. A few commoners hold higher titles, most of these granted under the Treaty of Concord.

- • **Basic**: You are a squire.
- •• **Minor**: You are a knight or a lady.
- ••• **Useful**: You are a baron or a baroness.
- •••• **Significant**: You are a count or a countess.
- ••••• **Incredible**: You are a duke or a duchess.

Treasures

Treasures are mortal items that have been imbued with Glamour, thus giving them the power to perform specific Glamour-based effects. The Treasures Background allows your character to begin the game with a treasure already in her possession. Many high-level treasures are unique, meaning that there should never be more than one of their kind in a chronicle. It might have been a gift from a mentor, an incredibly lucky find at an antique shop, or a family heirloom. A treasure has both a mortal and a faerie appearance. For example, Behn'ir's Sword of Fire appears as a normal sword to mortals whereas it has a flaming blade when viewed by changelings. Since treasures are invested with Glamour, they have the effect of enchanting mortals who touch them.

The rating of this Trait determines the power of the treasure. Although a treasure usually does only one thing in specific, the ratings below are listed in number of dots in an Art. This is to give you an idea of the types of things a treasure at that rating can do. A treasure will only do one effect. It does not have access to the Arts in the same way a changeling does. When determining your character's treasure, choose one effect based on the Art you assign to it and the level that you purchase. For example, Behn'ir's Sword of Fire is a 4-dot treasure that shatters solid objects on contact (Holly Strike). It doesn't get all the benefits of the Art. It still does normal damage to mortals and

changelings. It is given one specific effect inspired by Holly Strike. Your Storyteller has the final say in approving all treasures and may wish to impose time constraints on both their activation and the duration of the effect.

• **Basic**: Common, one dot in an Art

Examples: A lucky coin (Soothsay 1/Fair Fortune), rose-colored glasses (Chicanery 1/Fuddle), a large horseshoe magnet (Legerdemain 1/Gimmix)

•• **Minor**: Uncommon, two dots in an Art

Examples: A dunce cap that induces temporary amnesia (Chicanery 2/Fugue), a thermometer that heals as it reads the target's temperature (Primal 2/Heather Balm), a kingly scepter that allows its carrier to command others (Sovereign 2/Dictum)

••• **Useful**: Rare, three dots in an Art

Examples: A piece of chalk that when used to draw on a flat surface opens a portal (Wayfare 3/Portal Passage), a lump of clay that forms itself into whatever the holder is looking at (Legerdemain 3/Effigy), a flashlight that when turned on becomes a saber of light and causes fear in its wielder's opponent (Chicanery 3/Haunted Heart)

•••• **Significant**: Unique, four dots in an Art

Examples: A shimmery veil that when worn makes the changeling invisible (Chicanery 4/Veiled Eyes), a hammer that will shatter any solid object (Primal 4/Holly Strike), a crystal ball that give glimpses of the future (Soothsay 4/Augury)

••••• **Incredible**: *Unique, five dots in an Art*

Examples: A cigarette lighter that when flicked blinks the holder directly to whatever location he is holding in his mind (Wayfare 5/Flicker Flash), a golden picture frame that can hold any normal photo and which allows the carrier to look exactly like whatever is in the current picture (Primal 5/Elder-Form)

Tempers

Temper Traits (Willpower, Glamour and Banality) define *three fundamental aspects of your character's make-up.* A character's Willpower rating determines how strong-willed she is. Her Glamour rating expresses the strength of her connection to the Dreaming and all things fae. Finally, the Banality rating represents the extent to which she has been tainted by the banal in the mundane world.

These Traits are used differently from other types. The Temper Traits use a split scoring system, with each having both a permanent and a temporary rating. A character's permanent rating describes her total potential, whereas her temporary rating expresses her current state of being. *At character genesis,* you assign the character's permanent Temper rating based on her seeming and any freebie points you spend in the Trait. A character is then assumed to have a number of temporary Temper points equal to the number of permanent Temper points. Throughout the course of a chronicle, both a character's permanent and temporary Temper ratings may fluctuate.

Although at times, your Storyteller will ask you to make a roll by adding the rating of one of your Tempers to your Dice Pool, more often than not, you will merely be spending the points from either your permanent or temporary score. Once spent, these points are lost to your character, and she must employ one of the means described in the sections below to rebuild her score.

Converting Points

• Your character can never have more temporary Glamour or Willpower than her permanent rating in them. This does not apply to Banality, however, which has no cap on how much a character can acquire.

• If you have no temporary points left in one of your character's Tempers (except Banality), then you may convert a permanent point into a number of temporary points equal to your character's new permanent total. You cannot convert permanent Banality in this fashion.

• If your character exceeds 10 temporary Banality points, the 10 temporary points are *immediately removed and the* character gains an additional point of permanent Banality. This represents a changeling's gradual, but inevitable slide into mundanity.

Willpower

Your character's temporary and permanent Willpower ratings measure her ability to control the urges and desires that threaten to overtake her. They represent her strength of will in the face of opposition, her ability to steel herself against manipulating forces, and her determination in the face of temptation. Like the other Temper Traits, a character has both a temporary and a permanent Willpower rating.

When you use a point of Willpower, you spend it from your temporary pool, not from your permanent pool. The permanent pool merely serves as a ceiling on the amount of spendable, temporary Willpower that a character can have and defines her maximum potential. Any time your character is required to make a Willpower roll, you should use the permanent pool unless the rule specifically says otherwise. Temporary Willpower fluctuates a great deal during play. If a character has no Willpower left, he can no longer exert himself the way he once did. He is mentally exhausted and can't rouse himself enough to give a damn.

Willpower Ratings

•	Weak
••	Timid
•••	Unassertive
••••	Diffident
•••••	Certain
••••••	Confident
•••••••	Strong-willed
••••••••	Controlled
•••••••••	Iron-willed
••••••••••	Unshakable

Using Willpower

• A temporary Willpower point can purchase one automatic success on a dice roll. You may only spend one point per

turn, but it gives you a single guaranteed success. Thus it is possible for your character to succeed automatically at any simple action by asserting his will. The Storyteller may prohibit such a use of Willpower in certain situations.

• You can spend a point of temporary Willpower to have your character avoid some instinctual or primal reaction. This includes overcoming phobias, countering a supernaturally imposed urge, or controlling overwhelming emotions. You spend a point of temporary Willpower so that your character can avoid the undesirable reaction and do as he pleases. However, the Storyteller may decide that, over time, the feeling returns and the expenditure of more points may be required.

• Temporary Willpower has the ability to contain and control the effects of Bedlam. A special kind of insanity to which many changelings succumb, Bedlam impedes a changeling's ability to think rationally and affects his perceptions. By spending a temporary Willpower point, the character can regain some of his mental faculties and for a short time, his perceptions clear. This does not cure the Bedlam, but only serves as a temporary fix.

Recovering Willpower

Permanent Willpower points may only be purchased with experience points. A character can recover temporary Willpower, on the other hand, through a number of methods described below.

• At the end of a story (not just a game session), as determined by the Storyteller, all characters completely regain all their temporary Willpower up to a ceiling equal to their permanent rating. The Storyteller may wish to restrict this if the characters did not come away from the story with a feeling of accomplishment and pride.

• After a solid night's sleep, a character recovers a point of temporary Willpower. She must dream, however, and the sleep must be peaceful and uninterrupted. The character must awaken refreshed and invigorated. If the character's sleep is troubled or interrupted, the Storyteller has the option not to award the temporary Willpower point.

• At the Storyteller's discretion, a character may regain temporary Willpower through the accomplishment of a goal related to her Quest, as dictated by her primary Legacy. The Storyteller may award from one to five temporary Willpower points depending on the grandeur of the accomplishment.

Glamour

The stuff of dreams, the magical clay, the energy of awe, the workings of wonder, the breeze that blows the cobwebs of disbelief from our eyes — Glamour is all these things and more. The ability to live your dreams, to perceive the true and fantastic essence of the world, abides in Glamour. Everyone can create it, even normal humans. Only the fae, however, have the ability to give it form, to use it, and to wield its progeny as a weapon. Only the fae have a connection to and a command of Glamour that no other creature shares.

Raw Glamour can take physical form, and changelings can not only perceive it, but also see its presence. It appears to changelings as multi-colored flickers and tentacles of ever-changing energy. Unlike an aura, raw Glamour does not radiate, but seems to caress over and wind through things and beings, never still, ever evolving. When imbued in a cantrip, Glamour sparks and flickers around both the caster and the target of the cantrip. For this reason, it becomes very difficult for a changeling to cast a cantrip without all other changelings present realizing exactly who did it. A changeling has to be extremely subtle to hide his use of Glamour from other creatures of the Dreaming.

Once infused into an item or being, Glamour becomes more rigid, but nevertheless maintains a certain ethereal quality. For example, a chimerical sword swung through the air will leave a trail of shimmering Glamour behind in a wake.

Uses for Glamour

In **Changeling**, a character uses Glamour to exert control over the different aspects of the Dreaming, including forming chimera and casting cantrips. **For more information on the uses of Glamour, see Chapter Seven: Glamour Systems.**

• You must spend a temporary point of Glamour each time your character casts a cantrip.

• Sometimes you can spend temporary Glamour in order to extend the duration of a cantrip.

• You can use Glamour to create a token in order to enchant a mortal. To do so, the changeling invests a number of temporary points of Glamour into a small item, such as a ribbon or coin, equal to the number of days the changeling wishes the enchantment to last.

Gaining Glamour

Several methods exist which allow a changeling to regain temporary Glamour. Under only the rarest of conditions can a changeling regain lost permanent Glamour.

• **Epiphany**: A changeling may take Glamour from mortals or other changelings. Epiphanies are achieved through Ravaging, Rapture or Reverie. **For more on this, see Chapter Seven: Glamour Systems.**

• **Sanctuary**: Getting a full eight hours of uninterrupted sleep within a freehold provides a character with one point of temporary Glamour. A freehold may only support a number of changelings equal to twice its level. Furthermore, the character must dream; if her sleep is troubled or disturbed, the Storyteller may choose to withhold the point.

• **Dross**: Dross does not allow you to restore Glamour to either your temporary or your permanent pool, however dross can be spent in place of Glamour from your pool. **See Chapter Seven for a more in-depth explanation of dross.**

Losing Glamour

Temporary Glamour is lost by spending it to fuel the special effects your character achieves. Permanent Glamour is lost as your character ages. A childling who becomes a wilder loses one permanent Glamour, as does a wilder who becomes a grump. This marks a changeling's gradual slide toward mundanity as he grows older.



Banality

Television, doctors, lines at the bank, money machines, traffic, malls — all of these things carry the taint of Banality and negatively affect changelings. Anything that removes the wonder from the eyes of a child, anything that teaches us not to believe in magic or faeries is a source of Banality in the world and is a bane to changelings. The effect of Banality upon a character is measured by her temporary Banality rating. It describes to what extent the mundane world has tainted the character's ability to dream and to find wonder in the things around him.

Effects of Banality

• If your character's temporary Banality score ever exceeds his permanent Glamour score, he begins to slip into the Mists, reverting to his mortal seeming and forgetting that he is Kithain. This generally only occurs between stories, when the character is not actively involved with other changelings.

• Banality hangs over mortals and supernatural beings like a shield of disbelief. In order to use Glamour on someone or something, the character must fight against the target's Banality. Most humans have Banality ratings of 7 or higher.

• In order to enchant someone, a changeling must first overcome the target's Banality. The difficulty number for the enchantment must be equal to or greater than the target's Banality rating, at the Storyteller's discretion.

• When a character attempts to affect a target with a cantrip, the target's Banality will affect the chance of success. The difficulty number for cantrips should reflect the target's Banality; it should be either the normal difficulty as determined by the Storyteller or equal to the target's Banality rating, whichever is higher.

• Beings that have a Banality rating of 8 or higher actually physically affect changelings. Changelings may become nauseous, experience headaches or just get very edgy and belligerent. This occurs especially if a changeling spends any time in the company of high Banality people, and gets progressively worse the longer the changeling stays. As a general rule, normal mortals and others with ratings of 7 or lower, do not have this effect.

Gaining Banality

• Gain a temporary point of Banality whenever your character uses her own Banality to resist a cantrip.

• If your character attempts to overcome a being's Banality and fails, she gains a temporary point of Banality.

• Destroying treasures and some chimera can cause your character to gain temporary Banality.

• Killing a changeling's chimerical form causes your character to gain one temporary Banality; ending the changeling's mortal life as well adds another point of Banality.

• Spending time in the company of high Banality will rub off on your character and give her temporary Banality. At the Storyteller's discretion, a character may gain temporary Banality based on the Banality rating of the being, item or place

around which the changeling is spending time. As a guideline, a character may earn a point of temporary Banality for each point the other has above 7, per scene spent there.

• The Storyteller may arbitrarily assign you temporary Banality if she thinks your character is being too mundane.

• If your temporary Banality ever exceeds 10, you gain a permanent point of Banality.

Getting Rid of Banality

• Any time a character is supposed to gain a temporary point of Banality, he can choose to add a Nightmare die to his cantrip pool instead. **This is further described in Chapter Seven.**

• When you gain a temporary Glamour point, you can choose to remove a temporary Banality point instead. The moment when you acquire the temporary Glamour point is the only time you can make this exchange.

• With the Storyteller's approval, your character may decide to undertake a quest that will effectively reduce his permanent Banality. These quests usually involve an oath, which will bind the changeling to the task and punish him for an unsuccessful completion. Once decided upon, the quest must be completed successfully, or the character gains a point of permanent Banality rather than losing one. Any one of three types of quests will serve this purpose, but the details of the quest must be approved by the Storyteller:

The Quest of Deed: The Kithain must swear to undertake some task, such as recovering a lost item or rescuing someone.

The Quest of Inspiration: An individual is chosen and the changeling must spend the next several months or years (however long it takes) to bring that person to greatness. The Kithain may not interfere directly in any way; she may only inspire.

The Quest of Dreaming: A changeling may attempt to bring the Dreaming into a mortal's life. An individual is chosen, generally one firmly entrenched in his own Banality. The Kithain must then bring the mortal back to living with a sense of joy, awe and wonder about the world around him, much like the angel did in "It's a Wonderful Life." This process could take years or a single night, as in "A Christmas Carol," depending on the cleverness of the changeling. However, once a changeling has brought a mortal around, that mortal becomes his responsibility, and if ever the mortal should fall back into the clutches of Banality, the changeling has a duty to re-establish the miracle.

Health

Changelings pass their lifetimes in normal human bodies. This means that damage and healing times most often affect them the way they would any mortal. Although changelings have access to some healing magic, they are largely dependent on their human bodies as their only shield against damage.

A character's Health Trait measures how injured that character is. There are various levels of wounds, each applying a different penalty to the injured character. As the character becomes more injured, his ability to perform is hindered. Thus, a character who is Hurt loses one die from his Dice Pool; a character who is Crippled has five fewer dice to roll. If the Health penalties leave the character with no dice left to roll, then he cannot take that action. **More information on healing and damaged can be found in Chapter Eight: Dramatic Systems.**

Bruised: (0) The character is only bruised and has no action penalties.

Hurt: (-1) The character is mildly hurt; movement isn't hindered.

Injured: (-1) The character has sustained a minor injury; there is little hindrance to movement.

Wounded: (-2) The character has been seriously wounded; he cannot run, but can still walk.

Mauled: (-2) The character has taken substantial damage; he can barely hobble.

Crippled: (-5) The character is seriously injured and can only drag himself, unable to stand.

Incapacitated: The character has been rendered unconscious or is so severely wounded that he is completely incapable of action or movement.

Merits and Flaws

Merits and Flaws are new character Traits that add spice to your **Changeling** chronicle. Merits provide characters with some benefit, while Flaws act to their detriment. Some of these Traits will have little effect on a game beyond a dash of style; others could unbalance a chronicle or completely change its direction. Powerful Merits or Flaws will shape a character's destiny and any relationships she has.

When you create a character in **Changeling**, you are given 15 freebie points to assign to whatever Traits you like in order to give your character the finishing touches that make her unique. The optional system of Merits and Flaws expands on this idea and further allows you to personalize your character.

Merits may be purchased only with freebie points and only during character conception. Flaws provide additional freebies to spend, again, only during initial conception. A maximum of seven points of Flaws may be taken, limiting potential freebie points to a total of 22. Some Merits and Flaws have variable point costs; these Traits offer more options for character creation.

Merits and Flaws are provided to flesh out a character and add new story hooks and details, not to allow power-gamers to minimax their characters into war-machines. Players should make sure that the Storyteller allows these options in the chronicle before creating characters based around these options. Each chronicle is individual and unique, so there is no telling what restrictions or changes the Storyteller has in mind. There is no right or wrong way, only ways that work for everyone concerned.

Psychological

These Merits and Flaws deal with the psychological makeup of your character, and may describe ideals, motivations or

pathologies. Some psychological Flaws can be temporarily ignored by spending a Willpower point, and are so noted. If you possess such a Flaw and do not roleplay it when the Storyteller thinks you should, then she may tell you that you have spent a point of Willpower for the effort. Flaws cannot be conveniently ignored.

Code of Honor: (1 point Merit)

You have a personal code of ethics to which you strictly adhere. You can automatically resist most temptations that would bring you in conflict with your code. When battling supernatural persuasion (Mind magick, vampiric Dominate or Chicanery) that would make you violate your code, you either gain three extra dice to resist or your opponent's difficulties are increased by two (Storyteller's choice). You must construct your own personal code of honor in as much detail as you can, outlining the general rules of conduct by which you abide.

Higher Purpose: (1 point Merit)

All changelings have some vision of their path, but you have a special commitment to it. Your chosen goal drives and directs you in everything. You do not concern yourself with petty matters and casual concerns, because your higher purpose is everything. Though you may sometimes be driven by this purpose and find yourself forced to behave in ways contrary to the needs of personal survival, it can also grant you great personal strength. You gain two extra dice on any roll that has something to do with this higher purpose. Decide what your higher purpose is, and make sure you discuss it with the Storyteller. You may not take this Merit if you have the Flaw *Driving Goal*.

Addiction: (1-3 point Flaw)

You are addicted to any one of a variety of things. A one-point Flaw would be a mild addiction to an easily obtained substance, such as caffeine, nicotine or alcohol. A two-point Flaw would be either a severe addiction to any easily obtained substance, or any "mild" drug, such as painkillers, sleeping pills or marijuana. A three-point Addiction involves the heavy street drugs or hard-to-find drugs. The need for these drugs varies from once a day for some to two to three times a day for others, depending on the strength of the drug and the addiction. If, for whatever reason, you are denied access to the drug, you lose the number of dice equal to the level of your addiction (one, two or three) until you receive your "fix." If you are deprived of the drugs for an extended length of time, you will be forced to make a Willpower check (difficulty of 4 for the first day, + 1 for each additional day). If you fail, you will forgo everything and forcibly go seeking the drug. This would be an easy way for you to be either controlled or forced to do favors for your supplier, especially if the drug is hard to obtain due to its rarity or price.

Compulsion: (1 point Flaw)

You have a psychological compulsion of some sort, which can cause you a number of different problems. Your compulsion may be for cleanliness, perfection, bragging, stealing, gaming, exaggeration or just talking. A compulsion can be temporarily avoided at the cost of a Willpower point, but it is in effect at all other times.

Dark Secret: (1 point Flaw)

You have some sort of secret that, if uncovered, would be of immense embarrassment to you and would make you a pariah among your peers. This can be anything from having murdered a noble to secretly being a member of the Shadow Court. While this secret weighs on your mind at all times, it will only surface in occasional stories. Otherwise, it will begin to lose its impact.

Intolerance: (1 point Flaw)

You have an unreasoning dislike of a certain thing. This may be an animal, a class of person, a color, a situation or just about anything else. The difficulties of all dice rolls involving the subject are increased by two. Note that some dislikes may be too trivial to be reflected here — a dislike of left-handed Lithuanian plumbers or tissue paper, for instance, will have little effect on play in most chronicles. The Storyteller is the final arbiter on what you can pick to dislike.

Nightmares: (1 point Flaw)

You experience horrendous nightmares every time you sleep, and memories of them haunt you during your waking hours. Sometimes the nightmares are so bad they cause you to lose one die on all your actions for the next night (Storyteller's discretion). Some of the nightmares may be so intense that you mistake them for reality. A crafty Storyteller will be quick to take advantage of this.

Overconfident: (1 point Flaw)

You have an exaggerated and unshakable opinion of your own worth and capabilities. You never hesitate to trust your abilities, even in situations where you risk defeat. Because your abilities may not be enough, such overconfidence can be very dangerous. When you do fail, you quickly find someone or something else to blame. If you are convincing enough, you can infect others with your overconfidence.

Phobia (Mild): (1 point Flaw)

You have an overpowering fear of something. You instinctively and illogically retreat from and avoid the object of your fear. Common objects of phobias include certain animals, insects, crowds, open spaces, confined spaces and heights. You must make a Willpower roll whenever you encounter the object of your fear. The difficulty of this roll is determined by the Storyteller. If you fail the roll, you must retreat from the object.

Shy: (1 point Flaw)

You are distinctly ill at ease when dealing with people and try to avoid social situations whenever possible. The difficulties of all rolls concerned with social interactions are increased by one; the difficulties of any rolls made while you are the center of attention are increased by two. Don't expect your character to make a public speech.

Speech Impediment: (1 point Flaw)

You have a stammer or some other speech impediment that hampers verbal communication. The difficulties of all relevant rolls are increased by two. Do not feel obliged to roleplay this impediment all the time, but in times of stress, or when dealing with outsiders, you should attempt to simulate it. Sluagh may not purchase this Flaw in respect to their Frailty.

Curiosity: (2 point Flaw)

You are a naturally curious person, and find mysteries of any sort irresistible. In most circumstances, you find that your curiosity easily overrides your common sense. To resist the temptation, make a Wits roll (difficulty 5) for simple things like, "I wonder what is in that cabinet." Increase the difficulty up to 9 for things like, "I wonder what those strange sounds coming from the Unseelie duke's freehold are. I'll just slip in and check it out — no one will ever know. What could possibly go wrong?"

Obsession: (2 point Flaw)

There is something you like, love or are fascinated by to the point where you often disregard common sense to cater to this drive. You react positively to anything related to your obsession, *even if it's not in your best interests. For example, if you are* obsessed with supernatural creatures, you will go out of your way to talk to and befriend vampires, werewolves and stranger things, and find out as much as you can about them, disregarding all warnings. If you are obsessed with Elvis, you have your house decorated with black velvet paintings and annoy your friends with your constant talk about the King. You don't necessarily believe that Elvis is still alive, but you buy every supermarket tabloid that carries an article about him anyway. There are many other obsessions, including British royalty, guns, football, roleplaying games...you know the type.

Sadism/Masochism: (2 point Flaw)

You are excited either by causing pain or receiving it. In many situations, you will seek either to be hurt or hurt someone for your pleasure. For a masochist (someone who enjoys pain), your soak roll for actual physical damage is increased by one because you really want to feel the pain. A sadist (someone who likes to hurt others) must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 5) to stop combat (modified depending on how much you are into the attack and how much you are enjoying hurting the other person). If you fail, you are so caught up in the event that you are unaware of anything else happening around you.

Vengeance: (2 point Flaw)

You have a score to settle — a freehold was wiped out, a friend was corrupted, a parent was slain.... You are obsessed with *wreaking vengeance on the guilty party. Revenge is your first* priority in all situations. The need for vengeance can only be overcome by spending Willpower points, and even then, it only temporarily subsides. Someday you may have your revenge, but the Storyteller won't make it easy.



Wyld Mind: (2 point Flaw)

Your mind is extremely chaotic and unpredictable. As a result you have difficulty concentrating on any one task. You must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 4) for every extended action roll after the second.

Flashbacks: (3 point Flaw)

You are prone to flashbacks if you are in either high-pressure situations or circumstances that are similar to the event that caused the flashback itself. Flashbacks can be caused by almost any trauma — torture, extended combat or repeated drug experimentation. Either positive or negative stimulation could result in an episode. Emotional anxiety and stress are the usual catalysts for the flashbacks to begin. Returning to a good and happy vision can be just as dangerous or distracting as suddenly being surrounded by demonic hallucinations. During the flashback, you are not aware of what is really around you. Even people speaking to you will be viewed as people or objects from the vision. You can mistake men for women, people for animals and even inanimate objects for people. To you, reality has shifted, and you are back *there* again.

Driving Goal: (3 point Flaw)

You have a personal goal, which sometimes compels and directs you in startling ways. The goal is always limitless in depth, and you can never truly achieve it. It could be to restore equality for commoners or return to Arcadia. Because you must work toward your goal throughout the chronicle (though you can avoid it for short periods by spending Willpower), it will get you into trouble and may jeopardize other actions. Choose your driving goal carefully, as it will direct and focus everything your character does.

Hatred: (3 point Flaw)

You have an unreasoning hatred of a certain thing. This hate is total and largely uncontrollable. You may hate a species of animal, a class of person, a color, a situation or just about anything else, and you constantly pursue opportunities to harm the hated object or to gain power over it.

Lifesaver: (3 point Flaw)

You believe that human life is a sacred gift, and will not take a person's life except in the most extreme of circumstances. You may not ever willingly endanger the lives of innocents or in any way participate in a killing. You have no problems with killing animals (for the right reasons), and will kill evil and inhuman creatures to protect others if necessary. (Be very careful, however, with your definition of "evil"....) Senseless death in all forms repulses you, and you feel that those who commit murder should be punished.



Phobia (Severe): (3 point Flaw)

You have an overpowering fear of something. Common objects of fear include certain animals, insects, crowds, open spaces, confined spaces, heights and so on. You must make a Willpower roll not to freak out when faced with the object of your fear. The difficulty depends on the circumstances. If you fail the roll, you must retreat in terror from the object of fear. If you score less than three successes, you will not approach it. The Storyteller has final say over which phobias are allowed in a chronicle.

Mental

These Merits and Flaws deal with the mind, its strengths, weaknesses and special capacities. These Merits and Flaws should be carefully considered before taken because of the degree of effect they may have both on the character and on the story.

Common Sense: (1 point Merit)

You have a significant amount of practical, everyday wisdom. Whenever you are about to do something contrary to common sense, the Storyteller should alert you to how your potential action might violate practicality. This is an ideal Merit if you are a novice player because it allows you to receive advice from the Storyteller concerning what you can and cannot do, and (even more importantly) what you should and should not do.

Concentration: (1 point Merit)

You have the ability to focus your mind and shut out any distractions or annoyances, above and beyond the norm. Any penalty to a difficulty or Dice Pool arising from a distraction or other inauspicious circumstance is limited to two dice, though no extra benefits are gained if only one penalty die is imposed.

Lightning Calculator: (1 point Merit)

You have a natural affinity with numbers and a talent for mental arithmetic, making you a natural when working with computers or betting at the racetracks. The difficulties of all relevant rolls are decreased by two. Another possible use for this ability, assuming you have numbers on which to base your conclusions, is the ability to calculate the difficulty of certain tasks. In appropriate situations, you may ask the Storyteller to estimate the difficulty rating of a task you are about to perform.

Eidetic Memory: (2 point Merit)

You can remember things seen and heard with perfect detail. By gaining at least one success on an Intelligence + Alertness roll, you can recall any sight or sound accurately, even if you heard it or glanced at it only once (although the difficulty of such a feat would be high). Five successes enable you to recall an event perfectly: The Storyteller relates to you exactly what was seen or heard.

Iron Will: (3 point Merit)

When you are determined and your mind is set, nothing can divert you from your goals. You cannot be Dominated, and wraiths, mages and other changelings using mental attacks against you gain an additional + 3 to their difficulties if you are aware of them and resisting. However, the additional mental defense costs you one Willpower per turn. Even if you are unaware of the attempt, anyone attempting to magically influence you must add + 1 to their difficulty.

Self-Confident: (5 point Merit)

When you spend a point of Willpower to gain an automatic success, your self-confidence may allow you to gain the benefit of that expenditure without actually losing the Willpower point. When you declare that you are using a point of Willpower and roll for successes, you do not lose the point of Willpower unless you fail. This will also prevent you from botching, but only if you declare that you are spending the Willpower point before you roll. This Merit may only be used when you need confidence in your abilities in order to succeed. You can use it only when the difficulty of your roll is 6 or higher. You may spend Willpower at other times; however, if the difficulty is 5 or less, the Merit will not help you.

Amnesia: (2 point Flaw)

You are unable to remember anything about your past, yourself or your family. Your life is a blank slate. However, your past may some day come back to haunt you, and the Storyteller is under no obligation to be merciful. (You can, if you wish, take up to five points of other Flaws without specifying what they are. The Storyteller can supply the details. Over the course of the chronicle, you and your character will slowly discover them.)

Confused: (2 point Flaw)

You are often confused, and the world seems to be a very distorted and twisted place. Sometimes you are simply unable to make sense of things. You need to roleplay this behavior all the time to a small degree, but your confusion becomes especially strong whenever stimuli surround you (such as when a number of different people talk all at once, or you enter a nightclub with loud, pounding music). You may spend Willpower to override the effects of your confusion, but only temporarily.

Absent-Minded: (3 point Flaw)

Though you do not forget such things as Knowledges or Skills, you do forget such things as names, addresses and the last time you gained Glamour. In order to remember anything more than your own name and the location of your freehold, you need to make a Wits roll or, as a last resort, spend a Willpower point. This Flaw may not be taken with the Merit *Concentration*.

Awareness

These Merits and Flaws involve perception (or the lack thereof).

Acute Senses: (1 point Merit)

You have exceptionally sharp hearing, smell, vision or taste. The difficulties of all dice rolls that relate to the sense in question (e.g., Perception + Awareness to hear a faint noise, taste poison in food or see an oncoming attacker) are decreased by two.

Color Blindness: (1 pt Flaw)

You can only see in black and white. Color means nothing to you, although you are sensitive to color density, which you perceive as shades of gray. Note: color blindness actually indicates an inability to distinguish between two colors, but we fudged a bit for the sake of playability.

Hard of Hearing: (1 point Flaw)

Your hearing is defective. The difficulties of all dice rolls related to hearing are increased by two. You may not take the Merit *Acute Hearing* if you take this Flaw.

Bad Sight: (2 point Flaw)

Your sight is defective. The difficulties of all dice rolls related to vision are increased by two. This Flaw is neither nearsightedness nor farsightedness — it is a minor form of blindness. The impairment is not correctable.

Deaf: (4 point Flaw)

You cannot hear sound, and automatically fail any rolls that require hearing.

Blind: (6 point Flaw)

You automatically fail all dice rolls involving vision. You cannot see — the world of color and light is lost to you.

Aptitudes

These Merits and Flaws establish special capacities and abilities for your character, or modify the effects and powers of your character's other Traits.

Animal Magnetism: (1 point Merit)

You are especially attractive to others. You receive a - 2 to your difficulty on Seduction or Subterfuge rolls. However, this will aggravate others of your gender.

Ambidextrous: (1 point Merit)

You have a high degree of off-hand dexterity and can perform tasks with the "wrong" hand at no penalty. The normal penalty for using both hands at once to perform different tasks (e.g., fighting with a weapon in each hand) is at a + 1 difficulty for the "right" hand and a + 3 difficulty for the other hand.

Computer Aptitude: (1 point Merit)

You have a natural affinity with computers, so the difficulties of all rolls to repair, construct or operate them are reduced by two.

Crack Driver: (1 point Merit)

You have a natural affinity with driving motorized wheeled vehicles, such as cars, 18-wheelers and even tractors. The difficulties of all rolls requiring risky or especially difficult driving maneuvers are reduced by two.

Mechanical Aptitude: (1 point Merit)

You are naturally adept with all kinds of mechanical devices (note that this aptitude does not extend to electronic devices, such as computers). The difficulties of all dice rolls to understand, repair or operate any kind of mechanical device are reduced by two. However, this Merit doesn't help you drive any sort of vehicle. This Merit affects a characters aptitude with chimerical mechanical objects just as well as the mundane.

Poison Resistance (1 point Merit)

You have, for some reason or another, become resistant to poisons. It could be that you are somehow naturally resistant, or that you have spent years building up your resistance against all known types of poisons. Any time you need to make a soak roll against the effects of a poison or toxin, reduce your difficulty by three.

Natural Linguist: (2 point Merit)

You have a flair for languages. This Merit does not allow you to learn more languages than the number permitted by your Linguistics score, but you may add three dice to any Dice Pool involving languages (both written and spoken).

Daredevil: (3 point Merit)

You are good at taking risks, and are even better at surviving them. All difficulties are - 1 whenever you try something particularly dangerous, and you can ignore one botch result when you roll "ones" on such actions (you can cancel a single "one" that is rolled, as if you have an extra success).

Fast Learner: (3 point Merit)

You learn very quickly, and pick up on new things faster than most do. You gain one extra experience point at the conclusion of each story (not each game session).

Perfect Balance: (3 point Merit)

Your sense of balance has achieved great heights by constant training or inherited traits. It is very unlikely that you will ever fall during your life. You may trip, but you will always catch yourself before you fully lose your footing or handhold.

This Merit functions for such actions as tightrope walking, crossing ice and climbing mountains. All difficulties involving such feats are reduced by three. It would take a lot to push or shove a character off his feet if he has this Merit.

Jack-Of-All-Trades: (5 point Merit)

You have a large pool of miscellaneous skills and knowledge obtained through your extensive travels, the jobs you've held, or just all-around know-how. You automatically have one dot in all Skill and Knowledge Dice Pools. This is an illusory level, used only to simulate a wide range of abilities. If you train or spend experience in the Skill or Knowledge, you must pay the point cost for the first level a "second time" before raising the Skill or Knowledge to two dots.



Supernatural

These Merits and Flaws are different kinds of supernatural benefits or detriments. Because of the potential of these particular Traits, the Storyteller may not allow you to choose from this category — ask before you pick one. Furthermore, you should not select such Traits unless they firmly fit your character concept, and you can explain why your character possesses them. In general, we do not recommend that anyone have more than one or two supernatural Merits or Flaws — they should be strictly controlled by the Storyteller.

Geas: (1-5 point Flaw)

You are under some kind of *geas* at the beginning of play, most likely a Ban, but possibly a long-term quest. This *geas* may be a family curse or duty that you have inherited, or it may have been imposed on you by a changeling using the Sovereign Art. The difficulty of the *geas* determines how great a Flaw it is. Something minor, such as a Ban against harming animals or a requirement to give occasionally to charity, would only be worth one point. More difficult *geasa* are worth more points. A five-point *geas* is something that rules your entire life, like a Ban against sleeping in the same place more than one night or a quest that requires you to render aid to anyone in need you encounter. The Storyteller decides the exact value of whatever *geas* you choose.

Surreal Quality: (2 point Flaw)

Though the Mists still protect you from mortal detection, there is something about you that mortals find fascinating. At inappropriate times, they will stare at you and strike up conversations in the hopes of getting to know you better. Worse still, those mortals who are of less savory nature will choose you over other potential targets for their illicit acts.

Echoes: (2-5 point Flaw)

Your connection to the Dreaming is stronger than in most of the Kithain. As a result of this powerful connection, you are more susceptible to the ancient wives' tales of things which traditionally affect faeries. While Echoes is purchased as a Flaw, it often has some beneficial side effects. The points received with this Flaw reflect the level of your connection to the Dreaming and even to Arcadia. You must have Storyteller approval in order to take this Flaw. The effects of this Flaw are cumulative. A character with a five-point Flaw also suffers the setbacks of the two through four-point Flaws.

• **Minor:** Salt thrown over the shoulder for good luck offers a mortal from faerie powers. The same is true of bread. Any mortal who does so cannot be affected by your cantrips in any way for the duration of the scene. You may physically hurt the person, but cantrips simply do not work, or worse, they may well backfire. Additionally any mortal knowing your full name can command three tasks from you, which you must accomplish before you can be freed of that mortal's influence. However, you need only follow the exact wording of the mortal's request, not the desire behind the request. (*Two points*)

• **Moderate:** You may not enter a home without invitation, unless you perform some small favor for the owners of the dwelling. However, the invitation to enter a home may come from anyone at all, it need not be the owner. Cold iron in a residence will bar you from entering the place whether you are invited or not; religious symbols have the same effect. Religious symbols of any sort will prevent you from physically or magically affecting mortals. The sound of ringing church bells causes you pain, just as cold iron does (at this level there is only pain, but as a four-point Flaw, the changeling gains one point of Banality for every turn he is forced to endure the sound). (Three points)

• **Serious:** Four-leaf clovers in the possession of a mortal prevent you from using your Arts against that mortal for good or for bad. However, four-leaf clovers picked by you are sure to bring good luck (you cannot botch, or perhaps you temporarily gain the favor of a powerful individual) for as long as the petals of the clover remain intact. The clover must be worn or carried in order for this luck to remain. Any mortal wearing their coat inside out is invisible to you. You may not cross running water, save by means of a bridge. Religious symbols are now repellent to you, forcing you away from those who wear them, The shadow of a cross falling upon your person causes one Health Level of chimerical damage for each turn the shadow touches you. You may no longer enter holy ground without suffering chimerical injuries (one Health Level per turn), though this damage may be soaked. (Four points)

• **Extreme:** Wherever you dwell, mushrooms tend to bloom in a faerie ring — even on your plush carpet. The Mists no longer hide your powers. Many people will remember you if you use your Glamour while around them. Chimerical creatures tend to become more real for you than for others, and their attacks cause real and permanent injury. By the reverse, your chimerical weapons can cause damage to anyone, even mortals. People will likely follow you if you request it, often gaining a dazed look and following you even into dangerous situations. Your difficulties in casting cantrips might be reduced by a substantial amount (Storyteller's discretion), but those wearing cold iron or religious symbols are immune to any Arts you might use. You must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) in order to enter holy ground. Even if you succeed in your Willpower roll, actual physical damage (one Health Level per turn) occurs whenever you enter holy ground. (Five points)

Iron Allergy: (3-5 point Flaw)

Most of the Kithain only suffer pain and Banality when in contact with cold iron. You suffer from actual wounds. Cold iron reacts like superheated steel when touching your skin. The very least you will endure is severe blistering. For each turn in contact with iron, you suffer one Health Level of chimerical damage. As a four-point Flaw, you take one Health Level of real damage every three turns in contact with cold iron. As a five-point Flaw, you suffer this damage if you stand within a foot of the iron and you will take one Health Level of aggravated damage for every turn spent in contact with cold iron.

Iron Resistance: (4 point Merit)

Cold iron has no physical effect on you. You may touch cold iron and feel no excruciating pain, not even a tingle. However, constant exposure to the metal will still cause you to suffer Banality. This is a double-edged sword, as you may not realize when you are sitting on a cold iron bench or leaning against a fence made of the foul metal. A Perception + Intelligence roll (difficulty 7) is required to avoid exposing yourself to the dangerous element in any new setting where it is present.

Regeneration: (7 point Merit)

Your faerie nature is very strong, and as a result you heal much faster than other Kithain. For every turn spent resting, you recover one Health Level of chimerical damage. Physical wounds can be regenerated at a rate of one Health Level per hour. While in a freehold, your wounds heal at twice this speed. Wounds inflicted by cold iron are not affected by this Merit.

Chimerical Magnet: (5 point Flaw)

For some reason, chimera notice you more often than usual. In some cases this is of benefit, but more often than not this Flaw causes problems. Chimerical beasts on a rampage will tend to turn on you before attacking others. Nervosa find you irresistible, and sprites of all types surround you constantly, often making you the butt of their harmless but annoying pranks.

Past Life: (1-5 point Merit)

You can remember one or more of your previous incarnations. This can be as simple as constant *deja vu* in places known to your past lives, or as complex as conscious, waking memories of being another person. In practical terms, this means that your character (and therefore you the player) knows slightly more about whatever situations the dead memories contain. You might know your way around the past life's hometown, or back away from your murderer without knowing why. This is a good Background for beginning players; the Storyteller can tell them that something they are about to do is stupid, dangerous or both, because even if the character wouldn't logically know that, one of her past lives might. However, this Background cannot be used to "remember" Abilities.

The Storyteller can, and likely should, take the opportunity to flesh out one or more of these past selves with you. Unless the memory is very detailed, your character isn't likely to know everything about that past.

• One point — *Deja vu* memories of one life

• Two points — Dreamy, vague memories of one life, with *deja vu* from several lives

• Three points — Vague memories of several lives and one or two well-remembered impressions from one life

• Four points — Several well-remembered impressions from many lives

• Five points — A clear but broken thread of memories back to the Mythic Age and beyond...



True Love: (1 point Merit)

You have discovered, and possibly lost (at least temporarily) a true love. Nonetheless, this love provides joy in an arid existence usually devoid of such enlightened emotions. Whenever you are suffering, in danger or dejected, the thought of your true love is enough to give you the strength to persevere. In game terms, this love allows you to succeed automatically on any Willpower roll, but only when you are actively striving to protect or come closer to your true love. Also, the power of your love may be powerful enough to protect you from other supernatural forces (Storyteller's discretion). However, your true love may also be a hindrance and require aid (or even rescue) from time to time. Be forewarned: this is a most exacting Merit to play over the course of a chronicle.

Danger Sense: (2 point Merit)

You have a sixth sense that warns you of danger. When you are in danger, the Storyteller should make a secret roll against your Perception + Alertness; the difficulty depends on the remoteness of the danger. If the roll succeeds, the Storyteller tells you that you have a sense of foreboding. Multiple successes may refine the feeling and give an indication of direction, distance or nature.

Medium: (2 point Merit)

You possess the natural affinity to sense and hear spirits, ghosts and shades. Though you cannot see them, you feel their presence and are able to speak with them when they are in the vicinity. It is even possible for you to summon them (through pleading and cajoling) to your presence. Spirits will not simply aid you or give you advice for free — they will always want something in return.

Spirit Mentor: (3 point Merit)

You have a ghostly companion and guide. This spirit is able to employ a number of minor powers when it really struggles to exert itself (see *Haunted*, below), but for the most part, its benefit to you is through the advice it can give. This ghost is the incorporeal spirit of someone who was once living, perhaps even someone particularly famous or wise. The Storyteller will create the ghost character, but will not reveal to you its full powers and potencies. Mentors of this sort are not true Mentors of the Arts, but might give special insights into aspects of mortal life that changelings have missed or forgotten. (Further ideas for this Merit can be obtained from **Wraith: The Oblivion.**)

Werewolf/Vampire Companion: (3 point Merit)

You have a friend and ally who just happens to be a werewolf or vampire. Though you may call upon this being in time of need, she also has the right to call upon you (after all, you *are* friends). Neither your kind nor hers appreciate such a relationship; while changelings deal with the Prodigals often, all sides share a healthy distrust of each other. Your friend will *not* become a walking Glamour battery for greedy changelings. Such relationships often end badly.... The Storyteller will create the character in question, and will not reveal its full powers and potencies.

Luck: (3 point Merit)

You were born lucky; either you have a guardian angel, or maybe the Devil looks after his own. Either way, you can repeat three failed non-magical rolls per story. Only one repeat attempt may be made on any single roll.

Unbondable: (4 point Merit)

You are immune to being Blood Bound. No matter how much vampire blood you drink, you will never be Bound to one. This is exceedingly rare, and the Merit should be carefully considered by Storytellers before it is allowed into the game.

Art Affinity: (5 point Merit)

You are able to utilize one of the Arts with a greater degree of ease than other changelings. In a previous incarnation, you were extremely proficient in one of the Arts — so much so that you have managed to draw a small portion of that knowledge through into this lifetime.

Select an Art; when spending experience points to gain levels in that Art, you pay three-quarters the normal cost. This Art must be declared during character conception. Of course, this Merit may only be purchased once.

Faerie Eternity: (5 point Merit)

After you went through your Chrysalis, you had a birthday, and then another, and then another. Something was strange, however — you didn't seem to be growing or getting older. You are touched with a vestige of the immortality that used to be the birthright of all fae. As long as your fae seeming is active, you will age at one-tenth that of a normal human or changeling. Should your fae seeming be permanently destroyed, or should you retreat into Banality, you will begin to age normally.

Guardian Angel: (6 point Merit)

Someone or something watches over you and protects you from harm. You have no idea who or what it is, but you have an idea that someone is looking out for you. In times of great need, you may be supernaturally protected. However, one can never count upon a guardian angel. The Storyteller must decide why you are being watched and what is watching you (not necessarily an angel, despite the name).

Throwback: (1-5 point Flaw)

One or more of your past lives still affects you... badly. Their fears come back to haunt you in your dreams, and you have flashbacks of their worst memories (such as their death, or, even worse, a personality that encroaches on your own). For bad dreams or flashbacks, take one to two points depending on the severity of the condition and how much it will affect your studies or performance in dangerous situations. For a "roommate in your head," take three points (whether you know he exists or not). For the package deal and a truly miserable existence, take five points, but expect the Storyteller to take every opportunity to use these against you. This Flaw can be "worked off" during the course of play, but only with difficulty.

Cursed: (1-5 point Flaw)

You have been cursed by someone or something with supernatural or magical powers. This curse is specific and detailed. It cannot be dispelled without extreme effort, and it can be life-threatening. Some examples follow:

- If you pass on a secret that was told to you, your betrayal will later harm you in some way. (One point)
- You stutter uncontrollably when you try to describe what you have seen or heard. (Two points)
- Tools often break or malfunction when you attempt to use them. (Three points)
- You are doomed to make enemies of those to whom you become most attached (so whatever you do, don't get too close to the other characters!). (Four points)
- Every one of your accomplishments or achievements will eventually, inevitably, become soiled and fail in some way. (Five points)

Mystical Prohibition or Imperative: (1-5 point Flaw)

There is something you must or must not do, and your life, your luck, your magic and perhaps your very soul depends on it. It may be something that has always been upon you, a *geas* prophesied by Druids at your birth, a sacred oath or vow you swore, or a promise or bargain you made. *Someone* (with a capital S) witnessed it and is going to hold you to it. If you disobey, the consequences will be dire, if not deadly.

Characters may have several magical prohibitions or imperatives, and these may come into conflict. In Celtic myth, Cuchulainn had the *geas* to "Never refuse hospitality" and "Never eat dog meat." Three hags once offered him roast dog for dinner, and Cuchulainn died soon after. Consequently, most changelings keep their magical prohibitions and imperatives secret, lest they be used against them by enemies.

Storytellers should examine each prohibition or imperative and assign a point value to it, as well as to the punishment for violating it. Easily avoided circumstances, such as "Never break bread with a red-haired man," are worth one point, while more common, or difficult, things, such as "Stop and pet every cat you see," are worth two points, and particularly drastic or

dangerous circumstances, such as "Never back down from a fight," are worth three (or more) points. Consequences are worth points as well. Automatically botching the next major cantrip you do is worth one point, having bad luck for the rest of your life is worth two, losing all your friends and worldly possessions is worth three, dying is worth four, and being deserted by your faerie soul five. Characters and Storytellers may come up with variants of these.

Traditionally, there is very little that may be done about geas, which are simply facets of one's destiny, and curses are devilishly hard to lift (and the Flaw must be bought off if they are). Characters who accidentally violate them may attempt to atone for their crime, fixing whatever they did wrong. A witch who has vowed to never eat any red meat, and then suddenly finds beef in her soup, might be able to atone for the trespass by fasting and sending checks to PETA. However, if a changeling violates an oath willingly and with full knowledge — and survives — he becomes an oathbreaker, one of the foulest epithets among changelings. Oathbreakers are psychically marked. It is virtually impossible for them to find a tutor or any sort of aid.

Characters who wish to begin as oathbreakers should take the Flaw *Dark Fate* or some curse, as well as *Oathbreaker*, worth four points.

The Bard's Tongue: (1 point Flaw)

You speak the truth, uncannily so. Things you say tend to come true. This is not a facility for blessing or cursing, or an Effect that can be ruled by any conscious control. However, at least once per story, an uncomfortable truth regarding any current situation will appear in your head and through your lips. To avoid speaking prophecy, you must expend a Willpower point and take a Health Level from the strain of resisting (especially if you bite a hole in your tongue).

Haunted: (3 point Flaw)

You are haunted by a ghost that only you (and mediums) can see and hear. It actively dislikes you and enjoys making your life miserable by insulting, berating and distracting you, especially when you need to keep your cool. It also has a number of minor powers it can use against you (once per story for each power): hiding small objects; bringing a "chill" over others, making them very ill at ease with you; causing a loud buzzing in your ear or the ears of others; moving a small object such as a knife or pen; breaking a fragile item such as a bottle or mirror; tripping you or making eerie noises, such as chains rattling. Yelling at the ghost can sometimes drive it away, but it will confuse those who are around you. The Storyteller will likely personify the ghost in order to make things all the more frustrating for you. (More ideas for this Flaw can be obtained from **Wraith: The Oblivion**.)





Poetic Heart: (3 point Merit)

You have a truly inspired soul within you. You are destined to be a great hero or artist, and therefore Glamour shields you from the ravages of Banality. At times you may even be able to stave off the tide of Banality. You may make a Willpower roll (difficulty equal to the character's permanent Banality to avoid gaining a point of temporary Banality once per story.)

Cleared Mists: (3 point Flaw)

The Mists are the effect of the Shattering on the human world. It cloaks the powers and enchantments of the Kithain, hiding their presence in its tendrils. Unfortunately, the Mists do not hide your magic or abilities. Should a mortal witness your actions, he will not forget the effects of your Arts or other fae abilities. As a result, you may reveal your nature to the mortal world, triggering dire consequences for the rest of the Kithain.

Chimerical Disability: (1-3 point Flaw)

Part of your fae mien is damaged and no longer exists due to a past altercation. This disability is permanent. Examples of this Flaw would be a chimerical hand missing, therefore you cannot pick up chimera with that hand (two points). Your fae mien is missing one eye, therefore your view of chimera lacks depth perception (three points). One of your chimerical legs is missing; you can still walk, but it becomes extremely difficult to ride a chimerical creature (one point).

Changeling's Eyes: (1 point Flaw)

Your eyes are a startling color, maybe emerald green, violet or yellow. This is a sign you are a changeling, recognizable to those who know the ancient lore.

Winged: (2 point Flaw/4 point Merit)

You have beautiful wings, be they feathered bird's wings or batwings or colored butterfly wings. They are chimerical, but they need to be free, or they will subtract one die from Dexterity rolls. You may have to explain why you have cut slits in all of your coats. If you have taken this as a Flaw, you are not able to fly, but you do get an extra die if you are the recipient of the cantrip Wind Runner (Wayfare 3). If you have taken this as a Merit, you may indeed fly for short periods of time. This power works as any other use of Glamour when only Kithain are present, but will not work in the presence of mortals.

Seeming's Blessing: (5 point Merit)

All of your Birthrights affect your mortal seeming as well as your fae mien. They even function normally in the presence of mortals. A sidhe would have her extra dots in Appearance, a satyr would get his extra stamina and speed, trolls would get their extra strength, etc.

Slipped Seeming: (1-5 point Flaw)

Your fae seeming bleeds into your mortal seeming and makes you obvious to those mundanes who know what to look for. A one-point would be a slight bluish cast to the skin of a troll, and a five-point would be a pair of satyr's horns. This may make it difficult to explain yourself to mortals: "Ah, my friend... obviously got his head caught in a mechanical rice-picker, and fortunately there was a skilled plastic surgeon nearby...." This Flaw does not give you the benefits of certain portions of your fae mien (Goats legs will not allow you to run at advanced speeds, etc.).

Dark Fate: (5 point Flaw)

You are doomed to experience a most horrible demise or, worse, suffer eternal agony. No matter what you do, someday you will be out of the picture. In the end, all your efforts, your struggles and your dreams will come to naught. Your fate is certain, and there is nothing you can do about it. Even more ghastly, you have partial knowledge of this, for you occasionally have visions of your fate — and they are most disturbing. The malaise these visions inspire in you can only be overcome through the use of Willpower, and the malaise will return after each vision. At some point in the chronicle, you will indeed face your fate, but when and how is completely up to the Storyteller. Though you can't do anything about your fate, you can still attempt to reach some goal before it occurs, or at least try to make sure that your friends are not destroyed as well. This is a difficult Flaw to roleplay; though it may seem as if it takes away all free will, we have found that, ironically, it grants freedom. Combining this Flaw with the Destiny Background is very appropriate — Elric and Vanyel are classic literary examples.

Psychic Vampire: (5 point Flaw)

The spark of life is dying within you and must be continually fed from outside forces. You are a psychic vampire. Plants and insect life wither or die in your presence as you feed on their energies, and any person you touch for more than an hour will suffer one non-aggravated Health Level as you siphon away his life. Those already injured (including those whose Bruised Health Level has been sucked away) will not heal while in your presence. You can still be in the same building without harming someone, but sharing a bed is not possible unless you want the other person to slowly die. If you do not feed the emptiness within yourself at least once a day, you will begin to die. The rate at which you take wounds follows the progression for natural healing in reverse: you take a Health Level after one day, a second in three days, a third in a week, a fourth in a month, and, finally, one wound every three months.

Sidhe's Curse: (5 point Flaw)

The sidhe live in mortal terror of Banality, due to the fact it can take root in their souls much more easily than any other of the kith. Unfortunately although you are not sidhe, you are subject to this frailty as well. You gain two points of Banality for every one given by the Storyteller. Sidhe characters may not take this Flaw.

Changeling Ties

These Merits and Flaws deal with the place, position and status of a character within changeling society.

Boon: (1-3 point Merit)

A noble owes you a favor because of something either you or your mentor once did for him. The extent of the boon owed to you depends on how many points you spend. One point would indicate a relatively minor boon, while three points would indicate that the noble probably owes you his life.

Prestigious Mentor: (1 point Merit)

Your mentor had or has great Status among the Kithain, and this has accorded you a peculiar honor. Most treat you respectfully as a result, while some have only contempt for you, believing you to be merely riding your mentor's coattails. This prestige could greatly aid you when dealing with elders acquainted with your mentor. Indeed, your mentor's contacts may actually approach you at some point offering aid. Although your mentor might no longer have contact with you, the simple fact of your apprenticeship has marked you forever.

Reputation: (2 point Merit)

You have a good reputation among the changelings of your Court. This may be your own reputation, or it may be derived from your mentor. Add three dice to any Dice Pools involving social dealings with others of your Court. A character with this Merit may not take the Flaw *Notoriety*.

Enemy: (1-5 point Flaw)

You have an enemy, or perhaps a group of enemies. Someone wants to harm you. The value of the Flaw determines how powerful these enemies are. The most powerful enemies (kings or elder vampires) would be five-point Flaws, while someone nearer to your own power would be worth only one point. You must decide who your enemy is and how you earned such enmity in the first place.

Infamous Mentor: (1 point Flaw)

Your mentor was, and perhaps still is, distrusted and disliked by many of your fellow changelings. As a result, you are distrusted and disliked as well. This is a heavy load, and one not easily shed.

Insane Mentor: (1 point Flaw)

Your mentor has completely lost his grip on reality, and has become lost to Bedlam or dangerously insane. Any wrong committed by your mentor may affect your reputation, and some of your mentor's dangerous schemes may somehow involve you.

Mentor's Resentment: (1 point Flaw)

Your mentor dislikes you and wishes you ill. Given the smallest opportunity, your mentor will seek to do you harm, and may even attack you if provoked. Your mentor's friends will also work against you. Good luck!

Twisted Apprenticeship: (1 point Flaw)

Your mentor was quite malevolent and taught you all the wrong things about Kithain society. Your concepts of changeling politics are all wrong, and your faulty beliefs are likely to get you into a great deal of trouble. Over time, after many hard lessons, you can overcome this bad start (the Storyteller will tell you when). But until then, you will continue to believe what you were first told, no matter how others try to "trick" you into thinking otherwise.

Diabolical Mentor: (2 point Flaw)

Your mentor is engaged in acts that could cause a tremendous uproar. She could be ignoring unabashed Unseelie activity or worse. Plenty of folks are after your mentor's hide, and you may be tarred with the same brush.

Notoriety: (3 point Flaw)

You have a bad reputation among your peers; perhaps you violated the protocols once too often, or belong to an unpopular freehold. There is a two dice penalty to all dice rolls for social dealings with associated changelings. A character with this Flaw may not take the Merit *Reputation*.

Mortal Society

These Merits and Flaws deal with the influence, power and station of a character among mortals. Some of them correspond very closely to certain Background Traits (such as Influence and Resources), while others simply elaborate and expand upon them. The Backgrounds give you more creative freedom, while the Merits provide you with exact details of what you possess.

Black Market Ties: (1-5 point Merit)

You have special ties to the underground shopping network, ties that help you acquire hard-to-find equipment. This Merit adds one die per point to your Streetwise roll when trying, for instance, to obtain black market weaponry. Difficulties for such rolls are left up to the Storyteller (typically 7 or higher). The point cost reflects how "connected" you may be. The Storyteller may allow you to use your black market connections during the game to provide you with needed or useful equipment. Such connections will not simply hand you whatever you want — these things don't come cheap! It is up to the Storyteller to determine the quantity, quality and availability of the equipment. He may feel free to disallow it entirely if such connections would unbalance the game.

- One point — Small items: ammo, low-clearance ID badges, good software
- Two points — Average items: guns, hi-tech software, special ammo
- Three points — Fancy items: antique cars, explosives, automatic weapons
- Four points — Hefty items: heavy weapons, high-security IDs or access codes
- *Five points* — "Yeah, right. Maybe next game.": hi-tech military weapons, high explosives, military vehicles

Judicial Ties: (2 point Merit)

You have both influence over and contacts in the justice system. You know most of the judges as well as the attorneys in the prosecutor's department, and can affect the progress of various cases and trials with limited difficulty. Though it is difficult to intervene in a case, you can influence it in one direction or another. These ties can also make it easy to acquire search warrants.

Mansion: (3 point Merit)

You own a large mansion — a home with 25 or more rooms — as well as the surrounding estate. The servants, if you have any, are provided for if you choose this Merit, although they cannot be used as Dreamers or Retainers unless you purchase the appropriate Background. The mansion is assumed to have the most current electronic security available and a fence around the perimeter, but does not have access to a trod (see the Freehold Background for such a place). While the mansion can be in as poor or as good a shape as you wish, the more inhabited it appears to be, the more attention it will garner. A ghost house won't attract IRS audits, but it may attract police scrutiny if bands of strange kids hang out there.

Media Ties: (2 point Merit)

You have both influence over and contacts in the local media. You can suppress and create news stories (though not always with 100 percent efficiency; journalists are an unruly bunch), and you have access to the files and gossip of the staffs of newspapers and TV stations.

Nightclub: (2 point Merit)

You own a moderate-sized nightclub, perhaps one of the hottest nightspots in the city. This club brings in enough money to support you in moderate luxury ($1000 a month, but it can grow), but more important than the money is the prestige. You may use the nightclub as your freehold (though you must purchase the Background Trait to do so), or you may simply hang out there. The name of the nightclub, its style, design and its regular patrons are all up to you. Variations on this theme could include a restaurant, theater, comedy club, sports arena or retail store.

Church Ties: (3 point Merit)

You have influence and contacts in some local churches, and have the means to create protest rallies, help the needy or raise money. The more you use your ties, of course, the greater your risk of being discovered.

Corporate Ties: (3 point Merit)

You have both influence over and contacts in the local corporate community. You understand the dynamics of money in the city and have links with all the major players. In times of need, you can cause all sorts of financial mayhem, and can raise considerable amounts of money (in the form of loans) in a very short period of time.



Entertainment Ties: (3 point Merit)

You have a degree of fame and influence in the local entertainment scene (music, theater, dance, S.C.A., etc.). Either you own or manage a good venue or site, or you have some notoriety among both peers and fans. You can exert this influence to ferret out information or buy favors. For five points, this fame can become nationwide.

Police Ties: (3 point Merit)

You have both influence over and contacts in the local police department. You can, with a single phone call, cause an APB to be issued. However, the more often you use your ties with the police department, the weaker they become, and the more attention you attract toward yourself. Your influence is not solid (that can be achieved only through game play), and it can let you down at times.

Political Ties: (3 point Merit)

You have both influence over and contacts among the politicians and bureaucrats of the city. In times of need, you can shut off the power and water to a building or neighborhood, and can unleash many different means of harassment against your enemies. The more you use your political ties, the weaker they become. Total control can only be achieved through game play.

Underworld Ties: (3 point Merit)

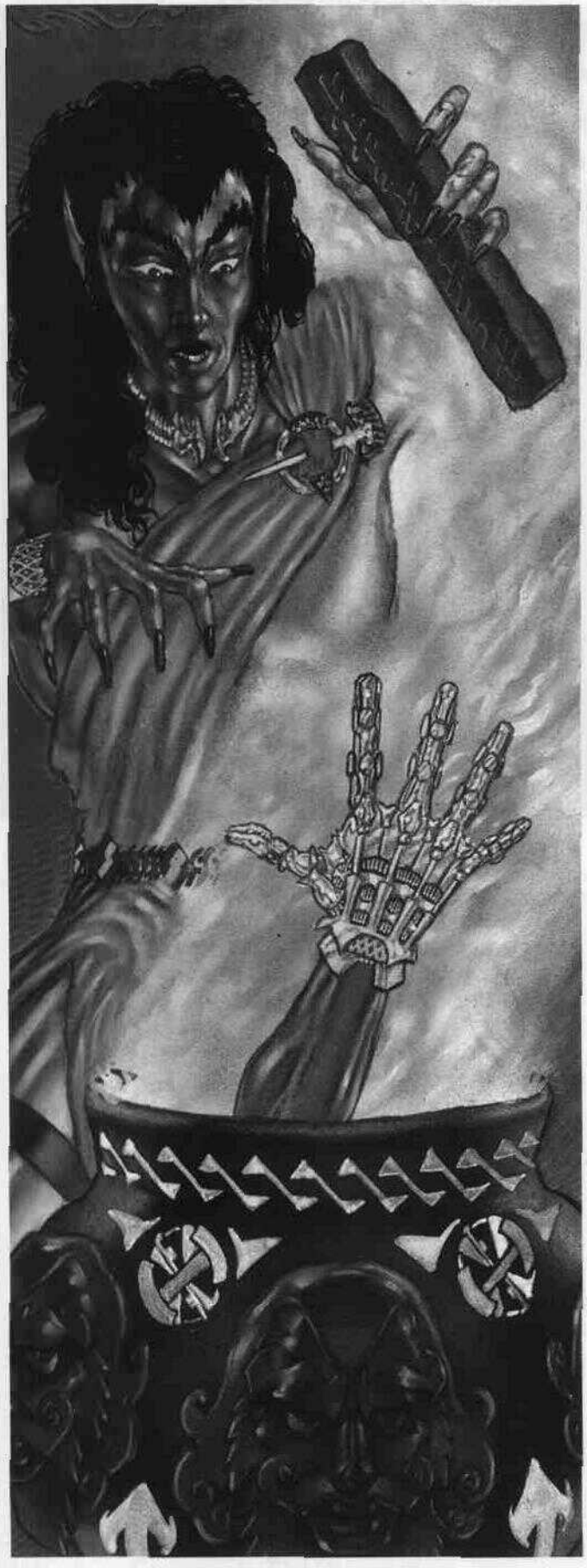
You have both influence over and contacts in the local Mafia and organized street gangs. This provides you with limited access to large numbers of "soldiers," as well as extensive links to the underworld of crime. The more often you use your ties with the criminal element, the weaker they grow.

Corporation CEO: (5 point Merit)

You have a particular influence and sway over a major corporation and associated companies, just as if you were its chief executive officer. Indeed, you might have owned this company before your Chrysalis, and you have retained your control. Through this corporation, you know much that takes place in the corporate community and have the means to wage economic warfare. This Merit provides you with some informal allies and Resources, the exact extent of which is determined by the Storyteller.

Ward: (3 point Flaw)

You are devoted to the protection of a mortal. You may describe your ward, though the Storyteller will actually create her. This character may be a friend or relative from your pre-Chrysalis days, or just a good friend. Wards have a talent for getting caught up in the action of stories, and they're frequent targets of a character's enemies.



Hunted: (4 point Flaw)

Vampires and werewolves are not the only supernaturals who need to fear fanatical witch-hunters. You have somehow attracted the interest of some mortal agency or individual who now seeks your destruction. This hunter is beyond reason, and has some form of power, influence or authority that puts you at a disadvantage. Your friends, family and associates are likewise endangered. Sooner or later, this Flaw will result in a confrontation. The resolution should not be an easy one.

Physical

These Merits and Flaws deal with your health and physical makeup.

Double-Jointed: (1 point Merit)

You are unusually supple. Reduce the difficulty of any Dexterity roll involving body flexibility by two. Squeezing through a tiny space is one example of a use for this Merit.

Surreal Beauty: (1 point Merit)

You possess a beauty far beyond that of normal mortals. People stand in awe of your perfect form. If you are sidhe then perhaps your fae mien shines over into your mortal seeming. Characters who take this Merit must first purchase at least an Appearance 5 though their appearance is considered to surpass even that.

Huge Size: (4 point Merit)

Your mortal seeming is abnormally large in size, possibly over seven feet tall and 400 pounds in weight. You therefore have one additional Health Level, and are able to suffer more harm before you are incapacitated. Treat this as an extra Health Level, with no penalties to rolls. Trolls can take this Merit since the extra Health Level gained through *Huge Size* affects only the mortal seeming. The extra Health Level is added to those a troll gets from his *Birthright* for the purposes of chimerical damage, however, or real damage if the troll has called upon the Wyrd.

Allergic: (1-4 point Flaw)

You are allergic to some substance — pollen, animal fur, alcohol, chocolate, etc. For one point, you get hives, sneeze or become dizzy upon prolonged contact with your bane; for two points, you swell up uncomfortably in the affected area, reducing all Dice Pools by one; for three points, your reaction actually incapacitates you, reducing appropriate Dice Pools by three. If the substance is really common in your chronicle, add an additional point to this Flaw.

Asthma: (1 point Flaw)

You have difficulty performing strenuous tasks because you cannot breathe properly. With asthma, your lungs only pull in a fraction of the air that normal lungs require. Any time that you exert yourself, you must make a Stamina roll against a difficulty of 6 or be unable to perform any action on the next round while you catch your breath.

Short: (1 point Flaw)

You are well below average height, and have trouble seeing over high objects and moving quickly. You suffer a two dice penalty to all pursuit rolls, and you and the Storyteller should make sure your height is taken into account in all situations. In some circumstances, this will give you a concealment bonus.

Only childling trolls can take this Flaw.

Disfigured: (2 point Flaw)

A hideous disfigurement makes you ugly and easy to notice or remember. You therefore have a zero Appearance.

Sidhe characters cannot take this Flaw.

Child: (3 point Flaw)

You were a small child at the time of your Chrysalis. You may be precocious, but you're still just a kid. You have the Flaw *Short* (see above), and find it difficult to be taken seriously by others (two dice penalty to all relevant rolls). Additionally, you may be subject to parental control, curfews and child labor and truancy laws. Few clubs will admit you, because you are "underage." Childlings who do not take this Flaw are for some reason more accepted by those older than themselves.

Deformity: (3 point Flaw)

You have some kind of deformity — such as a misshapen limb, a hunchback — that affects your interactions with others and may inconvenience you physically. The difficulties of all dice rolls related to physical appearance are raised by two. Your deformity will also raise the difficulty of some Dexterity rolls by two, depending on the type of deformity you possess.

Sidhe characters cannot take this Flaw.

Lame: (3 point Flaw)

Your legs are injured or otherwise prevented from working effectively. You suffer a two dice penalty to all dice rolls related to movement. A character may not take this Flaw along with the Merit *Double-Jointed*.

Sidhe who are members of House Dougal cannot take this as their handicap, though it can be taken if they have a different handicap as their House Flaw.

One Arm: (3 point Flaw)

You have only one arm — choose which, or determine randomly at character creation. This could be a battle scar, birth defect or other form of injury. It is assumed that you are accustomed to using your remaining hand, so you suffer no off-hand penalty. However, you do suffer a two dice penalty to any Dice Pool where two hands would normally be needed to perform a task. A character may not take this Flaw along with the Merit *Ambidextrous*.

Sidhe who are members of House Dougal cannot take this as their handicap, though it can be taken if they have a different handicap as their House Flaw.

Mute: (4 point Flaw)

Your vocal apparatus does not function, and you cannot speak at all. You can communicate through other means — typically through writing or signing.

Sidhe who are members of House Dougal cannot take this as their handicap, though it can be taken if they have a different handicap as their House Flaw.

Paraplegic: (6 point Flaw)

You can hardly move without assistance, such as a pair of crutches or a wheelchair. Even then it can be painful and cumbersome to do so. The Storyteller and you should take care to roleplay this Flaw correctly, no matter how difficult it makes things. A character may not take this Flaw along with the Merit *Double-Jointed*.

Sidhe who are members of House Dougal cannot take this as their handicap, though it can be taken if they have a different handicap as their House Flaw.


fig 6

Chapter Five: Arts and Realms

Cantrips

Cantrips, more simply known as "faerie magic," are how changelings manipulate Glamour to create magical effects, both in the Dreaming and in the mortal world. A changeling sparks her own internal Glamour and thereby creates a link with the Dreaming — a link strong enough that she can draw upon and form the raw stuff of the Dreaming to suit her desires. In a sense, cantrips are physical manifestations of Glamour.

What follows here is a description of the Arts, which define the actual powers and effects of changeling magic, and the Realms, which delineate who or what a changeling can affect with her magic when she casts a cantrip.

Arts

Arts are the defined means by which a changeling can mold and shape Glamour to produce certain effects. Each of the Arts is organized into five ranking powers of ascending potency. The powers given are what is known to most changelings of Earth; ancient fae may have abilities far beyond the scope and ken of their younger brethren. Following the description of each power is the systems and rules usage, including applications and the effect of casting the same cantrip multiple times upon a subject.

The Arts described here only begin to scratch the surface of those available to changelings; they are, however, the most commonly encountered. Being creatures of Glamour and whimsy, many changelings have discovered other methods of using the Arts described here (often for radical and unorthodox results). Whether a character can use an Art in a manner other than the ways described here is at the whim of the Storyteller — though it never hurts to try.

Mortals often later forget the effects of Arts cast upon them ("Coincidence," or "There *must* be a rational explanation."). Any time a mortal is affected by or witnesses a Wyrd cantrip, consult the Mists chart on pg. 208 to determine exactly what she remembers.

Definitions

The Art: Each Art opens with a general description of the Art's basic function as well as a little bit about what its cantrips are capable of. This section may also discuss how the Art is used and perceived in changeling society.

Attribute: Immediately following this description is the Attribute which is used when casting a cantrip from this Art.

Powers: Following the description of the Art are its different levels and what cantrips can be cast at each of these levels. The opening section provides an overview of the types of effects that are possible with that Art.

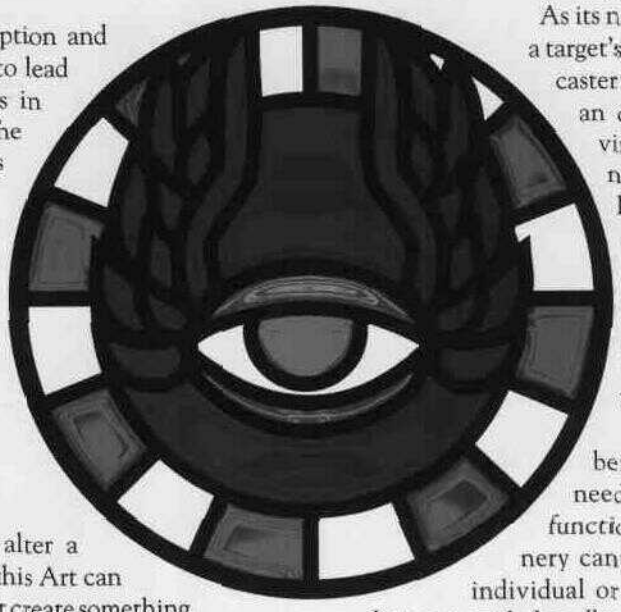
System: This section offers the actual rules for casting the cantrip. This includes how the Realms interact with the cantrip, how the number of successes earned affects the cantrip, and how (or if) the cantrip can be resisted.

Type: This indicates whether the cantrip is chimerical or Wyrd. *Chimerical cantrips* are those that either only affect enchanted beings or which have subtle effects that could be purely coincidental. Anything that has a real-world effect (such as teleporting from one place to another) is considered a *Wyrd cantrip*. If a changeling calls upon the Wyrd, all cantrips that the character casts automatically become Wyrd.

The basic cantrip casting rules make the most use of the Realms of Actor and Fae. Generally speaking, the target of many cantrips is most often a person, whether a mortal, supernatural or another fae. In many cases, the Scene Realm can be used in conjunction with Fae or Actor to affect multiple targets. Realms such as Nature, Prop and Time have their own particular uses in cantrips as well.

For example, Jimble (a pooka of fair nature if little wisdom) goes into a bar and walks right into a pack of Unseelie redcaps he played a prank on just the other week. Realizing that his life is in danger, Jimble ducks out of the bar and casts a Fugue cantrip on the redcaps to make them forget that he was ever there. Jimble needs to use Fae 2 to affect one of the redcaps and then Scene 1 to make all the redcaps in the room forget that they had seen him.

Chicanery



Chicanery is the Art of deception and favored by those who utilize guile to lead the unwary astray. This Art deals in fooling the senses and ensnaring the mind at higher levels. Practitioners of Chicanery are usually considered suspect by nobles and their chancellors, and are closely watched. A few nobles have become infamous through injudicious use of this Art, although Chicanery is generally considered to be a commoner's Art.

Attribute: Manipulation

Fuddle

Fuddle allows the caster to alter a target's perceptions. Proper use of this Art can be difficult, however, since it cannot create something from nothing — there must always be some basis for the deception the caster wishes to create. In a sense the caster is limited by the target's perceptions. A target who is blind and deaf cannot be made to suddenly see and hear the ocean, for instance, but she might fooled into smelling the tang of the salty sea air. Fuddle relies upon already existing factors to deceive the senses, and cannot completely negate a sense or create a sensation. In other words, an eshu trying to make use of Fuddle could not turn invisible while standing in plain sight, nor could he conjure up the sound of police sirens on a silent night. If the eshu were hidden in shadows, he could use Fuddle to cause a person to overlook him, or he could cause the sounds of barking dogs to be perceived as police sirens.

This cantrip can never cause any direct harm to an individual, though it is possible for a target to inflict accidental injury upon himself due to his confused senses.

System: The target of the cantrip determines the nature of the Realm needed to use this Art. The Scene Realm is required to affect multiple targets. For example, casting Fuddle upon a small group of mortal tourists to cause them to believe that a troll has turned into a wolf requires Actor 4 (mortal tourists) and Scene 2 (for the group).

The number of successes indicates how long the subject is Fuddled. Multiple castings of Fuddle are not cumulative; if such is attempted, the casting with the most successes is the one that takes effect.

1 success — one minute
2 successes — 10 minutes
3 successes — one hour
4 successes — one day
5 successes — one month

Type: Chimerical

Veiled Eyes

As its name implies, Veiled Eyes muddles a target's senses into ignoring anything the caster desires. The cantrip does not turn an object invisible, but rather convinces the observer that the object is not really worth his notice. Veiled Eyes would not cause a store to vanish from plain sight, but it would convince passersby that the store sold nothing of interest to them, causing them to ignore it. People cloaked with Veiled Eyes are merely ignored.

System: The person or object being veiled determines the Realm needed when using this Art. This Art functions differently than most Chicanery cantrips in that once cast upon an individual or item, the target of the cantrip becomes veiled to *all* passersby. The Actor Realm would be used to veil a mortal, and the Scene Realm would be appropriate to veil a building (though Scene and Actor could be used to veil an entire room full of people, making the room appear to be empty to anyone who entered or looked inside).

The obscurement lasts for one turn per success. A changeling can double the amount of successes by spending an extra Glamour point. A changeling can penetrate Veiled Eyes by rolling Perception + Kenning (difficulty is 4 + the number of successes scored in the initial casting before any Glamour points were spent). Only mortals who have had contact or foreknowledge of the veiled object get a chance to resist. Supernatural beings with magical senses (Kenning, Awareness, Auspex, etc.) may make the attempt to penetrate the obscurement when they first encounter it. This cantrip can be cast multiple times to increase the duration of the obscurement.

Type: Chimerical

●●● Fugue

(also known as "Tip-of-the-Tongue")

While Fuddle allows a changeling to alter a person's perceptions, Fugue lies within the province of memory. With Fugue, the changeling may remove or steal whole chapters of a person's life and beliefs, or home in on one salient detail, such as the moment the target bumped into him while walking down the street. Fugue can never add anything to an individual's memory, and its effects are rarely permanent.

System: A changeling only needs the Realm of the target to cast Fugue.

The number of successes determines the duration and amount of memory lost. The caster divides the number of successes between the memory loss and the duration, according to the charts below. A changeling who rolls four successes could cause her target to forget about his lunch for one minute, a person's identity for one turn, or the location of his car keys for a day.

Memory Loss

1 success — Forgetting a simple, immediate object or information (car keys, phone number, etc.)

2 successes — Loss of memory of an uninteresting scene in the past ("What did I have for lunch?" or "What was her name?")

3 successes — Complete eradication of a specific event, person's identity or object's presence.

4 successes — Powerful, forthright beliefs or memories may be forgotten.

5 successes — A *tabula rasa*; total memory loss (a vampire could be made to forget her nature, but finds herself inexplicably craving blood).

Duration

1 success — One turn

2 successes — One minute

3 successes — One hour

4 successes — One day

5 successes — One week

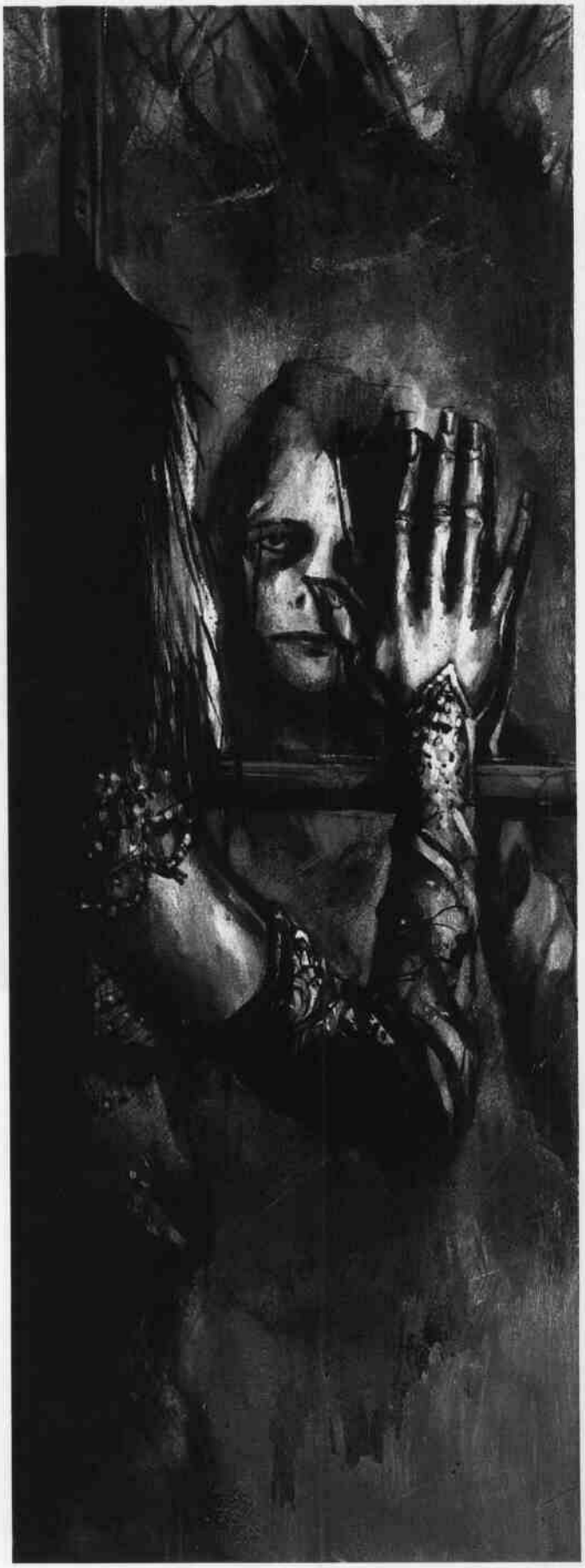
Multiple castings of this cantrip are cumulative. A changeling who achieves 10 successes on three castings of Fugue could, say, force a mage to completely forget her Awakened nature for a week (endeavors of this kind do not usually have tidy endings, however, and this is a great way to rack up powerful enemies).

Type: Chimerical

●●●● Haunted Heart

The caster of Haunted Heart can control and fan the emotions of her target. She can evoke any type of feeling she wants: fear, envy, love, gaiety, sadness, etc. This cantrip can cause a target to feel anything he is capable of feeling, even if he has never experienced the desired emotion before. The cantrip is more potent if the emotional evocation is similar to an episode from the target's past. However, the feelings can be drawn from anything: books, movies, observing wildlife, etc.

For example, linking a memory of lost love to a banana could cause the target to weep piteously as he remembers how



much his ex-lover used to love bananas. Casting a feeling of spite in a crowded bar would start a bar fight.

Old memories (even those forgotten or blocked) could reactivate with a canny use of Haunted Heart. Evoking hatred toward policemen in a man wrongly jailed would have a recurring effect well beyond the duration of the cantrip. Provoking a fear of a lake may cause the subject to suddenly remember almost drowning at age six and give the subject a permanent fear of water (subject to Storyteller discretion). Lucky (or shrewd) casters who manage to *awaken a feeling that is significantly* linked to an incident in the target's past get one free success when using this cantrip.

System: The Realm needed to cast this cantrip is determined by the target. Actor and Fae Realms are by far the most common.

This cantrip lasts one minute per success. The duration can be extended by spending one Glamour per additional minute. Multiple castings of this cantrip are cumulative, as long as the object and the emotion evoked remain the same. Opposite emotions cast upon the same object cancel each other, no matter how many successes each casting had. A phobia of snails cast with five successes would be neutralized by a cantrip of mollusk-love *with one success.*

1 success — Invokes a mild reaction.

2 successes —The target feels wild, chaotic surges of intermittent emotion. As long as the emotional object is not in sight, the target acts normally.

3 successes — Creates a continuous state of passion. The target's conversation drifts toward the emotional object; +1 difficulty to all rolls involving Mental Attributes.

4 successes — The target is passionately engaged. She actively seeks (or avoids) her object of passion; +2 difficulty to all rolls.

5 successes — Total obsession; the target can do nothing but engage in his passion. He becomes violent if restrained. Resistance requires the expenditure of a Willpower point (and a life-threatening reason).

Type: Chimerical

Captive Heart

Whereas Haunted Heart controls the emotions, Captive Heart has greater magnitude. The target of Captive Heart becomes pliant to the caster's commands; his personality can be completely changed with a few words.

Use of this cantrip allows the changeling to change broad or narrow facets of a person's behavior. A person could be made to believe he is Mick Jagger, a lawn chair or a secret agent for Planet Z. The victim of this cantrip makes every effort to conform to the caster's wishes: jumping around and singing, hopping and croaking, or simply standing quietly in the corner — anything. This has certain limitations, however; the target cannot be commanded to do anything *directly* harmful to himself. Commands such as "Take the knife and draw it across your throat," will send the target into confusion as her self-preservation instinct manifests. On the other hand, a command that is



not directly harmful ("See that man in the crown? Attack him!") is obeyed with as much speed as the target can muster.

System: The nature of the cantrip's target determines the Realm needed. Only one person can be affected with a single casting of this Art, so the Scene Realm cannot be used to affect multiple targets.

The number of successes determines how long the cantrip lasts. Whenever the subject must perform an action that runs counter to her personality, she is allowed one (extended) resistance roll (Willpower, difficulty 8). If the total successes on the resistance rolls exceed the caster's current Glamour, the cantrip is broken. As with all cantrips, non-mortals may spend Willpower to break the cantrip. Any expenditures of Willpower they make count as successes on extended resistance rolls.

Captive Heart can be cast multiple times with cumulative success, if the caster spends a Glamour point for each extra casting. If two casters use conflicting commands on one target, the cantrip with the most successes determines the outcome. A target told first to be a tree and then a dog follows the cantrip with the highest successes and ignores the other one.



1 success — The enchantment lasts for one turn.

2 successes — The enchantment lasts for one scene.

3 successes — The enchantment lasts for one hour.

4 successes — The enchantment lasts until sunrise or sunset, whichever comes first.

5 successes — The enchantment lasts 24 hours.

Type: Chimerical

Legerdemain

Legerdemain is the Art of sleight-of-hand and illusion. Originally based on illusions and "stage magic," Legerdemain transcends such parlor tricks, allowing a changeling to affect physical reality. Changelings who are the entertainers in Kithain society (jesters, clowns, pooka, etc.) generally specialize in this Art. While this is also considered a commoner Art, a user of Legerdemain is not as suspect as with Chicanery; however, an Unseelie pooka armed with this Art bears watching.

While many of the effects of Legerdemain duplicate Chicanery, use of this Art differs in that it creates a substantial illusion that is visible to all changelings and enchanted beings rather than altering a single individual's perception. There are those who claim that some uses of this Art actually create temporary chimera.

Attribute: Dexterity

Gimmix

Gimmix permits a changeling to maneuver objects telekinetically. With this cantrip she can move, twist, throw, lift and crush things. Fine motor coordination, such as typing or dialing a telephone is impossible, however. Anything a real person could do with her hands if her fingers and thumb were glued together is possible. Gimmix can be used in extremely small places, handling objects that the changeling couldn't normally see or reach.

The Bunk for this cantrip must incorporate some hand gesture that mimes the effect of the cantrip.

System: The Realm is determined by what the changeling is trying to affect. If she is trying to lift a pooka by his ears, the Fae Realm would be necessary, but lifting a knife would require the Prop Realm.

The number of successes indicates the force of the telekinesis. For objects thrown, the damage possible is determined by the strength of the cantrip (e.g., Strength = 2 inflicts two Health Levels of damage against a target). Multiple castings of this cantrip are considered separate castings and cannot be accumulated for greater strength. Five successes (depending on the target's weight) and the appropriate Realm are necessary to directly affect a human's body with this cantrip.

The effects of this Art only last one turn, so the cantrip must be continually recast to maintain any telekinetically lifted object. Alternatively, once a single object has been affected, the character can spend a point of Glamour for each additional turn he wishes to maintain the Gimmix.

1 success — Lift six oz.	Strength = 0
2 successes — Lift five lbs.	Strength = 1
3 successes — Lift 40 lbs.	Strength = 2
4 successes — Lift 100 lbs.	Strength = 3
5 successes — Lift 200 lbs.	Strength = 4

Type: Wyrd

Ensnare

This cantrip has two major uses: the changeling can cause a large object to move about quickly, or she can entangle an opponent with any scenery at hand, such as roots, old tires, tripwires, etc.

If the changeling is attempting to trip an individual, any vines, rope or other small objects suddenly move to trip and bind the intended target. If no such objects exist, the target believes that there are, tripping over his own feet and becoming bound by chimerical vines or rope.

The other use of this Art allows the changeling to cause one object weighing up to 300 lbs. to spin and whirl about at high rates of speed. Such objects can be targeted at another person or object (often resulting in much carnage).

System: The object being affected determines the nature of the Realm needed to cast this cantrip.

If the changeling directs an object to smash into a person, the object inflicts three Health Levels of damage for every success achieved in casting. To hit the target with the lifted object, the changeling must succeed in a Willpower roll (difficulty 7). The target is allowed a resisted Dodge roll.

For Ensnaring, the number of successes determines how well the target is Ensnared.

Ensnarement

1 success — Causes target to trip; target must roll Dexterity + Athletics (difficulty 6) to avoid falling.

2 successes — Target is Ensnared; must succeed in a strength roll (difficulty 6) to escape.

3 successes — Target is Ensnared and must exceed the Ensnare's successes by three or more in an extended Strength test (difficulty 6) in order to escape.

4 successes — As above, but the target must gain five successes.

5 successes — As above, but 10 successes are required.

Targets Ensnared remain trapped until they can break free. Multiple castings of this cantrip are not cumulative (use the Ensnare cast with the highest success in the case of several castings upon one target).

Type: Wyrd

Effigy

This cantrip creates a duplicate of an object or person that the changeling can see and touch. The copy has all the features of the item that could be seen and felt. An Effigy of a book is tangible, and if the original were open when copied, the Effigy would be open to the same page and have the same writing on the page.

The copying of the Effigy is only skin-deep, however, so none of the internal qualities of the original are transferable. The Effigy-book may be open to the same page as the original, but a person couldn't close it or read other parts. The caster can supply "special effects" to the copy by spending one Glamour point per effect (i.e., making the book open and close, writing on the other pages, etc.). Creating realistic movement and coherent speech in Effigy-created beings requires a successful roll of Manipulation + Subterfuge (difficulty subject to the complexity of the action taken).

An Effigy lasts until the caster ceases concentration, stops thinking about the Effigy, or it is eroded by Banality. An Effigy



can be out of the caster's line of sight, but the caster cannot create any special effects or supply movement or speech for it.

An Effigy in the presence of banal individuals begins to erode. (Any changeling who has a Banality score higher than his Glamour rating is considered to be banal for these purposes.) Each turn that the Effigy is in the presence of a banal person, one success is subtracted from the cantrip's successes An Effigy in the presence of an Autumn Person deteriorates at twice this rate. The Effigy completely discorporates when the Banality erodes the successes of the Effigy's casting to zero. An Effigy with six extended successes cast on it lasts six rounds, or sooner if the caster stops concentrating on it (any action other than concentrating is at +1 difficulty). On the seventh, the Effigy discorporates. As it erodes, the copy loses its "resolution," and its imperfections become more apparent. Multiple castings on the same Effigy are cumulative.

Effigies cannot be easily damaged. An Effigy damaged by Wyrd or chimerical effects loses one from its total successes but suffers no other ill effects. An Effigy reduced to zero successes in this manner completely discorporates.

System: The Realm is determined by the caster's subject for his copy when creating an Effigy.

The number of successes indicates the copy's accuracy, as well as the amount of damage an Effigy can inflict on a foe.

1 success — Bad copy.

2 successes — Major differences.

3 successes — Minor differences; can inflict 1/2 chimerical damage.

4 successes — Nearly perfect copy; can inflict chimerical damage.

5 successes — Exact duplicate; can inflict Wyrd damage (only if the caster initially specified the Effigy as Wyrd).

Type: Wyrd or Chimerical

●●●● Mooch

The changeling can instantaneously move things from one place to another. A favorite of pickpockets, Mooch can remove a trinket from a mark's pouch and replace it in the caster's own. The cantrip only works if the caster can see the object, or he has seen it within the past minute. A coin be could Mooched in plain sight, though anyone watching would spot the Mooch.

System: When casting this cantrip to Mooch an item from another character, the changeling uses whatever Realm is appropriate to the item's current owner. For example, Iain the pooka notices that Anya the boggan has these really neat shoelaces in her sneakers today, and he would like to "borrow" them. To Mooch the shoelaces, Iain would need the Fae Realm since Anya is a boggan. If his attention is captured instead by the charm bracelet on the wrist of a mortal girl working at a newsstand, he would need the Actor Realm to work Mooch on her.

If the object is on its own, then a Realm appropriate to the object being Mooched (generally Prop) is needed. So if the mortal girl takes off the bracelet that Iain's hankering after and lays it on a stack of magazines, Iain would need Prop to work Mooch this time.

The number of successes determines how well the changeling performs the Mooch. To determine if her object is missing (unless she was holding the object in plain sight, in which case the Mooch is apparent), the target may make a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty 4 + the number of successes gained for the Mooch).

Characters who possess the Pickpocket Skill receive one automatic success when they cast Mooch.

Type: Chimerical or Wyrd

●●●●● Phantom Shadows

This cantrip is the true art of illusion creation. Whereas Effigy creates an unmoving copy, Phantom Shadows creates original illusions and engenders them with sentience. The created illusion can be of any subject the caster desires and is difficult to differentiate from the real thing, unless those who examine it are mystically aware or possess faerie sight. The Phantom Shadow intrinsically knows what its caster wants and carries out her wishes; however, if the caster forgets (or is made to forget as with Fugue) the existence of the Phantom Shadow, the casting essentially becomes a free-willed, uncontrolled chimera and acts on its own whim (a sleeping caster does not forget merely because she sleeps; her unconscious mind still remembers).

A Phantom Shadow has exact parameters with unique limitations. A Phantom car does not necessarily have gas, and a Phantom Shadow soldier may not appear with a gun, although the cantrip does create clothes for the soldier to wear. A created computer possesses operating software, but nothing else (no spreadsheets, word processing or gaming software).

Phantom Shadows cannot be used to make a target appear as something else.

System: The item or creature being created determines the nature of the Realm needed to cast this cantrip. Entire phantom (or chimerical) buildings can be constructed through the use of the Scene Realm.

The casting of this cantrip actually creates a malleable chimera. The chimera created thusly can be either animate or inanimate at the caster's choice. The number of successes gained determines how believable the illusion is as well as how powerful it is. Multiple castings are cumulative in the same manner as with Effigy. Each time this cantrip is cast, the caster receives five chimera creation points for each success earned. The caster can then build his chimera using the chimera creation rules on page 220 for animate chimera or see the chart in the **Appendix** for inanimate chimera.

A chimera created by Phantom Shadows remains for as long as the caster continues to supply it with Glamour. The caster must supply the Shadow with at least one point of Glamour per day or it vanishes. A Phantom Shadow that has been released and become a true chimera begins to seek out its own Glamour — by whatever means necessary.

Phantom Shadows can inflict chimerical damage on anyone, including enchanted mortals and supernaturals. A target may disbelieve on an extended Perception + Kenning roll, difficulty 7. If the disbeliever achieves more successes

than the caster of the Phantom Shadow, the Shadow immediately disperses.

Banality also tends to erode the illusion in the same way as Effigy, but the decay is slower; the total number of successes reduces at a rate of one per hour of exposure. (Illusions that are patently "unbelievable," such as tap-dancing fish, tend to erode faster, though this is at the Storyteller's discretion.) Autumn People cause Phantom Shadows to discorporate at twice this rate.

1 success — Fuzzy image (5 points).

2 successes — Looks real if it's not studied too closely (10 points).

3 successes — All but the finer details are complete (15 points).

4 successes — Only the slightest imperfections (20 points).

5 successes — Perfect image (25 points).

Type: Chimerical (A Phantom Shadow made "real" by calling upon the Wyrd must be maintained by spending a point of Willpower every turn.)



Primal

Much of the power of changelings arises from the elemental affinity between their faerie souls and the forces of nature. In ancient times, the spirits of rocks and trees whispered their secrets to the fae who lived in the forests and groves. The ability to hear the forests' whispers was lost by most changelings during the Shattering, remembered only by the Inanimae. One of the first things the Inanimae taught the changelings after the Shattering was how to whisper back.

The Inanimae are mostly asleep now, and the Art they taught — Primal — is rumored to be only a fraction of the wisdom the nature spirits could have imparted. As a sign of gratitude to these beings, the cantrips of Primal are named after the spirits who helped the fae relearn these connections.

Kithain often stereotype other changelings who specialize in Primal cantrips as "salt of the earth" types: simple, stolid and honest. This oversimplification often makes them the butt of pooka jokemeisters ("Hey, troll! Did you hear the one about the Willow-Whispering farmer's daughter who....")

Primal cantrips have no effect on anything made of pure iron, though they can affect alloys, such as steel.

Attribute: Stamina

Willow Whisper

This cantrip allows the changeling to talk to anything, even things that normally cannot talk or understand speech. Willow Whisper grants the ability to speak to books, furniture, rocks, plants, buildings, aliens... anything. There is one limitation to this cantrip: all requests must be phrased in a whisper. Using Willow Whisper in a place such as a football stadium in the middle of a game is a fruitless exercise.

Also, nonsentient objects possess nonsentient intellect; rocks and trees may be really interesting to talk to, but they process information differently. An oak tree might think of "a short while" as 20 years, while a rock might consider several thousand years as a brief moment. Storytellers should imbue inanimate objects with personalities appropriate to their natures.

System: The Nature and Prop Realms are most commonly used in conjunction with this Art, describing the object with which the caster is trying to communicate.

The successes indicate how many questions may be asked and the clarity of response from the subject. Multiple castings upon a target are cumulative, but each successive casting is at +1 difficulty.

The Realm describes the object with which the changeling is communicating.

1 success — Mumbling, meandering answers; one question only.

2 successes — Vague, obscure answers; three questions.

3 successes — Clear but strange answers (the object is thinking in its terms, not recognizable human or fae terms); lasts for one scene.

4 successes — Clear, straightforward, but very boring answers; lasts for one week.

5 successes — Perfectly clear, lucid, interesting answers; lasts for up to a month.

Type: Chimerical

Eldritch Prime

The user of this cantrip can cause any one of the following natural elements to appear: fire, water, earth, air or wood. The cantrip causes the element to appear in the most natural form possible: water showers down as either rain or bubbles up from the ground like a spring; wood either sprouts out of the ground, or an object "grows" bark. The element can appear in an unnatural setting (such as rain indoors), but the element could not appear in an unnatural or manufactured form. A changeling could not suddenly cage an opponent inside a square wooden box, but he could cause a network of roots to grow around a target, forming a most unusual prison.

System: If simply creating natural elements, the Nature Realm is used. If actually affecting an individual, both the Nature and the appropriate Realm (for whatever is being affected) must be used.

The number of successes determines how much of the element appears. For every two successes gained (round up), the



changeling can create a one-die effect (as is generally the case when conjuring fire and air) or provide one Health Level of *protection* (as can be the case when conjuring stone or wood).

For example, a caster achieving three successes can cause a root-prison to appear that could withstand two levels of damage. A caster who rolls one success could summon a flame that would inflict one Health Level of damage, or cause bark to grow on her skin, protecting against one Health Level of damage. Multiple *castings are cumulative.*

The changeling can direct where the element will appear, but she cannot control what the element does unless she recasts the cantrip. If she causes fire to rain from the sky, she cannot control the path of the resulting inferno unless she recasts the cantrip and receives at least as many successes as the *present size of the flame.*

The consistency of the element is up to the caster, but she may not conjure anything that is not a phenomenon "normally" occurring in nature.

The effects of this cantrip last for one minute for each success earned.

Type: Chimerical

Oakenshield

This cantrip imbues an object or person with the solid, protective essence of oak bark. Targets of Oakenshield can resist a tremendous amount of chimerical punishment.

System: *The Fae and Actor Realms are most commonly* used in conjunction with this Art, though it is possible to use Prop or even Nature in some aspects to protect a specific item from damage.

Each success provides a Health Level over and above the Health Levels already possessed by the target. These extra *Health Levels last until they are destroyed by damage or* deliberately shed by the wearer. Multiple castings are *not* cumulative, and any successive casting of Oakenshield negates the successes gained by any previous castings of it.

Type: Chimerical

Heather Balm (or Holly Strike)

This cantrip has two uses: it can either mend that which is broken, or it can break something by expanding upon tiny imperfections in the object. The caster can heal or break anything, although Storytellers may decide that affecting certain objects or areas requires an extra expenditure of Glamour *and/or Willpower.*

System: Almost any Art can be used in conjunction with this Realm. The Realm used is determined by the person or object to be healed or harmed. If the caster uses Scene Realm to spread the damage over a large area (or several persons), the total damage is equally distributed.

Heather Balm heals one Health Level per success. In the case of nonliving objects, the Storyteller decides how many successes are required to repair the subject.

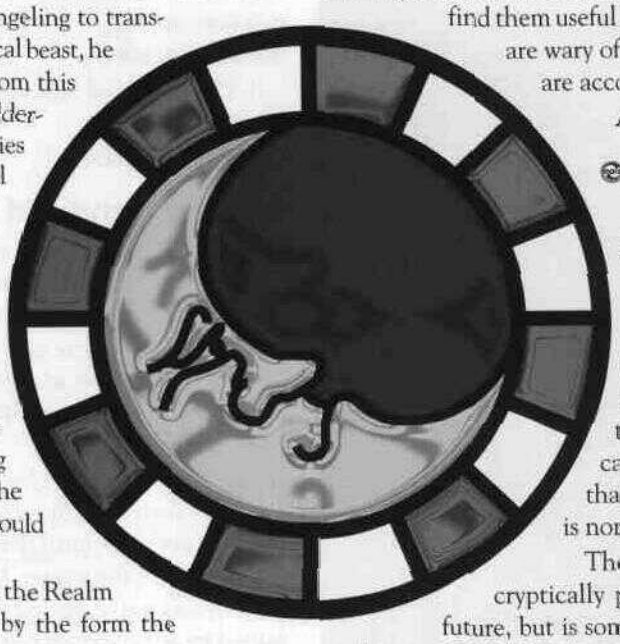
For Holly Strike, one Health Level of damage is caused for each success earned. When this Art is used on people, weird, jagged lacerations appear on random parts of the body. When damaging objects, the Storyteller must determine how many Health Levels are needed to destroy it.

Type: Chimerical

Elder-Form

This cantrip allows the caster or another target to take on the shape of something else. The new form possesses all of the Attributes and disadvantages of the new form. If the changeling turns himself into a tree, he may be taller and tougher, but he won't be able to talk (unless he casts Willow Whisper — just how does one perform that Bunk now, anyway?) If he turns himself into a stone, well, he'd better hope he's in a scenic spot, because he'll be seeing *a lot* of it in the next several centuries.

While it is possible for the changeling to transform himself into the form of a mythical beast, he does not gain any magical powers from this change. A character altered by Elder-Form only gains any natural abilities that form may have, not supernatural powers. For example, a changeling who transformed himself to appear as a vampire would have pale skin and maybe even fangs, but he would gain none of the special vampiric powers (such as regeneration), nor would he be susceptible to a vampire's weaknesses (such as sunlight). The same would be true if a changeling transformed himself into a dragon; he would have scales and claws, but he could *not* breathe fire.



System: Unlike most cantrips, the Realm used with this Art is determined by the form the caster wishes the target to take.

The period of the transformation is determined by the number of successes. There is a chance that the target will revert to her original form each time an unenchanted person comes into contact with the target. Roll the unenchanted person's Banality (difficulty 9); if the number of successes on this roll equals or exceeds the successes made by the caster of Elder-Form, the cantrip is dispelled.

1 success — One turn
2 successes — One hour
3 successes — One day
4 successes — Three days
5 successes — One week

Type: Wyrd

Soothsay

Soothsay is the Art of divination, prediction and interaction with *Dán*, the fae belief in fate.

Dán is like an immense, complex, shifting tapestry, too complicated for most to fathom. All beings, whether mortal, fae or Prodigal, have the threads of their fates caught up within this tapestry. Wormlike and blind, they burrow their way along their threads, until they suddenly realize that they have unwittingly caused the end they've achieved.

Occasionally, the forces of Dán make themselves apparent to a person. The most dramatic of these incarnations are the Norns, or Three Sisters, but the visitation can be more subtle. A priest glances down and sees a shiny gold coin. Instead of giving it to the church, he pockets it for himself. Years later, he is caught embezzling church funds.

This Art is for thinkers and contemplative Kithain. As such, changelings who specialize in Soothsay can often be found as seers and advisors to nobles. Most Kithain have widely differing views of those fae skilled in the Art of Soothsay. Nobles find them useful for court intrigue, and commoners are wary of their knowledge. In general, they are accorded much respect.

Attribute: Intelligence

Omen

In general, most people have difficulty seeing themselves as part of the "big picture." This cantrip offers a glimpse of the target's place within the great tapestry of Dán. Subtle clues of the ultimate fate of a person, place or thing reveal themselves to the caster. While this cantrip is too weak to ascertain more than a hint of the target's future, Omen is nonetheless a useful tool.

The information gleaned by Omen is cryptically prophetic. It hints at the target's future, but is sometimes vague concerning the immediate present. The changeling may not be able to discover that the target is an axe murderer, but she might guess that the target's intentions do not bode well for someone.

System: When casting an Omen cantrip, the Realm determines what the Omen is about. In most cases this will be the Realm of Fae or Actor (since most Omens concern people), though it is possible to cast an Omen upon an object and thus learn a little about its future.

The successes determine what information is available of the subject. None of the answers provided are straightforward, and the Storyteller should frame the response as symbolic visual clues. For example, a caster of Omen achieves three successes on an Unseelie troll with a Savage Legacy. The Storyteller may describe the image as this: "You see the troll wandering naked through a library with a look of confusion on her face. Suddenly, she grabs the nearest book and proceeds to eat the pages."

1 success — One clue about an immediate plan of the target.
2 successes — One clue about the Demeanor or general disposition of the target (if a changeling, one clue about his Court alliance).

3 successes — One clue about a long-term goal of the target.

4 successes — One clue about the inner nature (or Legacy) of the target.

5 successes — One clue about a closely guarded secret of the target.

Again, a changeling casting this cantrip receives no *direct* information. She couldn't cast this cantrip over Blackbeard's grave and find his treasure upon rolling five successes, but the cantrip might give her contextual clues as to where to look.

Multiple castings are not cumulative. Any further castings are at +1 difficulty, and the info has a tendency to be more vague with each successive casting (Storytellers should get really creative with botches, and perhaps even make the initial rolls themselves and not reveal the result to the player).

The Bunk used to spark the cantrip should involve some traditional means of fortune-telling (Tarot, tea leaves, astrology, entrail-reading, etc.).

Type: Chimerical

●● Fair Is Foul and Foul Is Fair

With this cantrip, the caster can more actively affect the target's Dán. She can curse the target with misfortune, or she can throw a ray of good fortune into a target's path. In either case, the change is not usually major; the target's situation usually only affects elements not already decided one way or another. *Powerful enemies will not suddenly die, but with a* bit of good luck, the target may find a piece of information that changes her enemy's mind about her, or (with bad luck) the target's closest ally suddenly decides she is not trustworthy and joins the enemy camp. Whatever happens, the change is usually unexpected.

System: The Realm determines the target of the cantrip, the elements affected and any other characters involved.

Multiple castings are not cumulative; they only cause multiple effects. Furthermore, all successive castings upon a target are at +1 difficulty, and successive bad-effect castings on the same target have a tendency to rebound on the caster.

The number of successes determines the amount of good or ill fortune the target receives. For "quick-and-dirty" fortune, the caster can either raise or lower the difficulty of any one roll no higher than 3 or lower than 5.

1 success — Find or lose a small thing (car keys, an old friend).

2 successes — Find or lose a valued acquisition (your *Rage* deck; a valued friend).

3 successes — Find or lose something treasured (a passionate love; a sizable inheritance).

4 successes — Find or lose a major element (a powerful patron/enemy; a magical sword; your lifetime companion; the family fortune).

5 successes — Find or lose something critical (your health, never fatal; a major magical tome).

Type: Chimerical



Tattletale

This cantrip provides a way to scrye through an object that is familiar to the caster. With Tattletale, the changeling can see anything that is within the immediate vicinity of the object. The image appears in any reflective surface that she desires. In order to successfully cast this cantrip, the target must be well-known to the changeling, or she must possess a part of, or know its True Name. Once she establishes a connection, she can use any Perception-based Ability or cantrip through the object.

System: As with all cantrips involving multiple elements, several Realms are needed to incorporate everything. For instance, a troll wants to spy on several Nunnehi who stole his favorite goblet, as well as the nearby scenery. He would need Fae 4, Prop 2 and Scene 1. If he just wanted to view the interaction between the Nunnehi, he would only need Fae 4 and Prop 2. If he wished other characters present to view the scrying, he would need the appropriate Realm of the characters.

Multiple castings are not cumulative on this cantrip. There is no limit to the casting's range. Some users have even caught glimpses of the Dreaming (if the object is in the Dreaming, Umbra, etc., subtract two from the total successes. Assume the cantrip failed if the net result is less than one).

The more successes gained, the more detailed and intricate the information.

1 success — Shimmering glimpses, with breaks and gaps if the object is moved. Visual only, lasting a turn.

2 successes — A good image that lasts approximately five minutes with no sound or color. The viewpoint cannot be chosen, and it does not change unless the object is moved.

3 successes — The image is perfectly clear, with full color and fuzzy sound quality (sounds can be heard within five feet of the object). Viewpoint may be tilted up or down, or pan left to right. Contact lasts one scene.

4 successes — Same as above, except that everything within normal earshot of the object can be heard. Furthermore, the caster can focus (or "zoom") upon any detail near the object. With a successful Soothsay + Realm roll (difficulty is the target's Banality + 4), the caster may use Omen on any subject she can see with this cantrip. Contact lasts sunrise or sunset, whichever is closest.

5 successes — As above, except that the caster can move her point of view wherever she likes. She can choose a subject and follow him, even if he moves out of eyesight of the original object. With a successful Soothsay + Realm roll (difficulty is the target's Banality + 4), she may use up to Level Two Soothsay cantrips upon the target (giving new meaning to a "good luck charm"). Contact lasts one full day, but a Stamina + Meditation roll (difficulty 7) is necessary to maintain contact after every six hours.

Type: Chimerical

Augury

A changeling uses Omen to get a small glimpse of a person's Dán. With Augury, he can throw a major element into the path of a person's destiny.

Augury works as a limited form of Fate Fire. After the Bunk is performed (which must include some form of divination, as with Omen) and the cantrip cast, the changeling describes a scene or event which will take place at some time in the future. The event could occur anytime, and the caster has no control over when it does. Furthermore, the adage, "Be careful of what you wish for...," is particularly germane here; the changeling describes the scene, but the circumstances leading up to and following the scene are at the whim of the Storyteller (who should give the players a little slack, unless the scene described is a ridiculous attempt at powermongering). For instance, a caster describes a scene wherein her worst enemy is butchered by his own treacherous guards. A sadistic Storyteller could engineer a plotline in which the caster is forced to Elder-Form herself into an exact likeness of the enemy. Just imagine her sweating bullets as she approaches her "loyal" guards in the Elder-Form guise of her enemy. Will they strike now? Only the Storyteller knows!

No one knows whether the caster of Augury engineers the future event, or the caster's own Dán is at work as a moment in the future unravels backward in time, planting a kernel in the Augury of the intrepid caster. It is for this reason that Soothsayers treat Augury with kid gloves.

System: Multiple castings are not cumulative; however, multiple castings can "link" successive scenes in the future together. No more than three scenes may be so linked, and the Storyteller can add unforeseen plots and elements in between the linked scenes. (The more you attempt to control your Dán, the more your Dán controls you, Oedipus.) The Realms describe all of the major elements within the Augury, including the target. To affect large areas outside the immediate vicinity of the target requires Scene.

The number of successes determines the pivotal consequence of the described event.

1 success — Minor event, a scenic element (slight weather change); car keys found; an expected letter arrives.

2 successes — Uncommon event, a major scenic element (thunderstorm, snow, 3-car crash); an old friend calls out of the blue; the IRS decides not to audit you.

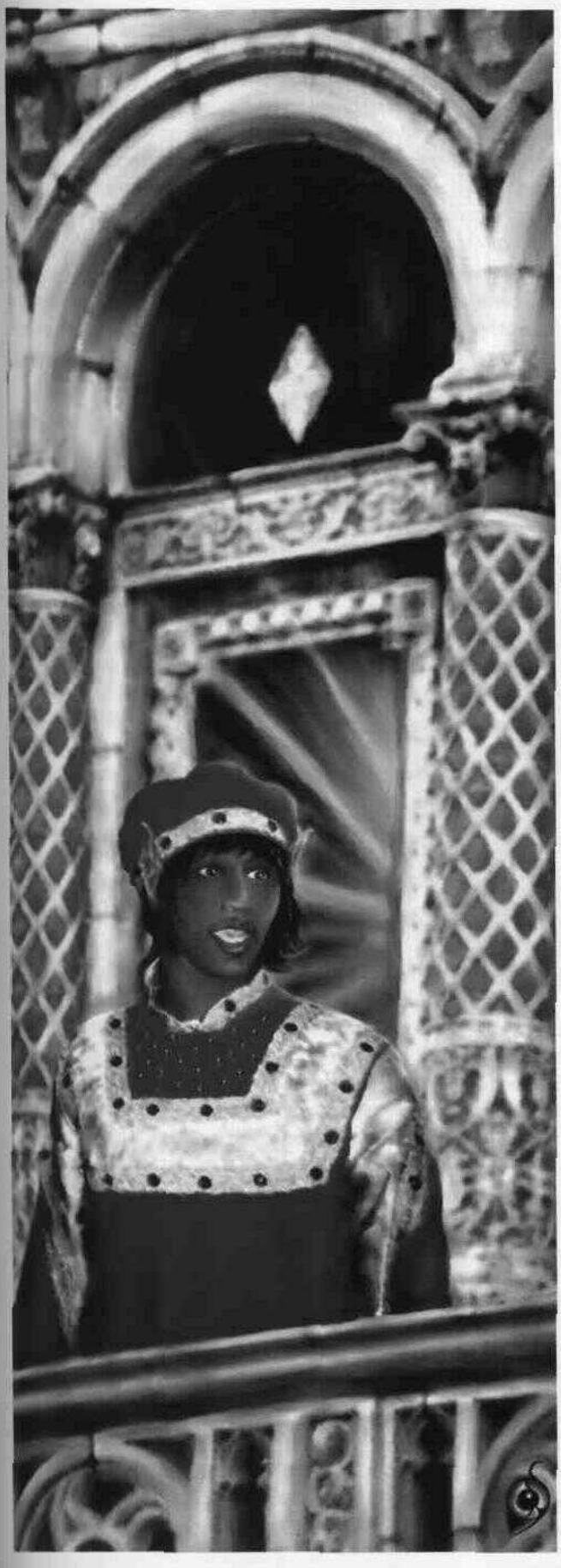
3 successes — Significant event, freakish weather (lightning strikes a particular person, or a rain of toads falls over L.A.); a dog reveals his owner's murderer; an ally arrives in the nick of time.

4 successes — Decisive event, wide-ranging elements (basketball-size hail for 36 hours, or black rain for a week); the state militia rebels; the IRS sets up a trust fund for you, based on your tax shelter.

5 successes — Acutely incredible event, nearly impossible elements (the President admits he is a vampire, a town simply disappears); the state militia announces its allegiance to Peru; a 3-headed baby holds a press conference.

Note: The caster achieves one free success (in addition to any successes earned) if her suggested Augury event is a complimentary element to the target's Dán. For example, if her target is a person dying of AIDS and she describes a scene where he passed away with all of his loved ones present, she gets one free success. If no successes are earned, she does not get this free success.

Type: Chimerical



Fate Fire

Many people have little contact with their Dán; this is why the concept is so elusive. The day of reckoning does not usually arrive for a while. Casters of Fate Fire can speed up the process and bring a person's fate to manifest sooner for good or ill, depending upon the balance.

The caster has no control over the outcome. Of course, he can make suggestions as to what may be the most fitting manifestation of Dán to the Storyteller. Casters of Fate Fire often have vague, portentous dreams of what will come to pass.

System: As with most Soothsay cantrips, the caster needs all of the Realms that will play a part in the casting of Fate Fire, including that of the target. As this is an unusually powerful cantrip, the Storyteller should take some time and thought in considering the target's manifestation of Dán (fate is usually obvious in its manifestation, but this cantrip should not totally unbalance the story... unless the Storyteller wishes to have a storyline wherein the main plot is the aftershock of Fate Fire).

The successes determine the degree of Dán brought to bear upon the target.

1 success — The target receives a chance encounter, warning her of the consequence (or benefits) of her actions. A troubled soldier has nightmares about war; a bad driver is nearly hit by a car.

2 successes — The target receives a clear illustration of her Dán, suggesting her ultimate rewards. The soldier receives *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* in the mail (no return address); the bad driver sees two cars smash up.

3 successes — A sudden turn of events in the target's plans either set her back or propel her ahead of "schedule." The soldier is court-martialed; the driver suddenly inherits a hot rod.

4 successes — Fate dramatically steps in and reveals the ends to the target's means. This may mean either sudden calamity or sudden prosperity. The soldier's platoon is wiped out (except for him), and he throws away his gun in an attempt to save an infant. The driver's close friend dies in a car accident.

5 successes — Instant karma. A character's fate is immediately brought to the fore. The soldier receives a supernatural visitation, informing him that his fate is not tied to warfare, but to saving lives. The reckless driver has a car accident, but may (or may not) live to become a safer driver.

Type: Chimerical

Sovereign

In ancient times, the sidhe used Sovereign to regularly enforce their noble dictates upon commoner kith. A few highly conservative (and unpopular) nobles still adhere to this custom. The Art of Sovereign forces commoners and nobles of equal or lesser rank to obey the caster's dictates. Thus, a knight could not use Sovereign on a baron.

This Art is the most widespread grievance that commoner *fae* have against the sidhe nobility. As such, wise nobles use this Art sparingly, lest they risk a revolt among their subjects. Traditionally, this Art was jealously guarded by the nobility, but

in recent times this Art has surfaced in some commoners' use. Some members of the Beltaine Blade blame House Fiona, but the more likely reason is the rise of the non-sidhe nobility.

Any time this cantrip is used to affect a changeling of equal rank (commoners are all considered to be of equal rank), the target can make a resisted Willpower roll (difficulty 6) to resist the effects of the cantrip. Each success reduces the caster's successes by one. Any character can spend a Willpower point to be allowed to make a similar roll, but at difficulty 7.

Attribute: Charisma

Protocol

This cantrip allows nobles to conduct business and hold court functions without being perpetually interrupted by noisy childlings or commoners. Protocol ensures that everyone affected behaves as noble etiquette requires, although a roll is required to determine if the target(s) can fathom the dictates of the proceedings (see the sidebar). When this cantrip is cast, no one may speak out of turn, and sudden combat and tomfoolery are out of the question. Duels between persons of equal rank to settle disputes are acceptable, if the reigning noble permits it.

Nobles take court very seriously, as it is the main deciding body for Kithain society. Before a noble can cast Protocol, he must determine what kind of court session he is holding, as well as its purpose (tribunal, treaty, a simple festival, Parliament of Dreams session, etc.). The court sessions listed below are in ascending order of secrecy. Ironically, the more secretive the session, the less often Protocol is used.

Open Court: Open to almost everyone. Often called as an impromptu session or a festivity highlight. Protocol is sometimes used if things threaten to get out of hand.

Closed Court: Open to certain commoners privy to important information. Called to settle matters of state. Protocol is occasionally used, especially if suspect commoners are in attendance.

Privy Council: Open to the reigning lord and his closest advisors. Protocol is rarely used here.

Reune: Highly secretive meeting between close confidantes or those making backroom political deals. Protocol is never used; noble fae would consider it an insult.

In addition, the form of a session is often difficult to comprehend for those unused to court proceedings. Attending changelings must make a Perception + Etiquette roll (difficulty and number of successes vary; sidhe reduce the difficulty by two, and non-kith attendants automatically fail this roll) or be out of sync with the proceedings. (Increase the difficulty of all Social and Mental rolls related to the proceedings by two.)

System: The Realms describe the targets affected. Obviously, certain Realms (such as Prop) are useless with Protocol.

The number of successes determines how difficult the Protocol cantrip is to break by making a resisted Willpower roll as described above. A botch when resisting this cantrip means the target abases herself by bowing and scraping to the reigning lord until the cantrip ends. This cantrip remains in effect until dusk, dawn or when the lord proclaims, "Court adjourned!"—whichever occurs first.

Multiple castings of this cantrip are not cumulative. Two nobles who attempt to cast this cantrip at the same time is a minor breech of etiquette to the higher ranking noble (of course, the lower ranking noble's Protocol fails).

Type: Wyrd

Dictum

This cantrip enforces the power of authority and command over commoners and underlings. The target is simply unable to disobey the requests of the caster, although the target is aware when Dictum is used upon him (even if he is unfamiliar with the Arts).

A target under the sway of Dictum attempts to carry out the caster's requests to the spirit and the letter, unless the request would somehow place him in immediate danger. A target couldn't be told to attack a werewolf, but he could be asked to guard the door against werewolves, as the command does not place the target in immediate harm.

This cantrip, more than any other Sovereign cantrip, is the major point of contention between commoners and nobles. Commoner kith seem to take less of an affront to a user of Grandeur (see below) than a user of Dictum. After all, most Kithain already respect and feel a certain sense of awe for the nobility, but they do not appreciate being forced to bow and scrape before every noble whim.

System: The Realm determines the targets affected by the cantrip.

The number of successes denotes how difficult this cantrip is to resist by making an opposed Willpower roll as described above. This cantrip lasts exactly one hour. Multiple castings are cumulative (successive castings are at an additional +1 difficulty for each time cast).

Type: Wyrd or Chimerical

Grandeur

Grandeur impresses upon others that element of the majesty of Arcadia that every noble and sidhe carries. It is the component of noble poise and refinement that later mortal rulers attempted (but ultimately failed) with their divine pageants and coronations. Anyone who views a caster of Grandeur is overcome with awe; he can take no action (violent or otherwise) in the presence of the noble (even if that noble attacks the target). Holding court is not possible for a caster of Grandeur, as most of the attendees would be unable to speak.

Changelings with romantic Legacies tend to fall in love with casters of Grandeur; this may be the reason it is rarely used

in public (although High King David does seem to have an overwhelming number of admirers....).

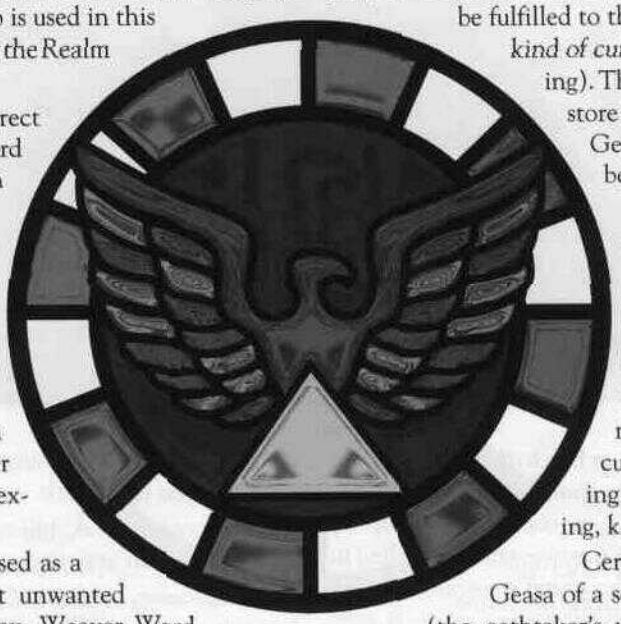
System: When Grandeur is cast, the Realm is determined by the subject(s) of the cantrip. The Scene Realm can be added to affect multiple targets.

If someone wishes to resist, she may attempt an opposed Willpower roll (difficulty is the number of successes scored by the caster). This cantrip lasts for one scene. Multiple castings are cumulative (successive castings are at an additional +1 difficulty for each time cast).

Type: Chimerical

●●●● Weaver Ward

Use of this cantrip prevents a door or entranceway from being passed by certain persons or inanimate objects. Alternately, a caster can use Weaver Ward to insure that no one picks up or uses an object (if the cantrip is used in this manner, the caster must also possess the Realm that represents the object).



A changeling may use this to erect a selective screening for this Ward that lets certain persons through (though the person's True Name must be known and spoke aloud at the time of casting), such as a Warded cave that only permits members of a certain society to enter. She can also create a deactivator password that temporarily shuts the Ward down; "Open sesame!" and "Open locks whoever knocks!" are two more famous examples of such.

Weaver Ward may be also used as a "cantrip lock," or a lock against unwanted counterweavings. Cast in this way, Weaver Ward protects cantrips from being undone. No counterweaving is possible against a cantrip unless the Weaver Ward is undone first. For this to occur, the counterweaver must be aware of the Weaver Ward, and direct her counterweaves against it. After Weaver Ward is undone, the other spell can be made normally.

System: The Realms determine who or what may not pass through the Weaver Ward. If cast upon a particular item rather than a doorway, a Realm appropriate to the item must be used. To Ward against cantrips, the Dweomer of Glamour (the fifth level of Fae) must be used.

Even one success with Weaver Ward prevents the subject of the cantrip from entering the specified doorway or using the intended object. The only ways around this cantrip are casting a Counter-Weave, or the Wayfare cantrip Portal Passage. In either case, the would-be breaker must score more successes than the original Weaver Ward casting. Otherwise, only the wearing of time (many years) or excessive Banality will overcome this cantrip. In the presence of strongly banal people (those with more Banality than Glamour), a Weaver Ward loses one success per day. Once the successes are reduced to zero, the Ward is destroyed. In the presence of Autumn People, this deterioration takes place at a rate of one success per hour.

Multiple castings of this cantrip are cumulative, but the caster can only accumulate a maximum of five successes on any given Weaver Ward.

Note: Yes, you can cast Weaver Ward on someone's mouth, but you need to achieve more (non-cumulative) successes than the target's Willpower (and the target can spend Willpower to automatically overcome the obnoxious use of this cantrip.

Type: Wyrd

●●●●● Geas (or Ban)

When this cantrip is used, the power of Glamour is employed to direct a person upon a task or quest. This quest must be fulfilled to the letter, or the target suffers some kind of curse (designated at the time of casting). The target need not know what lies in store for him if he fails to complete the Geas, but the anxiety of knowing can be worse than the punishment.

The other use of this cantrip, called Ban, forbids a target from doing something or engaging in a specified activity. The most common use of this cantrip is the exile-Ban, which forces the target to leave a specified area and never return (or suffer the effect of the curse). A Ban can also be a forswearing of a certain activity, such as smoking, killing another changeling, etc.

Certain forsworn quests and oaths are Geasa of a sort, and need no caster to initiate (the oathtaker's will and desire are initiating the cantrip). **See "Oaths" in Chapter Seven for details on this form of Geas.** For any other oaths not specified by this section, assume that a point of temporary Glamour is gained upon completion of the quest. The Storyteller must determine any ill effects for failure to complete the quest or the breaking of an oath. The minimum should be the addition of a permanent point of Banality.

A Geas or Ban that is impossible (e.g., a mortal is ordered never to breathe air) immediately fails. Geasa or Bans ordering a target to kill himself are likewise void, but a Geas or Ban can be cast which will surely mean death to the target (i.e., a target could not be Geased to stab himself, but he could be forced to take a quest in which he must kill an "unkillable" enemy).

System: The target of the cantrip determines the Realm need to cast this cantrip. The Scene Realm can be used to affect multiple targets. Unlike other cantrips, the changeling only needs the Realm affecting the target(s) to cast Geas or Ban. The Prop Realm is not usually needed unless the Storyteller feels that this is necessary. As usual, Scene is required to affect multiple targets.



The target must fulfill the Geas or Ban to the letter or suffer the consequences, determined by the number of successes. The target may (immediately) attempt to resist the cantrip by spending one permanent point of Willpower and succeeding in a Willpower roll (difficulty 4 + the caster's successes). This attempt must be made immediately after the cantrip is cast. Only one success is necessary to resist its effects. A Geas or Ban is immune to the effects of counteweaving.

The caster must divide her total successes between the quest and the curse (see below). She cannot stack multiple castings of this cantrip to increase the effects, though a single character can be affected by multiple Geasa and Bans. If she spends an extra Glamour point, she can designate the curse to gradually affect the target (with increasing severity) over the course of the quest. For example, a caster could send a target on a quest to find true love; the longer he looks, the more a debilitating and scarring disease ravages his body.

A Geas can be long-term ("Fight injustice whenever you face it.") or short-term ("No one may move until I finish singing my ballad."). The extent and power of the Geas (and the curse) are only limited by the number of successes at the time of casting.

Quests or Bans:

1 success — A simple Geas or Ban (drive me to the airport; stop picking your nose).

2 successes — A moderate Geas or Ban (retrieve a known item that has few guards; exile from a place rarely visited).

3 successes — A difficult Geas or Ban (find an unknown person; cease an activity you find important).

4 successes — A nearly impossible Geas or Ban (find an honest politician; exile from an area you've lived in all your life).

5 successes — A legendary Geas or Ban (bring back the Siege Perilous from Arcadia; never visit the love with whom you have sworn the Oath of Truehearts).

Curses:

1 success — Mild curse (rash or itch).

2 successes — Moderate curse (minor physical ailment or non-debilitating illness, such as a cold).

3 successes — Major curse (debilitating illness).

4 successes — Catastrophic curse (loss of loved ones, all possessions, etc.).

5 successes — Deadly curse (death, or worse).

Type: Chimerical

Wayfare

Wayfare is the Art of efficient travel. Originally developed by scouts and messengers, this Art has also found use in noble circles as a means to spy, because the powers at higher levels allow one to move into seemingly impossible places. For this

reason, the overt use of Wayfare at higher levels is carefully watched by some nobles (and outlawed by others). At the lower end, the Art is considered more of a useful tool than a dangerous weapon. In general, commoners, noble retainers and eshu are the most likely to possess Wayfare.

Attribute: Wits

Hopscotch

Leap trods in a single bound! With this cantrip, the changeling can make herself or others venture (seemingly) impossible leaps, either up or down. This cantrip is limited by the amount of space available (she could not smash an enemy into the ground as she could with Gimmix).

System: The Realm is determined by the target imbued with the ability to leap. An item imbued with this ability can be made to leap as well as people, though the caster must actually *will* it to do so. Anyone in physical contact with the item may prevent it from doing so by making an opposed Willpower roll (difficulty 6). Each success reduces the caster's successes by one. A failed Willpower roll generally means that the item in question rips free from the resisting parties grasp and leaps into the air. In the case of this cantrip being cast upon a person's clothing, the clothing will generally rip free (unless it is of particularly sturdy manufacture). This opposed roll cannot be used to stop a person who has been affected by Hopscotch. Finally, the Scene Realm *cannot* be used to cause a building to leap into the air.

If the Scene Realm is used to allow multiple people to jump, the successes must be divided among the targets.

For example, Jimble the pooka casts a Hopscotch cantrip on a unsuspecting redcap's undershorts (hoping to give the redcap in question a serious wedgie). Obviously not wanting to be pulled into the air by his undershorts, the redcap makes his Willpower roll. His four successes cancel Jimble's original four. Jimble is going to need that Hopscotch cantrip for himself in a few moments....

The number of successes determines how far the caster can leap.

1 success — Five feet straight up; 15-foot broad jump.

2 successes — One story straight up; 30-foot broad jump.

3 successes — Two stories straight up; 60-foot broad jump.

4 successes — Five stories straight up; 150-foot broad jump.

5 successes — 10 stories straight up; 300-foot broad jump.

Type: Wyrd

Quicksilver

Faster than a speeding phoenix! This cantrip allows the changeling or a subject of her choice to move incredibly fast for brief instances. Others view the Quicksilver target as a blur.

System: The Realm determines the target(s) of this cantrip. Each success allows the changeling to perform an additional action on her next turn. If the Scene Realm is used to allow multiple people to be affected by Quicksilver, the successes must be divided among the targets.

Type: Wyrd

Portal Passage

Portal Passage creates an opening through any barrier, up to 10 feet thick. This portal will generally appear as a normal door (6' x 3'), though it may be smaller, depending upon the size of the barrier. The portal will pierce any barrier, no matter how thick. A barrier can be defined as a wall, hedge or closed door. A mountain obviously cannot be pierced since this exceeds the thickness limitation, though an eight-foot-thick wall of stone can be pierced.

System: When casting a Portal Passage cantrip, the substance in which the portal is to be created determines the Realm. In most cases this will require the Nature Realm, though generous Storytellers may allow the Scene Realm to substitute (if appropriate). If the character was trying to make an opening into a locked car or a boat, the Prop Realm may be appropriate.

A created portal remains for one turn for each success gained.

Type: Wyrd

Wind Runner

This cantrip can bestow flight upon the target. The target has full control over where he wants to fly, and for how long (subject to the limits of the cantrip). *Multiple castings are not cumulative*, and another Wind Runner cantrip may not be while the changeling is airborne. If he forgets about the cantrip's duration while aloft, he has a long time to ponder his mistake as he plummets earthward.

System: The Realm is determined by the target of the cantrip (almost always Actor or Fae). This cantrip can cause an object to fly, but it is subject to the limitation of Hopscotch (see above). Any individual who is in physical contact with the object may attempt to stop the flight by making an opposed Willpower roll (difficulty 6). This opposed roll cannot be made to stop a person affected by Wind Runner. If the Scene Realm is used to allow multiple beings to fly, the caster must divide her total successes among her targets.

The number of successes + 1 die determines how many turns the target may remain aloft.

Type: Wyrd

Flicker Flash

This is the cantrip feared by the nobility for its ability to allow anyone to get anywhere. With Flicker Flash, the changeling can disappear and reappear anywhere in creation that she desires. The caster must know, see (or scrye) or possess a part of both her target and the destination. If she cannot fulfill this limitation, there is a chance the cantrip will go awry (the Storyteller should have as much fun as she likes thinking up a really creative place to send the character!).

This cantrip does not usually work when attempting to cross to the Dreaming. The few changelings foolish enough to attempt crossing to Arcadia have all been lost.

System: The nature of the person or item being affected by the cantrip determines the Realm. If the Scene Realm is used to Flicker Flash multiple people, the successes must be divided among the targets.

The number of successes determines how quickly the changeling crosses from point A to point B. Storytellers may adjust this chart as they see fit for their own chronicle.

1 success — Travel takes one hour (or more).

2 successes — Travel takes about five minutes.

3 successes — Travel takes about one minute.

4 successes — Travel takes about 10 seconds.

5 + successes — Travel is instantaneous.

Type: Wyrd

Realms

Possession of *Realms* determines who or what changeling casters are able to affect when casting cantrips. Everything up to the level she possesses is inclusive; thus if a changeling possesses four levels of a particular Realm, she is able to affect anything up to the fourth level.

The level of the Realm used added to the appropriate Attribute (based on the Art used) determines the number of dice the changeling has available to cast a cantrip. If several Realms are used in casting a cantrip, she must use the Realm with the *fewest* number of dots for figuring the Dice Pool. Even if she only needs a lower level of a Realm, she can still use her full rating for the purposes of casting a cantrip. So if she has five levels of Fae, but is only trying to affect a commoner, she can still add five to her Dice Pool.

For example, a giant land dragon is rushing at a group of changelings. Thinking quickly, Eriond the eshu decides to cast a Wind Runner cantrip so that they may fly away out of danger. The changelings have a couple of enchanted mortals with them, further complicating the situation.

Eriond has to use three Realms to be able to affect himself and all of his companions: He has Fae 4 (though he would only need one, since all of his companions are commoners), but he has only Actor 1 (which is fortunately enough since the enchanted mortals are good friends). He then combines this with Scene 4 (since they are currently in an open field). The lowest Realm he possesses is Actor, so Eriond uses this Realm when determining his Dice Pool for casting the cantrip. **See Chapter Seven for complete information on casting cantrips.**

Exceptions to the use of Realms are Scene and Time. In most cases, Scene allows the caster to affect multiple targets, and Time allows a cantrip to be cast with a delay before it takes effect (literally, a time bomb). When used this way, neither Realms are used to figure in the number of dice for Dice Pool. There are some instances where Scene can be used as the primary Realm, and in such cases Scene is used to help determine the Dice Pool.

Actor

This Realm concerns itself with mortals. The higher the Realm, the less the caster must personally know the person. This Realm includes supernatural beings such as vampires, wraiths, etc., but not other fae.

Level	Title	Description
•	True Friend	A well-known confidant, buddy, etc.
••	Personal Contact	You have had a long conversation with this person, and you know his name.
•••	Familiar Face	You recognize his face, but you do not need to know his name.
••••	Complete Stranger	You need no information, but the person cannot be your enemy.
•••••	*Dire Enemy*	This person must be your enemy, or in competition with you; a gaming friend falls in this category.

Nature

This Realm encompasses animals, elements and nonsupernatural creatures of nature.

Level	Title	Description
•	Raw Material	Unliving, organic matter (rope, paper, stone, etc.). If it's inorganic (steel, etc.), it is not of this Realm.
••	Verdant Forest	Living, organic plant material (not animals).
•••	Feral Animal	Living, nonsentient animals (self-aware animals are governed under Actor).
••••	Natural Phenomena	Natural occurrences: weather, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, etc.
•••••	Base Element	Governs natural (carbon-based) elements, or the traditional four: fire, water, earth and air.

Fae

This Realm governs all creatures of the Dreaming.

Level	Title	Description
•	Hearty Commoner	Commoner changeling.
••	Lofty Noble	Any changeling with a title.
•••	Manifold Chimera	Chimerical creatures or items.
••••	Elusive Gallain	Usable on all fae beings not categorized above: Nunnehi, Inanimae or anything else unexplainable but related to the Dreaming.
•••••	Dweomer of Glamour	Anything composed of Glamour: cantrips, treasures, dross, etc. (Note: you need to possess this level to attempt to counter any cantrips cast).

Prop

Prop governs objects that not natural and crafted from human hands. This includes formerly natural objects crafted into something else (wood sculptures, papier maché, etc.).

Level	Title	Description
•	Ornate Garb	Objects commonly worn (clothing, rings, tattoos, etc.).
••	Crafted Tool	An item with no movable parts (swords, shields, but not guns or even a morningstar).
•••	Mechanical Device	An item with movable parts, but not needing fuel to operate (including computers, which need electricity).
••••	Complex machine	A single item with movable, sometimes electronic components, but with an easily understandable mechanism (toaster ovens, cars and printing presses; no computers, TVs, etc.).
•••••	Arcane Artifact	Any crafted item not listed above, with complex components.

Scene

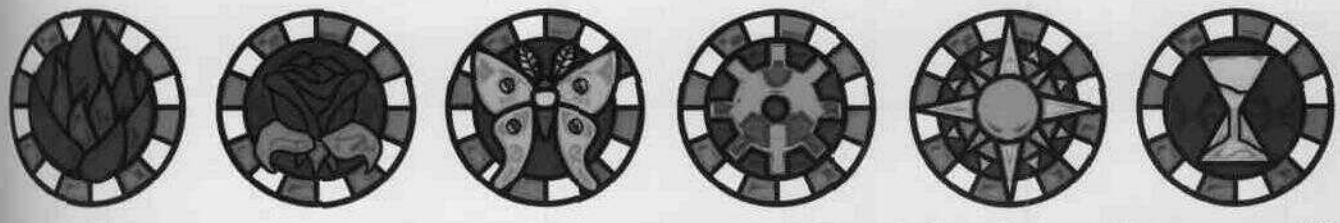
This Realm determines area of the casting. It allows the changeling to affect multiple targets (although she must possess the requisite Realms to affect these targets as well. She could not use Scene 3 by itself to affect a playground full of kids).

Level	Title	Description
•	Chamber	up to 25 sq. ft.
••	Cottage	up to 200 sq. ft.
•••	House	up to 750 sq. ft.
••••	Park	up to 2,000 sq. ft.
•••••	Kingdom	up to 50,000 sq. ft.

Time

This Realm allows the caster to set a "delay" on a cantrip casting. She could cast the cantrip, leave the area and then expect the cantrip to release without her being present. The number of dots determines how long the delay can be set, and the difficulty modifier applied to the casting.

Level	Time Delay
•	1 turn
••	1 hour
•••	1 day
••••	1 week
•••••	1 month




Under the sad, green folia
of an ancient weeping wil
I spied upon a sitting sa
reclining on mossy pillo
He played a wondrous m
thing through pipes of le
his song as ev
nymphs on a
ess dance
of earth
fig 2

Chapter Six: Rules

"Rules! Who needs 'em! Ptoooeey! You live your life by rules, and then you're supposed to play by rules, too? What a crock of goat shit! It's been my experience that the most interesting, sexy and fun stuff is as far off the beaten path as you can get. I say, give me a starting point and I'll find my own way. Don't need to be first at the finish line. Don't need to be the best. It's all the stuff in the middle, and to the right and left, that makes my tail wag."

— Se'han MacCannae, satyr grump

Rules are an important function of any game such as **Changeling**. Rules are the foundation upon which we build our house of creativity. They are the bones, muscle, sinew and brains of our characters. They outline the limitations imposed on our characters by the World of Darkness. They also allow us options that are only possible within the realm of the game. Finally, rules serve as the common judicial system on which the game is structured and through which we process the events that occur.

In **Changeling**, rules are secondary to the stories that players create. The foundation of a house only makes sure the house stands. It's the story that paints the eaves, hangs the shutters and decorates the windows. However, the necessity of rules is unquestionable. They make playing a game possible. Yet if the rules ever constrict your story, feel free to discard some of them, whether temporarily or permanently, based on the type of house you want to build. Do what you please with your game. Your only limits are the depth of your creativity and the breadth of your dream.

Rules and Storytelling

When friends gather to play **Changeling**, they work together to create a story, a shared dream built around the lives of their characters. No one wins or loses. The goal is to combine efforts in order to tell the most amazing story possible.

Most players assume the roles of changelings, faeries who must live in a world wracked by Banality and fraught with danger. One friend takes the esteemed position of Storyteller. The Storyteller has the most important function in any Storytelling game. She details the structure of the story that the players move through and embellish. The Storyteller alone knows the big picture, the scope and breadth of the story. Her primary responsibility is to the players; she works with them to ensure that everyone has a good time. She has final say in any rules disputes, and may allow or disallow anything at any time in the name of furthering the dream.

Time

Time is relative, as are all things. **Changeling** involves six different measurements to describe the passage of time. These guidelines delineate the amount of game time a character actually spends doing something as opposed to the amount of time it takes a player and the Storyteller to work through the action in real time.

Turn: A *turn* is the amount of time required for a character to take one simple action — anything that can be done in

roughly three seconds. Although the player and Storyteller may discuss a turn's action for half an hour, the time that passes for the character is much shorter.

Scene: A *scene* describes a series of events that usually takes place in one location. A scene can encompass any number of turns, or can last minutes or hours depending on the nature of character interaction. A scene can usually be titled based on its setting, such as "The Bar Scene" or "The Binghamton Freehold Scene."

Chapter: A *chapter* is a series of scenes strung together with a coherent beginning, middle and end, and is usually played through in one game session. A chapter could represent a day in the lives of the characters, or an entire week spent, say, gathering information on a particular villain.

Story: Turns, scenes and chapters combine to form stories. A *story* is the tale that characters experience. This tale has an introduction, a conflict and climax, and a resolution. The story is the problem of the month, the adventure of the moment.

Chronicle: A *chronicle* describes the big picture of the characters' lives. It is a series of stories connected by characters or setting. Long-term character development occurs through such a series as the characters become older and hopefully wiser. Characters may undergo many changes throughout a chronicle, and their goals and dreams may change as they live and learn. Characters may also come and go in a chronicle; the underlying ties are the ongoing plot and theme, as composed by the Storyteller.

Downtime: Not all of the moments in characters' lives are roleplayed. That would be boring. Events that don't relate directly to a story being told are delegated to *downtime*. Events that occur in such time, such as running the day-to-day aspects of a business, learning a new skill, resting or recuperating, are described or summarized simply to account for how downtime is spent. Downtime can last hours, days, weeks or even months depending on the amount of time that passes until the next story begins.

Dice Rolling

You need a handful of 10-sided dice, which you can buy in any game store, to play **Changeling**. The exact number you need is based on the statistics you set for your character. Players usually need fewer dice than the Storyteller does. Dice are typically rolled under the following circumstances:

• When you create your character, you divide points among various Traits to represent your character's strengths and weaknesses. Your character has a certain number of dots in each of these Traits. Once your Storyteller decides which Traits are relevant to your character's actions, you gather up one die for each dot you have in those Traits. The total number of dice that you can roll, based on your character's statistics, is called your *Dice Pool*.

• Next, your Storyteller assigns a *difficulty number* to your roll, a number between one and 10 that represents how challenging your character's action is. The Storyteller may also make rolls more difficult by reducing the number of dice in your pool, depending on the circumstances of your character's actions (such as she's attempting the task without the appropriate Ability, or her environment is making the task tougher than it might normally be). Such alterations are called *modifers*.

• Once you have rolled your Dice Pool, look to see how many successes you achieve. Every die that matches or exceeds the difficulty number is considered a *success*. However, any "one" rolled on a single die eliminates a success. Count how many successes you have left, and that number represents the height of your accomplishment or the depth of your failure. The more successes you roll, the better your character does. If you roll no successes, your character doesn't achieve what she set out to do, and the roll is a *failure*. If you roll more "ones" than you do successes, your character *botches*, which is a catastrophic failure; not only does your character fail at her task, but something bad happens as well. **(See "Botches," pg. 199.)**

Rolling dice is exciting — you don't know what's going to happen. Don't get carried away, though. The dice serve a purpose, but rolling them to determine every outcome becomes tedious. Roll dice only if roleplaying or the mutual consent of the players doesn't resolve the matter. **Changeling** *is a roleplaying* game that uses dice, not a dice-rolling game in which you play a role. Use your dice to enhance play, not to drive it.

Trait Ratings

You define your character through her Traits. Traits in **Changeling** are rated one to five to represent a character's strengths and weaknesses. One is lousy; five is superb. The normal range runs between one and three, with two being the human average. A character can also have a Trait rating of zero if she is handicapped or particularly miserable at something. Use the following chart as a guide when defining your character, deciding how capable she is, and assigning dots to Traits.

x	Abysmal
•	Poor
••	Average
•••	Good
••••	Exceptional
•••••	Superb

The two most commonly used types of Traits are Attributes and Abilities. Attributes represent the basic physical, social and mental capabilities of a character, such as Dexterity, Charisma and Intelligence. Abilities include Talents, Skills and Knowledges (like Athletics, Drive and Law) that a character has learned throughout her life. When you assign dots to your character's Attributes, you determine how strong, attractive or smart she is. Choosing your character's Abilities defines what she knows, what she can do and how well she can do it.

Whenever your character performs an action, the Storyteller decides which Traits apply to that action. For every dot that you have in the named Traits, you can roll one die. Thus, if your character performs a feat of strength and she has four dots in Strength, you get four dice in your Dice Pool for that roll.

It's rare to roll only the dice that your character has in a particular Attribute (which are innate aptitudes). You typically add the dice from a relevant Ability (Skill, Talent or Knowledge). Your Storyteller chooses one Attribute and one Ability that she thinks applies to the task your character is attempting. This combination of Traits makes up your Dice Pool. You never



combine more than two Traits to produce a Dice Pool. Furthermore, you use only one Attribute or one Attribute plus one Ability to create a pool. You cannot combine two Attributes or two Abilities.

Any Attribute can be combined with any Ability, although some combinations are much less likely than others. For example, you might not expect to combine Stamina + Drive. However, if a character is taking a long trip and risks falling asleep at the wheel, this roll would be appropriate. Difficulties and conditions listed in the following examples are arbitrary, and your Storyteller may lower or increase them based on the circumstances of the story.

For Example

Michelle tells her Storyteller, Ed, that Mimi, her cat pooka character, is trying to snag a goldfish from the fountain in a Chinese restaurant. Ed decides which Attribute and which Ability applies to Mimi's attempt. He tells Michelle to roll Dexterity (an Attribute) plus Athletics (an Ability). Michelle adds the number of dots she has in Dexterity (3) to the number she has in Athletics (2) to create her Dice Pool (a total of five dice). She rolls all five dice versus a difficulty number assigned by her Storyteller (in this case 6) — she gets 1, 5, 6, 8, 9. Now she counts her successes, removing one success for each "one" that's rolled. The "one" cancels out the 6 she got, leaving her two successes (8 and 9). The total number of successes determines how well Mimi succeeds at catching a goldfish. With two successes, Mimi manages to snag her little appetizer. Now, what sauce goes with goldfish?

Actions

Words, imagination and descriptions are the mainstay of any Storytelling game. **Changeling** players act out their characters' conversations and describe their actions. Your character will attempt many different things in the course of a game, from tenderly kissing the hand of his beloved to swinging his sword with gusto. You describe your character's actions to the Storyteller and the other players so that they can envision the scene and then describe their characters' actions. Your action descriptions should be detailed. This helps the others imagine exactly what your character is doing.

Many actions occur automatically, whether because of their simplicity or because there's no opposition to them. A character who "greedily eats the steaming french fries in front of her" has no trouble doing so. Other actions are more difficult, and the Storyteller may request that a player roll her Dice Pool to see how well the character succeeds, if at all.

Actions are broken down into several types, and a player has certain options when choosing her actions. An explanation of each type of action follows, accompanied by an example that illustrates it.

Simple Actions

The basic type of action is the *simple action*. When a character makes a simple action, she performs one act. The

player gathers her Dice Pool based on the appropriate Traits, the Storyteller assigns a difficulty number to the action, and the player rolls. The outcome of the roll determines the character's degree of success.

For Example

Wrench, a nocker, has gathered with some of his companions to share information in the Binghamton freehold, a diner in the mundane world. He scratches his head, bored, as he listens to Tomacchio the troll's long-winded tale of his own heroism. Wrench's mind and eyes begin to wander. He notices that a glass of milk balances precariously on the edge of a table. Someone bumps the table, and the glass shakes loose. He dives in an attempt to rescue the glass before it hits the floor.

The Storyteller informs Wrench's player that he must roll Dexterity + Athletics against a difficulty number of 6. The player adds the number of dots that Wrench has in those Traits and gathers his Dice Pool. There are seven dots, so he can roll seven dice. He rolls 1, 1, 3, 4, 4, 6, 8. The "ones" cancel out the two successes and, with no successes left, Wrench's player fails the roll. The Storyteller describes the tumble, resounding crash and white splash of milk as Wrench's hand grabs at empty air, just a second too late.

Multiple Actions and Splitting Dice Pools

Sometimes circumstances demand that you try to do several things at once, which occurs often in a high-adventure game like **Changeling**. Your character may attempt to perform two or more simple actions in the same turn. You must split your Dice Pool among the actions to do so. For example, if your character wants to attempt to break into a car while watching for the cops, he performs a *multiple action*.

Compare your character's Dice Pool for breaking into the car (Dexterity + Security) to his Dice Pool for watching for the cops (Wits + Alertness). You must use the smaller of the pools, and allocate the dice in it among the actions. Roll separately for each action. If you fail one of the rolls, you don't necessarily fail all actions (unless all rolls are failures). You can succeed at one task and fail or even botch another in the same turn.

For Example

Mary Contrary, a sad-faced beagle pooka, is sitting at the table near the falling glass of milk. With a gasp, she simultaneously tries to move out of the way and lunges downward to grab her friend Tehlana's laptop computer, which hums quietly on the floor nearby.

Mary is attempting two simple actions in the same turn. The Storyteller informs Mary's player that the rolls are Dexterity + Dodge (to avoid getting splashed) and Dexterity + Athletics (to grab the computer). Mary's player compares her two Dice Pools and discovers that her Dexterity + Athletics is the smaller of the two, with only five dice. She allocates three of those dice to dodging the milk, and two to rescuing the laptop. The Storyteller assigns a difficulty of 6 to both rolls. The player rolls, and Mary succeeds at dodging, but fails to rescue the laptop. The Storyteller describes the wet sizzle as milk splashes on the keys of the computer and causes it to malfunction. Mary's shoes are dry, though.



Extended Actions

Simple and multiple actions require only one success per roll for a character to accomplish each task. Any successes beyond the first indicate how well the character succeeds. An *extended action* works differently; more than one success is required to perform a feat. An extended action requires continuous effort over a period of time, such as putting out a fire over a space of turns, quickly stitching up a torn pocket in minutes, or maybe even taking hours to hack into the United Nations database. The Storyteller defines the extended action by the number of successes the player must accumulate before her character completes her task. This number could be anywhere from three to 20 successes. You roll repeatedly over subsequent turns (or other units of time, such as minutes, depending on the enormity of the task) in an attempt to accumulate the required number of successes. Once you have collected enough successes, your character has accomplished the task.

If a roll is botched (see below) in an extended action, all accumulated successes are lost. The whole effort is for naught and may be impossible to complete; essential tools were broken, or subjects were frightened off.

It's also possible to fail an extended action simply because you run out of time. If you need to accomplish a task in three turns, and need five successes to do so (perhaps a bomb is counting down to detonation), you're out of luck if you have only four successes at the end of turn three. The Storyteller decides when a time limit applies to an extended action.

For Example

Tehlana, another nocker, looks down to see her laptop fizzling. She cries out in anger and surprise, "Which one of you turkeys did this?!" She scoops up the laptop, dumps out as much milk as she can and dries out the keyboard. She pops a disk into the drive, and her fingers flicker over the keys in an attempt to save the data stored on the machine.

Recovering information is no minor task, but it's only a single task, so it is deemed to be extended. The Storyteller informs Tehlana's player that she needs seven successes on a Wits + Computer roll (difficulty 6), and that Tehlana will lose a megabyte of information from the computer's memory chip for every turn after the first that she attempts the action. The player gathers her Dice Pool and rolls. She gets four successes in the first turn, and only two in the second turn. The computer loses a megabyte of memory in the second turn. The player needs only one more success to complete the task. Her third roll botches! The Storyteller describes that the laptop makes an odd whirring sound, and a bright light flashes across the screen before it goes blank. Tehlana has lost everything, and she howls in rage. Even if the third roll had succeeded, the laptop would have lost two megs of information.

Resisted Actions

Sometimes your character's actions are opposed directly by another character, who typically seeks to accomplish the same task. This is a *resisted action*. Both players roll their appropriate Dice Pools versus a difficulty number indicated by the Storyteller. The players compare the number of successes achieved, and the player who rolls the most succeeds. Each success rolled by the loser cancels out one of the winner's successes in the same way that "ones" cancel out successes. The winner's remaining successes define how well the task is accomplished. It's difficult to perform a resoundingly successful resisted action.

For Example

Se'han and Lira, two satyr members of the Binghamton freehold, look up at the sound of the crash. Lira works at the freehold as a waitress, and begins to rise from her seat in Se'han's lap to clean up the mess. Se'han wraps his arms more tightly around her waist and grins up at her. "Let one o' the lads clean that up," he purrs, his voice deep and amused. Lira shakes her head. "No can do, Se'han. I'm the only one here today." She wiggles and squirms, trying to free herself from his embrace.

The characters struggle directly against each other in resisted actions. The Storyteller asks Se'han and Lira's players to roll Dice Pools based on Strength + Brawl. The difficulty number she sets for each is equal to the opponent's total Dice Pool. Se'han rolls six dice against a difficulty of five, and Lira rolls five dice against a difficulty of six. Despite the odds, Se'han rolls fewer successes than Lira does, and Lira manages to wriggle out of Se'han's grasp, leaving him cold, alone and pouting.

Resisted and Extended Actions

Actions can be both resisted and extended. Players compete to see who collects a designated number of successes first, over an extended period of time. The successes achieved in each roll are compared. Each success above the opponent's number of successes achieved in an individual roll is added to a success total. The first opponent to collect the designated number of successes wins the contest. It can take some time to accumulate the total number of successes needed.

For Example

By this time, everyone in the freehold has turned to see what the commotion is. Johnny, a loud-mouthed redcap, begins to hoot, pointing at Tehlana. Her face turns bright red, all the way to the tips of her ears. She catches Johnny's eye and glares. They commence a staredown, neither one willing to be the first to look away.

The Storyteller decides that this is both a resisted and an extended action. He tells the players that the first one to accumulate three successes on a Stamina + Intimidation roll versus a difficulty number of 6 wins the challenge. Rolls are made every turn. Johnny's player rolls four successes, and Tehlana's player rolls three in the first turn. Tehlana's successes cancel out three of Johnny's, so the score is Johnny: one, Tehlana: zero. In the second turn, Johnny's player rolls only three successes, and Tehlana's player gets five. The score is now Johnny: one, Tehlana: two. In the next turn, Johnny rolls three successes and Tehlana rolls four. The final score is Johnny: one, Tehlana: three. Tehlana wins the staredown. She continues to glare at Johnny as he averts his eyes and undoes his smirk.

Action	Example	Description
Simple Action	Search, Shoot a gun	One roll completes the task. The player rolls the appropriate Dice Pool versus a difficulty number set by the Storyteller. Automatic success is possible.
Multiple Action	Dodge and shoot, Dodge and drive	The player compares the two Dice Pools, uses the smallest and allocates the dice among the actions. She rolls for each action against a difficulty number set by the Storyteller. You can be successful at one action while failing or botching another. Individual automatic successes are possible.
Extended Action	Research, Seduction, Climbing	The task takes a certain number of successes to complete. The effort is protracted over turns, but sometimes minutes or hours.
Resisted Action	Gambling, Shadowing, Intimidation	Two characters oppose each other. A roll is made for each with difficulties set by the Storyteller. The character with the most successes wins, but the loser's successes are subtracted from the winner's to determine *degree* of success.
Extended and Resisted Action	Arm-wrestling match	The winner is the first to accumulate a certain number of successes over time (usually turns). Successes achieved in excess of the opponent's in a single roll are accumulated and applied toward accomplishing the goal first. The Storyteller sets the difficulties of extended and resisted rolls.

Teamwork

Characters can cooperate to accomplish a specific task, including extended actions. Players roll their respective Dice Pools and the number of successes are added together. (The Traits of different characters cannot be shared to form a new Dice Pool.) The total number of successes rolled indicates how well the group accomplishes its task, if at all. More participants usually increase the chances for greater success. Teamwork is effective in many circumstances, such as combat, research and repairing machines. On the other hand, too many cooks can spoil the broth. The Storyteller decides how many characters can contribute to a task, if any at all.

For Example

All the noise and confusion upsets Mary Contrary, who is still a childling. She starts to cry, which sounds more like baying since she is a beagle pooka. Thomas, a boggan, and Mars'hia, an eshu, rush to her side and attempt to comfort her, combining their efforts.

The Storyteller decides this involves a Charisma + Empathy roll versus a difficulty number of 6. Thomas' and Mars'hia's players roll their Dice Pools separately. Thomas' player rolls one success; Mars'hia's rolls two. Together, they achieve three successes, which constitute a solid success for this simple action. The players describe how Thomas puts his arm around Mary's shoulders comfortingly, while Mars'hia croons, "There, there, dear. No use crying over spillt milk." Mary is soothed by her friends' gestures, and her tears taper off into hiccups.

Difficulties and Successes

Once you have stated your character's action, and it has been decided that a roll is necessary to accomplish the feat, the Storyteller assigns a difficulty number to the action. The difficulty number is the minimum number you must roll on any one die in order for that die to be considered a success. A difficulty number is always a number between 2 and 10. If the difficulty number is 6, and you roll 3, 5, 6 and 9, you score two successes (6 and 9). The lower the difficulty number, the easier the task is to accomplish.

Furthermore, the Storyteller can decide to assign a difficulty number of 2 or 10 (though they're not on the list, on the next page). These difficulties should be rare. A difficulty of 2 means the action is pathetically easy. A difficulty of 10 indicates that the action is nearly impossible and your character is as likely to botch as he is to succeed. The standard difficulty number for an action is 6, unless the Storyteller states otherwise.

Difficulties

3 Easy
4 Routine
5 Straightforward
6 Standard
7 Challenging
8 Difficult
9 Extremely Difficult

You need to roll only one success for your character to succeed at an action. However, the more successes you roll, the better your character performs. One success means your character achieves marginal success, whereas three indicate complete success and five indicate a monumental success.

Degrees of Success

One Success	Marginal
Two Successes	Moderate
Three Successes	Complete
Four Successes	Exceptional
Five Successes	Phenomenal

Automatic Successes

The Storyteller may decide to forego making you roll to determine success at an action if the total of your Dice Pool exceeds the difficulty number of the action. This is called an *automatic success*. Automatic successes preserve the integrity of the story and avoid interrupting roleplaying with intrusive game mechanics. The Storyteller decides whether to allow an automatic success or to demand a roll, no matter how many dice are in your pool or how low a difficulty number is. (Actions that are always problematic or unpredictable, such as attacks, should always be rolled for, no matter how many dice are in a pool.) An automatic success is marginal at best, as if only one success had been scored. If you want better results at the action, you must make a roll.

Botches

The last thing any player wants to roll is a *botch*, which occurs when he rolls more "ones" than successes. Ones cancel out successes, so a botch indicates "negative success" or a disastrous failure.

The Storyteller decides what happens when a player botches. The results are obvious in many cases. If a character attempts to climb a rope and a botch is rolled, she probably falls. If she tries to sneak up on someone and a botch is rolled, she might knock over a vase. Other situations may not be so clear-cut. Botches require a bit of creativity on the part of the Storyteller.

For Example

Sergei the troll is attempting to intimidate a young boggan into leaving him alone. Sergei's player botches the roll, and the boggan misinterprets Sergei's meaning. The boggan falls head over heels in love with him, and now follows him wherever he goes.

When deciding the outcome of a botch, the Storyteller should try to avoid the obvious disaster. Instead, try to find another alternative that might surprise and amuse the players with its inventiveness. For example, with the sneaking character example above, rather than just announcing that the character is discovered by a noise she makes, it would be much more amusing and fun for the player if suddenly the electricity went out in the building and the character was thrown into pitch darkness, losing sight of the person she was sneaking up on. Always strive to provide the most unusual and interesting result for a botch.

Trying It Again

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

If your character fails an action, you may decide that he tries again. Subsequent attempts may be possible, depending on the circumstances, although the Storyteller may always rule that further attempts are pointless. In order to simulate the growing frustration a character feels as he tries to accomplish something and fails repeatedly, the Storyteller may add one to the difficulty number of each subsequent attempt. If an original difficulty was 6, it becomes 7 on the next attempt, and 8 on the third. The character accomplishes his goal on the first successful roll. Each new attempt is a separate action.

Note that trying rolls again usually applies only to simple actions. Extended actions already allow for successive attempts, and resisted rolls are won or lost outright. However, if you want to attempt an extended or resisted action again, after failing it once, you can initiate a whole new series of rolls in which your difficulty is one higher than it was in the previous attempt.

There are, of course, situations in which rolls cannot be tried again. If a character fails to dodge (with the Dodge Ability), for example, or throws a punch, she takes damage or misses her target, as appropriate. Future dodge or attack attempts are made normally.

For Example

Sneezer, a nocker, is attempting to make a simple repair on an engine (Dexterity + Repair versus a difficulty number of 6). Her player fails the first roll. Sneezer is determined to keep trying, though. On the next attempt, the player must roll Dexterity + Repair, difficulty 7. With each subsequent attempt that she fails, Sneezer becomes increasingly frustrated and confused as to the reason for the malfunction. She may eventually find it impossible to repair the engine.

Increasing difficulty also represents growing opposition from a living or aware opponent. A prime example is the eshu Sable's attempt to lie (Wits + Subterfuge) to her friend Moira, a sluagh, about where she was the night before. Sable isn't convincing in her first attempt; her player fails the roll. Each lie she tells after that risks getting her into more trouble and causes Moira to become increasingly suspicious (the difficulty of the Wits + Subterfuge roll increases by one every time Sable's player tries again).

Examples of Rolls

Now you know the rules, how to avoid them, and how to use them to your advantage to create your own wondrous faerie tale within the realm of the **World of Darkness**. The dice-rolling system described in this chapter is really all you need to play the game. Rules described later in this book are intended as clarifications, options, exceptions and extensions to the basic ones detailed above. This chapter holds all the information you need to understand the rest of this book. If you feel you have missed

something or don't understand a rule, re-read this chapter and you'll find that it makes more sense the second time around.

The following are some examples of rolls and ways in which you can combine Attributes and Abilities to represent certain actions. You might even want to grab some dice and your character sheet and try a few of the rolls if you're new to this.

- Your character fights a giant chimerical scorpion and attempts to cut off its tail with her sword. Roll Dexterity + Melee (difficulty 8).
- Your character attempts to play a lullaby on her flute. Roll Charisma + Performance (difficulty 6). The number of successes rolled determines how well she plays.
- Your character suddenly finds herself in the middle of a full-blown gang war, bullets flying everywhere. Roll Wits + Dodge (difficulty 8) to see if she can find a place to hide.
- Two characters, yours and a stubborn nocker, argue the merits of building a chimerical helicopter. Both players roll Manipulation + Persuasion (difficulty 6) and the one who rolls the most successes wins the resisted action.
- Is that redcap as mad as he seems? Roll Perception + Empathy (difficulty 7) to determine if your character can tell.
- Your character has to solve a riddle, or the chimerical sphinx parked on the lawn won't let her in the building beyond. Roll Intelligence + Enigmas (difficulty 7) to see if she can solve it.
- Your character attempts to threaten a pooka into submission. She lifts the pooka up by the seat of his pants. Roll Strength + Intimidation (difficulty 8).
- Your character, a duke, tries to regain control when chaos erupts during a particularly long court session. Roll Stamina + Leadership (difficulty 7) in this extended action. A total of three successes are required.
- Can your character charm the cop into not giving you a ticket? Roll Appearance + Persuasion (difficulty 8).
- You suspect that the little girl with the strawberry-blonde hair might be a changeling who has yet to awaken. Roll Perception + Kenning (difficulty 8) to sense the level of her Glamour.

Game Terms

The following list provides definitions of some of the terms commonly used in **Changeling**. Not all of these will make sense to you yet, but as you continue to read through this book you can refer back to them to refresh your memory.

Ability: A Trait that describes what a character has learned through experience and training. Some examples include *Athletics*, *Drive* and *Linguistics*.

Action: Any activity or feat performed by a character; when a player announces that his character is going to do something, that the character is taking an action.

Advantages: A catch-all category of character Traits that includes *Backgrounds*, *Arts* and *Realms*.

Arts: An Art is an area of concentration within the field of faerie magic. A character may have expertise in more than one Art or in several. Examples of Arts include *Chicanery*, *Legerdemain* and *Wayfare*.

The Golden Rule

The only real rule in **Changeling** is that the rules are yours to do with as you please. They are offered here as guides and a starting point from which to play; they are not set in stone. Feel free to change, eliminate or add to the rules as you see fit. **Changeling** is about breaking the Banality that binds us all, that keeps us from believing and from making our lives the tributes that they could be. Don't become trapped in the gears of the machine and forget to explore new horizons and stretch the boundaries of your imagination. The rules don't control you, you control them.

Attributes: Traits that describes a character's innate physical, social and mental aptitudes, such as how strong (*Strength*), smart (*Intelligence*) or attractive (*Appearance*) she is.

Backgrounds Traits: Traits that represent aspects of a character's life not directly related to his Attributes or Abilities. Examples of Background Traits include items the character may own (*Chimera*, *Treasures*) or people the character may know (*Contacts*, *Mentor*, *Retinue*).

Banality: A measure of the degree to which mortal rationality and disbelief has affected a person, changeling or place. It is one of the Temper Traits.

Botch: A catastrophic failure on a dice roll. A player botches when he rolls more "ones" than successes.

Bunk: An action that a changeling must perform before casting a cantrip successfully.

Cantrip: A spell cast by a changeling.

Chapter: A part of a story that is usually played in one game session, made up of several scenes and characterized by a clear beginning, middle and end.

Character: A **Changeling** player assumes a role in the game, creating a fictional individual to roleplay. This fictional person is that player's character.

Chronicle: The overall scope of a game; a series of stories that reveals the bigger picture of the characters' lives. In a chronicle, the Storyteller sets the overall theme and plots the development of the characters and the imaginary world they live in.

Dice Pool: The total number of dice that you can roll based on the number of dots you have in the relevant Traits, plus or minus any modifiers.

Difficulty Number: This number is assigned by the Storyteller and represents how challenging a character's action is. You must meet or exceed this number when rolling your dice. Certain modifiers may affect an action's difficulty.

Downtime: A period of time before, during or after a story when nothing of significance happens, and when it would be boring to roleplay events. Although character actions occur during this time, players simply summarize what their characters do and play moves on to the next important event.

Experience Points: Players earn experience points during the course of a game. These points can be spent to increase their

characters' various Traits. Experience points represent the personal growth and training that occurs as characters live and learn.

Extended Action: An action that requires several successes, typically acquired over a series of turns, before the character can succeed.

Failure: If you achieve no successes in a roll, the roll is a failure. The character merely does not succeed. The failed action, unlike a botch, does not cause anything catastrophic to happen to the character.

Glamour: The magical energy at the disposal of changelings. It is their lifeblood, the magical mortar that holds them together, and what they mold and shape into many wondrous things. Glamour, one of the Tempers, is often spent instead of rolled.

Realms: The spheres of influence in which changelings can use their magic. These define the areas that a character has concentrated on in her study of changeling magic.

Refresh: The act of renewing the pool of Bunks from which a player has to choose from when his character performs cantrips.

Resisted Action: An action that is opposed by another character. Players compare their number of successes; the player with the most succeeds.

Scene: A period of action and time set in one location or dealing with a particular issue.

Simple Action: An action that requires only one success to be accomplished successfully. More successes indicate a higher level of accomplishment.

Story: A series of interconnected scenes characterized by an introduction, conflict, climax and resolution.

Storyteller: The person who creates and guides the story, describes the settings decides rules and plays the parts of adversaries or friends that the characters meet.

Success: Any die that meets or exceeds the difficulty number of a roll is considered a success.

System: A specific set of rules used in a certain situation during a game of **Changeling**; rules to help guide the rolling of dice to simulate dramatic actions.

Tempers: A Trait category that encompasses Glamour, Banality and Willpower. Tempers work differently from other Traits and are often spent rather than rolled.

Trait: A qualifier that describes your character through a number of dots or points assigned to it. Some of these include Abilities, Attributes and Advantages.

Trait Rating: A Trait rating is the permanent value of one of the Tempers.

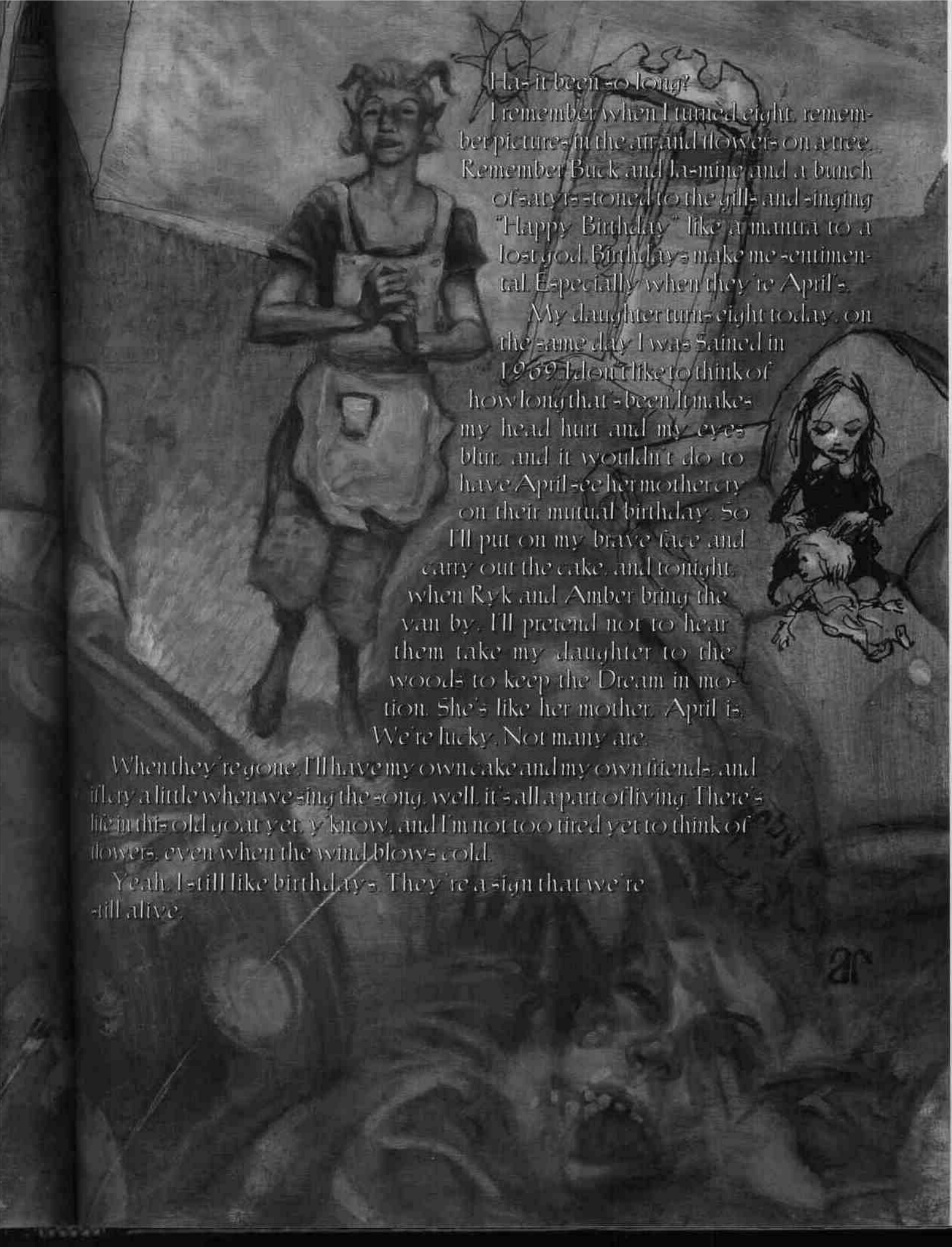
Troupe: The term used to describe a group of friends that meets on a regular basis to play **Changeling**. Troupe members work as a team to create a fantastic story through the actions of their characters.

Turn: A period of time of about three seconds, during which a character may take one action.

Willpower: One of the Tempers, Willpower measures the self-confidence and inner control of a character. Unlike other Traits, it is often spent instead of rolled.




Book Three: Grump



Ha- it been -o long?

I remember when I turned eight. remember picture- in the air and flower- on a tree. Remember Buck and Ja-mine and a bunch of -aty- -toned to the gill- and -inging "Happy Birthday" like a mantra to a lo-t god. Birthday- make me -entimental. E-pecially when they're April's.

My daughter turn- eight today. on the -ame day I was Sained in 1969. I don't like to think of how long that -been. It make- my head hurt and my eye- blur. and it wouldn't do to have April -ee her mother cry on their mutual birthday. So I'll put on my brave face and carry out the cake. and tonight. when Ryk and Amber bring the van by. I'll pretend not to hear them take my daughter to the woods to keep the Dream in motion. She's like her mother. April i-. We're lucky. Not many are.

When they're gone. I'll have my own cake and my own friend-. and if I cry a little when we -ing the -ong. well. it's all a part of living. There's life in thi- old goat yet. y'know. and I'm not too tired yet to think of flower-. even when the wind blow- cold.

Yeah. I -till like birthday-. They're a -ign that we're -till alive.


Leigh
fig 9.
of mind
of soul
of time
of heart
Noble

Chapter Seven: Glamour Systems

Glamour has been with us since the first times. It is the ringing melody of the song of life. It flows like a river through us, on us, around us — a living power. Like the healing water from the Cup of Dreams, the raging fire from the Gae Bolg, and the unblinking stone eye of Balor, Glamour is the very source of our being. It is sacred to us. Drink deep and dream.

— Eilun Silver-hair

The living font of all spiritual energy, Glamour flows from the Dreaming to Earth. Indeed, Glamour is concentrated dream, comprising magic, life and beauty. Its truth is hard to fathom, perhaps impossible. The wisest changelings have spent lifetimes studying it, yet it remains a mystery.

Whatever else, Glamour is a precious commodity now that Autumn has come and the Long Winter encroaches. At one time, Glamour filled the very air, free for the taking. Now it grows ever more rare, and gathering it becomes ever more difficult.

This chapter provides all the information about Glamour that you need to know to run a successful **Changeling** chronicle, including: cantrip casting, gaining Glamour, enchantment, Bedlam, freeholds, information about chimera and how to create them, and the Mists.

Knowing the Dreaming

As far as anyone knows, Glamour flows from the Dreaming, the ancestral home of all faeries, to Earth. Exactly how it reaches Earth is unknown, but the process seems to have some connection to humanity's creative and artistic faculties. The human imagination evidently has the capacity to open channels to the Dreaming, acting as a siphon and gateway for Glamour.

Still, why this occurs at certain times and not at others is unknown. Nor do changelings understand why Glamour is often found not just in people, but in places and objects that no human has ever touched or that have been abandoned for years. Do the dreams of humanity call Glamour to roost in places, things and people? Does the creativity of great artists and thinkers continue to collect Glamour after the artists themselves have ceased their great Dreaming? No one can tell. Certainly, Glamour shows up in some strange places and among some unexpected people.

Although Glamour is fundamental to changelings' existence, even they have a difficult time explaining exactly what it is. This is because they find it difficult to separate their feelings from their perceptions. The feelings that accompany Glamour are unlike any other, and virtually indescribable in human speech. Furthermore, Banality causes many changelings to forget the ambrosial qualities of Glamour all too quickly. It is difficult to retain the memory of a beautiful, Glamour-filled moment when one must go to work (or school) the next day.

Storytelling Glamour

When you tell stories involving Glamour, keep in mind that Glamour is a power source unlike any other — it has a will of its own. All of the guidelines detailed in this chapter should be completely ignored whenever they interfere with the flow of the story. Glamour should always be mysterious, unpredictable and exhilarating. If the players consider Glamour as mere points on their character sheets, you're not doing your job. Glamour is not about points — it is about imagination.

One way to convey the sense that Glamour is more than just a game mechanic is with the descriptions you use. When describing Glamour, appeal to all five senses: It feels warm, hot, cold, soft, silky, rough. It smells like rose petals, musk, patchouli oil, sweet clover, a midnight breeze. It tastes like honey or wine. It looks like a rainbow caught in a tie-dye factory. It moves like water, like a warm wind on the savanna. It's the aurora borealis, St. Elmo's fire or the gleam in a lover's eye.

You can also speak of Glamour in strictly allegorical terms: "You are flooded with a feeling like the first moment of a new love." "It is as bright as a hope and as solid as a wish." "You feel as fresh as a daydream, as innocent as a yawn, yet as worldly as envy."

Most importantly, Glamour never stands still for long. It is always churning, moving, flowing. It is infectious, wild and unknowable. It can never truly be held down or contained. Indeed, it is a testament to a changeling's faerie spirit that it can be shaped at all.

Cantrips

Cantrips are the means by which changelings manipulate Glamour to create magical effects, both in the Dreaming and in the mundane world. By sparking her own internal Glamour, a changeling can create a link with the Dreaming — a link strong enough for her to draw upon and form the raw stuff of the Dreaming to suit her desires. In a sense, cantrips are the manifestations of Glamour, the source of which is the Dreaming.

With experience, a changeling finds that she is able to shape Glamour in much the same way that a potter shapes clay or a weaver weaves cloth. Changelings' techniques for shaping Glamour are known as Arts. Arts are the powers a changeling can use to affect the world around her. Each of these powers is different; one may allow a changeling to move at incredible speeds or leap high into the sky, while another might allow a changeling to control another being's mind or even trick him into believing he is someone else. Each Art has its own potencies, peculiarities and weaknesses.

Furthermore, every changeling has an affinity with certain aspects of the world. These aspects (six in number) are known as Realms. These Realms have been studied and defined by Kithain lorekeepers, although affinity with them is determined largely by a changeling's kith. Of course, it is possible for a modern changeling to open himself to new experiences and explore new Realms.

By combining the active use of an Art and the innate familiarity of a Realm, a changeling can mold Glamour into a tangible evocation. The Art used defines the nature of the magic, while the Realm describes the focus of the effect.

But Glamour is fickle and wild. It makes demands of its user, and these must be fulfilled lest Glamour dissipate. The success or failure of a cantrip depends on whether a changeling can coax Glamour to do his bidding by performing a *Bunk*. Though Arts and Realms define the actual powers and effects changelings are capable of manifesting, they are only a part of the equation. A Bunk is needed to create the spark that allows a changeling to tap into the Dreaming. In entirety, this complete effect is known as a cantrip.

Basic Cantrip Casting

There are many factors that go into the casting of a cantrip. Beyond simply choosing an Art, Realm and a Bunk, you have to determine whether the Art is Wyrd or chimerical, and whether your character affects an enchanted or mundane target.

1. Choose an Art

The first thing a changeling must do when casting a cantrip is to choose an Art. There can never be more than one Art involved in the casting of a cantrip. The player must describe the effect he wishes to create with the Art. All Arts are defined as being either chimerical or Wyrd. Chimerical Arts are those that have only chimerical effects, or effects that are so subtle that unenchanted beings who witness them won't notice anything out of the ordinary. Wyrd Arts are those that have a physical effect in the real world, and that are noticeable by mortals.

For example, a boggan named Hodge finds himself surrounded by a corby of redcaps on All Hallows' Eve. Hodge decides to use his Wayfare Art (Hopscotch) to leap to the top of a nearby one-story building. Looking up the Hopscotch Art, Hodge's player notes that it is a Wyrd effect (because it has readily noticeable effects in the real world).

2. Choose a Realm(s)

The player and Storyteller now decide what Realm is needed to cast the cantrip, based on the effect described by the player. Realm typically describes the target (person or thing) that is affected by the cantrip (although some Realms are not compatible with certain Arts). If you are using the advanced cantrip rules (see

Glamour Terms

Art — The primary part of a cantrip; the Art defines the actual effect of the cantrip.

Bunk — An act performed to activate Glamour so that a cantrip can take effect. Often something silly such as singing a song, saying a rhyme backward or dancing in circles, it can also involve drawing an ornate door in chalk or laying a full Tarot spread.

Cantrip — The combination of an Art, Realm and a Bunk to create a changeling spell.

Chimerical — Chimerical effects affect only chimerical creatures, changelings and the enchanted. A cantrip that has no noticeable effects in the real world is considered chimerical.

Realm — Usually indicates the subject of a cantrip.

Nightmare — *A side effect that results from Banality* tainting a cantrip. Nightmares often cause cantrips to have strange and unexpected results.

Wyrd — These cantrips have real-world effects, such as moving at incredible speeds, flying or healing real damage, and the results can often be seen or recognized by mortals.

pg. 206), more than one Realm may be used in casting the cantrip. Modifier Realms such as Scene and Time are applied at this time.

Continuing the earlier example, Hodge, a boggan and thus a commoner, needs to use the first level of the Fae Realm (Hearty Commoner) in order to cast the cantrip on himself. Fortunately Hodge has up to level four of the Fae Realm, so he will have no problem.

3. Determine the Dice Pool

The Dice Pool is determined by adding the appropriate Attribute (listed under the Art being used) to the level of the Realm being used. This gives you the total number of dice that can be rolled to cast the cantrip. If your character has a higher level in a Realm than that needed for casting, you may still add all the levels he possesses in that Realm to the Dice Pool.

Referring to the Wayfare Art, Hodge's player sees that the Wits Attribute is used. He combines Hodge's Wits 3 with his four levels in the Fae Realm giving him a total of seven dice in his pool. Note that the player does not use a number of dice equal to the level of the Realm used in casting the cantrip (one), but a number of dice equal to the level that Hodge possesses in that Realm.

4. Choose a Bunk

The player must now declare the Bunk that the character performs. The nature of the Bunk must be chosen first. The player decides exactly what Bunk his character performs, and the Storyteller decides whether or not it is appropriate and what level it is. The Storyteller assigns it value of 1 to 5, based on the complexity (and appropriateness). The level of the Bunk generally indicates how long it takes to perform. A Bunk can be anything from dancing a silly jig to drawing an elaborate portrait of the cantrip's target.

The Bunk performed should always be appropriate to the nature of the cantrip being cast. While dancing a jig might be appropriate to a cantrip intended to cause the changeling to fly high up into the air, drawing a portrait might be more appropriate if the changeling attempts to use Soothsay to learn specific information about a person.

Level-one Bunks can almost always be performed in the same action as casting a cantrip. However, when a changeling attempts to perform anything more involved than a level-one Bunk, and seeks to cast a cantrip in the same turn, the player must split his Dice Pool. In some rare cases the Storyteller could allow a particularly interesting Bunk of a high level to be performed with a casting without splitting Dice Pools, but this is the exception, not the rule. For each level over one of a Bunk that is performed in the same turn as a casting, the character is considered to take an additional action. So, performing a level-two Bunk while casting a cantrip causes the cantrip Dice Pool to be divided by two.

To avoid a split Dice Pool, the character can choose to take the requisite number of turns to perform a Bunk, casting the cantrip at the end of that time. This is often done by changelings who have plenty of time to cast a cantrip, such as performing a Soothsay, though it is rarely done in combat.

Cantrips that have a starting difficulty of 10 or less can be cast without performing a Bunk by spending an additional point of Glamour, beyond those points demanded by the cantrip itself (see below). If the cantrip's starting difficulty is higher than 10, the difficulty must be lowered to at least 10.

If a Bunk is interrupted at any time, the casting fails automatically, and any points of Glamour invested are lost.

Since he needs to get away from the redcaps quickly, Hodge decides that his Bunk will be to stamp his feet three times — fast. The Storyteller rules that this is a level-one Bunk, and that Hodge will be able to cast the cantrip without the player needing to split his Dice Pool.

5. Determine Difficulty

The base difficulty for casting a cantrip is either the subject's Banality + 4 or the caster's Banality + 4, whichever is higher. Subtract the level of the Bunk being performed from the total difficulty. Additional Glamour can be spent to lower the difficulty by one for each point spent. The end result can never be lower than 4 or higher than 10 (remember, starting difficulties higher than 10 must be lowered to 10 or below).

Hodge's Banality is 5, so the base difficulty for casting his cantrip is 9. Since Hodge performs a level-one Bunk, the difficulty of the cantrip is lowered to 8. Since he really wants this spell to work, Hodge's player spends a point of Glamour to lower the difficulty by one more, reducing it to 7.

6. Determine Glamour Cost

Numerous factors determine the Glamour cost for casting a cantrip. The following guidelines should be used to determine the final cost of using a cantrip.

- *All Wyrd cantrips cost one Glamour.*
- Chimerical cantrips cast on enchanted beings or inanimate objects cost no Glamour, though you may still spend additional Glamour to lower the difficulty of casting (see above).
- Any cantrip cast on a banal target costs one Glamour. (This is not cumulative with the cost for casting a Wyrd cantrip.) Banal targets include mortals, unenchanted supernatural beings and anyone without a Glamour Trait rating (including changelings who have fallen to the Forgetting).
- Casting a cantrip without a Bunk requires an expenditure of one Glamour.
- Up to five points of Glamour can be spent to lower casting difficulty.
- Using a modifier Realm costs an additional point of Glamour (see "Modifier Realms," below).

The total Glamour cost for casting a cantrip must be paid before the cantrip comes into effect. If a character cannot pay the total cost (either with his own Glamour or dross), the cantrip fails, though no Glamour points are lost.

The base cost for casting Hodge's cantrip is one Glamour since it is a Wyrd effect. However, Hodge's player spent an additional point to lower the difficulty by one, bringing the total cost for casting the cantrip to two Glamour.

7. Make the Roll and Apply the Result

At this point the player rolls his character's Dice Pool to determine if the cantrip succeeds. If so, effects of the cantrip are applied to the subject.

Hodge's player rolls his seven dice: He gets a 2, 3, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 10, giving him a total of three successes. Looking at the Hopscotch chart, he determines that Hodge can jump two stories straight up into the air, allowing Hodge to land on top of the building safely.

The Effects of Cantrips

Chimerical cantrips affect only a changeling's fae mien and chimerical objects and creatures, or are subtle enough that they are not noticed by mortals. Wyrd cantrips affect both the real and chimerical worlds; thus, a Holly Strike cantrip affects a local policeman and a chimerical dragon equally.

Advanced Cantrip Rules

Modifier Realms

The Scene and Time Realms are most often used to modify the effects of a cantrip. The Time Realm can be used to create a time delay on a cantrip, causing it to come into effect long after the changeling has left the area, the equivalent of a magical time bomb. Though the usefulness of this may not be readily apparent, careful examination of this Realm will reveal that it can be extraordinarily useful.

Scene allows a changeling affect a number of creatures or objects in a given area. The changeling must still use the appropriate Realm(s) needed to affect those within the scene. For example, if a changeling wants to affect all of the mortals in a room, she has to use the appropriate level of the Actor Realm in conjunction with the Scene Realm.

Whenever a character uses a modifier Realm, the player must spend an additional point of Glamour, and the difficulty to cast a cantrip increases by one. Additionally, if a Scene Realm is used to cast a cantrip that has a physical effect (it does not matter if the cantrip is chimerical or Wyrd), the difficulty increases by one for each target affected after the first.

Suppose that Hodge was with two friends while attempting to escape from the redcaps. Being a good sort of a fellow (and a boggan to boot), Hodge certainly wouldn't leave his friends to the vile mercies of the redcaps. Fortunately, Hodge possesses the fourth level of Scene (Park), which the Storyteller judges is more than enough to allow Hodge to affect his friends with the cantrip as well. Since Hodge uses a modifier cantrip, his player must spend an additional point of Glamour (bringing his total to three), and the difficulty of the cantrip increases to 9 (base 7, plus two for each target affected after the first). Hodge's player will probably want to spend additional Glamour (if he has it) to lower the difficulty further.

Secondary Realms

It is possible to apply more than one Realm to the casting of a cantrip. In such cases, the player must decide which Realm is primary (this is usually apparent according to the nature of the cantrip being cast). For each additional Realm that can be applied, the difficulty of the cantrip being cast is lowered by one. Though the character must possess the appropriate level of the Realm, his total level in the Realm is *not* subtracted from the difficulty of the cantrip; the difficulty is reduced by only one for each additional Realm *as a whole* that applies.

Our old friend Hodge attempts to Mooch a dagger from a sidhe noble. The Fae or Actor Realms apply when Mooch is used to steal an item from a person (in this case it is the second level of Fae, Lofty Noble). However, Hodge also possesses the Prop Realm (he needs Crafted Tool to Mooch a dagger, which he has). So while Lofty Noble is used as the primary Realm, Hodge can use Crafted Tool as a secondary Realm, reducing the difficulty of the player's cantrip roll by one (not by Hodge's total score in the secondary Realm).

Countering Cantrips

Changelings can counter cantrips in one of two ways.

- **Invoking Banality**

A changeling is able to resist the effects of a cantrip by calling upon his own inherent Banality. The character gains a temporary point of Banality by resisting a cantrip in this way. The player rolls a number of dice equal to the character's permanent Banality rating against a difficulty of the casting character's permanent Glamour rating. Each success rolled reduces the caster's successes by one. If the caster's success are reduced to zero, the subject is unaffected by the cantrip. Resisting a cantrip by invoking Banality does not take an action.

Note that this method of countering cantrips can only be used to affect a cantrip that is cast directly upon a character. Storytellers may also allow characters to invoke their Banality to resist the magical powers of some chimera. Unenchanted mortals (and supernatural beings) cannot use this means of resistance, although some powerful Autumn People may, and Dauntain certainly can.

A character does not need to be aware that a cantrip is being cast at him to counter it with Banality, and he can use this method of resisting cantrips at any time.

Unfortunately, before Hodge can use his cantrip, one of the redcaps traps him in an Ensnare with three successes. Desperate to escape, Hodge decides to try to resist that cantrip with his own Banality. Since Hodge has a Banality of 5, his player has a Dice Pool of five to resist the effects of the cantrip. The Storyteller informs the player that his difficulty is 6 (the redcap's permanent Glamour rating). Hodge's player rolls 1, 2, 2, 4 and 6, giving him no successes. Despite the fact that the roll was failed, Hodge's player adds a point of temporary Banality to his character sheet. Bad luck for Hodge!

- **Counterweaving**

Characters who possess knowledge of Gremayre can undo a cantrip, even as it is cast. Counterweaving requires that the player spend a point of Glamour. She may then roll the character's Wits + Gremayre against a difficulty equal to the Glamour rating of the cantrip's caster. The player must earn as many or more successes as the caster for the counterweave to be successful; partial successes do not affect the cantrip in any way. The counterweaver must also possess the appropriate Realm(s) and their levels used in the original casting.

Counterweaving can be used on instantaneous cantrips. To attempt to undo a cantrip as it is being cast, the counterweaver must abort her next action (even if that would take place in the following turn).

If the Realms used in a cantrip are not readily apparent to the counterweaver, the weaver's player may roll Perception + Kenning (difficulty 6) to determine their nature. The difficulty is 8 for the counterweaver to determine what Art is being used.

Fortunately for Hodge, one of his friends is skilled in Gremayre and possesses the appropriate level of the Realm used to cast the redcap's cantrip. The countering player has a Dice Pool of eight (the total of his character's Wits + Gremayre). The Storyteller tells him that his difficulty is only 6 (the redcap's Glamour), and that he has to achieve at least three successes (the number achieved by the redcap in his casting). The player marks off a point of temporary Glamour (for attempting the counterweaving), and then rolls 2, 4, 4, 5, 7, 7, 8 and 9, more than enough successes to dispel the Ensnare cantrip.

Nightmares

Any time a character is about to suffer a point (or more) of temporary Banality, the player may choose to acquire a Nightmare die instead. Nightmare dice should all be of the same color and easily distinguishable from the other dice the player uses. The number of Nightmare dice that a character currently possesses can be recorded on the character sheet wherever the player sees fit (below the Banality track is a good place). The total number of dice is referred to as the *Nightmare Pool*. If a character ever gains more than 10 Nightmare dice, they are removed immediately and the character gains a point of permanent Banality.

Whenever a character with Nightmare dice casts a cantrip, the dice in the Nightmare Pool must be substituted for an equal number of dice in the player's Dice Pool. These dice should never exceed the total

Dice Pool, even if the character possesses more Nightmare dice than are rolled to perform a cantrip. For example, if a character has a pool of eight dice to cast a cantrip, and has a Nightmare Pool of three, three dice from the Dice Pool would be substituted by three Nightmare dice.

Any time a "one" is rolled on a Nightmare die, the character suffers the ill effects of a Nightmare. The number of Nightmare dice that come up as "ones" determines the severity of the Nightmare experienced. Once a Nightmare die rolls a "one," it is removed from the character's Nightmare Pool. Once Nightmare dice have been assigned to the pool, there is no way for them to be removed short of rolling "ones" and imposing Nightmares.

Descriptions of possible Nightmares can be found on the chart below.

Possible Nightmares

The following is a list of Nighmares that may occur as the result of rolling ones on Nightmare Dice.

Number of Ones Nightmare

1 **Horrid Dreams**

You have terrible dreams for the next five nights.

1 **Freezing Wind**

Everywhere you go, you are followed by a chilling breeze or wind. This lasts for a month.

2 **Clumsiness**

You trip continually unless you concentrate on your movement. All difficulties for physical movement are increased by three. This happens the next time you are in a dangerous situation and lasts for a scene.

2 **Headaches**

You are plagued with terrible migraines for the next month.

3 **Bad Luck**

You suffer botch results on both a "1" and a "0" during the next dangerous scene in which you take part.

3 **Temporary Blindness**

You cannot see for a scene. The Storyteller says when the scene begins.

3 **Recurring Nightmare**

Draw another Bunk. This becomes a taboo that you must observe for the next month. The Storyteller decides to what extent this reaches.

3 **Widdershins**

The cantrip you just cast reverses itself.

4 **Lose Important Item**

Even if you constantly watch all your possessions for the next week, you will lose one of them (to fire, destruction or forgetfulness). The possession is usually your most valuable or valued possession — possibly a treasure. It may be possible to regain the item, or it may be lost forever.

4 **Wracked with Pain**

You are wracked with terrible pain and cry out in agony. Every time you think of this pain, you must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) to avoid experiencing it again. This lasts for a full month.

5 **Lose All Glamour**

All of your temporary Glamour departs at once.



Mists Chart

The chart below may be consulted whenever a changeling or enchanted being is "killed" by chimerical damage, or whenever an unenchanted mortal (or supernatural) witnesses a chimerical effect or chimerical creature. This chart is also used to determine what happens to mundane beings that have been enchanted and are subsequently returned to the mortal world.

Banality	Duration of Coma	Memory
0	One minute	**Total Recall:** Everything is remembered with crystal clarity.
1	One hour	**Startling Clarity:** The entirety of the encounter is remembered as if it were yesterday.
2	Six hours	**Hazy Memory:** Nearly everything is remembered, though some of the details may be hazy.
3	12 hours	**Disoriented:** The individual is slightly confused and possibly shaken, but is able to recall most of his experiences, though many of the details are vague.
4	One day	**Uncertainty:** The person has a vague memory of what occurred, but is plagued by doubts as to the validity of the experience.
5	Three days	**Haze:** A hazy recollection of the experience is possible, but the individual doubts her own memories. She dismisses the experience as a momentary delusion, unless she has physical proof.
6	One week	**Flashbacks:** The person may experience occasional vivid flashbacks of his experiences, but they otherwise seem like a distant dream.
7	Two weeks	**Dreamlike Quality:** The individual recalls only vague, dreamlike images, and doubts that the experience ever occurred.
8	One month	**Distant Dream:** Something must provoke the memory and even then the experiences are recalled as nothing more than a faded dream.
9	Four months	**Complete Denial:** The character has only faint scraps of dreamlike recollection and completely denies the experience ever occurred.
10	One year	**Complete Blank:** The person remembers absolutely nothing of his experiences with the fae.

The Mists

The Mists separate the fae from the mundane, clouding the minds of mortals so that they do not remember their encounters with things faerie. A side effect of Banality, the Mists exemplify the force of human rationality.

Effects on Mortals

Most mortals (and unenchanted supernatural beings) do not remember their encounters with the fae accurately. The Mists are likely to erase much of these memories or at least relegate them to a dreamlike quality. The amount of Banality an individual possesses determines exactly what she remembers.

Bedlam

Insanity is a danger to the Kithain. They interact regularly with things that are not "real," and Glamour has a habit of making one's perceptions change over time. Thus madness is a threat to every changeling.

Changelings typically pass through three "thresholds" of Bedlam, although they occasionally go right from normalcy to complete madness without stopping at the intervening thresholds.

The Storyteller has complete control over the process of Bedlam. She may decide to advance a character further into Bedlam at any time that seems appropriate. However, there is a list of "warning signs" (see above) to guide the decision-making process. As a general rule, a character who fits three or more of the warning signs has the potential to slip into Bedlam.

Bedlam should be inflicted only when it is appropriate. One mad changeling can ruin the whole chronicle if you're not careful. Of course, Bedlam must be a threat with teeth if the balance between the real and fantastic worlds is to be encouraged.

First Threshold

The first threshold is perception-based. A character begins to have trouble distinguishing between mundane and chimerical things. She also begins to see what appear to be chimerical things that are not really there. Listed below are threshold flaws that can be inflicted on a character who has descended into the first level of Bedlam.

- **Color Change**: Everything changes color, either randomly or in patterns.
- **Whispers**: The changeling "hears" telepathic or audible whispers that impart secrets or prophecies, or that spew unintelligible gibberish.
- **Dread**: A feeling of complete and utter dread engulfs the changeling; shadows distort into monstrous shapes.
- **Lights**: Bright lights flash in and out of existence, surrounding people with nimbi or other illuminations.

Note: Whatever the first-threshold flaws that a changeling suffers are, they should be annoying but bearable. The character should descend into madness slowly. First-threshold madness is curable and recoverable. After the first threshold has been reached, however, the Storyteller may choose to add additional first-threshold flaws to the character's perceptions, or she may send the character to the second threshold immediately.

Second Threshold

Bedlam's second threshold is more severe and debilitating. At this point chimerical reality seems to become mundane reality. The Storyteller should take the player aside and explain how the character's reality has changed. This is when madness becomes

evident to other changelings, because the afflicted's Glamour is affected. The changeling ceases to interact with anyone who does not fit his version of reality.

Certain kinds of therapy (**see "Treating Bedlam," below**) can actually drive the afflicted deeper into Bedlam at this point. It is very difficult for outsiders to discern whether a changeling is in the first or second stage of Bedlam. Indeed, the changeling may regain lucidity occasionally; during these "spells," he seems positively normal.

Some examples of second-threshold Bedlam are:

• **Don Quixote Syndrome**: The character believes everything to be from an ancient time or fantasy realm.

• **Delusions of Grandeur**: The character sees everyone as an underling, fit only to serve him. No matter what utter nonsense he spouts, he expects others to laud his ideas and cater to his insane visions.

• **Social Darwinism**: The character sees everyone as either predator or prey — and herself as a predator of great strength and skill. This is an insidious form of madness, as it can remain undetected for some time. Soon, however, the character will strike — and death will follow in her wake.

• **The Walls Have Ears**: The character believes that everything has a personality and is alive. Manifestations of this madness range from a changeling holding quiet conversations with fence posts to uttering apologies every time he takes a step on the street.

Note: It's very difficult for players to watch their characters fall into Bedlam. Before proceeding to the third threshold (at which all but the most miraculous healing fails), the Storyteller should make sure that the madness fits the character's personal story, and give the character opportunities to heal, if possible. Of course, if the player of the mad character is having fun, there's no reason to ease his transition into the third threshold — utter madness.

Third Threshold

The third threshold of Bedlam is the most devastating. The character becomes an unintelligible creature. She retains all the characteristics of her former stages of madness, but also suffers from a number of other threshold symptoms, as seen below:

• **Berserker**: The character attacks all around her with whatever weapons are nearby.

• **Autism**: The character withdraws into himself, not recognizing the outside world at all.

• **Feral Cunning**: The character reverts to an animalistic state; not a frenzied attacker like Berserker, but a cunning, predatory animal that doesn't communicate and seeks only to escape or kill.

• **Perversity**: The character descends into the depths of her psyche and performs inhuman acts barely conceivable by even the most depraved soul.

Note: Third-threshold Bedlam is highly contagious. Any changeling forced into prolonged contact with a character in third-threshold Bedlam risks developing first-threshold Bedlam. This is, of course, up to the Storyteller's discretion, but it is a definite danger. Only the most brave (or foolish) treat those in third-threshold Bedlam. Changelings in this stage are often destroyed, albeit remorsefully.

As if this weren't awful enough, those in third-threshold Bedlam birth many nervosa (see pg. 277), which share common characteristics and work to protect the mad one.

If left untreated, Bedlam completely overtakes a character. She loses all free will and passes into the world of dreams. One night, while the changeling dreams, she simply ceases to be, disappearing entirely from the face of the Earth. At this point (or perhaps sooner), the player may no longer run the character and must create a new one if she wishes to continue play in the chronicle.

Treating Bedlam

First-threshold Bedlam is cured, ironically, by exposure to Banality. A changeling in first-threshold Bedlam often goes off by himself, seeking to "cure himself" in the normalcy of human society. He resigns his position at court or leaves his household, taking a job in the mortal world and forgetting his changeling nature temporarily. Eventually, the changeling is cured — disavowing all contact with changeling society is often like a splash of cold water on the changeling's psyche.

Treatment of second-threshold Banality is a little different. A delicate balance of magical healing (using the Primal Art) and Banality therapy must be used to treat the madness. The madness has progressed to the faerie soul of the changeling, and both his human soul and faerie soul must be cleansed before continuing.

The only widely known cure for third-threshold Bedlam is drinking from the Cup of Dreams, an ancient and powerful faerie treasure thought to be lost in the Dreaming. It is said that some dragons also possess the lore to cure third-stage Bedlam. No Banality cure has ever worked, and psychiatrists who treat changelings in third-stage madness are thoroughly confused by their patients' resistance to psychoactive drugs and normal therapeutic techniques.

Warning Signs Checklist

The following are some warning signs that a changeling might be in danger of experiencing Bedlam. Although none of these is a "sure" sign of impending madness, the more warning signs a character exhibits, the more likely it is that Bedlam is on the horizon.

• Your Glamour is higher than both your Willpower and your Banality.

• You spend more nights in freeholds than in the real world. (If you spend all of your time in freeholds, Bedlam is almost assured.)

• You have more than one faerie treasure.

• You interact with more than three chimera on a regular basis.

• You are a constant Ravager.

• You have no mortal friends.

• You have no mortal job (or other attachment, such as school).

• You are almost exclusively nocturnal.

• You drink alcohol or use drugs or have sex to excess.

• You spend more than half of your waking time creating art of some kind.

• You have no mortal family.

• You have no mortal possessions.

• You are in a state of unrequited love.



Enchantment

It is useful for changelings to bring mortals into their world at times, whether out of necessity or for less savory reasons (or both). This is done through a process known as *enchantment*. Enchanting a mortal is actually far easier than one might suspect; it is merely a matter of imbuing the chosen mortal with a bit of one's own Glamour.

A changeling who wishes to enchant a mortal must create a small token and infuse it with her own Glamour. Such tokens can take many forms: a bit of ribbon tied into a bow, an origami sculpture, a bouquet of daisies picked from the side of the road. Some Kithain create food or drink, which they imbue with their Glamour. Whatever the form, the item or food must be given to the chosen mortal (who must then accept it), and then either carried or eaten by the subject. The amount of temporary Glamour invested into the token determines how many days the mortal remains enchanted, on a one-for-one basis.

So, for example, if Higgins, a boggan, was to give his friend some home-baked cupcakes into which he had invested three Glamour points, his friend would become enchanted upon eating one of the cupcakes and the enchantment would last for three days. If he chose to give her a small trinket constructed from bits of wire, bird feathers and ribbon, it would take effect as soon as his friend accepted the gift.

An enchanted mortal is brought fully into the realm of the Kithain. Such a mortal can see and interact with chimera, and can take damage from chimerical weapons. Enchanted mortals take damage from chimera just as changelings do (**see "Chimerical Damage," pg. 264**).

The amount of time that an enchanted person remains unconscious after leaving the Dreaming is determined by referring to the Mists Chart (see pg. 208). Unconscious mortals appear to be in a comalike state, and usually remember very little of what happened to them.

Enchanted mortals cannot cast cantrips; their Glamour is borrowed and they have none of their own. They can use their own Banality to defend against cantrips cast on them, but each time they do so they lose one of their points of surrogate Glamour. Some kinain (mortals with faerie blood) do have some Glamour of their own, but it is difficult for them to regain it; most need a changeling to supply it for them. Kinain are the exceptions to the rule about

Supernaturals

For supernatural creatures (vampires, werewolves, wraiths and mages) to interact with creatures of the Dreaming (changelings and chimera), they must be enchanted just as mortals must be. Some supernatural creatures have the ability to "enchant" themselves through certain powers of their own. For the purposes of clarity, text that refers to unenchanted mortals also applies to supernatural creatures.

Wraiths must physically manifest in the mortal world before they can be enchanted. Vampires may be enchanted by drinking changeling blood, though wise changelings avoid letting vampires nibble at them too often (something about addiction...).

enchanted mortals, and have even been known to learn cantrips taught to them by changelings.

Staying in a freehold has an odd effect on enchanted mortals. The time limit of their enchantment is suspended while they are within a freehold, so that they may stay enchanted indefinitely while they are there. Additionally, like changelings, they do not age while within the boundaries of a freehold. While this may not be noticeable if the mortal spends only a few days there, if the mortal were to stay for several years it could be very evident upon his return to the mortal world. When the Mists cloud the mortal's mind, it may seem to him as if several years have passed in only a day or so.

There are other means by which a changeling can bring mundanes into the enchanted world or affect them with chimerical weapons. These are known as the enchanted strike and the dolorous stroke, and are discussed in Chapter Eight.

Calling upon the Wyrd

In contrast to bringing mundane people into the Dreaming, a changeling can transfer his fae mien and all of his chimerical possessions into the real word by calling upon the Wyrd. This action allows a changeling to manifest a bit of the chimerical world in the real world.

When a changeling successfully calls upon the Wyrd, his chimerical form becomes real, as do all chimerical items and any chimerical companions he may have. (Chimerical companions are considered to be those recorded on the character sheet under the Chimera Background, not chimera the character may have befriended.) In addition, all cantrips cast by the character are considered to be Wyrd.

For the character to call upon the Wyrd successfully, his player must spend a point of Willpower and a point of Glamour. The player must then make a successful Willpower roll, difficulty equal to the changeling's permanent Glamour rating. Only a single success is required to call upon the Wyrd. The effect lasts for the duration of the scene.

Failure on the roll simply means the character is incapable of carrying his fae image and possessions over into the material world.

Effects of the Wyrd

- All chimerical weapons in that character's possession inflict real damage.
- All cantrips that the character casts are considered Wyrd. This means that all cantrips cast cost one Glamour to cast.
- Any chimerical companions purchased as Backgrounds are real and do real damage.
- A character who has called upon the Wyrd takes real damage from all chimerical weapons, cantrips and creatures.

Oaths

• The Oath of Clasped Hands

Blood for blood, bone for bone, life for life, until only we stride the earth. My life is in your hands, my blood is in your veins. Hold me well and I will lend you my strength, break your bond and may we both perish. Friendship I swear to you, an oath of clasped hands and shared hearts.

This oath is never made lightly; these words are only for those who feel a bond for a friend as strong as any they might feel for a lover. To make this oath, the oathmakers' hands are clasped around a double-edged blade while the words are spoken. As the blood of the oathmakers is mixed, their friendship is reaffirmed and strengthened. Makers of this oath gain a Willpower point when it is completed, but lose two if it is ever broken.

• The Oath of Fealty

I swear fealty unto you, lady/lord. Your command is my desire, and your request my desire. May my service always please, and may my sight grow dark if it does not. As the tides to the moon, my will to yours, my liege.

This is the wording of the formal Oath of Fealty, commonly used at investitures, knightings and Sainings. Speaking the words of this oath requires the investment of one Willpower point, and a formal obeisance that lasts a full quarter-hour must be made. Once the oath is taken, the difficulties of all resistance rolls against any form of mental domination are reduced by two. Breaking this oath causes the loss of three Willpower points. In cases of extreme betrayal of this oath, the offender can be struck blind for a year and a day.

• The Oath of Escheat

I take you as my vassal. You are of my house, even as the very stones. I pledge to hold you, to guard you, and to keep you. I pledge to honor your service as it deserves, and to reward loyalty in kind. As the moon to the seas below, my will to yours. I pledge the Escheat to you.

With these words, a ruler formally signifies that she accepts another fae as a vassal. The oath is commonly spoken in conjunction with the Oath of Fealty, but not always. When these words are spoken, the speaker loses one Glamour point, and a chimerical gold coin, stamped with her visage, appears in her hand. The oath is not actually binding until the oathmaker offers, and the proposed vassal accepts, this token. Failure to abide by the terms of this oath indicates a fall from the ways of true fae honor, and thus causes the acquisition of a Banality point. Anyone currently bound by (and holding to) the terms of this oath, even if it is to but one vassal, gains an extra Willpower point per week.

• The Oath of the Accepted Burden

Lay down your burden, that I might take it up. The road is long, and I swear I shall bear it for you, until all roads end. I shall [the actual task is named here], else may the road cease to lay beneath my feet.

Superficially similar to a *geas*, this oath is a promise to perform a certain deed. The nature of the deed itself is irrelevant; it could be anything from a kiss to retrieving the still-beating heart of an enemy. This oath is always made to another, and is made to verify that a task that he desires will be performed. When these words are spoken, a Willpower point is gained by both the oathmaker and the one to whom the promise is made. If the oath is not kept, each loses two Willpower points.

• The Oath of Guardianship

As the sun guards the Earth by day, as the stars by night, so shall I serve thee. This my duty I shall not abandon [object of oath] till [duration of oath], else may the stars close their eyes and sleep.

This is a fearful oath, and those who do not uphold to it are cursed to never spend two nights in the same bed until a century has passed. The Oath of Guardianship binds the oathmaker to keep a single object, place or individual from any and all harm, to the point of ultimate self-sacrifice. There is no cost to make the Oath of Guardianship, save that extracted by its keeping.

• The Oath of Truehearts

I give a gift of myself to thee. Take it freely; freely is it offered, and forever thou hast me in thy keeping. I swear love unto you and pledge you my troth. May those who watch over love watch over this oath and those who keep it, and may we never find fault in their eyes.

The purpose of this oath needs no explanation. It is spoken in unison by the two (or more) lovers it binds, and it takes a point of

Glamour from each to craft a chimerical songbird visible only to the lovers. The instant this oath is broken, the bird ceases to sing, perching silently on the shoulder of the oathbreaker and now visible to all as a sign of betrayal. In addition, both betrayer and betrayed gain a Banality point as a result of this cowardly action. On the other hand, being true to the oath grants one additional point of Glamour from any *Rapture the lovers* participate in.

• **The Oath of the Long Road**

I swear that I shall [nature of quest undertaken] or lose my honor, that I shall [nature of quest] or lay down my sword, that I shall [nature of quest] or Dream no more. You and the sky my witnesses, so mote it be.

The Oath of the Long Road is the most potent of the oaths known to the common fae. It is the voluntary acceptance of a quest to be performed, and its swearing is usually sanctified with the blood of both the oathmaker and her witness(es). It is always spoken in front of one, or preferably three witnesses. The oathmaker receives an extra Willpower and Glamour point, but there are dire consequences for failure. Simple failure to complete the quest causes the loss of three Willpower and three Glamour points. Abandoning the quest altogether strips the oathbreaker of all temporary Glamour and Willpower, strips a point of permanent Willpower, and adds two Banality points.

• **The Oath of Crossed Blades**

Where two stand, there will be one. I swear enmity unto thee until the setting of the last sun. May my heart cease to beat and my hand lose its strength should ever I show favor to thee, and the bones of the earth are my witness.

Only trolls and sidhe generally speak this oath; members of the other kith consider it counterproductive to announce one's enmity. Still, there is a certain style to swearing eternal hatred, and the oath serves as a bold step in the intricate dances of court. A fae swearing this oath instantly trades a point of Willpower for one of Glamour, and also has the difficulty of any roll involving his enemy reduced by one. Should, however, the oath be broken, a point of Willpower is lost permanently, and a pair of matching scars, akin to those that would be left by a rapier's point, appear on the face of the oathbreaker.

Four Paths to Epiphany

Changelings require Glamour to maintain their tentative connection to the Dreaming. Without Glamour, they would quickly be lost in the Mists or, even worse, become Undone and lose all that makes them fae. They need to seek Glamour out constantly: find mortals who possess or are capable of creating it, and either inspire, plunder, or brutally and permanently rip the it away from them. A few rare Kithain are even able to tap into their mortal halves to create Glamour for themselves, without needing to steal it from someone else. The different methods of obtaining much-needed Glamour from one's self or from mortals are called *epiphanies*.

An epiphany is a near-overwhelming rush of sensations, ecstasy and emotions that flood into the changeling as she connects directly to the Dreaming for one brief, fleeting moment. A particularly intense epiphany can cause a changeling to switch Court affiliations or change in personality, at least temporarily.

Bedlam is always a danger for those Kithain who become greedy in their musing. If a changeling gains too much Glamour too quickly, madness can take possession as his mind retreats from mundane reality and into chimerical reality. This is why grumps sternly and repeatedly remind childlings to keep their greed for Glamour under a tight rein. Interestingly enough, childlings are able to handle more Glamour than either wilder or grumps can, perhaps because society, whether mortal or changeling, tends to let children and their imaginations have free rein.

The type of mortal who is able to generate Glamour is usually an artist or person with special creative insights. Anyone from a writer to an actress to a chef to a child with an imaginary world can create Glamour. However, not *all* writers, actresses, chefs or children can generate it. It takes a certain rare connection between a mortal and her dreams to create Glamour. Most people have too much Banality to tap into the Dreaming successfully.

There are four widely used means to an epiphany, even though one is expressly forbidden by both Courts: the pathway of inspiration, or *Reverie*; the pathway of self-inspiration and creation, or *Rapture*; the pathway of theft, or *Ravaging*, which is banned by the Escheat; and the pathway of destruction, or *Rhapsody*.

Reverie

Reverie is considered the most noble method of gathering Glamour. A changeling spends time cultivating the Dreamer, inspiring the mortal to tap into the Dreaming and create a Glamour-filled work. Reverie is looked favorably upon by Kithain because it is sustainable, and more beneficial to the mortal in the long run.

The Seelie Court prefers Reverie to Ravaging as a means to achieving epiphany because it keeps the precious few True Dreamers in the world creating works of art, as opposed to taking the chance of draining their creativity permanently as Ravaging can do. The Unseelie tend to consider Reverie too time-consuming for too little return. Some Unseelie nobles and a few rare Unseelie commoners occasionally use Reverie as their preferred method to gain Glamour. However, the artists and art they inspire usually relates to change or a darker form of art or creation than the Seelie would choose.

Changelings who follow the pathway of Reverie to gather their Glamour are sometimes viewed as muses or patrons to the mortals they nurture. It is necessary for Kithain to study and get to know their subjects over a period of time. This communion helps the changeling understand what inspires a mortal, and how to best aid her in developing her creativity. Knowing the right words and ways to push a mortal to create ever greater wonders is the key to a long-lasting, and mutually beneficial, fount of Glamour for the Kithain. The more time and creativity the muse spends on the Dreamer, the better the Dreamer's art will be and the more Glamour she will produce.

Many muses use love as a source for inspiration, although it can be risky for both parties. Love can grow into obsession; the artist might become enraptured with the muse rather than the art. On the other hand, if the mood of the Kithain changes, perhaps to anger or jealousy, a long-term and formerly beneficial Reverie can become a bitter Ravaging, or a violent punishment through Rhapsody in a worst-case scenario.

A muse experiences Reverie and gains Glamour by being exposed to the product of the Dreamer's work — whether it be a novel, poem, painting, recording, a divinely created meal or an appreciative audience. Sometimes a muse's influence is so instrumental to the work, and the work is so potent, that Glamour is received every time the creation overwhelms a new audience.

A Reverie's concrete form — a novel, poem, painting, recording — eventually becomes diluted and unable to generate more Glamour through repeated contact with mortals. A new song or play performed before a live audience may release copious amounts of Glamour, but lose much of its initial impact once it is released on CD or as a movie. Perhaps this is why the works of many great artists are kept under wraps — once they become widely distributed, they become mundane and produce no more Glamour.



Musing Thresholds

Just as there were different Muses in Greek mythology, each a patron of a particular art, so each changeling can have a specialty by which she inspires artists to create awesome works and thereby Glamour. This specialty, called a Musing Threshold, usually reflects the changeling's own tastes, and the ways in which she is inspired in life.

Each player should choose a Musing Threshold for his character during character creation. A changeling shouldn't have more than one Musing Threshold. A character who begins without one can gain a specialty during play, and a character's specialty can change during the course of a chronicle.

At the beginning of a story, each player can establish a goal that he intends to fulfill with his Musing Threshold to earn Glamour. It might be to coach a dancer to master a difficult move, to help a singer hit a note or to encourage a painter to complete a long-unfinished piece. Alternatively, the player doesn't have to specify a subject whom his character inspires, but that his character simply seeks to be inspirational wherever he goes during the story, and gains Glamour as a result.

See the Musing Threshold Table for examples of how changelings can specialize in motivating artistry.

System: In order to generate Glamour, the character must first know what inspires his Dreamer subject, or those whom he comes in contact with. Roll Perception + Kenning (difficulty 8); the number of successes indicates how much time the character must spend with the Dreamer in order to understand what makes him create.

1 success	A year
2 successes	A month
3 successes	A couple of weeks
4 successes	A few days
5 successes	Instant connection

Once the character knows and understands his Dreamer, the player can make a roll to inspire her. The character must spend time with the Dreamer, sometimes as little as a few hours or as long as a number of weeks or even months. The more time spent musing, the more remarkable the creation.

Roll Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty 6). The number of successes rolled equals the number of Glamour points gained in the end. If the character spends extended time with the subject and is extraordinarily patient, the Storyteller may lower the difficulty of the Manipulation roll (or may raise it if the changeling rushes his Dreamer). The amount of Glamour gained might also be limited by the talent of the Dreamer; some Dreamers can create only minor works of art. If a botch is rolled, the Dreamer rejects the changeling's assistance or vision and suffers a creative block. The muse must study the mortal again (e.g., start from scratch) before he can inspire the Dreamer to create something else that can generate Glamour.

Even if the character is successful in inspiring creativity, it may be some time before the Dreamer feels the desire to create again. The Storyteller may make an appropriate Attribute + Ability roll (difficulty 6) for the Dreamer to determine the period of time that must pass before inspiration returns (compare successes rolled to

Musing Threshold Table

- **Inspire Creativity:** The character loves to inspire creativity in all those around her, especially those who hold potential to be great artists. She often strives to inspire not just one artist, but a group of artists to work together to create a mutual piece of art. Many different minds working together toward one goal can be trying at times, and the character's guiding vision unites the artists.
- **Create Hope:** The character is an optimist of the highest sort and tries to keep hopes alive. This might involve searching for people in seemingly hopeless situations who are ready to give up. The changeling tries to come up with another solution to the problem at hand, or picks up their spirits.
- **Create Love:** The character believes that love can make everything work out in the end, and gains strength by playing matchmaker or by resolving problems in relationships. She has the patience to listen to the laments of the heartbroken, and tries to keep couples together or to make individuals give romance one more try. As long as the subject keeps trying and believes in the changeling's advice, the musing works.
- **Create Calm:** The character believes that possessing a calm spirit can resolve most situations, and she tries to keep people cool to help them gain insight on their situations.
- **Foster Trust:** The character believes that the world can be a better place with a little trust and understanding. He tries to encourage people's faith in each other so that everyone can work together and achieve what they need to, or sometimes to get involved with life and people again.
- **Helping Those in Need:** Some people are lost or need guidance to get back on their feet. People who need the character's aid include runaways who need someone to believe in, addicts trying to quit their addictions, and neglected children who need self-esteem. Helping them to stand on their own makes the character whole.
- **Foster Dreams:** This variety of musing involves inspiring people to dream of things that they want to achieve. If they believe in their dreams and strive to get what they want, their dreams may become reality.

the duration chart, above). The amount of time needed to create again can also be modified at the Storyteller's discretion.

Rapture

Changelings possess both faerie and mortal natures. By allowing their mortal sides to be inspired — achieve Rapture — they can get in touch with the Dreaming as if they themselves were mortal Dreamers. This is a very lengthy and difficult process as it takes a lot of soul-searching and understanding of one's faerie and mortal natures, but it also has the potential for enormous gain.

Rapture allows the changeling to gain Glamour from her own imagination. The moment of Rapture is one of pure and total ecstasy as the changeling connects directly to the Dreaming. The two halves of her nature are united as one for a brief and fleeting moment. Both the Seelie and Unseelie recognize that Rapture is difficult to achieve. Any Kithain who can find it is believed to have reached an ultimate height.

Spontaneous Glamour

Occasionally, when a Glamour-induced work of art is enacted (such as a breathtaking performance in a play, a virtuoso musical performance or a moving poetry reading), spontaneous Glamour is created for all who witness the accomplishment. The Storyteller decides how much Glamour was released and how much changeling witnesses can absorb. No roll or system is needed.

Some performances might infuse more Glamour into an Unseelie than into a Seelie changeling, or vice versa. The nature of the performance, whether it is dark and brooding or light and happy, makes all the difference. However, all Kithain should gain some benefit from attending such an event. Characters with Thresholds appropriate to the work of art or performance may gain additional Glamour, at the Storyteller's discretion.

In order to achieve Rapture, a changeling must make an artistic or creative breakthrough, which is no small task. The changeling chooses an art or medium in which she excels (though this is not a necessity), and comes up with a vision or an idea that she wants to fulfill before she can begin the long process of seeking Rapture.

System: When the Storyteller decides that the character has labored over her creation long enough, and is at the point of achieving Rapture, the player must make an appropriate Attribute + Ability roll (difficulty equals the character's Glamour subtracted from her Banality + 6). Difficulty can also be adjusted if the Storyteller believes that the character has devoted more than enough time, thought and passion to her creation.

The number of successes rolled equals the amount of Glamour that the character gains. If the player rolls five or more successes, the changeling gains a point of permanent Glamour, in addition to any temporary Glamour! A botch indicates a total and utter confidence-shattering failure, causing the character to gain a temporary point of Banality.

Reverie and Rapture in Specific Locations

If someone uses Reverie in one specific location, such as a Dreamer's loft or studio, or if a Kithain achieves Rapture repeatedly in the same location, the area becomes infused with Glamour. Such residue Glamour can attract other Dreamers as they try to find any inspiration they can.

If a particular area becomes a haven for artists, Seelie nobles (and the occasional Unseelie noble) may declare Ravaging in those areas a punishable offense, even putting special wards on such locations to keep the Dreamers safe. A story could even be based on a motley that protects or tries to infiltrate such a locale.

Glamour-infused sites tend to attract the attention of any and all changelings; the outpouring of Glamour can't be hidden from a Kithain's natural Kenning. Unseelie tend to consider such places easy prey, and the playing fields for games of "Ravage and Run."

Ravaging

It is a simple matter to tear, wrest or rip Glamour from a mortal, and it can be as satisfying as any epiphany. Such an assault taints the epiphany with the psychic anguish of the victim, mixing pain with Glamour — a delicious meal for many Unseelie changelings.

This form of psychic rape is called Ravaging. Unfortunately, mortals don't have an infinite supply of Glamour, and they need time to replenish their creativity. If their Glamour is stolen from them, it will take much longer than usual for them to rejuvenate.

Seelie tend to view Ravaging as a unnecessary evil, and they frown upon anyone who practices it. The Unseelie consider Ravaging a necessity, since Ravaging brings about change, even though it occurs through suffering and destruction. Childlings don't usually have the understanding or patience to use Reverie or Rapture as a means for epiphanies. Indeed, Unseelie childlings take perverse pleasure in Ravaging other children. They feel safe that they will only be scolded. After all, "Children will be children," the elders tutt.

If a particular mortal is Ravaged repeatedly and frequently, his creativity can be extinguished permanently. Still, as many Unseelie are fond of saying, "There are always more Dreamers."

Ironically, changelings utilize their own Banality when they Ravage, which runs the risk of gaining more Banality. The Ravager floods the Dreamer with Banality, literally driving the Glamour out of her body, and the Ravager gathers it up. Occasionally, Banality is gathered up too, which is another reason why the Seelie frown on Ravaging.

System: Once the Kithain has established a relationship of sorts with the target (usually a loose friendship), the player rolls a number of dice equal to his character's Banality rating (difficulty 6). The number of successes rolled equals the number of Glamour points gained. If the Ravaging roll is botched, the character gains a permanent point of Banality as the Ravaging attempt backfires and tears into the character's psyche.

Victims of a Ravaging are unable to create or perform anything original or inspired for at least one day per Glamour point stolen. They usually sit around listlessly, feeling drained and depressed. The artist's block experienced also has unseen effects as the artist can gain a small amount of Banality. Alternatively, the artist might be left so frustrated that her connection to the Dreaming is severed forever.

Ravaging Threshold

Most changelings who Ravage use simple psychic assault to gain Glamour. However, some Kithain have exotic and perverse tastes. Ravaging Thresholds are specialized methods used by some Unseelie to spice up their Ravagings with anguish. They put extra effort into their Ravagings to make them an art form.

A character's Ravaging Threshold is usually based on her past, and is often the result of some emotional trauma that she suffered. The Threshold chosen is often a means to get revenge on the world. Possible Thresholds are provided in a sidebar. Inventive players and Storytellers are encouraged to come up with additional ones.

There are two ways to incorporate Ravaging Thresholds into a story. The changeling tries to accomplish a goal through his chosen Threshold, and appropriate events are assumed to occur in downtime. A changeling might, for example, spend time during a story frightening whatever children she can, gaining Glamour from their horrific thoughts and dreams. No one person is the target. The second use of Ravaging Threshold is more intense. It involves roleplaying an emotional scene — the player roleplays the abuses that her character heaps on a victim.

Ravaging Thresholds

- **Exhaust Creativity:** The character delights in exploiting others, or is contemptuous of the talents of those who are more creative than he is. He employs others to create for him, but this art is ultimately corrupted, buried or wasted. The Dreamer then burns out, wondering why he wasted his time on such frivolity.
- **Destroy Hope:** The character is fatalistic and Ravages by destroying hope. This might involve watching over someone who is in a hopeless circumstance and is ready to give up fighting. The predator talks the mortal out of taking action that would improve her life.
- **Destroy Love:** The character no longer has illusions of love, and gains strength from preventing others from finding it or trusting in it. She typically has a repertoire of techniques for "breaking people up," such as seducing someone's significant other, providing photographic evidence of infidelity (real or fabricated), and sending flowers with a note that says "Good-bye...." The Ravaging succeeds as long as the prey's attempts to fall in love fail.
- **Create Anger:** The character prides herself on maintaining her composure, and delights in driving others to anger. By wearing down an individual's self-control, she drives him to self-destructive acts of violence.
- **Break Trust:** The character must break the trust that exists between two people. The character has had his trust broken, and now others must suffer as he has. The character's prey ultimately trust no one, becoming isolated from the world.
- **Exploit Dependence:** The character prides herself on her self-sufficiency, and she flaunts it by making others dependent upon her. Victims might be neglected children, teenagers supplied with a steady diet of cheap video games and bad food, or kept lovers who worry about satisfying her needs. The character destroys anyone who becomes dependent upon her, and is fulfilled as they waste away.
- **Destroy Illusions:** The character is jaded, and the sight of innocence disgusts him. This type of Ravaging is often performed by childlings, who have been known to get "good kids" in trouble and spread the "truth" about Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny.

In either case, a normal Ravaging roll is made to determine how much Glamour is gained in the story, whether throughout it or in a few particular scenes. However, if roleplaying of a Ravaging Threshold is extremely compelling, the Storytelling may allow the player to forego Ravaging rolls and may award Glamour automatically.

Rhapsody

This is an Unseelie means of epiphany that is strictly forbidden by the Kithain. A changeling can imbue so much raw Glamour into a mortal that he burns like a Roman candle; all his creativity goes into one, final, glorious masterpiece. This is the last creation the artist or Dreamer is capable of as he is left drained forever after.

All Kithain, Seelie and Unseelie, forbid this form of epiphany because it destroys any possibility for more Glamour in the future. It also destroys the mortal's life so thoroughly that he may become an enemy

of changelings subconsciously, if he survives. Many Rhapsodized mortals succumb to exhaustion, suicide or stress-related ailments.

The work of art that results from Rhapsody contains copious amounts of Glamour (the item is considered to be a special form of dross — see below). When the work is destroyed, the Glamour is released. (And this is added insult to injury for the artist — not even his greatest creation is allowed to live on.)

System: One to five points of Glamour are invested into the victim. (Members of a group can each donate some Glamour to the victim, and reap shares of the Rhapsody.) The mortal makes a Manipulation + Expression roll (or another appropriate roll, difficulty 7) to create his masterpiece. A number of dice is added to this pool equal to the number of Glamour points invested by the changeling(s).

For each success rolled in creating the work, a Seelie changeling gains one point of Glamour, while an Unseelie changeling gains two points when the object is destroyed. If a group donated Glamour to the Rhapsody, each contributor regains the Glamour that he invested (if there is enough to go around), and any remaining points are distributed on a point-by-point basis (single points awarded to Unseelie contributors become two points automatically).

However, for every "one" rolled on a botch during the work's creation, the artist gains a point of permanent Banality, and no one gains any Glamour.

Dross

While epiphanies are used to glean Glamour from mortals, there are other ways of obtaining Glamour in its many guises. The raw essence of the Dreaming sometimes gets trapped in physical form, usually through natural or magical means. This type of Glamour is known as *dross*. Dross is less threatening than the unbridled energy of the Dreaming. Indeed, many Kithain believe that dross should protected even more so than the Dreaming itself, because it is fragile and unique.

Dross can manifest in many natural variations — forest mushrooms, geodes, fern seeds, well-worn river stones. Dross is often contained in the possessions and relics of great people: John Lennon's diary, Picasso's paintbrush or palette, Abraham Lincoln's top hat, or a letter written by either Lewis Carroll or Dr. Seuss.

The Glamour gleaned from dross is more fleeting and temporary than that gathered from an epiphany. The power of dross is measured in points, but the fragile nature of that Glamour requires it to be used immediately once it is released. The Glamour unleashed from dross cannot replenish a changeling's own store. An object usually contains anywhere from one to five Glamour points, although some magnificent vessels hold 10 points or more.

In order for the Glamour trapped in dross to be released, part of the item (and in many cases all of it) *must* be destroyed. A changeling must tear, crush, burn, devour, rip or otherwise ruin the item permanently, unless only part of its Glamour can be released, in which case only part of the object is destroyed. Once all the dross has been released from an item, there can be no chance to repair it. Ever.

Many Kithain use dross as a form of currency. The Kenning Talent enables a changeling to know exactly how much Glamour is contained in an object (on a roll against difficulty 5). Many Seelie and Unseelie believe that such treasures and mementos should be protected from greedy Kithain out for a quick fix (although the Unseelie generally hold a much more liberal view of what makes something a treasure).

Types of Dross

Dross can take the form of many different things, in varying sizes and shapes. The following is a list of sample items.

• **Dream Stones:** *Dream stones* are beautiful natural objects. Although these items are named dream stones, the majority of them aren't stones at all — they might be anything from a small clump of moss from a rarely visited forest to an unusually formed crystal. Dream stones are distinguishable from their ordinary counterparts — the moss might be an unusual color, or the crystal might glow with a chimerical inner light. Dream stones are usually found around faerie glens and in hidden wilderness grottos. Dream stones usually contain only small amounts of Glamour, from one to three points.

• **Mementos:** *Mementos* are items associated with a person or an event of great inspirational significance. One of Elvis' rhinestone-studded jumpsuits, a pen that belonged to H. P. Lovecraft, a moon rock from mankind's first lunar landing, or even John Belushi's bumblebee outfit could be mementos. Mementos can contain large amounts of Glamour, some as much as 10 points. The more rare the item and the greater the person or event connected with it, the more dross it holds.

• **Treasures:** *Treasures* can hold as little as one or as many as 10 points of Glamour, depending on the significance of the item and the impact it has had on creativity. The original copy of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare might contain more than 20 points of Glamour, while a canvas painting by a new but well-respected graffiti artist might contain only two. Most treasures are guarded zealously by the Kithain. Some treasures are made specifically to be destroyed, to release the Glamour contained within. Destroying a permanent and important treasure simply for the Glamour within earns the defiler a temporary point of Banality.

• **Chimera:** Glamour gained from destroying a chimerical beast may be used to replenish a changeling's own depleted score. However, one must consume the flesh of the beast in order to gain any benefits. Doing this repeatedly can cause side effects ranging from purgative to poisonous to Bedlam-inspiring.

Chimerical items may also release Glamour when destroyed. The amount of Glamour gained by consuming a beast or breaking a chimerical object is generally proportional to the power of the creature or item.

• **Founts:** Certain hidden places in the world have a direct connection to the Dreaming. These places, called *founts*, are highly sought after. In fact, some freeholds are built upon or near these sites, where Glamour bubbles up naturally like a spring. The amount of dross gained by ingesting the Glamour-laden "water" is determined by the Storyteller, although it is usually never more than 10 points in one draught, after which the fount must be allowed to replenish itself before it can be drawn from again. Strange side effects can arise from drinking from certain founts. Anything from hallucinations, nightmares, precognition or an attack of the giggles may result, depending on the Storyteller's discretion and the location of the fount.

Using Dross

Each time a changeling uses dross in any way, her player must roll a single die to see what affect the fickle nature of the Glamour contained within the dross has on the changeling. A "one" indicates that the Glamour has some negative side effect (anything from a momentary lapse in the surrounding Mists to nightmares to gaining a temporary point of Banality). A "10" might mean that some permanent or long-term benefit is incurred (such as gaining a perma-

nent point of Glamour to losing a permanent point of Banality). The Storyteller decides what occurs and may not even tell a player what the effects of using dross are until they exhibit themselves (in which case the Storyteller should roll the die for the player).

Chimera

Chimera are creatures and items of pure imagination, but the unconscious minds of the Kithain and other low-Banality beings can shape Glamour into things far more "real" than mere dreams. Chimera exist only to Kithain and enchanted beings. They can be objects (weapons or magical treasures), creatures (often monstrous) and places (flying castles or archways located in forests). Chimera can be sentient or nonsentient. They can be inanimate and malleable to a changeling's will, or "alive" and dangerous in the extreme.

Composition

The metaphysical composition of the Dreaming, and of chimera in particular, is a mystery that baffles the most learned fae. To those who can perceive chimera, most appear as solid and as "real" as objects in the Autumn world, or Earth. Changelings can perceive chimera with all five senses. By definition, chimera are constructs of Glamour energies, made manifest through the will of mortal and fae Dreamers. More dense than mere thought, chimerical substance physically interacts with those attuned to its presence.

Even the most ethereal chimera consist of a coarser material than pure Glamour does. This is an advantage in some ways and a disadvantage in others. Because chimera are of a heavier and sturdier substance than Glamour, they can withstand the mildest abuses of Banality. In fact, their physical nature results from the limited application of Banality to the Dreaming. True Glamour is the ultimate antithesis of static form. Glamour touches Dreamers, who in turn create chimera, but Banality influences those Dreamers as well. Thus they create chimera based on their Autumn world perspective, no matter how distorted their vision may become in the Dreaming.

Inanimate Chimera

Inanimate chimera are the building blocks of the Dreaming. They may be the dreams of cloth, silver or stone that appear in the Dreaming or in the mundane world (though they are still invisible to nonfae). Inanimate chimera may result from the dreams of changelings or from the singular or collective dreams of humanity. They may be the creations of chimerical creatures (webs left by spider nervosa), or changelings may spin them from near nothingness with certain Arts and treasures. Kithain artisans may mold these materials into clothing and weapons.

Inanimate chimera may be semi-formed raw materials or may be fully realized pieces of art. Almost every piece of creative work on Earth has its chimerical counterpart. Only those works imbued with true creativity, however, maintain their integrity in the Dreaming for long. (Thus a cathedral has far more "reality" as a chimerical construct than does an O'Tolley's restaurant.) Inanimate chimera that have little integrity succumb to Banality quickly, while those that spring from highly creative sources may last for centuries. The dreams of the creators of the work are often the strongest force behind a chimera. It is the dreams of those who



appreciate the work, however, that keep it alive after the artists' death. Thus even a chimerical O'Tolley's might rebuild itself continuously as new customers come through its doors, but its existence is always a poor one at best.

Inanimate chimera are not always art-related, but may spring from humanity's collective unconsciousness. Thus chimerical metal may exist in an imagined "mother-lode" near a mining community. Chimerical food may come from the desperate dreams of a starving child or from the dream-harvest of a successful boggan farmer. Changelings who wish to gather dreamstuff for the creation of chimerical items must "mine" it from the Dreaming, much in the way that humans gather raw materials in the mundane world.

There are four types of inanimate chimera: Incidental, Dreamed, crafted and forged.

Incidental Chimera

Incidental chimera constitute the majority of chimera in the mundane world. They are stray dreams, detached from the main body of the Dreaming. They sprout up in an unpredictable and hodgepodge way on Earth, but are invisible to mundane people.

Chimera that grow in the real world seem to have all the "reality" of chimera found in the Dreaming. An Incidental tree may have the solidity of a real tree to a changeling in the mundane world. Once removed from its growth site (the place where it was originally dreamed into existence), however, the Incidental chimera succumbs to Banality quickly, breaking apart like wet cotton candy. A changeling may use an Incidental tree branch as an impromptu weapon while in an Incidental forest, but the branch would not serve very well as a walking stick once the changeling leaves the woods. Incidental chimera are usually brittle and have little value as raw materials for crafted or forged items. These chimera are born into the hostile Earth, and Banality infects them at the root. Even if a changeling brought an Incidental chimera into the Dreaming, it probably wouldn't last long (though a changeling may nurture an Incidental chimera, transforming it into a Dreamed chimera with repeated transfusions of Glamour).

Dreamed Chimera

Dreamed chimera are the most common type of chimera in the Dreaming, but are relatively rare in the mundane world. Few changelings know why one newborn chimera becomes an Incidental chimera and another has a more rich and solid existence as a Dreamed chimera. Sometimes a Dreamer's creation may take root only in the mundane world, and sometimes only in the Dreaming. Some may exist in both realms, creating two aspects of the same chimera that take on separate but mysteriously connected lives. Dreamed chimera have a far more independent and permanent existence than Incidental chimera, but they are still susceptible to dissolution by Banality in the mundane world.

Dreamed chimera are less "infected" by Banality than their Incidental counterparts. Changelings may use Dreamed chimera as raw materials in crafted or forged items. Inanimate Dream chimera tend to keep their cohesiveness as long as no one drastically changes their original Dreamed form. Thus a changeling may use a Dreamed tree branch as a walking stick, and may even trim a few twigs off it to make it more serviceable. However, if the changeling tries to carve the branch into an ornate walking stick, it is no longer a branch as envisioned by its Dreamer and dissolves quickly unless crafted or forged.

A changeling who wishes to craft or forge a chimera usually obtains his materials from the Dreaming instead of using Incidental materials from Earth. The more rare the item, the deeper into the Dreaming the changeling must usually go to find it. Truly rare items



and materials can become the foci of major quests. The recent opening of trods into the Near Dreaming upon the sidhe's return has precipitated a building boom unprecedented since the Sundering.

Crafted Chimera

Crafted chimera are those that have been altered from their original form through traditional crafting methods. A changeling may work chimerical metal, leather, wood and more fantastic substances (dragon scales, true silver) in the same way that human artisans work mundane materials. To do this, the changeling must first gather the appropriate chimerical materials (preferably Dreamed chimera), and the player must spend a point of Glamour. A Dexterity + Crafts roll (difficulty and number of successes needed vary) is made to work the chimera into its desired shape.

Chimerical materials are difficult to work with, however, and few changelings are able to do so. Of all the kith, only boggans and nockers have much skill; the difficulties of all other kith trying to craft Dreamed chimera are increased by one to four. (Incidental chimera are even more difficult to work with.) Crafted chimera are rarely manipulated beyond the level of simple mechanical devices, and are still as vulnerable to Banality in their new forms as they were in their old.

Forged Chimera

Forged chimera are the rarest of inanimate chimera because only nockers can make them. The nocker Birthright (Forge Chimera) allows them to transmute chimera on a fundamental level, forging them into hardier forms of dreamstuff. Forged chimera are resistant to the forces of Banality (difficulties are reduced by two on all rolls involving Banality), and are not connected to single changelings in the manner that voile are. Nockers can create forged chimera that are complex mechanical devices that do not even resemble their original materials. Bigger projects (such as chimerical castles or ships) are usually assembly-line projects; nockers forge the materials and other fae put them together. (**For more on forging chimera, see the nocker entry in Chapter Three.**)

Voile

Voile, or faerie clothing, is the most common example of Dreamed chimera, and is an integral part of a changeling's faerie mien. A changeling may create chimera of various sorts spontaneously during her Chrysalis. These "items" are usually distorted dream images from the fledge's past life or subconscious reflections of her fae nature. A new changeling's first action is often the instinctual creation of faerie garb, seemingly from thin air. These chimera are personal and attached to the changeling, and are thus Dreamed, not Incidental, chimera. This first suit of voile is usually an accurate indication of the changeling's kith and seeming. Thus a redcap may appear in tattered leathers and a white cap (which turns red when he first spills blood); a sidhe may appear in court finery.

The player may decide what this first suit of voile looks like, but the clothing confers no special powers unless the player buys it as a Treasure Background during character creation. Voile is typically permanent as long as its creator possesses it. A suit of armor voile dreamed by a fledgling troll is a permanent part of his ensemble. If the troll loses his armor, however, he probably needs to seek out a nocker to forge him a new suit.

Crafting and Forging Sentient Chimera

Unlike their thoughtless, unaware counterparts, sentient chimera are willful beings, which may not want to change from their original forms. A changeling who forges sentient metal into a sword without its consent may find that the blade turns in her hand, or shatters at the worst possible moment. Unwilling voile may tear in embarrassing places when the arrogant Eiluned duke presents himself to the queen.

To overcome this, an artisan must either convince (cajole, wheedle or frighten) the material to cooperate, or make it behave through force of will. (The player must spend an additional point of Glamour, and roll the character's Willpower against a difficulty of the chimera's Willpower. If the roll fails, the player may try again, but each additional attempt subtracts one die from the Willpower Dice Pool.) Of course, the artist must still have the prerequisite Skill to change the chimera into its finished form.

Chimerical Wyrd Effects

Chimera may, under certain circumstances, affect the mundane world. This requires the use of Willpower and special chimerical powers called *Redes*. Thus, only sentient chimera may affect the material world. A changeling wielding a nonsentient chimerical sword can cause Wyrd effects with it, but must do so in the usual manner (**see "Calling Upon the Wyrd," pg. 211**). A chimerical flying carpet may carry a changeling from one place to another in the physical world, but the risks incurred with such an enterprise are real and great. Beyond the threat of suffering Banality, there are all the dangers of crashing into airliners, meeting errant vampires or being confronted by the Technocracy.

Birthing Chimera

Chimera derive from the stuff of unformed dreams, and their birth is a very special and magical event. Chimera may attach themselves to a changeling during his Chrysalis or Saining. This process is something over which the changeling has little control; they are born from his subconscious dreams. Such chimera may be inanimate voile or chimerical guides to aid the changeling in his new life (if the player buys the Chimera Background).

Chimera also come into existence through many other means. Kithain may create chimera subconsciously during stressful, creative or highly emotional times. Changelings may also birth chimera when they go into Bedlam. Chimera born from Bedlam are often unpredictable and dangerous, sometimes staying with their creator long after his state of Bedlam subsides. Chimera may also spring from the minds of nonfae Dreamers. Some chimera are truly ancient and may visit Earth from far into the Deep Dreaming. Chimera may even come from places of low Banality, such as a Lost Ones' freehold (**see "Freeholds," pg. 224**), or from places of intense mystical activity.

Dreamers and Chimera

Kithain are not the only creatures that can spawn chimera. While individual changelings are far more likely to do so than humans, the vast majority of chimera (and, indeed, the Dreaming itself) are the unconscious creations of humanity's dreams. The collective uncon-

sciousness of the human race and other denizens of the World of Darkness creates the fantastic dream world from which the fae draw power. Even the most Banality-sodden humans occasionally give spark to minor and ill-formed chimera. Despite the oncoming Winter, some beings still maintain the ability to dream. Such "Dreamers" are individuals with low Banality ratings (4 or lower).

These mortal Dreamers may include artists, children, daydreamers and the insane. Some supernatural creatures may also birth chimera. Examples of low-Banality supernatural Dreamers may include, but are not limited to: Fianna werewolves; Malkavian, Ravnos and Toreador vampires; and mages such as Dreamspeakers and the Marauders. Children add a strange quality to the Dreaming that is both comforting and disturbing. The culture that a child lives in heavily influences any chimera he creates. These beings may be spring from children's books, cartoons, childlike perceptions of MTV, the 6:00 news or from the abuses of parents.

Children often give their chimera an winsome look. (Some child-chimera are nauseatingly cute.) Appearances can be deceiving; children are prone to nightmares, too. That cute little bunny might pull out a butcher knife at some inopportune moment. Some chimera are very protective of their creators and defend them against Kithain predators (other chimera and changelings who try to Ravage creators for Glamour). These chimera may also interact with their creators.

Animate Chimera

Animate chimera are simply chimera that have either life or the appearance of life. They may be sentient or nonsentient, but nonsentient chimera can mimic intelligent creatures in a surprisingly sophisticated manner. Like inanimate chimera, chimerical creatures may be either Incidental (living wholly in the mundane world) or Dreamed. Some animate chimera, such as nocker golems, may even be forged.

Nonsentient Chimera

Nonsentient chimerical creatures may have the appearance of life and intelligence, but are really little more than animated impulses following a preordained series of actions. These creatures may have all the outer aspects of sentience. They may show clever instincts while hunting, use a sword with amazing facility, or even carry on an intelligent conversation. All of this is illusion, however. A nonsentient chimera merely behaves the way that the Dreamers who created it expect it to act. It has no independent thought or will, though in some cases a nonsentient chimera may become aware over time.

Sentient Creatures

Only Kithain or mortal Dreamers with the low Banality (rarely over 2) give birth to sentient chimera. Inanimate chimera rarely obtain sentience, simply because the Dreamer does not expect it to do so. Humans may ascribe human attributes to animals or their cars, but few toy with the thought that a toaster is alive. This is not always the case, however. Some Dreamers anthropomorphize the most mundane objects. A child may dream that her teddy bear is alive, and, fueled by her dreams, it comes to life.

Similarly, a madman may imagine that dreadful disembodied voices call from his own shadow, creating disturbing and wicked chimerical creatures from the stuff of nightmares. The shadow-chimera may even gain enough awareness to realize that a cure to their progenitor's delirium will end their existence. They may attempt to strengthen their creator's madness and attack those who attempt a cure. In rare cases they may gain a mobility independent of their creator, and commit hideous crimes in the Dreaming.

A changeling may determine if a chimerical creature is sentient by talking with it and making a Perception + Gremayre roll (difficulty varies), or can tell visually by making a Perception + Kenning roll (difficulty equals the chimera's Glamour; two successes needed). Of course, not all chimera will speak the changeling's language. The Kithain would need to know German to speak with a German chimera, or Plant Lore to communicate with an enchanted apple tree in the queen's orchard. Sentient chimera may lose sentience over time as Dreamers forget them, or when exposed to Banality.

Building Chimerical Creatures

Traits

Chimerical creatures are created with these rules for use with the Chimera Background. All sentient chimerical creatures have seven fundamental types of Traits: Physical, Social and Mental Attributes, Abilities, Glamour, Willpower and Health Levels. Nonsentient chimerical creatures have Physical Attributes, Glamour and Health Levels. Creatures of the Dreaming may also possess chimerical powers, called *Redes*.

Attribute Cost

All chimerical creatures are designed with chimera points, which can be allocated among the chimera's Attributes in almost any manner. Most chimera from the Near Dreaming may have anywhere from eight to 36 chimera points (**see the Chimera Background, pg. 146**). Some, however, are far more powerful. Chimera can go above the human maximum of 5 in any Attribute, though one can never have an Attribute higher than its own Glamour rating.

Physical Attributes: Most chimera have quasi-physical bodies because of their rather crude Glamour construction. (Chimera with the **Dreamform** Rede are the exception.) Chimera with physical forms have three Physical Attributes: Strength, Dexterity and Stamina. If an attacker disperses a chimera, but does not destroy it, the chimera's Attributes return at the rate of one point for each Attribute per week.

Cost: Each chimera point buys three points to allocate among a chimera's Physical Attributes. Chimera do not begin with one dot in each Attribute as characters do.

Mental Attributes: All sentient chimera have the three Mental Attributes: Perception, Intelligence and Wits. Nonsentient chimera do not have Mental Attributes, though some may *appear* intelligent. Such chimera have limited behavioral patterns and cannot grow in knowledge or make independent decisions outside of their "original programming."

Cost: One chimera point buys three points to allocate among the three Mental Attributes. Chimera do not begin with one dot in each Attribute as characters do.

Social Attributes: Chimera are dream-creatures and are often socially active. All sentient chimera have the three Social Attributes: Charisma, Manipulation and Appearance. (Appearance can have a rating of zero — monstrously ugly.) Nonsentient chimera are not required to have Social Attributes, but may possess them. A nonsentient chimera may still have a high Appearance. It may even be charismatic or a convincing speaker, even if it is really nothing more than an automaton.

Cost: Each chimera point buys three points to allocate among the chimera's three Social Attributes. Chimera do not begin with one dot in each Attribute as characters do.

Abilities

Chimera may have almost any Ability that can be possessed by changelings or other creatures in the World of Darkness. If a person can dream of someone doing something, then a chimera can do it too. A chimerical duelist may be just as good with a sword as the best changeling warrior. A sentient chimera may be a great, original artist. Chimerical Abilities do not usually exceed the human maximum of 5, but potent chimera from the Dreaming may surpass the most talented humans in skill.

Cost: One chimera point buys three Ability points.

Glamour

All chimera have some Glamour, or they would cease to exist. Most have only a few points, while legendary creatures from the Far Dreaming and Deep Dreaming may have almost limitless dream power. Chimera cannot regain Glamour while in the mundane world unless they visit a freehold, are given it by a changeling, or have the **Steal Glamour** Rede. Chimera regain one Glamour an hour in the Dreaming.

Cost: One chimera point buys one point of Glamour.

Willpower

Willpower suffuses a sentient chimera's Glamour, giving it independent purpose and direction. Sentient chimera need Willpower to fuel certain Redes. Nonsentient chimera do not have Willpower. Chimera regain Willpower at the rate of one point per day.

Cost: Three chimera points buys one point of Willpower.

Health Levels

Physical chimera have a very real substance to those in, and of, the Dreaming. Kithain can destroy chimera through "physical" chimerical means. A chimerical sword draws blood, and a chimerical fire burns chimera and changeling alike. This damage may force changelings into their mortal seemings, but it destroys chimera.

The penalties applied for losing Wound Levels is exactly the same as for changelings until the chimera exceeds seven Health Levels. Once past this point the Storyteller may decide the affects of additional Health Levels.

Cost: One chimera point buys two Health Levels. The limit to Health Levels is five times the chimera's Stamina score.

Attack

All physical chimera can inflict Strength + 1 chimerical damage, unless they use weapons or Redes.

Redes

These strange powers are displayed by many chimera. The variety of these powers is seemingly endless; a few examples follow. A chimera uses Glamour to power most of its Redes, but needs Willpower to affect the mundane world. Not all chimera have Redes.

Chimera Point Cost: This is the number of chimera points that must be spent for a chimera to possess a Rede.

Use Cost: This is the number of Glamour points that must be spent for a chimera to use a Rede.

Example Redes

• ***Aggravated Damage*** — Chimera may use this Rede in tandem with the **Wyrd** Rede (see below) to cause aggravated, real-world damage.

Chimera Point Cost: 3

Use Cost: None

• **Armor** — The chimera may grow armor to protect its physical form. Types of armor include tough skin, metal plating, dragon scales and chitinous exoskeletons.

Chimera Point Cost: 1 (per point of armor)

Use Cost: None

• **Befuddle** — This power confuses its target, making it difficult to perform any action. Roll Glamour with a difficulty equal to its target's Willpower. The target loses one die from all Dice Pools for every success that the chimera achieves in excess of the victim. The effect lasts as long as the chimera remains in the victim's presence.

Chimera Point Cost: 3

Use Cost: 1

• **Dreamform** — The chimera is composed of a more rarefied, purer Glamour than most chimera are. It does not have a physical form. (It is still visible, however, unless it has the Rede **Hide**.) Kithain must use Arts or treasures if they wish to affect it, as normal chimerical means will do no good. A chimera with this Rede does not need to possess Physical Attributes, but must still have Health Levels. (If this Rede is purchased, the Stamina limit on Health Levels is ignored.)

This Rede is permanent, unless the chimera is exposed to high levels of Banality (it touches an Autumn Person, for example). In such instances, the chimera's current Glamour is rolled (difficulty equals the source's Banality). If the roll fails, the chimera loses its Dreamform instantly and gains two chimera points to be allocated among Physical Attributes that it develops suddenly. The chimera remains in this physical form as long as it remains in contact with the Banality that changed it. If the Glamour roll botches, the change is permanent.

Chimera Point Cost: 5

Use Cost: None

• **Enchantment** — This Rede allows a chimera to affect nonfae, and allows them to affect it. The chimera may interact with a human, chat amiably with him, or attack him. All damage is still chimerical, and the human forgets the encounter quickly. (**Refer to the Mists Chart, pg. 208.**) The chimera would need the **Wyrd** Rede to affect the physical world.

Chimera Point Cost: 3

Use Cost: This Rede costs one Glamour per turn to use, or one per hour in a freehold or the Dreaming.

• **Ensnare** — The chimera can attempt to physically restrain its target in some manner. The ways in which chimera do this vary widely (a spider's web, a net, sticky foam). An appropriate attack roll is made, or the Ensnare is set in advance in hopes that someone will blunder into it. Ensnare has Strength 2 and two points of armor for every three points of permanent Glamour possessed by the chimera. Chimera with less than three points of permanent Glamour have an Ensnare with Strength 1 and one point of armor.

Chimera Point Cost: 2

Use Cost: 1 to capture one human-sized object

• **Fear** — Chimera with this Rede can cause a subject to freeze with fear or retreat in stark terror. Fear persists for one to 10 turns. The victim may make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6); each success reduces the Rede's duration by one turn. This fear can be generated by any number of means; some chimera frighten their targets by their mere appearance.

Chimera Point Cost: 2

Use Cost: 1

• **Fester**—This Rede causes a victim to manifest the symptoms of a particular disease. The Storyteller decides at what rate the disease progresses, but it is often extremely fast. A disease that normally would take years to manifest may do so in hours. A victim may cure the effects of this Rede by making an opposed Willpower roll and gaining more successes than the chimera does, although the victim must be aware of the chimera's presence to resist. Primal •••• (Heather Balm) may heal damage inflicted by this Rede, but will not cure the disease.

Chimera Point Cost: 5

Use Cost: 1 per Health Level of damage inflicted by the disease

• **Flight**—The chimera can fly under its own power. Changelings seek chimera with this Rede for flying carpets and the like. The chimera can fly 25 feet per turn per point of Dexterity that it has.

Chimera Point Cost: 3

Use Cost: 1 per hour

• **Gulp**—Chimera with this power may unhinge their jaws wide enough to swallow victims. If a chimera gains five or more successes on an attack roll, it swallows the victim whole. Damage is automatic each turn thereafter, if the chimera chooses to inflict it. Some chimera may hold their victims inside themselves just long enough to terrify them, and then spit them out again. Victims swallowed by redcap-inspired chimera are rarely so lucky.

Chimera Point Cost: 3

Use Cost: 2

• **Glamour Pact**—The chimera can protect itself from being crafted, forged or trapped in a treasure against its will. The difficulty of any attempt to do so by changeling artisans is increased by two, and the chimera may be even more difficult to control than the average unwilling chimera. Changelings consider most Glamour Pact items to be "cursed," and the chimera in one may still use any Redes that are not based on Physical Attributes. Chimera with Glamour Pact that are trapped in items retain their Glamour and Willpower scores. Their new forms dictate their physical characteristics. Some chimera use this power to force an artisan to change them back to their true forms (often a difficult task). Some, however, retain their imposed forms for years, relishing their status as cursed objects. Only the greatest or most insane changeling artisans work with chimera that possess this Rede.

Chimera Point Cost: 5

Use Cost: 1 permanent Glamour

• **Healing**—The chimera can heal its own wounds or those of others. The chimera must have the **Wyrd** Rede to heal nonchimerical injuries.

Chimera Point Cost: 5

Use Cost: 1 point of Glamour heals one Health Level of damage

• **Hide**—This Rede allows a chimera to become invisible to all changelings and enchanted beings. A Perception + Kenning roll (difficulty 8) must be made for a changeling trying to determine the location of a chimera that is using this Rede, and at least two successes must be achieved. (One success indicates the *general* location of the chimera.) This effect lasts for the duration of a scene (up to one hour).

Some chimera can use this Rede to hide changelings or even unenchanted beings. Hiding a changeling from another changeling functions just as described above. Hiding a changeling from the unenchanted, or hiding a unenchanted item or person requires that the chimera possess the **Wyrd** Rede.

Chimera Point Cost: 5 (for hiding self only); 7 (for ability to affect others)

Use Cost: 1 (and 1 per person or item affected)

• **Possession**—The chimera must touch the target. An opposed roll is made of the chimera's Glamour and the target's Willpower (difficulties are the opponents' scores). If the chimera rolls more successes, it possesses the victim for one turn per success in excess of the opponent's roll. If the target has a higher permanent Banality score than the chimera has permanent Glamour, the chimera loses a point of Glamour for each point of the difference. This Rede works only on Kithain unless the chimera has the Rede **Enchantment**.

Chimera Point Cost: 7

Use Cost: 2 Willpower

• **Scuttle**—Chimera with this Rede may move at truly amazing speeds.

Chimera Point Cost: 3

Use Cost: A chimera may take one extra action per Glamour point spent.

• **Sense Banality**—The chimera can tell how much Banality is in a person, object or place.

Chimera Point Cost: 2

Use Cost: 1 Willpower

• **Shapeshift**—A chimera with this power can change its appearance in almost any way it desires. It may appear to grow larger or smaller. It may turn into a creature of dazzling beauty or a monstrosity from the Nightmare Realms. This image is completely illusionary, and the chimera gains no additional abilities from this Rede. This power affects all five senses, but cannot be used to cause damage with illusionary weapons.

Chimera Point Cost: 5

Use Cost: 1 per shape change

• **Steal Glamour**—This Rede allows the chimera to actually steal Glamour from a changeling or even another chimera. A Willpower roll with a difficulty equal to the target's Glamour must be made for a chimera to use this Rede successfully. The number of successes rolled determines how many points of temporary Glamour are stolen.

Chimera Point Cost: 3

Use Cost: 1 Willpower

• **Traverse Dreaming**—This Rede allows chimera to travel to the mortal world from the Dreaming, or to enter the Dreaming from the mortal world. Chimera can travel only through established trods and portals, though some travel chimerical trods known only to their kind.

Chimera Point Cost: 5

Use Cost: 1

• **Venom**—Chimerical venom can cause paralysis or even "death" to changelings. The victim may suffer damage, and a successful Stamina roll (difficulty 8) must be made, or the victim may be paralyzed for one minute per Glamour point invested by the chimera.

Chimera Point Cost: 3

Use Cost: Chimera usually deliver their venom in tandem with a physical attack (bite, stinger, claw). This Rede causes one additional Health Level of damage per point of Glamour that the chimera chooses to invest (assuming that the chimera seeks to do harm with its venom).

• **Weaponry**—The chimera may create physical (non-ranged) weapons from its chimerical substance. These may include swords, horns or lashing tails. If a chimera loses its physical form, its weapon

disappears with it, but the weapon may stay behind in some cases.

Chimera Point Cost: The chimera inflicts +1 damage for every two chimera points spent.

Use Cost: None

• **Wyrd** — A chimera that invokes this Rede becomes a solid creature in the real world and can cause physical damage. This is one of the rarest chimerical powers.

Chimera Point Cost: 5

Use Cost: 1 Willpower per scene

Killing Chimera

If a chimera loses all its Health Levels, its current Willpower must be rolled successfully (difficulty 7) to maintain its integrity. If the roll fails, it dies instantly. If the roll succeeds, the chimera becomes incorporeal (as though in **Dreamform**), and its wounds heal at the rate of one Health Level per week, unless it has the Rede **Healing**. When a chimera has been reduced to noncorporeal form, it may retreat from its pursuers and be intangible but still visible. A chimera in this form can still be affected by Arts, but is immune to



Sample Chimera

Mary's sluagh character Tatania has the Chimera Background. Mary wants to create a guardian spider for her character to protect her freehold from intruders, and to keep Tatania company. Mary put three freebie points in her Chimera Background during character creation. That entitles her to 20 chimera points with which to design Tatania's chimera. At least one chimera point must be assigned to each of the seven Trait categories — Physical, Social, Mental, Abilities, Glamour, Willpower and Health Levels — for a sentient chimera, unless the spider has the **Dreamform** Rede. (Mary could also make the chimera nonsentient, and wouldn't have to buy Social Attributes, Mental Attributes, Abilities or Willpower.)

Mary decides to assign three chimera points to each of the Physical and Mental categories. This gives her nine dots to allocated within each group. She assigns only one chimera point to the spider's Social Attributes, giving her three dots to spend in that category.

Mary assigns the spider's nine Physical Attributes (Strength 3, Dexterity 4 and Stamina 2) and nine Mental Attribute dots (Perception 3, Intelligence 2 and Wits 4). She assigns the three Social dots (Charisma 2 and Manipulation 1). As a sluagh, Tatania understands that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, so Mary gives the spider a zero Appearance.

Mary then decides to put two chimera points in the spider's Abilities. This grants her six points to distribute among them. She gives the spider Alertness 1, Brawl 3 and Stealth 2.

Mary has spent nine chimera points so far and has 11 left. Of these she puts two into Glamour (giving the spider 2 Glamour), three into Willpower (giving the spider 1 Willpower), and spends three chimera points on Health Levels (giving the creature a total of six levels). This leaves Mary with three chimera points. She uses these to buy the Redes **Ensnare** (webbing) and **Armor** (one point's worth).

the effects of chimerical weapons. If the chimera can be slain again (it loses all of its Health Levels), it becomes corporeal and is subject to the effects of Banality (see below).

If a chimera is destroyed (i.e., it loses all of its Health Levels, and its Willpower roll fails) in the mundane world, one of two things happens. If the Banality of anyone present, or of the location itself, is higher than the chimera's permanent Glamour, the chimera melts away into nothing in seconds. Nothing can be harvested from it. If the Banality of everyone present, or of the location, is lower than the chimera's permanent Glamour, this decomposition is slower and changelings may "harvest" the chimera's Glamour as dross. Changelings may also use the chimera as physical parts for crafts (using a chimerical dragonhide for armor, for example).

Any chimera that dies in the Dreaming is not dissolved by Banality, but is absorbed by the Dreaming. (The chimerical dragon rots or chimerical insects eat it, recycling its Glamour into other forms.)

Chimera and Banality

Humans and unenchanted supernatural beings with high Banality ratings can dispel chimera by their mere proximity. Since most mortals cannot see chimera, this is usually not a problem. If a changeling interacts with a chimera in a way that normal humans cannot readily explain (the changeling wields a chimerical blade or talks to a chimerical friend), most humans will merely consider her to be playacting or insane. Chimerical effects become an issue, however, if a human sees the chimera perform a "real-world" feat, such as flying with a changeling on its back. The chimera will usually remain invisible, but the flying changeling may not. If the changeling or chimera does not take pains to disguise their flight (through Chicanery or the Rede **Hide**), humans' skepticism may shunt the Kithain and chimera (and anyone or anything in contact with them) into a random part of the Dreaming (Storyteller's option). If this happens, the changeling may have a difficult time returning to the mundane world.

A sentient chimera may resist this effect by rolling its Willpower versus the observing human's Banality (two successes are needed). If the roll succeeds, the chimera is immune to that particular viewer's skepticism for the remainder of the scene. If a group witnesses the flying changeling, the chimera's roll is made against a difficulty equal to that of the highest Banality rating in the crowd. The Mists will usually cover up any memory of the event after the fact.

Even more dangerous are the risks a chimera faces if it gets too close to or, worse, touches a person with a high Banality. Most chimera can recognize such people and take great pains to avoid them. Even if a human cannot see a chimera, the force of his or her doubt is enough to erode the chimera's fragile form. Sentient chimera take one Health Level of damage for every turn spent in close proximity to an unenchanted person who has a Banality rating of two or more in excess of the chimera's own permanent Glamour score. The actual proximity at which a chimera suffers this damage is determined by the Storyteller, though the greater the person's Banality, the farther his aura extends (generally about a foot per point of Banality, though this may be greater with some Autumn People). A chimera reduced to zero Health Levels in this manner is destroyed forever.

Ironically, if a changeling or chimera enchants a human successfully, and that person sees the chimera or the results of its actions, the human's skepticism has no effect on the chimera. The human believes in or doesn't question what she sees, at least for that moment. (This tactic has little effect on Dauntain, who can see chimera on their own.)

These rules on disbelief do not usually apply to inanimate or nonsentient chimera. Such items are usually either too "mundane" to be affected by humans' skepticism, or are protected as part of a changeling's personal effects. Thus a changeling could hit an unenchanted being with a chimerical blade without fear of losing it, but the blade causes no damage unless the changeling enchants the person or calls upon the Wyrd.

Freeholds

Most of the ancient faerie glens, isles and hillocks disappeared long ago; their pathways to Arcadia closed when humanity's disbelief became too strong for them to remain open. Nonetheless, a few of these spots, called freeholds, remain. Such places have close connections with the Dreaming. Changelings draw power from these refuges and find peace there as well. They are places where Banality is, temporarily at least, at bay.

Freeholds are so valuable to changelings that they are the center of the Kithain feudal system. They are sources of power and influence for nobles and commoners alike. Freeholds are the foci of many changelings' faerie lives. Most consider a freehold to be their home, though few changelings actually live in them. Changelings have loyalty and affection for their refuges, no matter how small or humble those places are.

Dream Nature

Freeholds are protrusions of the Dreaming into the mundane world, but the opposite is also true. Freeholds feed the Dreaming Glamour, but Banality leaks into the Dreamrealms through freeholds, trods and other such sites. This is not necessarily a bad thing; the "mundane" world gives the Dreaming form and variety. In its purest form, Glamour is ceaselessly chaotic. Freeholds are, by necessity, more banal than the Dreaming around them.

Most known freeholds are protrusions between the *Autumn* world and the Near Dreaming. Some may exist between two Dreamrealms, such as the Near and Far Dreaming. These are usually shadows of old Earthly freeholds that have migrated (willingly or unwillingly) deeper into the Dreaming. Changelings call a portal between realms in any kind of freehold a *rath*.

Raths

"Rath" is the Irish name for circular earthworks left by the fae; even humans know these are gateways into the faerie lands (though few humans really believe such "fairy tales."). This folklore is true, however, though not all raths are circular earthworks. Raths vary widely — from a silver archway for the sidhe, to a hole under an upturned tree root for a forest-dwelling pooka, to a gauntlet of whirling saw blades in a nocker freehold. A rath may be any kind of portal that is large enough for a changeling to pass through, though not all are big enough to allow humans passage. The size of these archways varies, but is usually proportional to a freehold's power.

The freehold on the Dreaming side of a rath usually appears similar to its mundane aspect, yet there are startling differences. Perhaps north is south here, or mirrors do not reverse images in the usual manner. Banal objects disappear completely, while others are barely visible but drift away like cobwebs in the breeze when touched. The air seems crisper, and colors are more bold. Minor chimera are ubiquitous in the Dreaming aspect of most freeholds. Attracted to freeholds like fish to a coral reef, most are mindless and do little to endanger the freehold or its inhabitants. More daring

chimera may use the rath to jump between realms, though they must have the Rede **Traverse Dreaming** to do so. Homesteads (see below) are freeholds that exist wholly in one Dreamrealm, and they have no raths that lead to another realm.

A freehold is more "static" than the Dreaming that it connects to or surrounds it. Thus, a freehold situated between the Near and Far Dreaming has two aspects. The Far Dreaming aspect is less "mundane" than the freehold's Near Dreaming aspect, but still more stable than the rest of the Far Dreaming. If a changeling leaves the immediate vicinity of this island of stability and enters the Dreaming, she may become lost quickly and may never find her way back to the human world (Intelligence + Dream Lore roll to find her way, difficulty increases with distance from the freehold), unless she travels by way of an established trod. Few changelings dare to wander more than a few city blocks from their freeholds in the Dreaming. Only changelings with Dream Lore may navigate the Dreaming reliably.

Opening a Rath

Raths are usually easier to open than trods are (see below), though this is not always the case. To open a rath, a character must possess the Wayfare ••• (Portal Passage) Art and the Fae ••• (Manifold Chimera) Realm. The number of successes needed to open a rath varies greatly, depending on the circumstances. The sidhe are more adept at traveling the Dreaming than other kith, and their difficulties to open raths are reduced by two. The changeling who owns the freehold has a difficulty of 5 and requires only one success. She may then enter the freehold's Dreaming aspect on the other side of the rath, taking any other changelings (or even enchanted humans) with her. Any changeling with the appropriate Art and Realm may attempt to use another changeling's rath, but the attempt is challenging (difficulty 7, two successes needed). Some changelings use their Arts to make their raths inhospitable to uninvited guests.

Creation of a Freehold

Creating a freehold in the mundane world is not a simple matter, though not impossible. One must find a place with a certain amount of natural Glamour. Such locations are rare, and usually discovered only by luck or chance. Indeed, some Kithain spend years searching for one. With the location determined, the would-be creator must light a torch from another freehold's balefire and bear it to the newly established haven. She must light a new fire with this torch, investing a certain amount of her Glamour.

This fire becomes the balefire for the new freehold. The amount of Glamour invested determines the freehold's level (never

Types of Freeholds

Glade — Glades are sylvan glens, typically located deep in a forest. Changelings favor glades as sites for many of their festivals. Unlike most freeholds, glades are naturally occurring wellsprings of Glamour. Glades have a sacred stone instead of a balefire as their heart.

Hearth — A faerie tavern, bar or coffee house, usually with a back-alley entrance. Many speakeasies from the 1920s are now hearths. All changelings are welcome, as long as they have something to trade.

Lodge — Cottages, houses and mansions, collectively considered lodges, can be freeholds. Lodges are typically the strongholds of nobles, who spend much of their time in residence.

Manor — A manor is a small faerie glen surrounding a cabin or other building, and is usually located in the wilderness.

Eyrie — Eyries are high mountain freeholds, and are typically the refuges of outcasts.

Grotto — Grottos are often overgrown sylvan glades or abandoned mines. Sluagh and nockers often gather in such out-of-the-way freeholds, though others use them as well.

Faerie Ring — A very small glen found deep in the forest. These naturally occurring freeholds grow increasingly rare as the wild places of the world dwindle.

Isle — These enchanted islands are rarely on maps or sullied by mortal feet. Isles are private refuges, and are among the most prized freeholds.

Thorpe — Thorpes are faerie towns. They are rare these days. One of the most famous is a mining ghost town known as Mother Lode, located somewhere in Nevada, while Ireland boasts the village of Glenlea.

Urban — Only the hardiest Kithain dare to live in the World of Darkness' choking urban sprawls. Banality is at its highest here, and untainted Glamour is scarce. These freeholds are on the edge of the coming Winter.

Market — Faerie markets are places, often freeholds, where changelings come to buy, sell and trade strange treasures from a thousand realms. These places often share space with human markets covertly, though some may exist wholly in the Dreaming. A human may purchase a piece of faerie craft "accidentally" on occasion. Such transactions may be lucky or disastrous for the unwary human.

Lost One Freehold — Most sidhe left Earth for Arcadia during the Shattering and stayed away for over 600 years. Some stayed behind, however, immersing themselves in their freeholds. These freeholds are rich in Glamour, but dangerous because of their Bedlam-inspiring qualities.

Homestead — Homesteads are freeholds that are wholly in the Dreaming, yet without access to a rath. They do not have the dual nature of most freeholds; their prime virtue is stability. The Kithain build homesteads to withstand the rigors of the Dreaming. Homesteaders are few, but fiercely independent. Some changelings from every kith set up homesteads (even small villages) in the Near Dreaming. There is currently some tension between long-term homesteaders and changelings who entered the Dreaming after the Resurgence.

Nunnehi Freeholds — Nunnehi freeholds are inherently different from any other kind, and are misunderstood by European fae. Severed from the *Higher Hunting Grounds* (their aspect of the Dreaming), Nunnehi freeholds may nevertheless have access to the "Upper" and "Lower" Worlds. They share many characteristics of werewolf caerns and mage nodes; some Nunnehi find themselves in conflict with Garou or mages who covet their freeholds for their spiritual energies. Nunnehi freeholds vary widely in appearance, and conform to the cultural conventions of the local tribe.

over five). The player subtracts the points from his character's Glamour rating permanently, unless he bought the freehold with the Holdings Background during character creation. Sometimes several changelings may hold a freehold, going so far as to use a common balefire. (The difficulties to resist Banality are reduced by one for shared freeholds.) Each can withdraw what she initially invested in the freehold. Thus a changeling who invested three points of Glamour draws from the freehold at a higher level than the changeling who invested one point does.

Creating freeholds in the Deep Dreaming is far more complex and requires special Arts known only to a few.

Ownership of a Freehold

A changeling may acquire a freehold in one of four ways. She may create the freehold, gain it as a gift or inheritance, discover it by chance or as the result of a quest, or she may steal it from another changeling. If the character discovers or inherits a pre-existing freehold or glade, she must swear an oath to protect it if she wishes to stake her claim. The character must also invest an amount of temporary Glamour equal to the level of the freehold. If something destroys a changeling's freehold, the owner gains a number of temporary Banality points equal to the level of the freehold. If she created the freehold, she also regains any Glamour that she invested.

Changeling tradition holds that once a changeling claims a freehold, no other may claim it until the owner's death — unless he chooses to give it away. The full force of the Dreaming backs this law, making "claim jumping" rare. There are exceptions, though.

A noble with a pennon treasure (a count or higher-ranking lord) can use it to take a freehold against a commoner's will, though she must invoke a formal fior to do so. A "neutral" noble, mutually agreed upon by the contestants, chooses and administers the fior. If the commoner refuses the fior, the freehold becomes the legal and mystical property of the noble and it responds to only her commands. The returning sidhe used this age-old power to take over a number of commoner freeholds, but this practice has slowed considerably since the Treaty of Concord. Nobles who use this power too freely are understandably unpopular among commoners, and occasionally meet nasty ends.

If a changeling becomes Undone by Banality, his freehold's balefire gains a bluish tint and the freehold "dries up" at the rate of one Glamour point per year. If the changeling's Undoing is temporary, the owner may rekindle her freehold by spending a temporary point of Glamour. Another changeling may claim an "abandoned" freehold on the basis that it is better to rescue a freehold than to lose it to Banality. Seelie tradition dictates that the original owner has the truest claim to her freehold, and that a new owner should return the freehold without protest. The original owner typically thanks the freehold's "caretaker" with a small gift for protecting the freehold while she was away. Unseelie tradition holds more to a tradition of ownership by the strong; a changeling who becomes Undone is obviously unfit to maintain a freehold. A returning changeling must often invoke a fior to regain her lost property.

Gaining Glamour

The owner of a freehold may use it to renew his Glamour, though he can grant this power to another as a favor instead. To obtain Glamour from a freehold, the character must sleep and dream in the balefire's light, or near the secret stone of a glade. Upon awakening, he recovers a number of Glamour equal to the amount he initially invested. Of course, the changeling may never gain Glamour above his permanent Glamour rating. Glades function slightly differently; the first person to dream within the glade in a night is the one who gains Glamour. Changelings rarely share glades.

Reaving

It is possible to gain Glamour from a freehold, even if one is not the owner or does not have permission, through Reaving. It risks causing permanent damage to a freehold, though. The owner may also Reave his own freehold in an attempt to gain more than the daily allowance of Glamour. To do this, the character stands in the presence of the balefire or sacred stone and wills the Glamour to come forth. The player rolls the character's Banality rating (difficulty 7). The number of successes determines the amount of Glamour gained. If this number is higher than the level of the freehold, the character still gains that amount of Glamour. The freehold loses one level for every two successes over its rating. Most changeling rulers (Seelie and Unseelie) have outlawed Reaving; destroying a freehold is one of the most horrible crimes a Kithain can commit.

Glades

While freeholds are often created (and hence artificial sources of Glamour), glades are naturally occurring wellsprings. They are extremely rare and, when discovered, become carefully guarded secrets. A glade has a sacred stone, which is similar to a freehold's balefire. Sacred stones can take many forms. Some are tall standing stones left as chimerical glacial till, while others are sacred gems or smooth stones rounded by mountain streams. They may sit in a place of high honor or rest unnoticed by a tree root. Regardless of its form, the stone is the source of a glade's power. Removing or destroying a sacred stone strips a glade of its magical energies. Nunnehi still control most natural glades, but many European fae covet them. This has lead to numerous fights over the years.

Trods

If Glamour is the Dreaming's life-blood, then trods are the arteries through which Glamour flows. Trods are the fae's nearest connection to the Dreaming and Arcadia beyond. They are also power. The sidhe realized this during the Resurgence, and rushed to reclaim most of the recently re-opened trods. Those who control the trods have considerable control over Kithain society. Changelings may move troops and secret missives through them in times of war. They are ideal trade routes and vital connections to the Dreaming in times of peace. Most trods closed during the centuries of the Interregnum, but reopened spectacularly with the sidhe's return.

When a changeling enters a trod, she disappears from the mundane world. Trods may lead to a number of places. Most follow a path leading from one earthly location, through the Near Dreaming, to another earthly location. Others end at specific locations within the Dreaming. Time and location shift constantly in the Dreaming. After over 600 years of being severed from the Dreaming, most commoners are not adept at traveling through it. Few Earth-bound changelings used trods, but now travel them in growing numbers. (This is especially true of the sidhe and eshu.)

Few changelings live directly in the Dreaming due to its hostility and restless nature. Those who leave the safety of a trod's Silver Path (see below) risk becoming lost forever in a constantly shifting wilderness, with only monstrous chimera for companionship. However, some changelings manage to set up homesteads along trods, in the Dreaming. These are scattered throughout the

Near Dreaming, providing shelter to those who travel these roads.

Travelers may travel both ways on trods, and may reverse direction in mid-journey when they choose to. A trod's physical appearance varies greatly, depending on its nature and on the Dreaming that surrounds it. Some have openings in the mundane world, while others thread only through the Dreaming. Trods may intersect each other, though a traveler must open the new trod to change paths.

The Silver Path

The Silver Path is literally that, a path that leads from one end of a trod to the other. Its physical form varies from trod to trod, depending on the type of trod it runs, but it always has a slight silver cast to it. If travelers on a trod do not deviate from the Silver Path, they greatly increase their chances of reaching their destination unharmed. The Silver Path not only acts as a guide, but as a protector as well. Chimerical monsters must expend Glamour to attack those on the path. The difficulties of all chimerical attacks staged on travelers of a Silver Path increase by one to three, depending on the path's strength in the area. Some crafty chimera try to trick unwary changelings from the path, and many have gotten quite good at it. (Chimera may use trods that are protected by the Silver Path, but only if they travel under a changeling's protection.)

No one knows the Silver Path's true nature, though it was clearly a creation of the changelings' progenitors, the Tuatha de Danaan. The Silver Path protects most Near Dreaming trods, though there are long stretches where it fades or disappears completely. The path fell into disrepair after the sidhe left during the Shattering, and many maps of trods and paths were lost. High King David and other monarchs have made it a priority to strengthen the Silver Path, but no one knows how to do it. Many changelings seek this secret.

Opening a Trod

To open a trod, a character must possess the Wayfare ••• (Portal Passage) Art and the Fae ••••• (Dweomer of Glamour) Realm. Eshu and sidhe are particularly adept at traveling trods, and gain an extra die to their Dice Pools when opening them. The number of successes needed to open a given trod varies greatly, depending on the circumstances. If all the conditions for opening a trod have been met — proper season, riddle answered, sacrifices made — only one success is necessary. If a changeling fails to meet these conditions, she may need as many as 10 successes.

The Passage of Time

Time does not flow in a trod as it does in the mundane world. A great deal of time may pass for a changeling on the trod, while almost none has passed in the mundane world. A journey's duration on the trod is often, though not always, a close approximation of the time it would take to traverse the distance in the mortal world. (A changeling who flies along a sun or moon trod in his chimerical balloon will have a faster journey than one who chooses to walk to the same destination along a land trod.) In the mundane world, however, both arrive at approximately the same time. A changeling may enter a trod in New York and exit in Paris with only a few minutes or even seconds passing in the mundane world. While this can be very useful if a changeling is in a hurry, the difficulty and risks of traveling a trod may not be worth the savings in time. If a changeling is not in a hurry, she may take a scheduled airliner like everyone else.

Types of Trods

Trods vary as vastly as the Dreaming itself does. Most in the Near Dreaming are recognizable as paths of some sort, but are more esoteric in the farther Dreamrealms. Land and water trods are the most common.

Land: Land trods may be anything from a wide superhighway to a narrow path along a precipice. They may pass through idyllic faerie towns, by literally burning deserts or through forests of mists and moaning trees. A changeling may walk, ride or drive along these trods; mode of travel is limited only by terrain.

Water: These trods may be small as a mountain stream or as vast as a thousand oceans. Due of the lack of recognizable landmarks, travelers on this type of trod must rely on charts and other navigational treasures to travel these watery paths safely.

Sun: Sun trods are sky trods that are open during the day. Only those changelings who can fly (even in a balloon) may travel these ethereal highways. Sun trods may appear as shafts of focused sunlight or as paths along sun-lit clouds. A changeling traveling a sun trod must find a moon trod to continue his journey after dark.

Moon: Moon trods are sky trods that are open only at night. Only those changelings who can fly may travel these lunar phantom trails. Moon trods may appear as dust motes dancing in shafts of pale moonlight or as paths along night-sky clouds.

Cursed: Cursed trods have been corrupted by some means. Perhaps a powerful chimera, changeling brigands or a wicked monarch has taken up residence beside it, and kills all who travel it. Banality may block or sever some trods, trapping travelers in gray pitfalls where their Arts are of little use. These areas of the Dreaming are often home to feral chimera and other monstrosities. Any type of trod may become cursed.

Chimerical: Chimerical trods are far too ethereal for material creatures such as the fae to travel, but chimera have little trouble using these Glamour-rich roads. Some arcane Arts may allow changelings entry to these alien trods. Such paths are extraordinarily dangerous, even to the most potent Kithain. The Silver Path does not extend into these trods.

Nightmare: The Nightmare Realms fester in the Deep Dreaming like an insatiable cancer. Dark and twisted trods spiral from them, touching almost every other part of the Dreaming. Malignant chimera and even darker creatures travel these fearsome roads. Some Unseelie changelings use these trods on secret errands, but these paths are dangerous even to them. The Silver Path exists along some of these trods. Most believe the Tuatha de Danaan built the path there during their wars in the Nightmare Realms. In recent decades, these trods have disgorged increasing numbers of malign chimera into the Near Dreaming and the mundane


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Chapter Eight: Dramatic Systems

In well-devised battftain
They march amid blue spears,
Pale-visaged, curly-headed bands.
They scatter the battalions of the foe,
They ravage every land they attack,
Splendidly they march to combat,
A swift, distinguished, avenging host!
— Kuno Meyer (trans. from Irish), *The Hosts of Faery*

This chapter presents guidelines for handling the dramatic elements of a **Changeling** chronicle when story and system converge, and sometimes conflict. The rules presented here are as much for the players as for the Storyteller. These systems add flavor and continuity to a chronicle — they are the link the players have to the reality the Storyteller is weaving. A Storyteller who arbitrarily changes the rules on the players risks pulling the "rug" of reality out from under them.

However, the story cannot be dictated by mere rules systems. Try these systems, but if they don't work for your chronicle, adapt them or create your own. As always, our advice for the Storyteller is to err on the side of the story.

Action Scenes

During scenes of combat and derring-do, time is broken into turns because the effects of the characters' actions can be critical in determining what comes next.

Organizing an Action Turn

Action turns are a mixture of brief moments of tension when a player gets to act, and long sessions of boredom while she waits for her turn to come again. To keep things moving, and to give everyone an opportunity to act, all action turns consist of four stages.

Describing the Scene

Before the characters can act, the players must have a detailed description of their surroundings. Good descriptions, updated as the turns flow, prevent confusion and give the characters options beyond Dice Pools and dots. Springing surprises on the characters ("Didn't I mention there was an antique blunderbuss on the wall behind him?") or not giving them enough information about a scene is a recipe for chaos. The characters should always know where they are in relation to each other and anything else of importance.

Initiative Stage

Once the players understand where their characters are, they may want to do things. However, everyone can't shout out at once what they're going to do — again, the makings for chaos. One way to decide the order that players go in is to roll *initiative*. Each player makes a Wits + Alertness roll (difficulty 4). The person with the least successes acts first. Those

players with more successes may interrupt this with their own characters' actions.

If the characters are not in a combat situation, any convenient way may be used to decide who acts first, perhaps just going around the table.

Decision Stage

This is when all the characters, including those played by the Storyteller, make their moves, with the player with the least amount of successes going first. By working things this way, those players with higher initiatives (those characters who are thinking faster this turn) have the advantage of seeing what's going on around them and reacting more quickly as well.

As the players describe their actions, the Storyteller decides how she wants their actions to be resolved — what rolls are necessary, difficulty numbers, the number of successes necessary, etc.

Resolution Stage

At this point the players begin making rolls, and the conflicting intents get resolved. The players roll their dice and see what Lady Luck has brought them.

By the end of this stage, the rolls need to be interpreted into plot, action and consequence. Try to stay away from number chatter: "You get three 8s — the chimerical serpent's lost his last two Health Levels." This is a storytelling game, after all, and stories are about action and reaction, not numbers: "Your dagger slides under the serpent's emerald scales and into the cold meat beneath. Green ichor spills over your hands as the creature thrashes in death throes, finally collapsing at your feet."

Taking Actions

There are two basic actions a character can take without the need for rolls:

Yielding: The character allows the person with next highest initiative to perform his action, thereby yielding her turn. She can still take her action at the end of the turn or may interupt a character with a lower initiative at any time.

Moving: The character may move by walking, jogging or running. If she walks, she may move seven yards. If she jogs, she may move 12 yards + Dexterity. If she runs, she may move 20 yards + (3 x Dexterity).

Movement does not have to be rolled for if it is the only action allowed to the character during a turn. In some situations, however, it can be hazardous to jog or run, and the character might need to make a Dexterity roll to maintain her balance. It's also best to dodge if the character is running from a conflict or encounter, so splitting the character's Dice Pool will be necessary.

Most actions in an action turn require rolls to succeed. Don't forget the automatic success rule, though.

Attack: A character may decide to fire his weapon or strike someone. The player rolls Dexterity + the appropriate combat skill.

Climb: This action requires a Dexterity + Athletics roll.

Dodge: Dodging not only allows a character to avoid damage, but to avoid an attack altogether.

Get to Feet: It takes a turn to get up from the ground without the need for a roll. If a character wants to get to her feet and still take other actions, the player can take dice from her announced action and attempt to score at least one success on a Dexterity + Athletics roll (difficulty at least 4).

Leadership: A character may give commands to followers by making an appropriate Charisma (or Manipulation) + Leadership roll.

Reload Gun: Reloading a gun in a turn takes a single action as long as the character has a preloaded clip. Revolvers take a complete turn to completely reload, no matter how many actions a character has.

Research: A character may try to locate vital information in a book. Research generally employs the Investigation Ability. Though this would likely take longer than three seconds, you may wish to suspend reality a bit for dramatic purposes.

Start a Car: The action doesn't require a roll at all unless the character is hot-wiring the car.

Sneak up on Enemy: This action usually requires a Dexterity + Stealth roll.

Unjam Gun: Make a Wits + Firearms roll (difficulty 7) to unjam a gun in a single turn.

Dramatic Systems

This section includes a variety of suggested systems to resolve actions, or, to put it simply, a bunch of ways to make rolls. There are more examples of Physical dramatic systems than any other kind; these actions are impossible to resolve purely through roleplaying. Situations in which Social and Mental contests come up can be roleplayed out without the use of dice.

Physical

These systems describe dramatic situations in which Physical Attributes come into play.

Climbing

When a character attempts to climb anything (a tree, cliff or building), the player must roll the character's Dexterity + Athletics. The difficulty depends on the type and sheerness of the surface and, to a lesser extent, the weather conditions. Each success indicates that the character has climbed five feet. Once the player accumulates enough successes to get to where the character wants to go, he can stop rolling.

For example, Bartolomé the nocker is trying to climb a 25-foot wall into his rivals' lab; five successes are needed to get to the top. A failure indicates that Bartolomé is unable to make any progress during the turn. A botch indicates that he falls and cannot attempt to climb again without expending a Willpower point. Of course if he falls too far....

2 Easy climb: a tree with many stout branches.
4 Simple climb: a cliff with many handholds.
6 Straightforward: a tree with thin branches.
8 Treacherous: very few handholds.
10 Extremely difficult: a nearly sheer surface.

Feats of Strength

A character's Strength is often rolled alone, without an Ability, when brute force is all that matters. If the character's Strength equals or exceeds the difficulty of the task she is attempting, she succeeds automatically. She need only roll if the difficulty is higher than her Dice Pool.

When the player makes the roll, however, it is based on Willpower, not Strength. This is a pretty simple roll, so she gets only one chance to make it. The difficulty is almost always 9, though it can vary according to the surface conditions, the object being lifted and Storyteller whim. Each success pushes the character's effective Strength up one step on the chart below (to a maximum of 5). Thus, if the character has Strength 4, but wants to flip over a car, she needs three successes on the Willpower roll to do it.

Dice Pool	Feats	Lift
1	Crush a beer can	40 lbs.
2	Break a chair	100 lbs.
3	Break down a wooden door	250 lbs.
4	Break a 2" x 4"	400 lbs.
5	Break open a metal fire door	650 lbs.
6	Throw a motorcycle	800 lbs.
7	Flip over a small car	900 lbs.
8	Break a three-inch lead pipe	1000 lbs.
9	Punch through a cement wall	1200 lbs.
10	Rip open a steel drum	1500 lbs.
11	Punch through 1" sheet metal	2000 lbs.
12	Break a metal lamp post	3000 lbs.
13	Throw a car	4000 lbs.
14	Throw a van	5000 lbs.
15	Throw a truck	6000 lbs.

Jumping

Jumping requires a Strength roll for a vertical or standing broad jump, or a Strength + Athletics roll for a horizontal jump with a decent running start. The difficulty for a jump is almost always 3 (prohibitive weather conditions or a narrow landing space may modifiy this). The Storyteller calculates how many successes the character needs to make the jump. There are no partial successes in jumping; the character either succeeds or falls in one roll. A Storyteller may influence the difficulty based on a changeling's form. A pooka who can turn into a jackrabbit might make jump rolls at difficulty 2.

You can use the chart below, if necessary. The number of successes required is based on the number of feet that must be jumped and whether the character is jumping horizontally or vertically.

Type of Jump	Feet per Success
Vertical (up)	2
Horizontal (across)	4

Pursuit

Use this simple system if one character is trying to catch another. One opponent starts with a certain number of successes; say two for every turn's worth of head start, or one for every success on a Dexterity + Athletics roll (difficulty 6). The pursuing character has to match or beat these successes before he can catch up. Once he does, he can try to grapple the fleeing person (see "Grapple," pg. 239). The pursuer might only want to catch up halfway, just to get a better shot at the fleeing character.

Repair

Sometimes you can't just take something to the garage to be fixed; you have to do it yourself. When a character wishes to fix any sort of mechanical implement, the player must roll Dexterity + Repair. The difficulty is determined by the complexity of the task (see the chart below). Before the job is complete, the player must roll a certain number of successes, usually between two and 20. Each roll means that a certain amount of time passes — whatever the demands of the story require. A botch indicates that the device is somehow damaged in the attempt.

Chimerical devices are usually twice as difficult to repair outside a freehold or source of Glamour. Nocker-made devices are notoriously hard for non-nockers to repair (+2 to difficulty).

Job	Difficulty	# of Successes
Simple mechanical repair	4	3
Soldering job	5	2
Electronic malfunction	5	5
Fitting in new part	6	10
Repair stalled car	6	5
Tough auto repair	7	10
System overhaul	8	20
Technical glitch	9	2

Shadowing

Sometimes a character will want to "shadow" someone — to follow him as discreetly as possible without being noticed. A character can shadow someone on foot or in a vehicle; he can try even if someone else, like a taxi driver, is driving: "Follow that car — carefully!"

The player in question makes a Perception + Stealth (or possibly Streetwise) roll. The difficulty is normally 6, but can vary from 5 to 9, depending on the thickness of a crowd or bad weather conditions. Each success indicates that the target has been followed for a turn. The Storyteller determines how many successes are needed to follow the subject all the way to his destination. The first failure indicates that the character has temporarily lost her subject, but can try to locate him again on the following turn. A second failure means she has lost him completely and the chase is off (unless she comes up with a new



approach). Should the player botch, the character not only loses her subject, but she stumbles into some new problem of her own — a hostile street gang, foraging vampire, lost child.

If the subject looks to see if he is being followed (out of habit, perhaps), roll his Perception + Investigation (or Streetwise). The difficulty is the shadowing character's Stealth rating + 5. Each success on this roll indicates a higher degree of suspicion; however, the subject's succesesses are lowered by one for each success earned by the shadower. Successes can be accumulated from turn to turn; see the chart below to see how aware the subject is that he is being followed. A failure in the target's roll means that he hasn't seen anything and relaxes his guard, dropping his suspicion to zero. If he botches, he's convinced he isn't being followed and no longer looks behind him.

Successes	Suspicion
1	Hunch
2	Suspicion
3	Near-certainty
4	Positive knowledge
5	The shadower has been spotted

Buddy System: Two or more characters can shadow one target by trading off. However, they must have worked or trained together in this technique previously, or the difficulty on all rolls for the pair is +1 higher. One character shadows for a turn or more, then trades off whenever her partner gives the signal. If the pair switches off, the subject cannot continue to accumulate successes for very long, making it that much harder to notice his pursuers.

Sneaking

When a character attempts to hide in shadows or sneak up on a guard, the player must roll Dexterity + Stealth. The difficulty is the guard's Perception + Alertness. Anyone actively looking for intruders can be considered a guard.

The player needs to collect a certain number of successes for the sneaking character to make it where she wants to go. A Perception + Stealth roll can be made if the player wants to estimate how many successes will be needed for the Stealth roll itself; the difficulty for this is usually 7.

Failure of any sort on a Stealth roll indicates detection.

Stunt Driving

This system determines the outcome of nearly any type of automobile chase or maneuver. Dice rolls are made not to see how fast a driver can go, but to see if she stays on the road. Each vehicle is rated for its maximum safe driving speed as well as its maneuverability. One vehicle is not always as fast or maneuverable as another, so the details of the chase often depend on the make of the vehicles (see the chart below).

A character can perform special maneuvers to catch or lose another vehicle, such as spinning around a tight corner, doing

a 180° turn or wheeling about to block a road. Essentially, if one character makes a special maneuver, the other character must copy that maneuver through a similar roll.

The player rolls Dexterity (or perhaps Perception) + Drive; her Dice Pool cannot exceed the maneuverability rating of the vehicle. Each maneuver is assigned a basic difficulty from 2 to 7, and then the Storyteller decides the maximum safe speed that the maneuver can be perfomed at. If the vehicle is going over that speed, the difficulty is raised (by one for every additional 10 mph), or the character fails outright.

Cruise Speed: The vehicle's standard comfortable cruising speed.

Maximum Speed: The vehicle's maximum speed.

Maneuverability: The difficulty to perform a maneuver when driving the vehicle at cruising speed.

Vehicle	Cruise Speed	Max Speed	Maneuverability
6-wheel truck	60	90	3
Bus	50	100	3
18-wheeler	60	110	4
Sedan	70	120	5
Mini-van	70	120	6
Compact	70	130	6
Sporty compact	70	140	7
Sport coupe	100	150	8
Sports car	100	170	9
Formula One race car	140	240	10

Social

Social interactions are best handled by roleplaying; that's half the fun of such things. When there isn't time to play out a witty court repartee or an eight-hour jam session, or when a player doesn't share her redcap character's street smarts or her sidhe's smooth manners, these systems may come in handy.

Courtly Etiquette

Roleplaying is essential to explore the nuances and stratagems of polite changeling and human society. The Storyteller can use the Etiquette Skill to help a player learn the ways of court and ballroom, to speed up a scene, or to judge the depth of a character's skill at evaluating her peers.

If time is a constraint, the Storyteller may ask the player to make a Perception + Etiquette roll to point out the subtleties of others' actions. Characters may also be able to inflict subtle unanswerable insults upon their foes at court with a Manipulation + Etiquette roll.

Successes	Etiquette
1	A slight barb: "Ah, that's what they are wearing in Newark!"
2	Can distinguish the old money from the new pretenders
3	Spot the best court gossip at first glance
4	Insult master
5	Dr. Samuel Johnson

Credibility

Use this system if a character attempts to convince someone she's telling the truth, such as persuading a jury that she's not lying, or convincing a police officer of her identity. The player makes a Manipulation + Leadership roll, with a difficulty of the other subject's Intelligence + Subterfuge. Lower the difficulty by one to three if the character is telling the truth (it does make a difference). Each success indicates a higher degree of believability. The subject is completely convinced at five successes. A failure indicates disbelief, and a botch means the character is caught in a lie (or the subject thinks he has caught her in a lie).

Facedown

This system comes in handy when two characters are engaged in a duel of willpower and neither wants to be the first to back down. No words are exchanged — the opponents just glare at one another. Sidhe do this sort of thing often, although trolls can certainly give back as good as they get.

Both opponents roll Charisma + Intimidation; the difficulty is the opponent's Willpower. The one who accumulates his opponent's Wits + 5 in successes first wins; the other one looks away. A player can spend a Willpower point each turn to avoid giving up until the characer runs out of Willpower.

Fast-Talk

With this system, a character browbeats and bamboozles someone into submission. The player usually rolls Manipulation + Subterfuge, though Charisma or Appearance could be used with Expression, Intimidation or any number of Knowledges, depending on the character's approach. The difficulty is the target's Willpower. Success indicates that the target becomes confused.

The target of the fast-talk can make a resisted Wits + Streetwise roll. He can also expend Willpower points to resist the effects of fast-talk. If the offending character fails his roll, his attempt has faltered, and the target can try to explain himself or even fast-talk back. This rebuttal continues until the target fails or botches. A fast-talker's botch indicates that his target doesn't get confused, only angry. Fast-talk attempts by that character will never work on that particular target again.

Repeated rolls might be necessary to truly confuse the target.

Interrogation

Interrogation is a favorite tactic of the sidhe, sluagh and redcaps. This system reflects a form of questioning, not torture, though intimidation (a redcap specialty) is certainly employed. You'll have to develop your own rules for torture if you wish to include it in your chronicle.

The player makes a Manipulation + Intimidation roll; the difficulty is the victim's Willpower. The number of successes indicates the amount of information obtained. A failure indicates that the character learns nothing of value. A botch indicates the subject tells the character nothing, and will

never tell him anything — or worse, the subject lies. To conceal the truth, the Storyteller, not the player, should make Interrogation rolls.

A victim's player may spend Willpower points to resist the effects of interrogation, but the very best (or worst) interrogators know they need only wait for their victims to overextend themselves.

Successes	*Interrogation*
1	Only a few mumbled facts.
2	Some relevant facts.
3	Much interesting information.
4	The subject talks on and on.
5	Everything of import is revealed.

Oration

If a player wants her character to give a speech, but doesn't want to actually perform it, you can use this system. To simulate the speech, the player should describe what her character says and maybe come up with a memorable phrase that she uses — that might even get the player started roleplaying the scene out.

The player makes a Charisma + Leadership roll. The mood of the crowd, its willingness to hear what the orator says and its penchant for throwing rotten vegetables determines the difficulty (usually 7). If the orator has any sort of reputation, it may modify the difficulty accordingly. The number of successes indicates how impressed the crowd is (see the following chart). The player has only one attempt at the roll. A failure indicates the crowd ignores the character. A botch gets the character booed (or possibly even lynched).

Successes	*Crowd Reaction*
1	They listen, but aren't excited.
2	The character convinces them somewhat.
3	The crowd is won over.
4	The crowd is completely enthralled.
5	The crowd is in the palm of the character's hand.

If the speech is vital to the story, the player may make several rolls. If you want to spend some time on it, you can make it an extended action, interspersing rolls with roleplaying. The character can spend as many turns as she would like on the speech, but the difficulty goes up by one each turn after the third. It might take more than five successes to completely win the crowd over.

Performance

This system is used whenever a character gives any type of performance, whether it is comedy, music, acting or storytelling. It can be on a stage or in a nightclub, formal or informal.

The player rolls Attribute + Expression (or Subterfuge, Etiquette or some other performance-oriented Trait). The difficulty is based on how receptive the audience is, according to the Storyteller. A failure indicates a lackluster, forgettable performance. A botch indicates a miserable performance that cannot even be finished — the dancer trips or the musician breaks his instrument.

The number of successes rolled indicates how moved the audience is.

Successes	Performance	*Reaction*
1	Mediocre	Polite applause
2	Average	Approval
3	Good	Genuine appreciation
4	Superior	Vigorous applause
5	Exceptional	*Ecstatic reaction*
6	Superb	Immediate sensation
7	Brilliant	Miracle, magnum opus

Seduction

Seductions are tricky; the seducer woos her target in stages, from clever lines to intimacies. Not all seductions are sexual — they may range from intellectual diversions to changes of faith. No matter the goal, a seducer uses false pretenses to gain some form of intimacy with her quarry, who usually assumes that the seducer's feelings are real.

A seduction occurs in stages, and unless the seducing character succeeds at each stage, she will not be successful in the long run. This system simulates misdirection; if the seducer's emotions and motives *are* real, ignore the system and roleplay it out. Even if you use the system, play it out anyway — it can be fun, and may make all the difference to the characters' later relationship.

Some characters, depending on their Legacies, regain Willpower from successful seductions. This skill is a stock-in-trade of the Shadow Court, who use it to sway others into corruption. Whatever the goal, the seducer will gain something of value from her target if everything goes as planned....

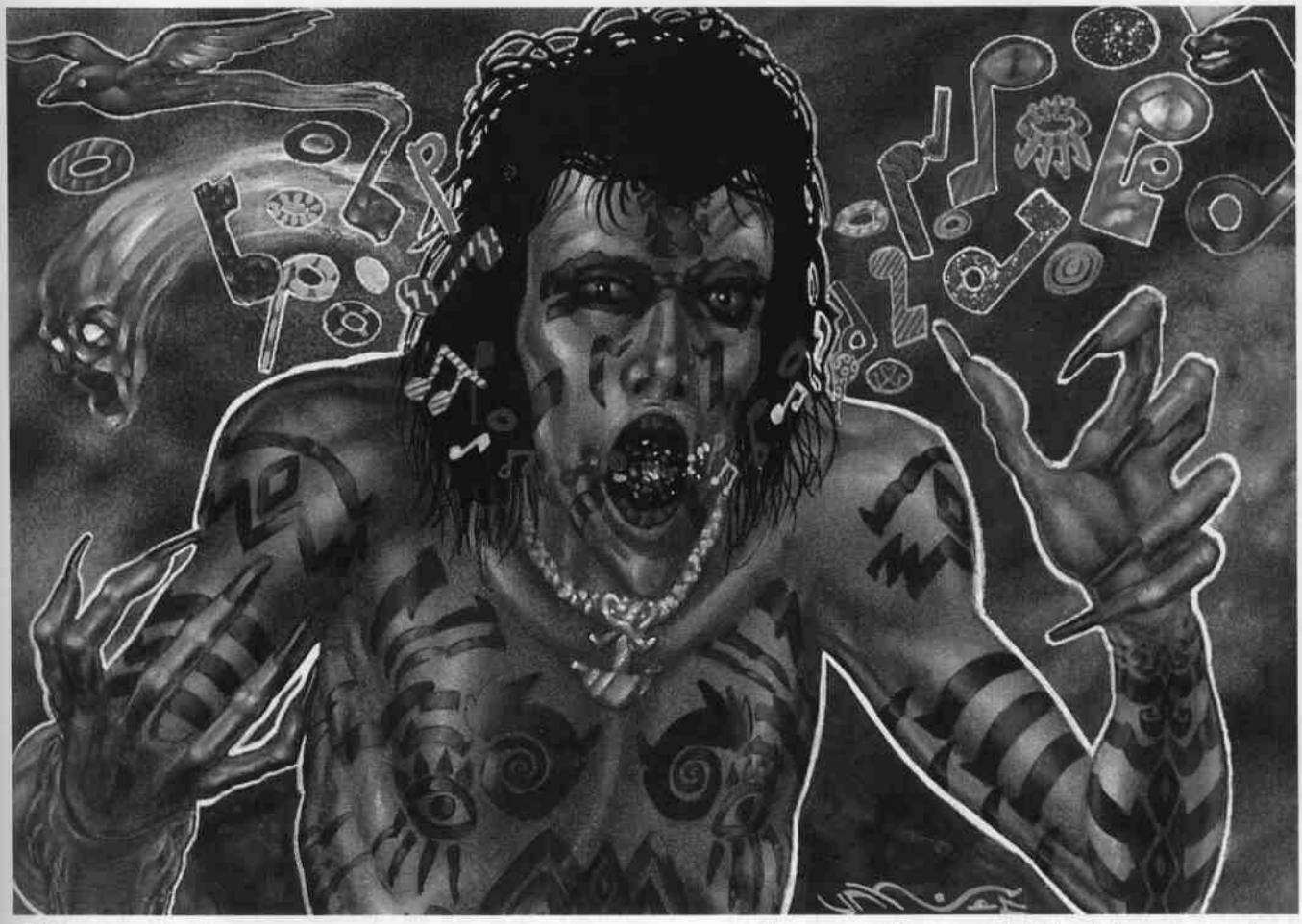
The following are the stages one needs to go through to conduct a successful seduction. A roll is required at each of these stages.

Opening Line: The player rolls Appearance + Subterfuge (or another combination, if applicable — Manipulation + Subterfuge, Expression, Lore, etc.). The difficulty is the subject's Wits + 3, although good roleplaying may adjust this for better or worse. Each success after the first adds an extra die to the roll of the next stage.

Witty exchange: The player rolls Wits + Subterfuge (difficulty is the target's Intelligence + 3). Give bonuses and penalties for roleplaying. Each additional success adds an extra die to the roll of the next stage.

Conversation: The player rolls Charisma + Empathy (difficulty is Perception + 3). Again, add roleplaying bonuses if they are merited.

Intimacies: At this point the couple moves on to activities best left without systems. If the seducer is trying to convert her target — change his beliefs, swing his support from one person to another, talk him into some undesirable activity or to reveal a secret — her successes show how thorough a job she does, as determined by the Storyteller.



Mental

Mental tasks often lend themselves to "downtime" scenes between the Storyteller and one of her players. Encourage the players to be detailed in describing their characters' efforts, whether it is an eshu scholar prowling the restricted stacks of a university library, or a boggan bartender offering her interpretation of another character's dreams.

Dream Interpretation

Most Kithain believe dreams reveal important information. Unfortunately, it is often shrouded in mysterious symbolism and obscure references. Thus it is very difficult for a changeling to decipher his dreams.

The Storyteller must first craft the dream sequence, perhaps even roleplay it though with the player. It should be replete with bizarre occurrences and mythological symbols that relate to the character's concerns. The character may attempt to explain his dream, with a Perception + Enigmas roll tacked on (difficulty 7). For each success rolled, the Storyteller may correct one of the player's misconceptions. Other characters may try to interpret the same dream, but the difficulty will be higher, depending on how well they know the dreamer.

Research

Information is an important commodity. In many stories, research is the only way for the characters to uncover clues, lore or gossip they may need to proceed. A sluagh detective may have to investigate matters in a library, bar, newspaper office and computer archive in order to obtain the information he needs. General research is a great way to let a character with high Intelligence show off, while back-alley or ballroom research allows a streetwise character to do what he does best.

For general research, the player rolls Intelligence + Research (or an appropriate Knowledge, like Computers or Investigation, after a place to research has been found). Street or social research goes on in the appropriate places — bars, jails, costume balls, social events. A character gathers this kind of information by seeking out people who might know the answers he wants and asking the right questions. While such research may involve Social interactions (**see "Seduction"**), the character uses his wits more than his looks. With a little luck, his Intelligence + Streetwise, Etiquette, Investigation or Subterfuge will usually get him what he needs to know.

Research difficulty is based upon the obscurity of the information:

Difficulty	Accessibility of Information
2	Generally available
4	Widely documented
6	Accessible
8	Difficult to find
10	Incredibly well-concealed

The number of successes rolled determines how much the character discovers. One success might mean that he uncovers the most obvious facts, while five successes might mean that he learns the full (and maybe truthful) story. Depending on the precise information the character seeks, 10 or 20 successes might be required to find all the available data.

The player might want his character to continue his research after only partial success. Continued research, however, takes longer than the initial search. Basic research usually takes only an hour — that's the first roll. More in-depth research (and a second roll) takes one complete day. If the player wants a third roll, further research takes a week; a fourth roll takes a month, a fifth roll takes a year. After that, use your imagination. It's easy to see how some research projects can take years or even decades to complete.

Search

This system enables a character to search for something in a confined area, like a room. Have the player roll Perception + Investigation; the difficulty depends on how well-concealed the object is (usually between 7 and 10). Each success indicates more is found. Sometimes a certain number of successes are required to find something hidden well. A lower number of successes could warrant a hint or clue from the Storyteller about where to look, thus encouraging roleplaying and a degree of puzzle-solving. The player should go through the search step-by-step as much as possible, describing where she looks to the Storyteller. If the player's search is going down the wrong trail, then the character can't find the object in question. The Storyteller may let the player succeed automatically if her description is detailed enough.

Track

Changelings can often track people and things by following their physical trails. A player rolls Perception + Survival (or Investigation in the city — tracks are rarely left on sidewalks and pavement, but people leave other impressions on their surroundings). The difficulty is based on weather conditions, terrain and the age of the tracks, but averages around 8. Each success beyond the first lowers the difficulty of the next roll by one.

The character needs to succeed for a certain number of turns; the exact number depends on the length of the trail, as determined by the Storyteller. Each turn is considered about five minutes long when tracking. If the player misses a roll, the character can try again; this time, however, the difficulty is +1 higher. Once it goes above 10, the character loses the trail. If the trail is lsot, the character must start over from scratch.

Combat

There are three basic types of combat: firefight, melee and brawl. Each uses the same basic system, yet they have some minor differences.

• A firefight is any type of armed combat using projectile weapons, things like crossbows and sawed-off shotguns. Opponents normally need to be within sight of each other in order to engage in a firefight.



• Melee refers to fighting with hand weapons — anything from broken bottles to chimerical swords. Opponents need to be within one or two yards of each other in order to engage in melee.

• A brawl describes a hand-to-hand battle fought with bare hands — unarmed combat. Opponents need to be within touching distance to engage in a brawl.

Stage One: Initiative

This stage organizes the turn. The players declare their characters' actions — leaping behind a wall, shouting a warning, swinging a sledgehammer, whatever. Each player, in turn, must describe what his character is doing and with what, in as much detail as the Storyteller requires.

Players make initiative rolls using Wits + Alertness (difficulty 4). Everyone takes their actions in descending order of successes — the character with the least successes goes first. For simplicity, Storytellers may call for initiative only once per fight scene and use that order for the whole battle. Those who botch go last — something disastrous happens at the beginning of the fight which slows them for the whole scene — though they can still act.

Players must declare their characters' actions before going to the Attack Stage. A player splitting her Dice Pool (e.g., for her character to dodge and attack) must also declare how many dice to allocate to each action. The only action a character may take out of turn is a dodge, which she can perform at any time as long as she has dice left in her pool. Keeping a die or two in reserve is always a good idea.

Optionally, during melee combat, the Storyteller may choose to grant initiative to the participant with the greatest reach. The size and shape of melee weapons greatly influences their usefulness. Alternately, a person with a spear is not going to win initiative against a foe with a knife during a fight in a thicket. Use common sense.

Stage Two: Attack

The attack is the meat of the combat turn. It's where success or failure are determined, as well as any impact on the targets.

The Roll: There are three different types of attack rolls; the type of combat determines which one to use.

• For firefights, roll Dexterity + Firearms or Dexterity + Archery

• For melee (with weapons) combat, roll Dexterity + Melee.

• For hand-to-hand (without weapons) combat, roll Dexterity + Brawl.

The weapon or attack determines the base difficulty of the attacker's roll. The number of dice might be modified by a gun's rate of fire or the use of a scope.

If the player does not gain any successes, the character has failed his attack, and no damage is inflicted. If the player rolls a botch, the attack fails and something nasty happens as well.

Dodging

Any time a character is attacked, he has the option of dodging. In fact, a player may announce at any time that her character is using an action (or part of it, by dividing her Dice Pool) to dodge, simply by declaring "Dodge!" before the opponent makes an attack roll. A dodge may not be allowed in some cases, such as in confined quarters or when the character has been surprised. The required roll is Dexterity + Dodge; each success subtracts one success from the attacker's roll.

• The difficulty to dodge melee or brawling attacks is a base 6, +1 for every opponent after the first.

• In firefights, the difficulty depends on the availability of nearby cover. Each success removes one of the opponent's successes. A character can even take away successes from different opponents, though this means splitting successes between them. After such an attempt, the character usually ends up behind some sort of cover or, at the very least, lying on the ground (if there was no cover to be found).

Difficulty	Terrain
2	By moving back half a step, the character is back under full cover.
4	Full cover within diving distance (one yard).
6	Full cover within running distance (three yards).
7	Partial cover within running distance (three yards).
8	Flat and featureless, no cover (the character dives to the ground).

Stage Three: Resolution

In this stage, players determine the damage inflicted by their attacks and the Storyteller describes what occurs in the turn. It's a mixture of game and story; though the dice never lie, the Storyteller must interpret what luck has decreed.

Damage: Each weapon or attack allows the wielder to roll a certain number of damage dice (difficulty 6). Each success removes one Health Level from the target. Additionally, each success scored on the attack roll with a firearm (after any dodge) adds one die to this damage roll. Melee and brawling successes do not add to damage rolls.

Soak: A target may make a roll to see how much damage she "soaks up" because of her natural hardiness. The target rolls Stamina (difficulty 6); each success reduces the damage by one.

Exception: Damage and soak rolls are two rolls in **Changeling** that cannot be botched.

Complications

A number of factors determine whether an attack hits or not. Smart combatants head for cover as soon as bullets and bolts start flying. Others find that ganging up on one foe in a brawl never hurts. The following modifiers delineate many of the variables that affect combat (see also the chart on pg. 250)



General Complications

• **Changing Actions:** If a character changes her declared action after the turn has started, the difficulty for the new action increases by one. Generally, the Storyteller should allow the character to change her declared action only if events have made it impossible to perform. "Yes, I know I said my character would jump onto the bicycle seat, but that redcap just ate it!"

• **Immobilization:** If a target is immobilized (e.g., held down by someone), but still struggles, the difficulty for attack rolls against the target is lowered by two. However, if the target is completely immobilized (e.g., is tied up), no roll is required to hit and the attack succeeds automatically.

Firefight Complications

• **Range:** Getting close to one's foe is a good idea if a character doesn't mind taking a few shots in return. The range given on the Firearms Chart or the Range Weapons Chart is a weapon's medium range. The character receives no modifier for shooting at this range. Twice that range is the farthest the weapon can shoot. The difficulties of shots within this range increased by one. On the other hand, shots made at targets within a yard of the attacker are considered "point-blank"; the difficulty of a point-blank shot is 4.

• **Cover:** Intelligent characters use cover to protect themselves from enemy fire. Cover increases the difficulty of an attack, depending on how much of the character's body is still exposed. Though cover protects, it can also hamper return fire, and in some rare instances it can completely prevent any return fire. Ducking out from around a corner to shoot may increase the difficulty by one, while watching a shoot-out through the cracks in a battered wall prevents a character from firing back at all.

Cover	Difficulty
Lying flat	+1
Behind pole	+2
Behind wall	+3
Only head exposed	+4

• **Movement:** Shooting at a moving target increases the difficulty by one (or even more), as does shooting while moving at any speed faster than a walk (such as firing out the window of a speeding car).

• **Aiming:** A character may add her Perception rating to her Dexterity + Firearms Dice Pool if she spends time aiming. However, it takes one turn for each die added, and during this time the character can do nothing but aim — it takes time and patience. Additionally, the target may not be moving at a speed faster than a walk. Shotguns and SMGs cannot be aimed.

If the gun has a scope, the character may add two dice to her pool in addition to the dice added for Perception. The scope bonus can only be used once per shot — after the initial three dice added in the first turn (two for the scope and one for Perception), the character continues aiming as outlined above.

• **Targeting:** Aiming for a specific location (gun hand, the heart) increases the difficulty of the shot by two, but if the changeling hits an unarmored spot the victim does not get the benefit of the armor's soak dice.

• **Multiple Shots:** If a character wants to take more than one shot in a turn, he must divide his Dice Pool into two or more actions. Also, for every additional shot after the first, the difficulty increases by one; 10 is the maximum difficulty. A character can only take as many shots as allowed by the rate of the firearm.

The multiple shot penalty is cumulative. Thus a character adds two to her difficulty on the third shot and three on the fourth. It is not usually wise to snap shots off blindly; the recoil always catches up with the gunman. It is permissible to fire two or more three-round bursts in a single turn using these rules.

• **Full-Auto:** The full-auto option is the most damaging attack a firearm can make, as the attacker unloads the full contents of a gun's ammunition clip within a very short time span. However, the gun becomes a bucking bronco, difficult to control and even harder to aim.

A character gets 10 additional dice to roll on the attack, thus increasing the chance to hit and cause damage. However, the difficulty goes up two from the recoil.

Full-auto fire can only be done when a weapon has more than half its clip remaining. Whenever a character uses the full-auto option, he uses up the entire clip of the weapon. Reloading takes one full action and requires the character's full concentration (and Dice Pool). A character can only fire on full-auto once per turn (and must reload to do it again).

• **Three-Round Burst:** The semi-auto option is the middle ground between the full-auto and the single-shot options, and has some of the strengths and weaknesses of both. A burst gives the attacker three additional dice on the attack roll. However, the recoil increases the difficulty by one.

• **Spray:** When using full-auto, a gunman can decide to spray across an area instead of focusing on one foe. A spray uses the extra 10 dice given by full-auto fire, but the attack has a base difficulty of 5, increased by one for every yard covered by the spray, in addition to other modifiers.

The player divides any successes gained on the attack roll evenly between all targets in the covered area. However, if only one target is in the sprayed area, only half the successes affect him. The player then assigns any leftover successes as she desires. If the attacker rolls fewer successes than there are targets, the player may only assign one to a target until they are used up. This attack also empties the clip.

The difficulty of a dodge roll against a spray is increased by two.

Melee and Brawling Complications

• **Body Slam:** A character may try to charge forward, hurling his weight into his opponent in an attempt to damage her. It's possible to hurt oneself with this attack, as bodies were not meant to be used as battering rams. A character needs three successes to unbalance an opponent and does one Health Level of damage to himself for every success fewer than three.

If the attack succeeds, the opponent is thrown off balance, and the difficulties for the rest of her actions for this turn are increased by two. Also, if the opponent does not succeed in a Dexterity + Athletics roll (difficulty of the successes + 3), she falls to the ground. The base damage done by the attacker equals his Strength; each success scored on the attack roll above the minimum adds one to this base. If the attacker does not roll at least three successes, this maneuver fails; he falls to the ground and is treated as though he had no dice left in his pool.

• **Flank and Rear Attacks:** The difficulty of a flank attack is lowered by one, while that of a rear attack is lowered by two.

• **Grapple:** An attacker can try to grab a foe, hoping to immobilize and subsequently crush him. If the attacker scores more successes than the opponent's Strength, the attacker pins the target. She can begin to inflict harm in the next round. Any character struck by this attack loses his attacks for the current turn. If the attacker misses altogether (by failing the Dexterity + Brawl roll), she falls down and must spend an action getting to her feet.

Continuing to grapple during each turn after the first requires the combatants to make opposed Strength + Brawl rolls. Whoever accumulates more successes may immobilize the other. If both score the same number of successes, neither gains the upper hand that turn.

• **Joint Break:** A favorite of the Unseelie and many redcaps, this maneuver merely requires some knowledge of how arms and legs are *not* supposed to bend. If the victim takes any Health Levels in damage from this maneuver, her limb is broken and useless until it heals. A character must have Brawl 4 and Strength 2 to perform this maneuver. (Of course, joint break has no crippling effects on sluagh!)

Roll: Dexterity + Brawl **Difficulty:** 8
Damage: Strength + 2 **Actions:** 1

• **Multiple Opponents:** If a character is battling multiple opponents in close combat, that character's attack and dodge difficulties are increased by one for each opponent (to a maximum of 10).

• **Neck Snap:** Directions — Grab your opponent's head, and twist hard and quick. If this brutal maneuver is successful, the victim may add his Strength to his Stamina for soak purposes. If any Health Levels are unsoaked, his neck is broken. For most it means death, but some are paralyzed from the neck down (Incapacitated). Unfortunate Kithain who fall victim to this will need expert care and a visit to a freehold to recover. A character must have a least Brawl 5 and Strength 2 to perform this maneuver.

Roll: Dexterity + Brawl **Difficulty:** 9
Damage: Strength + 3 **Actions:** 1

• **Parry:** As with dodge, a character can perform a parry as long as dice are left in his Dice Pool and he has a suitable weapon. Any weapon larger than a knife will do in a pinch. Each success on a Dexterity + Melee roll subtracts one from the opponent's number of attack successes.

A botched parry roll usually means the character's weapon is knocked from his hands.

Roll: Dexterity + Melee **Difficulty:** 6
Damage: None **Actions:** Special (as Dodge)

• **Riposte:** A changeling can execute a blindingly fast attack, the riposte, following a successful parry. No other action can follow the parry; if the character is forced to dodge another opponent, for example, the opportunity for a riposte is lost. If the character chooses to riposte in the next turn, the player rolls two extra initiative dice.

Roll: Dexterity + Melee **Difficulty:** 6
Damage: As per weapon **Actions:** 1

• **Shield Parry:** A shield's inherent defenses (see below) always add to the attacker's difficulty. This assumes that the defender is catching her opponent's blows on her shield. If the character is desperate and really needs to hide behind the shield, this maneuver is used. Unlike parry (above), shield parry is considered an action that must be declared at the beginning of an action. Each success on the character's Dexterity + Melee roll subtracts one from the opponent's number of attack successes.

A botched shield parry roll usually means the changeling's shield is knocked from her hands or destroyed.

Roll: Dexterity + Melee **Difficulty:** 6
Damage: None **Actions:** 1

• **Sweeps:** Sweeps are attempts to knock an opponent's legs out from under him in a fight. The end result of this maneuver is that the foe falls in place — with the extra advantage that the character does not need to close the distance between himself and the opponent. Sweeps are performed with staves, spears and pole weapons.

Roll: Dexterity + Melee **Difficulty:** As weapon +1
Damage: Special **Actions:** 1

• **Tendon Slice:** Skilled, if somewhat unscrupulous warriors can attempt to slice the tendons of their foe's wrists and ankles. Doing this requires Melee 4, Dexterity 2 and a bladed weapon. If two or more Health Levels are taken by the victim, the tendons are cut. Wrists become useless, and a successful tendon slice to the ankle can cripple the opponent for life unless excellent health care or magical aid can be rendered. This maneuver is considered to be completely unchivalrous by most nobles.

Roll: Dexterity + Melee **Difficulty:** 9
Damage: As weapon **Actions:** 1

Two-Weapon Styles

Experienced changeling warriors may master Florentine swordplay, ni-to kenjitsu or street-level knife-fighting. Just because a character can hold a weapon in each hand does not mean that he can use them well, though. Characters need at least five dice in their Dexterity + Melee Dice Pools to gain any benefit from two-weapon styles. If a character has fewer dice, the Storyteller should reward botches with serious self-inflicted wounds.

Characters with sufficient skill (and dice) to use two weapons have several options. The player may decide to have the character attack with both weapons or to use one weapon to defend and the other to attack. If the character attacks with both weapons, the Dice Pool must be split, but the pool gains a bonus die to divide between the attacks. If the character chooses to defend with one weapon, it acts as a shield, adding one to the difficulty of the opponent's attack.

Sapping

Some weapons are meant to knock characters out without harming them unduly. Saps are usually made out of thick cloth bags filled with lead shot, although any small, heavy object will do: cudgel, candlestick, sword hilt, etc. Sapping requires that the character whack his victim on the head, so sapping is usually done from surprise. Roll Dexterity + Melee or Dexterity + Streetwise (difficulty 7). If the character scores a number of successes equal to the Stamina of her victim, the victim must make a Stamina roll (difficulty 8) to stay awake. Otherwise, he falls unconscious. Victims usually wake at the Bruised Health Level. A sap will not drive a character beyond the Bruised Health Level if he is already damaged.

Weaponry

Changelings employ hundreds of types of weapons to attack their foes or defend themselves. They tend to be fond of anachronistic weapons such as the sword and bow, but are just as likely to use a shotgun if necessary.

Firearms

A changeling would have to be a fool to ignore the power of firearms. Their use is extremely widespread among commoners, partly out of familiarity, but also because they can substantially level the playing field when facing Pendragon's Host!

Melee Weapons

Changelings love medieval weaponry, and most still fight with sword and mace if given the chance. Since many changelings have chimerical weapons, they can bear these in public with little or no complications, although the local nobility usually frowns upon public melees.

Ranged Weapons

Ranged weapons are low-tech projectile weapons, including thrown weapons and bows. Many changelings are well-practiced in these weapons. They are still favorites of tourneys and contests. Members of Unseelie organizations, such as the Monkey's Paw, prefer these silent weapons over sniper rifles for servicing their clients from a distance.

Thrown Weapons: The difficulty number is determined by dividing the range in yards by the Strength of the changeling. So, if a pooka wants to throw a potato at a redcap who is standing 16 yards away, the difficulty is 16/3 (the pooka's Strength), or six (always round up).

If the weapon is designed to be thrown, add one (or more) to the character's Strength for the purpose of determining the difficulty. If the object is definitely not meant to be thrown, such as a pie, subtract one (or more) from the character's Strength for

the purpose of finding the difficulty number. So in the same circumstance, the pooka's difficulty would be 4 to hit the redcap with a lawn dart, or 8 to hit him with a key lime pie.

All rolls to hit are made with Dexterity + Athletics, and the maximum range is the character's Strength x 10 in yards for most objects. Unaerodynamic and light objects have less range. You can throw a football a lot farther than you can a Kleenex box! Use common sense.

Bows: Bows require two separate actions to use. The character readies an arrow in the first action, and draws and fires in the next action. Successes scored on the Dexterity + Archery roll may add to damage, at the Storyteller's option.

Crossbows: Crossbows take three turns to fire: one to cock the crossbow, one to ready a bolt and the last to fire. The strings of heavy crossbows must be winched into place, and cocking them takes an extra turn. Successes scored on the Dexterity + Archery roll may add to damage, at the Storyteller's option. Due to the crossbow's similarity to firearms for the purpose of aiming, the Storyteller may let a player roll Dexterity + Firearms (difficulty 7), instead of the normal archery roll.

Mounted Combat

Sidhe, more than any other changelings, love the thrill and danger of mounted combat. The sight of a sidhe knight in full armor on a charging warhorse bedecked in splendid colors can be breathtaking and inspiring. Horses, however, come with complications — a real horse is expensive and requires much care, while a chimerical one can disappear in a flash of Banality if a wandering mortal happens to see the rider "floating."

Horses, real and chimerical, are not cars. They have personalities, and must be trained and practiced in the art of war and in obeying their masters. Horses will not jump over obstacles or go near loud noises, much less charge into battle, without a lot of training and reinforcement on the part of *their owners*. They require hours of work on an almost-daily basis. Nonetheless, sidhe counts and dukes attempt to keep stables, real and chimerical.

While fighting on horseback, changelings are limited to using the smaller of two Dice Pools for all maneuvers: Dexterity + Melee or Dexterity + Ride. Also, many weapons cannot be used from horseback, and botching a combat roll on horseback is potentially lethal to the horse, and quite possibly to both horse and rider.

So what is the benefit? Damage. A horse at a trot adds an automatic damage success to his master's melee weapon; two automatic successes at a canter; and three automatic damage successes at a full charge. A weapon that does damage equal to or greater than its normal maximum has a chance of being dropped, broken or left in its victim. If this is a possibility, have the player make a Strength roll (difficulty 7). The Storyteller



should decide what happens if the rider fails this roll, based on the situation. (Smart warriors often affix loops to their hand weapons, so the weapons don't fall to the ground.) Sabers and scimitars are made for fighting on horseback; the difficulty number versus dropping them is only 5.

For example, Sir Mabelrode of House Ailil rides down a peasant nocker with his lance. He hits and rolls his damage, 4 (Strength) + 3 (lance). He rolls four successes, but since he was charging he adds three more, for a grand total of seven successes! The peasant is run through — oh, happy day! Since his damage equals the maximum he could possibly do with a lance, Sir Mabelrode makes a Strength roll at difficulty 7. He rolls a 3, 5, 6 and 1. The Storyteller rules that the lance shatters upon impaling the nocker. Darn — a lance is much more expensive than a peasant.

Only short bows and crossbows can be fired from horseback, and crossbows can't be re-cocked. Gunfire is likely to panic a horse, unless the animal has been trained to be accustomed to the noise. Difficulty for all ranged attacks from horseback is one higher than normal. As with melee combat, changelings are limited to using the smaller of two Dice Pools for all ranged attacks: Dexterity + Archery/Athletics or Dexterity + Ride.

Armor

Armor adds to the character's soak roll to help resist damage. This advantage is tempered by the fact that armor often weighs a lot and restricts a character's movement. The difficulty numbers of all rolls involving Dexterity are increased by the penalty number listed for a character's armor type on the Armor chart. Some Kithain weaponsmiths, like nockers, can produce armor of such light weight and efficient design that it imposes no Dexterity penalties. No armor is as comfortable as normal clothing, though; not even the most martial changeling wears armor unless it is necessary for protection, or as a matter of decorum.

Most modern armor is made from ballistic cloth. Some suits of modern armor contain pockets for ceramic and composite plastic plates to improve protection against bullets, but these plates make the suits heavier and more expensive.

Armor's protection is not universal. Chimerical armor only protects a changeling from chimerical weapons. Real armor only protects a changeling from real weapons. Talisman armor is the only kind of armor that can protect a changeling from both forms of damage. An example of this would be a bulletproof vest that has the chimerical appearance of being a bronze plate doublet. However, this kind of armor tends to cramp a sidhe corporate executive's style in the office, so it is rare and of limited practicality. Wealthy changelings tend to own both modern ballistic armor and suits of chimerical armor, wearing what is suitable for the occasion.

Anachronistic Armor

Changelings often wear chimerical (or real) armor that simulates the kind worn by medieval warriors. Generally speaking, the heavier the armor, the more protection it grants, although armor may also impose a Dexterity penalty. The following are some of the common types of armor worn by changelings:

Light Armor: This category includes quilted and leather armor. It is often the only type of armor owned by commoners. Nobles often use it as padding beneath finer suits of mail. A soft leather cap or quilted hood provides minimal head protection. The bodice, or gambeson, usually looks like a duster. Shorter gambesons require some sort of padded trousers to protect the legs..

Composite Armor: Composite armor is nothing more than assorted bits of reinforced leather armor, perhaps over a quilted suit, linked by chain rings or studs. Common pieces include a breastplate, vambraces for the arms and a gorget for the neck. A lot of unsavory types prefer this armor, as it exhibits their prowess at thiev— er, making something from nothing. A dented helm or rusty chain coif might cover the head.

Heavy Armor: Retainers or lesser nobles may own suits of heavy armor. These are chain or chain-reinforced leather pieces (gambesons or breastplates) over a thick suit of quilted armor. The helm is a sturdy metal cap or a well-made chain coif covering the top of the head; soft fabric is worn underneath for cushioning.

Full Armor: All pieces are uniform, tailored to an individual, and made of chain or chain combined with plate, worn over a quilted suit and cap. The helm has a moveable visor. Full armor usually has fine etching or some decoration that reflects the wearer's alliance.

Sidhe Plate: The armor of a noble is a work of art. Sidhe plate is the stylized armor of sidhe nobles and heroes. It is formed of sweeping oval plates, high collars and a skirt made of plates attached to the cuirass with chainmail. This armor is reserved for sidhe, and usually only landed nobles or retainers of great heroism.

Surcotes and Crests: Surcotes are square tunics with slit sides. They are worn over armor and are usually embroidered or painted with personal heraldic devices or the device of a warrior's lord or lady. Crests sit atop helms; they are usually a padded or stuffed representation of the major heraldic charge of an individual or a noble house. For example, a warrior of House Liam may sew and stuff a silver tree to mount on his helm.

Shields

Changelings typically reserve shields for hall decorations; few things make a banquet hall or throne room look more medieval than a hanging row of decorated shields. In combat, however, a shield can mean the difference between glorious victory and a mortal blow. Commoners and nobles alike can bear shields, though the latter usually decorate theirs with heraldic devices.

Heaters are triangular shields borne by warriors on foot; they were the most common shields of the medieval period. Mounted warriors often carry kite shields, elongated versions of the heater, which protects the legs. Trolls and others with a passion for things Norse might prefer the round shield, which is also seen in parts of the Middle East. Some eshu carry the spiked



shields of the Zulu, which are elongated and come to a point at top and bottom. Most shields are made of wood, which are partially covered and edged with strips of leather or metal. On the other hand, many's the redcap who prefers a garbage can lid to some fancy painted shield.

The average shield adds +1 difficulty to the attacker's Dexterity + Melee roll against the defender. A gigantic shield, perhaps carried by a troll or a mounted warrior, adds +2 difficulty. Thus, if the redcap Conor, with his garbage can lid and baseball bat, faces Magdelen, a troll squire with a round shield and oak cudgel, the troll's base difficulty to hit rises from 4 to 5. Conor, on the other hand, suffers a more severe penalty. Conor's base difficulty is 6, thanks to Magdalen's giant round shield.

Invoking the Dragon's Ire

Tales of fae warriors of preternatural skill fill books of lore, and their exploits resound in the halls of latter-day sidhe kings. Changelings are the masters of melee combat, while the sidhe surpass all Kithain in the arts of dueling. Changeling combat is wild and unpredictable, filled with leaps, parries, pratfalls and breathtaking acts of derring-do. In melee combat, changeling warriors are often able to summon a force from the Dreaming to aid them. They call it the Dragon's Ire.

Many different tales describe the nature of the Dragon's Ire. Redcaps have several limericks concerning how they ate the heart of a dragon to gain its powers, while the boggans tell a story about a fell dragon that became to a boggan chef's gooseberry tarts. All of the tales have their merits, but the quest of Prince Ardan is recounted most often in the courts of Concordia as the origin of Dragon's Ire.

In Arcadia's distant past, before the Fair Folk ever came to this world, Ardan's uncle stole the prince's crown and throne. Disconsolate, Ardan ventured far into the Dreaming. There, a mighty dragon, named Ouroboros, attacked him. After hours of fighting, Ardan managed to slip his blade beneath the chin of the beast, but stayed his death blow if the dragon would aid him in his quest to regain his throne. The dragon agreed, and Ardan returned and gathered together a great host with members of every kith. He called his warriors the Orbori in honor of the dragon, and he taught them how to invoke its aid. His army was the first to summon the Dragon's Ire, and it won his throne back, and eventually the throne of Arcadia as well.

A pale nimbus of flame surrounds those enveloped in the Dragon's Ire, and a subtle cyclone of wind stirs their clothes. Some bystanders even hear music, which seems to echo faintly across the battlefield. Any changeling with Kenning can perceive the invocation of the Dragon's Ire from a great distance as the tide of Glamour shifts subtly in the direction of the wielder.

The Dragon's Ire is not a force of animalistic energy; it is a celebration of the art of war. It is the dance of the duelist and the song of the fray. Changelings experiencing the Dragon's Ire are confident, implacable, focused and deadly.

The Orbori Berserk: Bedlam

A changeling in any stage of Bedlam invokes the Dragon's Ire at great peril to friend and foe. The rush of Glamour produced in the grip of the Dragon's Ire is intoxicating to all changelings, and this rush is all the more seductive to those slipping into Bedlam. No roll is necessary; success in invoking the Dragon's Ire is automatic.

For a character in Bedlam to control the Dragon's Ire, a Willpower roll must be made and three successes must be gained. The difficulty is the Glamour rating of the character. If the character controls the Dragon's Ire, then play out the effects normally. If the roll fails or botches, then the effect depends on the character's current level of Bedlam.

Stage One: The Mien of Burning Gold — The character projects a nimbus of burning gold streamers. Her Ire dice are doubled, but she proceeds to stage two of Bedlam when the scene is over, if she is not killed.

Stage Two: The Gaze of Madness — The Kithain's eyes channel raw power from the Dreaming. Any Kithain staring into the eyes of the character must make a Willpower roll, difficulty 8, or enter stage one of Bedlam. The character's Ire dice are doubled, but she proceeds to stage three of Bedlam when the scene is over, if she is not killed.

Stage Three: The Visage of Doom — The character becomes a silhouette, reflecting the nightmare impossibilities of the Deep Dreaming. Any changeling coming in contact with her is pulled into the depths of the Dreaming. Chimerical weapons and Arts have no effect on the character — cold iron is the only defense against the Visage of Doom. Dragon's Ire dice are tripled, but the character is devoured by the Dreaming in a cataclysmic blast when the scene is over.

Dragon's Ire Modifiers

A list of modifiers to the difficulty number to invoke the Dragon's Ire follows. No cumulative modifiers greater than -3 are allowed, and the total can never exceed -3.

Boggans defending home	-2
Eshu on roadways	-2
Nockers in their workplaces	-2
Pooka escaping combat	-2
Satyrs in the wilderness	-1
Sidhe in a duel	-2
Sluagh defending home	-2
Trolls defending honor	-2
Wounded redcaps	-3

System: When a character attempts to invoke the Dragon's Ire, the player must spend a point of Glamour and make a Glamour roll with a difficulty equal to his character's Banality. If the roll is successful, the player gains a number of dice for each success he gains (with a maximium equal to the character's current Remembrance rating). These Ire dice can be spent on attack or maneuver rolls during each turn of combat, but do not accumulate with repeated attempts to raise the Ire. Once invoked, the Dragon's Ire lasts for an entire scene. Utterly wonderful uses of the Dragon's Ire, especially at the climax of a chronicle, may even generate Glamour at the Storyteller's whim.

Characters invoking the Dragon's Ire may add to the base Dice Pool in multiple actions, but may not roll more dice than the original pool size for any one feat. Let's say that Marissa, a newly knighted sidhe, has invoked the Dragon's Ire and has three Ire dice to spend in the combat. She may choose to make all of her rolls with three dice instead of two, or she could boost one of her rolls to six dice, leaving three dice for the other two actions. Since her base Dice Pool for her multiple action was six, she cannot roll more than six dice for any of her multiple actions.

Changelings with less than three dots of Remembrance rarely know of this ability. Some, such as the sidhe of Houses Scathach, Gwydion and Fiona are taught its mysteries when they enter military training. Most commoners discover the Dragon's Ire only under times of life-threatening stress. Summoning the Dragon's Ire is not considered an action. Once a changeling has done it successfully, it becomes instinctual, although not automatic.

Botching a Dragon's Ire roll is no fun for a character. The Storyteller counts up all the ones rolled and then adds one to that number. At any point during a turn of combat the Storyteller may simply pluck that number of dice from the hands of the player, but may never take all the dice. Once botched, the Dragon's Ire cannot be re-invoked in the same scene. This terrible effect lasts for a scene.

The Dragon's Dance: Dueling

The term "duel" is usually reserved for a formal contest, but duels range from murderous street brawls to the climax of changeling tournaments. Duels are fairly common occurrences between sidhe nobles.

The duel has a nearly-mythic place in sidhe society, and has seen a renaissance since the Resurgence. It is said that the Dragon's Dance was the first use of the Dragon's Ire after the Shattering. Members of House Scathach had nearly forgotten the power of the Dragon's Ire, until the ritual and romance of the duel brought it back to them. Dueling on this ritualistic level is beyond a public brawl; it is an art form and one of the keystones of the noble society.

Nobles are limited to challenging only those of equal rank — those of higher rank can refuse duels with little loss of honor. Challenges delivered to inferiors are rare, but can be attributed to "teaching the offender a lesson." The person challenged has the right to choose the weapons and time of the fight. These discussions are usually carried out by the parties' factors, persons whom they entrust with the arrangements. The general rules for conduct are set during these negotiations, but hot-blooded sidhe often forget the niceties in order to get on with the fun.

The formal duels listed below often involve the invocation of the Dragon's Ire, even though cantrip use is usually considered cheating. All of the duels listed involve taking an oath, binding the participants to abide by the rules set forth by the type of duel, and observing any exceptions agreed upon by the duelists. (House Eiluned knights consider cantrip use fair, for instance.) There is no benefit to taking the oath, other than the protection it affords as both parties are buond by the duel's limits. Failing to abide by the oath results in the immediate loss of a permanent point of Willpower.

The Scarlet Trip: This duel is fought to first blood, usually with little or no armor, and with light weapons.

Tonight we trip for honor and right.
Guide our hands, Mother Dream, as we fight.
Fae are quick to anger, but quicker to mend.
We swear, tomorrow our anger will end.

The Dragon's Dance: This duel is regarded as the most honorable and as such, is the most common form of dueling. It is fought until one side or the other yields. It may be fought with any weapons or armor the foes agree to.

We dance the Dragon's Dance beneath the waning moon,
And set loose the Dan, the Chariot of Dream and doom.
The reigns of reason slip as the star-hoofed horses race,
And we hear the cackle of misrule beneath their frantic pace.
Wide-eyed, the mares of terror to us draw you near —
Come, sweet Mother Dream: our love, our lot, our fear.

Danse Macabre: This duel is to the death. Only queens and kings can sanction such a contest. It may be fought with any weapons or armor the foes agree on.

We call for honor in deeds
Let us rise above this petty seeming.
Death to s/he who flees
Before the power of the Dreaming.

The Dance of Iron: This duel is fought with no armor and with iron weapons. It is fought until the death of both the changeling soul and the human host. It is illegal in Concordia and most foreign kingdoms as well.

The only oath taken before the Dance of Iron is something to the effect of, "Die and to Oblivion with your soul, bastard!" Many variations of this exist.

Glamour and Combat

Changelings know many other ways to mix Glamour and combat, beyond their ability to invoke the Dragon's Ire. For instance, the Unseelie often use techniques such as the enchanted stroke or the dolorous blow to kill Dreamers they have Ravaged. First they enchant their victims with the enchanted stroke, and then kill them with the dolorous blow. Witnesses, if any, are confused by the Mists and give conflicting reports to the authorities.

The Enchanted Stroke

By expending a point each of Glamour and Willpower, a changeling can use a chimerical weapon to enchant someone. The player merely expends the points and rolls to strike the target. If the target is hit, he is instantly enchanted for a day. The target suffers no damage from the enchanted stroke, but will most probably have the daylights scared out of him when the character's fae mien is revealed. Treasures cannot be used to perform the enchanted stroke; only chimerical weapons will work.

The Dolorous Blow

A changeling can make a chimerical object, usually a weapon, real to any unenchanted being by expending a Willpower point. This effect lasts for only one turn and only one object is affected, though no roll is required. The object or weapon suddenly appears out of nowhere to the unenchanted. After the turn has passed or the object is taken from their sight, unenchanted witnesses are soon overcome by the Mists; their limited imaginations quickly transform the object into the most rational substitute that they can conceive.

Cantrips and Combat

Using cantrips in combat presents several problems. Bunks are often hard to coordinate and are very obvious to other changelings. It doesn't take much gray matter to figure out who is planning to cast a cantrip if there's a Kithain charging into combat with a bunch of cotton candy and rose petals clutched in one hand. In other words, these Kithain tend to draw a lot of fire. Additionally, to use a cantrip in combat, the changeling must spend a turn casting it, leaving her open to attack. The character can attempt multiple actions, but, of course, those actions are more likely to fail.

The power of some cantrips offsets most disadvantages of their casting, especially Primal and Wayfare cantrips. Primal can boost both damage and Health Levels. Wayfare adds to movement and, with the cantrip Flickerflash, gives changelings multiple actions in combat.

Other Arts have more subtle uses: Chicanery cantrips can be used to fool a changeling's enemies, Soothsay can shift probability, and Sovereign can be used to gain recruits or command foes to leave combat.

Injury and Health Levels

There are many ways that a character can suffer injury. Because changelings have a dual existence, they must not only worry about damage to their human selves, but their fae miens as well. To represent this, **Changeling** uses two ways to record damage to the character.

Beneath Health Levels on the character sheet there are two rows of boxes: one represents the changeling's chimerical, or fae, self; the other represents his real, human body. Whenever a character suffers chimerical damage, such as from a chimerical dagger, check off a number of boxes under chimerical damage equal to the number of Health Levels lost. Whenever the changeling suffers real damage, such as from Kithain treasures or bullets, check off these boxes. For example, if an opponent scores two levels of damage with a baseball bat, the player checks off two real Health Levels.



Each level of damage makes it successively harder for a character to complete skills and to participate in combat. A Mauled character (he has now taken five Health Levels of damage) must subtract two dice from his Dice Pool. These modifiers to the Dice Pool are listed to the right of the Health Level boxes.

Chimerical and real damage are not cumulative. Keep track of them separately, and apply the worst penalty to the character's Dice Pool. If Toby the boggan has been chewed to the Crippled state (-5) with a redcap's chimerical chainsaw, and stabbed with an Unseelie troll's very real icepick to the Injured (-1) Health Level, the total modifier to Toby's Dice Pool is -5, not -6.

Sources of Injury and Healing

Changelings not only have to worry about falling off a ladder or being shot, but chimerical fangs, tentacles and maces as well. Cold iron causes the worst kinds of wounds. It is *anathema to the Kithain.*

Stunning

If a changeling suffers more damage from a single attack than she has Stamina dots, she is stunned for the next turn of combat. The character may do nothing more than fall to the ground, if not already there.

Chimerical Damage

Changelings suffer chimerical damage (Health Levels) from purely chimerical sources, such as the horns of a nervosa or a chimerical lance. These wounds are visible only to those capable of seeing the character's fae mien — normally other Kithain and enchanted mortals. Purely chimerical wounds are more dramatic than normal wounds, so play up their descriptions. Get medieval. Of course, unenchanted mortals will see nothing outwardly wrong with a Mauled character who is screaming for aid.

An Incapacitated changeling falls into a comalike state and must be taken to a freehold, glade or strong source of Glamour to recover. The character does not wake until all chimerical Health Levels have been healed. Childlings and wilders usually reawaken on the next day after being healed. Grumps may require any other special aid the Storyteller feels is appropriate.

Chimerical damage heals at a normal rate, unless the character is in a freehold or glade. While in a freehold, the character heals one chimerical Health Level per night spent there. In the Dreaming, a changeling heals one chimerical Health Level per hour.

Real Damage

Real damage occurs most often during games in combat, but normal damage and its associated Health Levels represent damage from any of the sources that could harm a normal human: falling, fire, disease, drowning.

Real damage heals at a normal pace (see the Normal Healing Times chart) unless cantrips are used, or the character is in a freehold. The time listed next to each Health Level on the chart is the rate for healing to the next Health Level only. A

Normal Healing Times

Bruised	One Day
Hurt	Three Days
Injured	One Week
Wounded	One Month
Mauled	Three Months
Crippled	Three Months*
Incapacitated	See **

* Not only must a changeling heal this Health Level, but she may lose one point from one of her Physical Attributes. A changeling who is magically healed, or who reaches a freehold to be healed before a day has passed, does not suffer this loss.

**A changeling who reaches Incapacitated heals at the Storyteller's discretion; she may fall into a coma for the rest of her life (unless taken to a freehold for healing).

Crippled character takes three months to heal to the Mauled state, then another three months to heal to Wounded. This chart assumes sanitary, adequate health care. The Storyteller may adjust times for poor or excellent care, as appropriate.

Cantrips, such as Heather Balm, can heal normal damage easily. Also, changelings regenerate normal damage when exposed to the powers of the Dreaming. When in a freehold, glade or in the Dreaming, normal damage heals at the rate of one Health Level per night.

Aggravated Damage

Cantrips, such as Holly Strike, that damage a character directly cause aggravated wounds. Certain Prodigal attacks (the teeth and claws of vampire and werewolves, Garou Gifts, vampire Disciplines and True Magick) can also cause these deadly wounds. Cold iron (see below), toxic waste, acid and fire are also common causes of aggravated wounds.

Use a different method to mark aggravated damage from the one you use to mark real or chimerical damage. Circling or putting an X in the box instead of a check is the easiest way to note which damage is aggravated.

Aggravated damage can only be healed by the body's natural processes. Consult the Healing Times chart for these healing times. In the Dreaming or a freehold, these times are halved, round up, with a minimum of one day required to heal a Health Level.

Aggravated damage can only be healed by cantrips if additional points of Glamour, beyond points used for casting itself, are spent. One level of aggravated damage can be healed per point of Glamour expended.

Cold Iron

Cold iron is the ultimate sign of Banality to changelings. Perhaps it was the rise of the iron age that precipitated the Sundering, and thus cold iron is the Sundering's banal manifestation. Its presence makes changelings ill at ease, and cold iron weapons cause horrible, smoking wounds that rob changelings of Glamour and threaten their very existence. It is so distasteful to changelings that they can sense cold iron in their immediate presence.

Like many things in **Changeling**, cold iron is a bit of a paradox. Steel actually contains more of the element iron than does cold iron. In fact, most of the things we associate with iron nowadays are actually steel or cast iron (cold iron which has been melted and poured into a mold). Cold iron is what we know as wrought iron. The best way to think about cold iron is not as a *thing*, but as a *process*, a very low-tech process. It must be produced from iron ore over a charcoal fire. The resulting lump of black-gray material can then be forged (hammered) into useful shapes.

Cold iron weapons are heavier, softer, more brittle than steel weapons and lose their edge more quickly. Any cold iron weapon larger than an dagger is very unwieldy, usually adding +1 or +2 to the difficulty number to hit. Botches almost certainly cause them to break. Cold iron weapons therefore tend to be small — axe heads, daggers, arrow heads, darts, bolts, caltrops, shuriken.

Making cold iron weapons is illegal in most kingdoms, and even owning one is considered a crime in most. (Many a noble still has one secreted away, just in case.) Mortal blacksmiths are much prized for their abilities to work cold iron, and finding the ore is not too difficult since large iron ore deposits are common in Alabama, Utah, Texas, California, Pennsylvania and New York. It is rumored that some mortal mages can produce cold iron weapons that have the properties of steel. It is also believed that weapons quenched in changeling blood are extremely hard for changelings to sense.

Cold iron is the only thing that causes Health Levels of chimerical and aggravated damage simultaneously. Cold iron weapons also cause changelings to loose a point of temporary Glamour per Health Level inflicted.

Disease and Poison

Poison and human diseases affect changelings like they do mortals. Fae who have access to the Glamour of freeholds, however, do not generally die by mundane means — their powers of recuperation are better than that. Health Levels lost to disease or poison are assumed to be normal wounds for the purposes of healing. Once the changeling is healed, she is cured. Severe diseases and vicious poisons are treated as aggravated wounds.

Falling

The sad result of missing that much-needed Dexterity + Athletics roll. Use the falling chart to calculate damage. Characters can make Stamina rolls to try to "soak" damage, though; the difficulty is 8. Each success means one less Health Level is lost (the changeling happens to fall into the passing garbage truck, etc.). Each botch means an additional Health Level is lost.

Distance (in feet)	Injury
Five:	One Health Level
10	Two Health Levels
20	Three Health Levels
30	Four Health Levels
40	Five Health Levels
50	Six Health Levels
60	Seven Health Levels

... and so on, to a maximum of 10 Health Levels.

Fire

A character struck (or worse, enveloped) by flames takes damage according to the Fire chart. The player may roll a number of dice equal to the character's Stamina rating against the difficulties listed below. The player must roll for each turn that the character is in the flames to see if the character can resist the damage. If the roll fails, the character takes from one to three Health Levels of damage (see the second chart). If the roll succeeds, the character takes one less Health Level of damage per success than the size of the fire inflicts. If the roll is botched, the character is harmed in some special way — perhaps she loses her eyesight or her limbs are maimed.

Difficulty	Heat of Fire
3	Heat of a candle (first-degree burns)
5	Heat of a torch (second-degree burns)
7	Heat of a Bunsen burner (third-degree burns)
9	Heat of a chemical fire
10	Molten metal
Wounds	**Size of Fire**
One	Torch; part of body burned
Two	Bonfire; half of body burned
Three	Raging inferno; entire body burned

Suffocation and Drowning

Even changelings die without air. A Kithain can hold her breath for a length of time based on her Stamina (see chart) — she can even extend this time by spending Willpower points (30 seconds for every point). If she cannot get air by the time her Willpower runs out, she suffocates or drowns at a rate of one Health Level per turn. While this is not aggravated damage, she cannot heal it until she leaves that hostile environment. When the changeling falls to Incapacitated, she dies within one minute per point of her Stamina rating.

Stamina	Holding Breath
1	30 seconds
2	One minute
3	Two minutes
4	Four minutes
5	Eight minutes
6	15 minutes
7	20 minutes
8	30 minutes

Death

Changelings heal with amazing speed, but their dual (human and fae) natures makes them fragile as well. Changelings are neither human or fae; the true death of either part is the death of whole. The fae mien can be "killed" by chimerical damage and still be reborn. Perhaps this fragile nature is also responsible for the wisdom and vitality of many fae. They experience many times what most mortal know only once: death.

Banal Death

When the human part of a changeling dies, the fae self may live on, but that changeling will never come into existence again. Commoners are reborn into another human host, who has a different appearance and upbringing from the previous human seeming. No one knows what happens to sidhe souls. Many sidhe comfort themselves with the notion that they are taken to Arcadia, but no one knows for sure.

The death of the human part of a changeling while she is on a Silver Path is an amazing sight. The fae souls of commoners stand over the corpses of their human hosts. Others present in the Dreaming can converse with these souls, but memories of their last Earthbound lifetimes deteriorate as the minutes pass. As this happens, they begin to remember more and more of Arcadia. At the moment their memories of the human life fade completely, and their ancient lives in Arcadia and the pre-Sundering Earth are remembered, a fist of purple chimerical flame pulls them fighting and screaming all the way back into the World of Darkness.

The souls of sidhe changelings killed on a Silver Path shine forth in all their fae glory and stride off into the Deep Dreaming, beyond the powers of the Silver Paths, as if on some great mission.

It is said that all fae killed off of a Silver Path wander the Dreaming looking for Arcadia. Direction is hard to determine away from a Silver Path, and those dying in the Near and Far Dreaming may never find Arcadia. Those killed in the Deep Dreaming, with its host of chimerical horrors, are closer to their goal, but in much greater threat of Final Death.

Sorcerers of House Eiluned are said to know of cantrips capable of capturing the fae souls of changelings and investing them in new human hosts. This task is extremely risky (and unethical).

Chimerical Death

Chimerical death occurs when a character suffers more chimerical damage than she has Health Levels. The character passes out immediately, and has only fleeting and often nightmarish memories of her fae life when she regains consciousness. She believes that she is mortal, and only mortal.

The changeling can be restored with Glamour, though only after the requisite amount of time as passed (see the Mists Chart, pg. 208). Chimerical death also earns the character a permanent point of Banality.

Fae Death

Fae death occurs whenever a character is killed by cold iron. The death blow must come from a cold iron weapon. If this tragedy occurs, not only does the changeling die a physical death, but her faerie soul can never be reborn in a mortal host. She is lost to the Dreaming for all time.

If a character is taken to the Injured Health Level by a cold iron dagger, and then is slain by a chimerical sword, he faces chimerical death. If the death blow is from the cold iron dagger, or if the assailant finishes the character off with the dagger, the victim experiences fae death.

Combat Summary Chart

Initiative Stage

• Roll Wits + Alertness (difficulty 4). Everyone declares their actions in ascending order of successes — the lowest score goes first, but may be interrupted by a character with higher initiative. Some characters will act simultaneously (they both rolled three successes, say). Those who rolled no successes at all go last, and those who botch don't get to act this turn.

Stage Two: Attack

• For firefights, roll Dexterity + Firearms or Dexterity + Archery.

• For melee (with weapons) combat, roll Dexterity + Melee.

• For hand-to-hand (without weapons) combat, roll Dexterity + Brawl.

• Dodging: The difficulty to dodge melee or brawling attacks is a base 6, +1 for every opponent after the first. In firefights, use the dodging chart.

Stage Three: Resolution

• **Damage**: Each weapon or attack allows the wielder to roll a certain number of damage dice (difficulty 6). Each success removes one Health Level from the target. Additionally, each success scored with a firearm (after any dodge) adds one die to this damage roll. Melee and brawling successes do not add to the damage.

• **Soak**: A target may make a roll to see how much damage she "soaks up" because of her natural hardiness. The target rolls Stamina (difficulty 6); each success reduces the damage by one.

• **Exception**: Damage and soak rolls are two rolls in **Changeling** that cannot be botched.

Falling

Distance (in feet)	Injury
Five	One Health Level
10	Two Health Levels
20	Three Health Levels
30	Four Health Levels
40	Five Health Levels
50	Six Health Levels
60	Seven Health Levels

... and so on, to a maximum of 10 Health Levels.

Fire

Difficulty	Heat of Fire
3	Heat of a candle (first-degree burns)
5	Heat of a torch (second-degree burns)
7	Heat of a Bunsen burner (third-degree burns)
9	Heat of a chemical fire
10	Molten metal
Wounds	**Size of Fire**
One	Torch; part of body burned
Two	Bonfire; half of body burned
Three	Raging inferno; entire body burned

Drowning/Suffocation

Stamina	Holding Breath
1	30 seconds
2	One minute
3	Two minutes
4	Four minutes
5	Eight minutes
6	15 minutes
7	20 minutes
8	30 minutes

Normal Healing Times

Bruised	One Day
Hurt	Three Days
Injured	One Week
Wounded	One Month
Mauled	Three Months
Crippled	Three Months
Incapacitated	Three Months

Armor Types

Level (Modern/Anachronistic)	Armor Rating	Penalty
One: Sporting Pads/Light Armor	1	0
Two: Ballistic Cloth Shirt/Composite Armor	2	0
Three: Flak Vest/Heavy Armor	3	1
Four: Flak Jacket/Full Armor	4	1
Five: Special Forces Armor/Sidhe Plate	6	2

Melee Weapons

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	Hand	Conceal	Strength
Knife	5	1	1	P	1
Dagger	5	1	1	J	1
Short Sword	6	2	1	T	1
Rapier	6	3	1	T	2
Broadsword	6	4	1	T	2
Bastard Sword	6	5	2/1	N	3
Great Sword	6	6	2	N	4
Quarterstaff	5	2	2	N	2
Spear	6	3	2	N	2
Lance*	8	3	2	N	2
Poleaxe**	6	6	2	N	3
Club	4	1	1	T	1
Hand Axe	6	5	1	J	2
Battle-axe	6	6	2	T	3
Mace	4	4	1	T	2
Morning Star***	7	5	1	T	2

Difficulty: The difficulty of a Dexterity + Melee attack roll.

Damage: Roll Strength + the damage number to resolve damage. Difficulty 6.

Hand: The number of hands it takes to wield this weapon.

Conceal: P = may be hidden in a pocket; J = may be hidden in a jacket; T = may be hidden in a trenchcoat or duster; and N = not concealable.

Strength: Strength required to wield the weapon. Difficulty increases by +2 for each dot of Strength short of the difficulty number.

* Lances are usually heavy, cheap spears made to be left in their victims. These stats cover their use on a charging horse. **See "Mounted Combat" for more information.**

** Poleaxes also have a spear point, and can be used as spears in combat. Poleaxes may also have hooks attached, allowing the wielder to drag people off horses. The wielder rolls Strength + Melee after a successful attack (this does no damage). The rider rolls Strength + Ride to resist. The one with the most successes wins.

*** Botches with any chain weapon result in the weapon becoming either fouled and unusable or striking the wielder.

Firefight Complications

Complication	Difficulty	Dice
Changing action	+1	—
Immobilization	-2	—
Long range	+1	—
Point-blank	4	—
Lying flat	+1	—
Behind pole	+2	—
Behind wall	+3	—
Only head exposed	+4	—
Movement	+1	—
Aiming	—	+ Perception
Scope	—	+2
Specific area of target	+2	—
Multiple shots	+1/extra shot	—
Full-auto	+3	+10
Three-round burst	+1	+3
Spray	5 +1/yard	+10

Dodges

A normal hand-to-hand dodge difficulty is 6; for firefights, see below:

Difficulty	Terrain
2	By moving back half a step, the character is back under full cover.
4	*Full cover within diving distance* (one yard).
6	Full cover within running distance (three yards).
7	Partial cover within running distance (three yards).
8	Flat and featureless, no cover (the character dives to the ground).

Ranged Weapons Chart

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	Conceal	Strength	Range
Short Bow	6	2	T	2	60
Long Bow	6	4	N	3	120
Long Bow, Hvy.	6	6	N	4	150
Crossbow	5	3	T	2	90
Crossbow, Hvy.	5	5	N	3	110
Spear*	7	Str +2	N	3	10
Javelin	see text	Str +2	N	2	see text
Knife	see text	Str +1	P	2	see text
Rock	see text	Strength	P	2	see text
Hatchet	see text	Str +1	J	2	see text

Difficulty: The difficulty of a Dexterity + Archery attack roll for bows, or Dexterity + Athletics roll for thrown weapons.

Damage: Roll a number of dice equal to this number resolve damage, difficulty 6.

Conceal: P = may be hidden in a pocket; J = may be hidden in a jacket, T= may be hidden in a trenchcoat or duster; and N = not concealable.

Strength: Strength required to use the weapon.

Range: See pg. 240 regarding thrown weapons. For bows, this is medium range. This number is doubled for a long-range attack, at a difficulty of +1.

* Spears are usually heavy, and do not make effective ranged weapons. These stats can be used when in desperation.

Firearms Chart

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	Range	Rate	Clip	Conceal
Revolver, Lt.	6	4	12	3	6	P
Revolver, Hvy.	6	6	35	2	6	J
Pistol, Lt.	6	4	20	4	17+1	P
Pistol, Hvy.	6	5	30	3	7+1	J
Rifle	7	8	200	1	5+1	N
SMG, Sm.*	7	4	50	3	30+1	J
SMG, Lg.*	6	4	50	3	32+1	T
Assault Rifle*	7	7	150	3	42+1	N
Shotgun, pump	6	8	20	3	8+1	T

Difficulty: The difficulty of a Dexterity + Firearms attack roll.

Damage: Roll a number of dice equal to this number to resolve damage (difficulty 6).

Range: This is medium range. This number is doubled for a long-range attack, at a difficulty of +1.

Rate: The maximum number of bullets or three-round bursts the gun can fire in a single turn. Rate does not apply to full-auto fire and sprays.

Clip: The number of bullets held in one clip. The "+1" indicates a bullet can also be held in the chamber, ready to fire.

Conceal: P = may be hidden in a pocket; J = may be hidden in a jacket, T = may be hidden in a trenchcoat or duster; and N = not concealable.

* These weapons are capable of three-round bursts, full-auto fire and sprays.

Brawling Table

Maneuver	Difficulty	Damage
Punch	6	Strength
Grapple	6	Strength
Kick	7	Strength +1
Body slam	7	Special; see Options
Bite*	5	Strength +2

* redcap (chimerical damage only)

EXAMPLE OF PLAY



Example of Play

Ian has just started his **Changeling** game. The players have just gathered for the latest chapter in the story. The characters are Emma (played by Jennifer), a satyr wilder, and Dorian (played by Ethan), a troll knight. During the last session, the group split apart while attempting to escape with the Masque of Dreams. Ian has decided to run the game in two different sessions until the motley regroups.

Since Ethan has stated that his character is looking out the window, Ian asks him to make a Perception roll to see if Dorian notices the sidhe knights' approach. Since the knights are not really making any attempt to hide themselves, Ian decides that the difficulty is only 4. Dorian has Perception (3) and Alertness (2) for a pool of five dice. Ethan rolls 2, 3, 4, 4, 6. Ian tells Ethan that he sees several sidhe knights approaching the cottage.



The sidhe knight must make an opposed Strength roll against Dorian in an attempt to get through the door. Ian rolls three dice (the sidhe knight's Strength) against a difficulty of 6 (Dorian's Strength). He rolls 3, 5, 6 earning only one success. Ethan smiles, knowing that he needs only one success to keep the sidhe out of the cottage.

Ethan now rolls six dice (Dorian's Strength) against a difficulty of 3 (the knight's Strength). Ethan rolls 2, 2, 4, 5, 6, 6 — enough to keep the door shut, but just barely! Ian announces that during this turn Thom has begun to draw a doorway on the wall of the cottage. He does not yet inform them that Thom has actually begun to perform a Bunk in an attempt to open the freehold's trod.


FORTUNATELY, THIS FREEHOLD HAS ITS OWN TROD... IF ONLY I CAN GET IT OPEN.
HURRY! THROUGH THE TROD!
ARRGHH!

Duke Dray tosses several leaves at the door of the cottage, enacting a quick Bunk for the casting of Holly Strike (Primal ••••). Ian determines that the final difficulty for the cantrip is 6 (throwing the leaves was only a level one Bunk, reducing the difficulty by one). After marking off the requisite cost in Glamour on Dray's character sheet, he rolls eight dice for Dray's Casting Pool. He rolls 3, 3, 5, 6, 6, 8, 9, 9 — for a total of five successes!

Ian decides that five successes is more than enough to completely destroy the wooden door.

At this point Ian declares that everyone must roll initiative. Ethan scores the most successes, and says that Dorian attacks one of the sidhe with his chimerical battle axe, but he splits his Dice Pool so as to be able to parry any later attacks. Ethan makes an attack roll using Dorian's Dexterity + Melee. He scores two successes for the attack, an easy hit. For damage he gets seven successes. Ian rolls soak dice for the sidhe knight, but gets no successes. That's going to hurt — the knight collapses to the ground, screaming in pain.

Thom completes the Bunk for his Wayfare casting. He manages to get four successes, opening a portal into the Near Dreaming. In an effort to protect Thom from the incoming knights, Jennifer says that Emma draws her chimerical dagger and stands ready to parry any attack.

The second knight jabs at Dorian. Ian rolls the knight's Dexterity + Melee and scores three successes. Ethan rolls Dorian's remaining dice for a parry and scores only one success — the knight's attack is a success. For damage Ian rolls an amazing seven successes!

Ethan makes a Soak roll for Dorian. Dorian has a Stamina of five and has two levels of armor for his chimerical chainmail, giving him a total of seven soak dice. Ethan rolls 2, 2, 3, 4, 4, 5, 8 — only one success! Unfortunately Dorian had taken one Health Level of damage in an earlier battle, so he is incapacitated.


DORIAN!
YOU CAN'T HELP HIM NOW! HE WILL BE FINE!
CURSES!
SURRENDER NOW, AND YE WILL NOT BE HARMED.
NOW THE REAL ADVENTURE BEGINS....

Because he has been Incapacitated by chimerical damage, Dorian reverts to his mortal seeming, now apparently unharmed but unconscious. Ethan refers to the *Mists Chart* to determine how long Dorian will remain unconscious. Since Dorian's Banality is 6, he will remain in a coma for at least a week.

Thom manages to win the initiative on the next turn, but Emma seems paralyzed by her friend's defeat (actually Jennifer botched her initiative roll for this turn and must go last). Ian decides that Thom will try to pull Emma through the portal with him. However, he gets only a single success, so Ian says that even though he is successful, both of them tumble to the ground. He also asks Jennifer to make a Dexterity roll to see if she holds onto the Masque and the dagger. She gets only one success, so Ian rules that she must drop one of the items — Jennifer chooses the dagger.



One of the sidhe knights steps through the portal, and, seeing the two apparently helpless on the ground, orders their surrender.

Taking advantage of the situation, Emma kicks at the knight. Jennifer states that she is only trying to knock the knight back through the portal and not do any damage. She gets four successes in her attack, which Ian judges to be enough to knock the sidhe back.


Tor
Fae
Brooch of
Honor
21
Glory
Nobility
12

Chapter Nine: Storytelling

This tale's a fragment from the life of dreams.
— Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Phantom or Fact?"

Once upon a time, when the world was young and dreams were new, the border between myth and reality was less clearly drawn. Before the cold light of logic "explained" the universe in rational, quantifiable terms, people stood awed and bewildered by the natural world and its creatures. Instead of science, they used stories to explain the cycles of the seasons, the alternating rhythm of day and night, the stark finality of death and the miracle of life. As children, we shared this sense of wonder at the world around us, making up our own reasons for why thunder and lightning happened, why trees lost their leaves in the fall and why the moon and stars looked so small. We believed in the stories told to us, whether they were fairy tales or religious parables. We dreamed and lived out our stories every day.

Later, as we grew older and learned the facts of life, the world grew less magical and wondrous. Darkness, nightmares and thunderstorms lost some of their terror and much of their grandeur.

Changeling is a storytelling game that allows you to tap into the roots of wonder and rediscover the world through the eyes of legend. Changelings are creatures of imagination swaddled in cloaks of flesh and blood, trapped in guises of their own making. Separated from their true lives in Arcadia, the Kithain are only occasionally able to taste the Glamour they once knew as the living embodiments of dreams. In many ways, the lost children of the fae are metaphors for our lost youth, and the World of Darkness mirrors the heartless society to which we are all so resigned.

By surrendering to the call of imagination, by daring to dream new stories, we can recapture some of our lost innocence. We can learn to laugh again, and to weep — for not all stories have happy endings — and most of all we can learn to remember. It is your job, as Storyteller, to guide the players along the path that lies between memory and forgetfulness, between dreams and reality, between wonder and Banality.

The Storyteller's Role

Throughout the ages the storyteller has been one of the most respected members of human society. Serving as the repository for tribal history and wisdom, the storyteller *remembered and told* tales of heroism and hardship that shaped the character of the tribe. Creation myths, stories of the gods and tales of great champions all served to instruct listeners in the values and practices of the society. They also served as entertainment.

The role of a **Changeling** Storyteller is more complex, though less controlling. Today's Storyteller expresses her art through storytelling *games*. She must design the plot, play the parts of others whom the characters meet and respond to whatever actions they take. However, the game's players also have a role in creating (and significantly changing the outcome of) the story. People have always responded well to stories that feature *them* as the heroes. They delight in hearing their names used and being asked what they want to do in certain situations.

In fact, Storyteller games take this one step beyond — once the scene has been set and the basic plot set in motion, it is up to the players to resolve how events turn out. From the bare bones of a story, players and Storyteller work together to create something new and potentially wondrous.

Maintaining Interest

You must understand your players as well as the characters they create. Some play to gain a sense of power; others game for the social aspects of being with friends. Many players use roleplaying as a means of wish fulfillment. Some prefer stories in which fighting deadly foes takes priority, while others like puzzles and riddles or the chance to use their wits to overcome tricky situations. Many players simply enjoy talking in character and engaging in political infighting or witty repartee. All of these different desires must be juggled and given some space in the game. Each player deserves time to do what she likes best. Luckily, it is fairly easy to accommodate all of these desires, and placing them at different points throughout the game strengthens the story and differentiates between scenes, making them more than ongoing series of fights or puzzles.

Fundamentally, it is your job as Storyteller to see that each player gets his share of attention. While many players are vocal and aggressive, some are shy or have difficulty putting their ideas into words. You should know your players well enough to step in and ease wary ones into the action, either by having their characters notice things that busier characters miss or by focusing a part of the story around information or special interests the quiet players' characters possess. A player who is not kept involved in the story quickly loses interest and either drops out of the game or, worse yet, remains in the game but says and does nothing. Boredom is the real-world Banality that can spell death for your stories.

Preparation

Even though the players help create the story when they play, they cannot create the background or people the story with characters to meet. The Storyteller must make preparations before running a game.

This doesn't mean that you should create an inflexible script that pushes characters in one direction and forces them to adhere to your preconceived story path. Rather, you should have an overall idea of the story that you want to tell and have several possible ways of responding to the characters' choices.

Sometimes — in fact, most of the time — the players will decide to do something so extraordinary that you never conceived of any storyline to cover such an eventuality. In such a case, you must roll with the punches and go in the newly unexpected direction (taking notes so you can analyze the possibilities later), either finding some way to return to the original plotline or saving it for later. Further thinking may reveal tie-ins that you would never have conceived on your own, but that strengthen the overall story. Players like to feel that their actions and decisions have a real impact on the game, and incorporating their ideas lets them know you are willing to give them control over their characters' destinies.

You also need to prepare Storyteller-controlled characters. Each character should be memorable for one reason or another — one has hair like Little Orphan Annie, another smacks her gum nonstop, the bald guy has a liver spot on his forehead, the other has aftershave that smells like pine trees. Players should get a sense that these characters are more than just cardboard cutouts.

Settings should be given as much life. Saying that the characters enter a dentist's waiting room is far less effective than describing the room's broken-down couch, the smell of disinfectant lingering in the air, and the high-pitched buzzing of the dentist's drill. The more evocative your descriptions are, the more believable the scenes and characters will be to the players. Unless you are a whiz at extemporaneous descriptions, this too takes preparation. It isn't that difficult, though it is best to write everything down and keep it on file. There is nothing more frustrating for players than to have their characters return to a place they know and be confronted with a totally different setting, inhabited by characters whose names have mysteriously changed.

Environment

Before beginning play, prepare the area where you will be playing. Make certain there are chairs for everyone, tables or other flat surfaces (for the rolling of dice), character sheets and sufficient light. If the session is scheduled to last more than an hour or so, refreshments might also be provided, though you may ask that consumption take place during a preset break. Nothing is more annoying than trying to set a mood while someone is rattling a bag of potato chips. Ideally, nothing in the environment should distract the players.

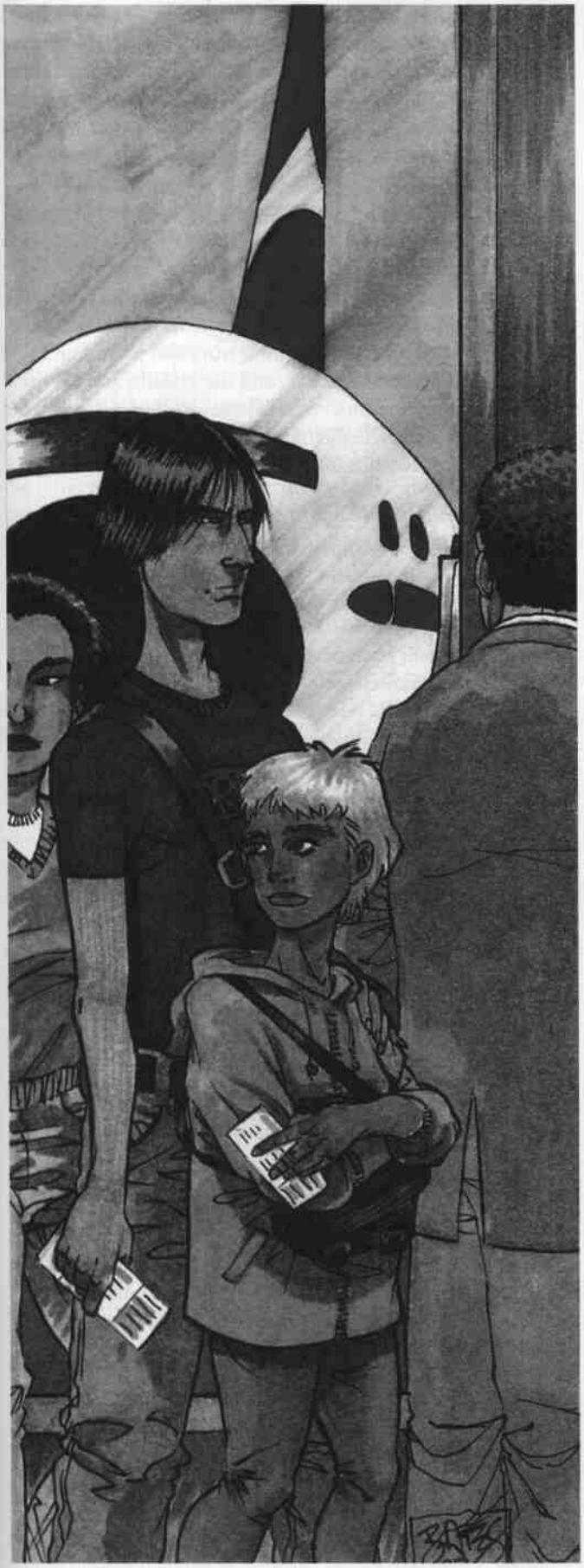
Aside from these mundane preparations, you should gather any props and reference materials that you'll need during the session. Also consider whether you'll need music, lighting changes or anything else to enhance the quality of the game. Establish some way of signaling that the story is beginning. Lighting a stick of incense or a candle, putting on an appropriate tape or CD, reading a poem or quote from a book, or simply saying, "And we begin...." can all be signals for the players to quiet down and give the game their undivided attention.

Story Ideas

At the source of the longest river
The voice of the hidden waterfall
And the children in the apple-tree
Not known, because not looked for
But heard, half-heard, in the stillness
Between two waves of the sea.

— T. S. Eliot, "Little Gidding," *Four Quartets*

There are hundreds of sources for story ideas. Books, plays, movies, television, fairy tales, news stories, overheard conversations — all of these can provide rich fodder for countless stories. Even old stand-by tales can be revamped and enjoyed. Rather than having a dragon kidnap the princess, have a psycho kidnap



someone's sister. Better still, let the character's sister disappear while traveling abroad. Tracking her down, the characters find that she's been kidnapped by a wilder duke, who adores her. How will they handle that? Rescue her, Rambo-style? Diplomacy? What does the sister think about all of this? And what if the kidnapper is Unseelie while the sister is Seelie, or what if she is only mortal kin who has been enchanted by him?

It is just as easy to take a setting as a plotline and use it to power the story idea. A story placed in a setting like that of the movie *Cliffhanger* would emphasize the difficulties of the terrain and weather, while one set aboard a cruise ship would raise problems with the passengers and the question of how to escape on the high seas.

Storyteller-controlled characters are another source of inspiration. Obviously, this is so when a great villain is involved (particularly a recurring one), but even nonthreatening characters can present obstacles to the characters. Perhaps the duchess doesn't care for pooka. How will the characters (who have two pooka among them) ever manage to persuade her to help them?

Finally, there are the heroes of the story themselves. Working from the characters' histories and backgrounds, you can create stories that are tailored to the characters and designed either to showcase their strong points or to play on their weaknesses. This can be one of the most rewarding sorts of stories, for it shows the players that you are paying attention to them. If one character is showcased in one story, however, subsequent stories should focus on someone else, thereby giving everyone a chance to shine.

Elements of Changeling

So the darkness shall be the light, and the stillness the dancing.
Whisper of running streams, and winter lightning.
The wild thyme unseen and the wild strawberry,
The laughter in the garden, echoed ecstasy
Not lost, but requiring, pointing to the agony
Of death and rebirth.

— T. S. Eliot, "East Coker," *Four Quartets*

As in any of the Storyteller games, **Changeling** has story elements that help define and enhance it. Many of these elements are woven into the background of the story being told, and often the players will not even realize consciously that these elements exist. Without them, however, the story lacks cohesion and direction, no matter how cleverly the plot itself is constructed, and you will miss the grandeur and depth they evoke.

Theme

Themes are unifying ideas around which stories may be built. Whether they are simple ones such as "we must all work together to survive," or complex, universal ones such as "rationality has killed the romance inherent in the human soul," themes provide anchors for the plotline and touchstones for the



characters. Thinking about different ways to express the theme in setting, events and characters can provide you with numerous storylines, plot twists and subplots.

There may be more than one theme in a story. Combining two or more similar themes can often bring them into sharper focus and give each greater resonance. Conversely, themes that seem to be working at cross-purposes may often strengthen one another through their juxtaposition. **Changeling**, as a whole, has several recurring themes: alienation from both the "untainted" fae and normal humans, walking a tightrope between the world of Banality and that of dreams, the wonder of imagination and the Dreaming (amazement, awe and sadness for its loss), the terrors and joys of creating dreams that take on substance, and the erosion and eventual death of childlike innocence. These are but a few of the themes inherent in the setting, yet each holds the possibility for dozens of other variants.

Isolation/Alienation

Changelings are orphans, exiles from Arcadia. Though born into human families, they are not human. They are beings of dream and nightmare, each born of a unique story. They live in an invisible world no human can see. No one understands them; many of them don't even understand themselves. Under Banality's relentless assault, they gradually lose touch with their faerie sides and forget who and what they truly are. Very few make it to adulthood, for Banality stalks them like the icy breath of winter — and because they are touched by Banality themselves, their true fae brethren see them as tainted and lesser beings.

Family

Because changelings do not remember their ties of kinship to other changelings, each is in some sense an orphan, without a true family. Each changeling must craft a family of kindred spirits. Fosterage — the adoption of a changeling into a faerie household — provides a substitute for a birth family, sometimes the only substitute. Other changelings form close ties through oathbonds.

The question of family is the fundamental question of childhood, thus it is a dominant theme of **Changeling**. How does a changeling relate to his human family? What kinds of problems arise among human families with changelings in their midst? It is possible that changelings may work even harder to promote harmony within their mortal families because of their sense of "difference." The dramas of the Greeks, the plays of Shakespeare and many modern works revolve around the dynamics of the family — one of the most powerful and universal themes of all.

Romance

Fairy tales and troubadour ballads abound with tales of true love and unrequited love — princes who awaken princesses with kisses, lovers who share enchanted fruit, and fairy queens who steal the hearts of mortal knights. Certainly **Changeling** reflects those stories. It is a world of epic legends, and romance is its

lifeblood. Courtly love has its place in changeling society, and a hopeful suitor might be set to a series of seemingly impossible tasks that he and his friends (the troupe) must fulfill to win his love's affections. No changeling lover ever accepts a suitor without demanding proof of that suitor's love. Great love stories have been interwoven through many of the most enduring tales (Arthur, Lancelot and Guinevere, or Tristan and Isolde), and including some aspect of these in a **Changeling** story may provide just the background needed to set the tone.

Wonder

When you think of changelings as children, everything begins to make sense. Children display a wide-eyed wonder and nonjudgmental acceptance of the most unbelievable things. Anything and everything is possible to a child: Santa Claus and his reindeer fly through the winter sky bringing presents to good boys and girls, daddy is going to win a kajillion dollars in the lottery, Bethie is really a princess in disguise, and that little brown acorn is actually a best friend named Terwillikin. All children share an innocent hope and belief that they are really immortal and that wishing on a star can make anything happen. Changelings do too. Their world is peopled with fantastic beings, including themselves. They can create chimera out of their imagination, and their dreams take shape and become real. Changelings *are* immortal, though their human bodies age and die, and wishing on a star just might be the key to unlocking ever more fantastic delights.

Nightmares

No fairy tale would be complete without a terrible foe or magical beast for the heroes to battle. Just as changelings can create fabulous and marvelous chimera, so can their darker emotions and dreams escape their control and run amok. Though these creations might have no substance in the real world, they can harm changelings and send them reeling back into the protective clutches of Banality. And sometimes the foe is not chimerical — powerful changeling enemies may oppose the characters, or worse, Banality may be creeping upon them in far less fantastic (but far more deadly) forms, such as incarceration in a mental institution.

Freedom/Wildness

Changelings are spontaneous beings. Many are primitive and wild. They are creative, given to new ideas (how could they not be when each is to some degree the physical representation of a dream?), but while they often promote beauty and freedom, they can as often be wildly destructive and potentially harmful. Some changelings don't know the difference between the two extremes, but like selfish children serve their own whims at others' expense.

Madness

What happens to changelings who never discover their true heritage? Worse still, what if they or someone close to them believes them mad? After all, nobody else can see the things they do; nobody else is chased from the house by their own nightmares. How else can you define insanity?

When changelings forget what they are, or fall so far into Banality that they have difficulty reasserting their faerie natures, madness is a logical explanation to them. In a world where no one believes in the truth of their existence and where all the most wondrous things are ephemeral, how can anyone retain her sanity?

Humor

Changeling stories should never be unrelentingly serious and dark. Lusty satyrs, lying pooka and nasty redcaps all have as great a role to play as the most genteel sidhe, and interactions among commoners and nobles can lead to hours of amusement. Think of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with its gleeful pranks, and you have a pretty good idea of faerie humor. Of course, in the hands of certain kinds of changelings, humor can be quite vicious. Imagine Kevin, the child from *Home Alone*, as a redcap.

Mood(s)

We're the mystery of the lake when the water's still.
We're the laughter in the twilight,
You can hear behind the hill.
We'll stay around to watch you laugh,
Destroy yourselves for fun.
But you won't see us, we've grown sideways to the sun.

— Horslips, "Sideways to the Sun"

The mood of a **Changeling** story is a combination of setting, ambiance, presentation and situation that evokes an emotional response in the players. It may be merry and carefree, dark and brooding, ominous or bawdy. In many ways, the mood and theme work together, one serving to anchor the other.

The nature of the mood is often subordinate to how it is used. A tale of whimsical tricks and pranks would be ill-served by a mood of somber sadness, and a story of desperate pursuit racing against a time limit would not work if set in a mood of mirthful slapstick.

It is best to set the mood from the very start, either through music, lighting or tone of voice. Playing a lively song might cue the players that the story will be fast-paced and light-hearted. Lighting a candle and incense, striking a bell or intoning a solemn chant could serve to begin the session and let the players know that the mood is serious and mystical.

Maintaining the mood can be harder than establishing it. Some players invariably try to break a serious or scary mood by joking or talking out of character. Many such players are actually embarrassed at their own emotional responses, and are trying to make light of them. Concentration on the mood and a refusal to break the tension can sometimes bring such players back into the story. If all else fails, just ignore the player's outburst and keep going. Players who are involved in the story and mature enough to appreciate the power of mood will work to keep it intact.

Suspension of Disbelief

Players must immerse themselves in the story without feeling foolish or self-conscious. They must also believe in the details of the story being told. This doesn't mean they must literally believe that giants exist, but only that they must be willing to suspend their disbelief for a time. Thus, you must create and evoke a believable world and then draw your players into it.

Changelings do not exist purely in mundane reality — they also exist in places that are free from the constraints of normalcy and Banality. They interact with amazing beasts born of dreaming and shaped in fantastic and horrific ways. Faerie freeholds and chimera are places and beings made from dreams. It is essential that you use great care in describing these places, for dream creatures and dream weapons are as real and solid to changelings as any car or skyscraper. Players must accept the reality of chimera and faerie Glamour in order to experience the full depth of fae existence. It is up to you to make it real to them.

One of the best ways to do so is to use all the senses when describing the scene. Though we tend to get most of our information through visual cues, other sensory input is crucial to making something feel real. Describe the warm, luxurious feel of a changeling's fine velvet cloak; the cold, constricting touch of his chainmail; or the icy chill of Banality pouring forth from a cold iron weapon. Emphasize the birdsongs on a lazy, sunny day or the strange rustling in the underbrush. Tempt the players with the thought of tasting lemon sherbet or the salt spray from the ocean. Try to make them smell freshly baked bread or the stench of the wounded and dying. Better still, bring a piece of velvet or a feather to the game and pass it around, play an environmental tape softly in the background, light some incense or bring a carton of lemon sherbet to the gaming session.

Conflict

The heart of any story is conflict. No one cares about a story in which a girl walks to the store and buys a loaf of bread. However, if she is a starving orphan trying to feed two younger siblings and she makes her way through a snowstorm despite her broken leg, the story is more likely to hold our attention. Conflict does not necessarily imply combat; it simply means that there are obstacles to be overcome. In **Changeling**, many different kinds of conflict are possible. Some of these are:

Seelie vs. Unseelie: This is the classic dichotomy of the fae — the essential, fundamental battle. The conflict might be between opposing courts or an inner struggle to assert one's dominant nature over one's unconscious nature.

Changeling vs. Mortal: This conflict might be the battle between the changeling's faerie and human sides; alternatively, it might involve conflict with Banality-infected mortals or hunters seeking fae trophies.

Changeling vs. Vampire: Changelings believe that vampires are the descendants of a bloodthirsty, mad faerie. As half-living/half-dead beings, they are repositories of Banality and have forgotten their faerie origins. They are seen as traitors and dangerous foes.

Changeling vs. Werewolf: Werewolves are believed to be a race of changelings, and though they have left the company of their brethren, they are always welcome back. Because of their ferocious battle against the darkness, however, they have been struck by Banality and are divorced from the Dreaming. Werewolves and changelings occasionally compete for wild areas.

Changeling vs. Mage: A few mages were once changelings themselves, but have become lost in their own paradigm. Some mages are friendly toward changelings; others want to harm them, destroy them or experiment upon them.

Changeling vs. Wraith: Once changelings could bring the souls of dead artists to the Dreaming and let them go on creating after death. Now the realm of the dead is a closed and terrifying place. Who knows what strange plans the legions of the dead might have?

Grump vs. Wilder vs. Childling vs. Themselves: The generation gap is keenly felt even among the fae. Grumps are responsible and trusted, though filled with Banality. They see wilders and childlings as irresponsible and untrustworthy. Wilders have begun to taste Banality and feel the beginnings of the aging process. They struggle to maintain their youth and beauty, battling wildly against grumpdom and resenting the freedom and innocence of childlings. Childlings resent the control their human (and sometimes faerie) parents exert over them. Each group has its goals and desires, and these can conflict sharply.

Each group is also prone to internecine feuds. Some changelings may even be at war with themselves, hating their mortal seemings or recessive Legacies.

House vs. House: Though the sidhe are powerful, they do not always get along. Many resent House Gwydion's arrogance, and some believe House Liam ought to be eradicated altogether. Lesser families with ties to the noble houses squabble more than their patrons over rank and privilege.

Noble vs. Commoner: Many commoners see the sidhe as outdated, unnecessary busybodies. For their part, the nobles hardly know what to do with common faeries who no longer know their proper place in society, but instead insist on something called democracy!

Ravagers vs. Muses: Many changelings believe that there will always be more Glamour to be had. These changelings, known as Ravagers, are despised by those who believe that Glamour is gradually disappearing from this world. At some point in their lives, however, most changelings find that they must Ravage in an emergency situation. How does one deal with such need?

Changelings vs. Banality: One of the main occupations of changelings is keeping Banality at bay. Autumn People serve Banality without knowing it, while Dauntain actively hunt changelings (whether they recognize them as such or not).

Changeling Chronicles and the Hero's Journey

In **Changeling**, you are telling a grand story, an epic story that should be filled with mythic resonance and wild adventure. One

way you can imbue your stories with this kind of epic feel is by understanding mythic structure. Although there are certainly many ways to put together a rousing story, it is difficult to do so unless you know the way that myths are usually constructed.

One kind of myth structure is called "the Hero's Journey," and is an archetype for many adventure and fantasy stories. Even if you don't force a story through a specific sequence in the Hero's Journey, you can pick and choose elements from it and thus enrich your game.

The Hero's Journey is easier to understand if you think of it not as a single specific story, but as an archetype for a story. If you are just starting out storytelling, you may want to try creating a very basic chronicle based very specifically on the Hero's Journey. A strict structure will keep you focused and keep your players interested, as they feel the age-old excitement and power of the myth.

The Hero's Journey has 12 stages, which, though they traditionally fall in a specific order, may be arranged any way that seems appropriate to you as a Storyteller.

1. The Ordinary World

Our heroes (Elharn, Vivianne and Gavin) are found in their Ordinary World: a local bar. The night is boring, things are stable, nothing much is going on. Little do they know that things are about to change. The bar closes, and they make their way home.

Description: The mundane world and Banality are perfect for highlighting this stage. Certainly, changelings must regularly return to the Ordinary World whether they like it or not. It is important to establish the Ordinary World, thus providing contrast to the magical world of fae wonder in which changelings will be participating.

Suggestions: Set this stage in a home, a workplace, anywhere that's calm, boring, secure. Of course, if the character is strange, let his "Ordinary World" also be strange. A character's prelude is very, very important when establishing his Ordinary World.

2. The Call to Adventure

Suddenly, a group of Unseelie attack! Black arrows fly everywhere, but before the characters can respond, the Unseelie bowmen are gone. Why did they attack? What's going on?

Description: Suddenly, something happens to warn the characters that things will never be the same again. A new element enters the story, and the characters realize that their Ordinary World is no longer insulated from reality and change. The king orders them to investigate something; one of their friends is kidnapped; an ancient treasure is found.

Suggestions: A Call to Adventure should be something that very clearly and simply involves the characters. This is crucial if you want to get them into the story. The Call to Adventure can be subtle, but should always be noticeable.

3. The Refusal of the Call

"Shouldn't we go tell the duke about this?" Elharn asks. "Nah, let's not get involved. Besides, it's dangerous," Gavin says. "Let's get



out of here!" Vivianne says, running. The characters flee back to the safety of their apartment.

Description: Even though the Call to Adventure has been made, our heroes are reticent to leave the Ordinary World. They refuse, turning away from their destiny. But only for a time — their destiny awaits them in the form of a mentor.

Suggestions: This stage largely depends on the characters' own reactions. Still, you may voice the refusal through Storyteller characters. Of course, another kind of Refusal of the Call is to denigrate what's going on: "Gee, that's not really too bad. What's the problem?"

4. Meeting with the Mentor

The old eshu Gregory waits for them in the darkness of their apartment. Though Unseelie, the wizened grump is highly respected. "You wilders don't understand what you're involved with, do you?" he says, moving through the room, staring at the heroes one by one with his midnight eyes. "The Thunder Lords have targeted you for destruction."

"What have we done to them?" Vivianne asks.

Gregory's voice rolls out of the darkness: "Why, my friends, it is not what you have done, it's what you will do that concerns the Lords." He pulls his cloak tightly around him. "They have foreseen your destiny, and it pleases them not...."

Description: A mentor appears to explain the Call to Adventure and set the characters on their journey. The mentor character is usually older and wiser or more powerful than the characters, although this does not have to be the case. A mentor is someone who helps the characters learn their new standing now that the Call has taken place. A mentor may even be a thing: a book, a map, a treasure — anything that helps the characters along and sets them on the path to adventure.

Suggestions: Fight the urge to give away a lot of the plot through the mentor. Mentors are their own characters — frequently they are heroes who have already made their own personal journey. Although mentors will occasionally accompany the heroes into the story, they will frequently vanish without warning. Do not let the characters turn the mentor into a crutch. The character is a facilitator, but shouldn't do the players' thinking for them.

5. Crossing the First Threshold

It is late at night. The chain on the door to the warehouse parts easily with pair of bolt-cutters. "Are you sure about this?" Gavin asks.

"Sure about it? Hell, I'm not sure I should even be here. But we have to find out what the Thunder Lords have planned," Vivianne whispers.

They step quietly into the old warehouse. Crossing to a stack of crates, they make their way around them, following the dim light of the EXIT sign in the far left corner. A tiny penlight flashes on in Gavin's hand. "Look at all these boxes of gardening equipment. I thought you said—," Gavin begins. Vivianne scoffs, "Heh! Garden equipment? Yeah, right. Look at this!" She places the Stone of Opening on the cratetop, and the wood creaks as the nails loosen and the top comes free.

"Just as I thought," Vivianne says, barely suppressing a shiver as she senses what is within. Gavin's penlight shines down on the flinty reflection in the box.

Elharn curses under his breath. "Cold iron swords! This time the Shadow Court's gone too far."

The lights in the warehouse suddenly flare on, illuminating every shadow. A man — no, Kithain, definitely — in a black trenchcoat steps forward. As he does so, the three heroes hear the click of three crossbows, strung and cocked, a second before three more Kithain surround them on all sides.

The Kithain in the trenchcoat smiles wickedly at his captured prey. "Greetings, and welcome to my humble abode. Unfortunately I cannot ask you to stay for hospitality...."

Description: Crossing the First Threshold is the entrance into the Special World, the part of the story where things start to get strange and dangerous and remain that way until the characters leave the Special World in Stage 10, the Road Back. Clearly the characters can no longer return to their quiet, private lives. Now they must confront the Guardian of the Threshold, a character who represents the danger they face. They must defeat the Guardian, or circumvent him, to continue. For the first time the characters must confront the fear they sensed in the Refusal of the Call and move through that fear to the Special World.

Suggestions: This is a stage where many Storytellers feel the need to threaten the characters. Resist the urge to threaten them so much that they die. Still, you can go quite a fair way toward endangering them and then offer an escape route should they near death. It is a good idea to use the First Threshold as a means of introducing either the central antagonist or her plans — if nothing else, it should foreshadow the kinds of conflict to come.

6. Tests, Allies, Enemies

At the Toybox Cafe, the characters relax. "Good job getting us out of there, Viv," Gavin says, still rubbing the wound where the cold iron bit him. Vivianne nods. "I'm worried that the Thunder Lords are going to try to stage an assassination — what if they go after Duke Aeon?" she says quietly. "We need to find more about them. I wish we could get data on that truck they escaped in," Elharn adds.

"You kids, don't you know anything about operational security?" grumbles a troll in the corner. He is obviously an old one, a grump, wearing a ratty old Army coat. Stepping over to their table, the immense Kithain extends his hand to Elharn, who shakes it firmly. "M'name's Tor. You may have heard of me. You folks shouldn't oughta be talkin' 'bout the Lords here — this is near their turf and, well, the walls have ears. Why don't you meet me in the park in 20 minutes? Make sure you're not followed," Tor says, quietly and evenly. He smiles at Elharn and, without another word, exits the Toybox as unobtrusively as he came in.

Description: This phase sees the characters gaining new information about their journey, finding new friends, falling into crises and generally getting into trouble. This is the longest stage of the 12. Care should be taken to give tests, allies and enemies a structure of their own. It's a good idea to set this phase

in a bar or open area to take advantage of the wealth of character interaction opportunities. Your job as Storyteller in this phase is to educate the characters about the Special World they've entered, introduce them to the players of the story (if that hasn't yet happened) and give them an inkling of what's to come.

Suggestions: This is the stage where you can bring in the character's Backgrounds, especially Backgrounds like Contacts, Retinue, Dreamers, Resources, Mentor and Gremayre. You should challenge the characters, present enemies and give them the allies they need during this phase. The characters should obtain more and more information about the story and learn of the impending crisis.

7. Approach to the Inmost Cave

"I've got a bad feeling about this," Gavin whispers. Vivianne scoffs, "Please, you sound like a bad pulp fiction novel. Keep quiet. Remember what Tor said — this place is swarming with chimera!" The characters make their way through the dark redwood forest, toward the hidden Unseelie fortress there. Little do they know that they are watched by numerous dark eyes in the trees, eyes that report back to the Thunder Lords themselves.

"What's the name of this Unseelie lord who lives here?" Gavin asks. Elharn rumbles, "Blackthorne. He is said to have a personal harpy chimera who serves him." "A harpy?" Gavin asks querulously. "Gee, I'll just go get a beer and wait for you guys, okay?"

Description: Your characters finally understand what they need to accomplish. They have found all the pieces of the puzzle during the previous stages (especially Stage Six); now they just need to put the puzzle together and act on it. In this stage, they prepare to descend into the Underworld, the belly of the beast, the Inmost Cave, where their very souls will be tested. Unlike the First Threshold, this is a very real danger that lies in front of them.

Suggestion: This stage shouldn't be too foreboding or heavy-handed, or the tension you are trying to build will be lost. During this phase, you play on the characters' fears once again, trying to get them to realize that this is the major focus of all that has come before. If the characters aren't concerned at this point, they are either foolish or you haven't done your job building the tension.

8. The Supreme Ordeal

"You should've stayed in your own fief, Sir Knight!" Blackthorne sneers from behind his great helm-mask. The black sword in his hand glows with an unearthly radiance. "My loyalty to Duke Aeon is unquestioned! I will not allow someone to plot his doom!" Elharn shouts, struggling to parry the great Unseelie lord's blows. Vivianne watches from the sidelines as, seemingly in slow motion, Blackthorne penetrates Elharn's defenses and thrusts five feet of black chimerical steel into Elharn's breastplate. "Foolish boy, Duke Aeon is as good as dead. Already I have placed a dagger at his heart — have you've met his newest personal guard? It is only a matter of time before cold iron pierces that bastard Aeon's heart," Blackthorne gloats.

Description: This stage is the downbeat, depressing part. This is when the heroes have seemingly lost all. The characters face their greatest enemy, their worst failing, and do not succeed. They are struck down, cut off, lost. Even if it is only a symbolic death, the characters must "bottom out" and face the greatest darkness.

Suggestions: This can be a very depressing time for your players. Make sure that you don't torture them too long with it. However, remember that the bleaker you make the Supreme Ordeal, the more exciting and triumphant the last few phases will be.

9. The Reward

"Well, Blackthorne, you've defeated a new knight. Are you ready to fight an old man-at-arms?" Tor asks, stepping from the shadows and bringing his huge battle-axe to bear. "Why, Sir Tor, what a remarkable surprise. What brings you here?" Blackthorne says, his voice not at all pleasant. "I am here as a witness, a witness to your treachery. You are undone, dark lord," Tor rumbles. "I'm afraid it is you who are undone, Tor," Blackthorne counters. "My crossbowmen are aiming at your heart even as we speak."

"Call them off, Blackthorne!" Vivianne growls, pressing a cold iron dagger to the knight's back. She smiles as he freezes and lifts his hands slowly into the air, motioning the black-liveried crossbowmen to withdraw.

Description: Your characters have hunted the enemy into his lair, faced death, and lived to tell about it. They gain vital pieces of information or actual treasures that will help them complete the story. Although the heroes have not yet completely won, all is not lost, and they are now closer than ever to achieving their goal.

Suggestions: Don't dawdle in this stage; you want the players to continue on to one of the most exciting stages: the Road Back. If you hang out in the rosy glow of the Reward for too long, you will find your story's momentum slowing and your players becoming bored.

10. The Road Back

"I can't believe he let us get away," Elharn says. "He didn't let us get away. Don't forget his great ravens. They're somewhere in the forest," Gavin says worriedly. "Take it easy, Elharn," Vivianne clucks. "Give the Heather Balm time to work."

"My truck is parked over in those trees, if we can make it," Tor says, coming up behind them. Then, suddenly, all around them, hundreds of cawing ravens swoop down in a swarm.

"Run!" Gavin yells, diving for some underbrush.

Description: The Road Back takes place after the characters' central assault on the antagonist. They still haven't won — they're rushing toward the ultimate climax of the story. Usually the Road Back is fraught with danger.

Suggestions: Keep the pace moving on this one — make it exciting. There should be movement, a stressful, adrenalin-filled chase. Don't let this part get bogged down with combat — that will kill your story's momentum.

11. The Final Threshold

"And so you see, Your Grace, Lord Blackthorne has been plotting your demise for many weeks now," Tor says, his new charges standing next to him.



The duke leans forward, his blond locks falling around his face. "And how was this to take place?" he asks quietly.

"If it please Your Grace," Vivianne begins, "there is reason to suspect the newest member of your personal guard—"

"I see. Have Corain brought to me immediately!" the duke orders.

From above the hall, on the balcony, comes a reply: "No need, Your Grace. I am already here. Now, if everyone would please step away from His Grace. There is no need for anyone else to get hurt." A sidhe by his look, Corain has the eyes of a cold-blooded murderer. In his hands is a carefully cradled three-shot crossbow, its quarrels tipped with cold iron.

Description: Even though the characters have come this far and are almost near the end of their story, they must once more come face-to-face with death and overcome it. They must be threatened, purified by the final risk, the final danger. The "final scare" common to many horror movies exemplifies this stage. After this, they are "resurrected" — the changes that the story has wrought upon them become clear.

Suggestion: This is the climax of the story, so play it up. Your players should be on the edge of their seats. You have worked hard to get here, and you should enjoy the momentum of the story you've created.

12. The Return

"And so, in recognition of your protection of the person of His Grace and the sniffing out of the vipers who would bring ruin to this court, I am pleased to announce that you three are to be initiated into the Order of the Silver Lion, for conspicuous valor in the service of Duke Aeon. May he always have such protectors!" Lady Alyssa, the chamberlain, proclaims in open court. There is a great cheer, especially from the commoners, as the three go forward to accept their tokens of honor.

Afterward, Tor brings them all aside. "The Shadow Court is growing more and more powerful. I had not understood this until today. Although the duke still ridicules it and thinks its members buffoons, I think we have seen differently," Tor says softly to them, lest they be overheard.

"What can we do?" Vivianne asks, fingering the silver brooch that she now wears as a cloakpin. "There is but one thing to do, milady Vivianne," Elharn grumbles. "We must clearly stand against this new threat. We must do whatever we can. We must stand fast against the Shadow Court, wherever its power grows strong."

"Just as long as we don't have to go near those damn ravens again! Geez!" Gavin chimes in. The other three share a quiet laugh as the musicians strike up an air in the dance hall.

Description: The adventure is over, and yet there must be a denouement. Rewards and recognition need to be given. Most importantly, however, the characters need to realize how they have changed and what they have accomplished. As well, you need to establish the foundation for another story in ending this one.

Suggestions: This is actually a crucial point, so don't relax just yet. Enjoy the moment, but remember that you must tie up all of your plotlines and provide a satisfying resolution. Celebrations are common in some stories, but you can still have a downbeat ending if the story demands it. Let the story unfold naturally.

Some Final Advice on Using the Hero's Journey

First of all, don't cling to the structure. Don't be too obvious when you're using it. Mix it up a little, or a lot. Use the Hero's Journey as a tool, not as a crutch. If you blindly follow its structure from point to point, your story will seem hollow and unfulfilled.

On the other hand, get to know the structure well. Look at popular movies and analyze their structure in terms of the Hero's Journey. Movies like *Star Wars* and *The Wizard of Oz* are very clearly modeled on this structure.

Finally, simply recognize that all stories do have a structure of one kind or another. When you stop just throwing together encounters and actually create a coherent story using a structure, you encourage your players to respond emotionally and *build their expectations for the next story you tell.*

Story Concepts

These are a few ideas for stories. Not all of them will suit every group, but feel free to experiment with them to achieve the ends you desire.

• In The Shadow of the King

Every noble has a "tail": a retinue of courtiers, knights, servants and sycophants. This retinue is a hotbed of intrigue. In this story concept your characters become immersed in the backstabbing and social machinations of the court. Is murder in the offing? Noble characters have an obvious edge, but commoners (because of their social invisibility) have a different sort of advantage.

• The Lost Ones

A community of changelings has not been heard from in some time, and your lord requests that the characters stop by to see what's up. It may be nothing — they may just be busy — but when has that ever been so? The Escheat demands that changelings be retrieved if they are lost. What will your characters do to get the community back?

• A Pooka's Request

A respected pooka shows up at the characters' freehold, offering great treasure and glory to any who care to throw in with him. What follows is a far-ranging quest for a chimera the pooka swears holds the answer to a riddle he's been trying to answer for years. Do you dare trust such an untrustworthy mentor?

• Childling Found

A new changeling has been found — a childling born to very strict parents. She may even be abused by her family. Is it right to take the child from her kin — and if she is taken, who will take care of her? What of the giant paulag cat chimera who guards her and won't let anyone come near?

• A Sword of Ill Substance

The characters stumble upon a shipment of cold iron in an Unseelie motley's part of the city. Do they steal the shipment, leave it where it is, or fetch one of the Seelie nobles?

• The Search for Inspiration

The characters, on the lookout for new sources of Glamour, find an artist or performer to muse. Nurturing talent isn't always as easy as it sounds. Several problems could occur, from drug dependency to money problems to marital strife to falling prey to Ravagers. The characters must somehow preserve and inspire their artist, either directly or indirectly.

• A-Ravaging We Will Go

Even the most scrupulously fair and caring changeling occasionally finds herself in need of a quick fix of Glamour. Ravaging is often the only answer. This can be a quick-and-dirty swipe job (leaving the characters feeling guilty) or a joyous bust-out party where everyone has a blast and the victims wake up with headaches and a temporary increase in Banality.

• Righting Wrongs, Battling Beasties

The quintessential fairy tale or hero's quest may be unabashedly offered for an evening's entertainment. Whether rescuing a damsel in distress (imagine combining **Changeling** with elements from the film *Speed*) or rounding up stray chimera that have broken loose from the characters' dreams (oops!), this one is for action fans.

• Defending the Homefront

In this story, the characters must defend a faerie freehold or trod from attackers. This could involve a straightforward battle or might become a battle of wits against city planners bent on bulldozing the area. For a true threat, have the usurpers be wily vampires or mages.

• Mysterious Happenings

The characters must investigate a mysterious disappearance — either of a person or object — and hopefully retrieve whoever or whatever is lost. Another changeling may have taken the object of their quest; alternatively, a normal human may have made off with a powerful and potentially dangerous artifact that he thought was a mundane item. Dauntain may have kidnapped another changeling to question her about her friends. The characters must recover the missing person or item before irreparable harm is done.

• Summoned to Court

The characters are summoned to a festival at the Seelie (or Unseelie) Court. Proper dress is expected, though they are allowed to bring their Harleys for the chimerical jousting. Naturally, none of them knew until this morning that the festival is a birthday celebration for the duke. Where do you get a present for a guy who can create whatever he wants out of thin air?

Chronicles

A chronicle is really nothing more than a series of interconnected stories that tell a larger tale. Each story within the chronicle tells a part of the tale, but the stories all taken together make up the greater story. Just as with each story, the chronicle should have an overall theme and mood, the characters should remain consistent, the antagonists should be clearly defined (though not necessarily obvious at first), the setting described and the projected beginning, middle and end outlined.

It isn't necessary to plot out every story in the chronicle or cover every eventuality. In fact, it is better to leave a lot of the

A Quick Word About Antagonists

One of the most effective methods to make stories memorable is to create great villains for the characters to battle. But not all antagonists are villains. Many are simply people who have differing goals or beliefs; some are misled by circumstances or poor leaders. Real villains should be few and far between; even in fairy tales, which revel in symbolism and strict interpretations of good and evil, things are not always purely black and white.

When you do create an actual dyed-in-the-wool, black-hearted scoundrel, you should remember that the best villains rarely think of themselves as such. They have reasons for what they do and are the heroes of their own stories (twisted as those might be). A madman bent on worldwide destruction "just because" is not interesting; a madman who wants to destroy the world because he believes it's the only way to bring back the Dreaming is far more compelling and believable. He should also be quite cunning and operate logically (such as his logic may be) to achieve his goals and defeat his opponents.

middle ground fairly hazy, giving the players room to add their ideas and deviate from the plot. As the stories unfold, you can incorporate new elements into the overall design and strengthen the original concept. Chronicles should allow for deviations from the course — you can always rope the characters back into the main tale during the next session.

As the stories progress, however, it is important that they become broader and broader in scope, with tougher villains, more dastardly plots, grander settings and ever more vital goals. Each story should be more compelling than the last, as the characters move toward solving the final puzzle or overcoming the final obstacle, and their actions should have greater significance. The main issues raised by the chronicle must be dealt with in some fashion, though less immediately important subplots can be left unresolved to serve as starting places for new adventures.

Chronicle Concepts

Like the story concepts given above, these are just a few ideas to get the Storyteller started. They are broader categories because they represent ongoing stories rather than one- or two-session adventures. Each may suggest other ideas for variant chronicles.

• The Saining

The characters discover that they are changelings. How does this affect their lives? What changes will they make? This kind of story is best for a first chronicle. It should begin with a prelude in which each character discovers (or at least suspects) her true nature. The chronicle may follow the characters through the discovery of their true natures, the search for others of their kind, and their tutelage under the local ruler's watchful eye.

• Intrigue

With so many possible factions (both at court and away from it), there are numerous opportunities for intrigue. Intrigue need be neither epic nor villainous in nature; it might merely be the petty maneuverings of court toadies and flunkies. The characters might be used as pawns in the schemes of one or more rival factions, or they might turn the tables on the ambitious courtiers and expose them for the plotters they are. Honor is very important in changeling society, and exposing a traitor or self-serving individual could also involve defending a lady's honor, engaging in duels or carrying sensitive documents from one location to another. Possibilities for stories abound.

• The Quest

Many good tales are stories of epic quests — for a particular item or place, to discover a forgotten bit of knowledge, or to find a certain person. Usually, but not always, there is some sort of time limit involved (the heroes must make it to the Armageddon Bell before the stroke of midnight on December 31st or all is lost), and a number of obstacles or conflicts are placed in the heroes' way. The characters need not realize at the start that they are engaged in an epic quest; many such stories start small (old Bilbo gets a trinket from Gollum and passes it on to Frodo).

• *The Long Autumn*

This chronicle could evolve in a number of different ways. Perhaps the characters are older changelings, weighed down by Banality and longing for renewed vigor and innocence. Is there some substance or magical item that can restore their Glamour and erase their acquired Banality? What about the creeping tide of Banality that is slowly eroding all Glamour in the world? Can the characters overcome their own slide into forgetfulness long enough to reverse the tide and bring real Glamour back into the world?

• Tending the Seeds

As crime increases, taxes inflate and welfare benefits vanish, the characters' home city becomes a brutal hellhole of despair. Glamour begins to dry up, and even the freeholds' balefires flicker and ebb. Banality rises to an all-time high. Is this the Last Winter of the legends? Or is there hope for this Glamour-starved city? Your characters must rise above their apathy to help inspire creation, imagination and merriment, or risk losing their precious freeholds.

• A Call to Arms/The Peasants are Revolting

This dual chronicle can be played with two groups. One group plays a band of commoners, the other a band of nobles. The commoners have decided that the nobles aren't fit to rule the Kithain and must therefore be removed from power. The nobles, ever interested in retaining their rightful power and sovereignty, have decided to react with force. Both groups fall into open conflict, usually spilling over into physical violence. One Storyteller can coordinate things between the groups, although it's best to have two or maybe even three Storytellers keeping track of events in both chronicles. Is it possible to find some middle ground and thus reestablish peace? Or are the two sides going to bash it out to the death?

• **The Court of Love**

It's springtime and the entire court is filled with the strains of romantic love. Love affairs form, resolve, are interrupted, broken and renewed. Soon politics are interwoven with desire and love, knotting into a complicated tangle that no one *fully understands.*

• **The Mirror Crack'd**

A giant magic mirror hanging in the liege's treasure chamber has mysteriously shattered. All of the pieces of the mirror, except one, have disappeared. The court treasurer explains that the mirror contained 100 special dream-worlds. After a little experimentation, the characters discover that their mirror-shard enables them to travel into some of these dream-realms to hunt for other "exits" — which should theoretically be located at places where other mirror-fragments exist. Of course, then the characters have to negotiate each shard's return, but that's up to them. Each dream-realm is more exciting and strange than the last.

Ending a Chronicle

All stories must come to an end. Wrapping up a chronicle, particularly one that has lasted for months — or even years — requires a special touch to make it memorable and satisfying for all. The conclusion of a book or a film usually involves a significant confrontation (sometimes, but not always, a battle) with the fundamental source of conflict, resulting in either victory or defeat. Besides providing a convenient resolution, this "final conflict" also serves as a catharsis in which the emotions and tensions that have built up over the course of the chronicle are finally released.

Unlike faery tales, which end with the phrase "and they lived happily ever after," a chronicle does not always end so fortuitously. In the World of Darkness, there is always a sense that the enemy has not been entirely defeated. For changelings, the constant threat of Banality casts a pall on even the happiest occasion and dampens the greatest victory with its miasmic presence.

The players should be left with a very real sense of accomplishment and satisfaction while keeping open the possibility that some loose ends still exist. This can be done through a series of denouements, or winding-down sessions, in which characters finally have the leisure to consider their future. Will they stay in touch with the friends and allies they have met during the chronicle? Have romances blossomed between characters, and will these liaisons wither when excitement no longer fuels their passions? Will some characters be lost to Banality for a time?

Often, after a chronicle has ended, it is helpful for you to sit down with your players and discuss the aftermath. If the players wish to continue watching their characters develop, they may have some ideas for new chronicles that can spring from the glowing embers of the old chronicle's finale. You may wish to take your turn as a player, creating a character to fit in with the troupe and giving another player the opportunity to act as Storyteller.

Although melancholy always surrounds the end of a chronicle, it helps to remember that no story ever truly ends. Each story simply forms the background for a new story. The stock ending for fairy tales should really be "they lived happily ever after until...."

Advanced Techniques

Some people say that he's a fiend,
A devil in disguise,
He'll promise love and happiness,
Bright lights before your eyes,
And still you know you can't refuse,
No matter what you think.
You just got to taste the glamour,
Ovations as you sink.

— Horslips, "Ride to Hell"

The following techniques are for those troupes who enjoy more complex stories. They are particularly useful in **Changeling**, where dreams become reality and otherworldly magics and fantastic beasts are the norm. If used correctly (and sparingly), these techniques allow the creation of stories that no participant will ever forget.

Dreams

When using this technique, you roleplay out a character's dream. This dream can be specific to one character or shared by the troupe. With either option, the characters take the roles of beings in the dream — either themselves or other characters who might be symbolic or literal — and act through the dream. The dream may be like any other dream — with strange settings, illogical events and people coming and going at random — or may seem entirely straightforward. The characters in the dream may not have as much control over events as they normally would, and may not even realize they are in a dream until things become overtly bizarre.

The truly wonderful thing, however, is that these dreams might come true (usually in chimerical form). What happens when every dream forms chimerical beings or alters reality? This is a good way to shock the players and put them off their guard.

Flashbacks

Flashbacks are a way to roleplay scenes in a character's past and thereby present a new perspective on the current story. This is a particularly valuable technique for **Changeling** stories, because changelings are reborn again and again in different mortal guises. Characters may not remember their last incarnation or even that they are changelings. Flashbacks may provide clues to the characters' true natures, allow them to unravel plots against them by heretofore forgotten rivals, or give hints to the location of an artifact hidden in a prior mortal life. Old loves, enemies, great friends and valued faerie companions can all be introduced through flashbacks. The events that occur must be controlled fairly strictly by the Storyteller, making the charac-

ters' actions and choices less free, but the flashback is primarily intended to provide the characters with information, not to let them change the past.

Parallel Story

Parallel stories are stories unconnected to the main story being told, but which share a theme with the main tale. Players are asked to create a new set of characters, or are given Storyteller-created characters to play. Though the parallel story may be set in an entirely different environment or time (or even involve characters who are not changelings), some aspect of it will reflect upon the main story, clarify events within it or emphasize its theme. Players get a break from the main story, get the chance to play different characters for a while, and get a better grasp on the original story. This technique should be used sparingly lest it become stale.

Rival Factions

In this technique the players create two sets of characters — rivals to one another, but with similar or identical goals — and play through two sides of the same story. The two groups don't necessarily encounter the same events all the time (that would be boring), but occasionally cross paths or make deals with Storyteller characters to create problems for the other group. Eventually, one group or the other will win, or the two will learn to compromise (either with players handling two characters or by combining characters from the two groups into a third consensual group). This technique is for advanced and mature Storytellers and players only; players must not utilize knowledge gained by the rival group.

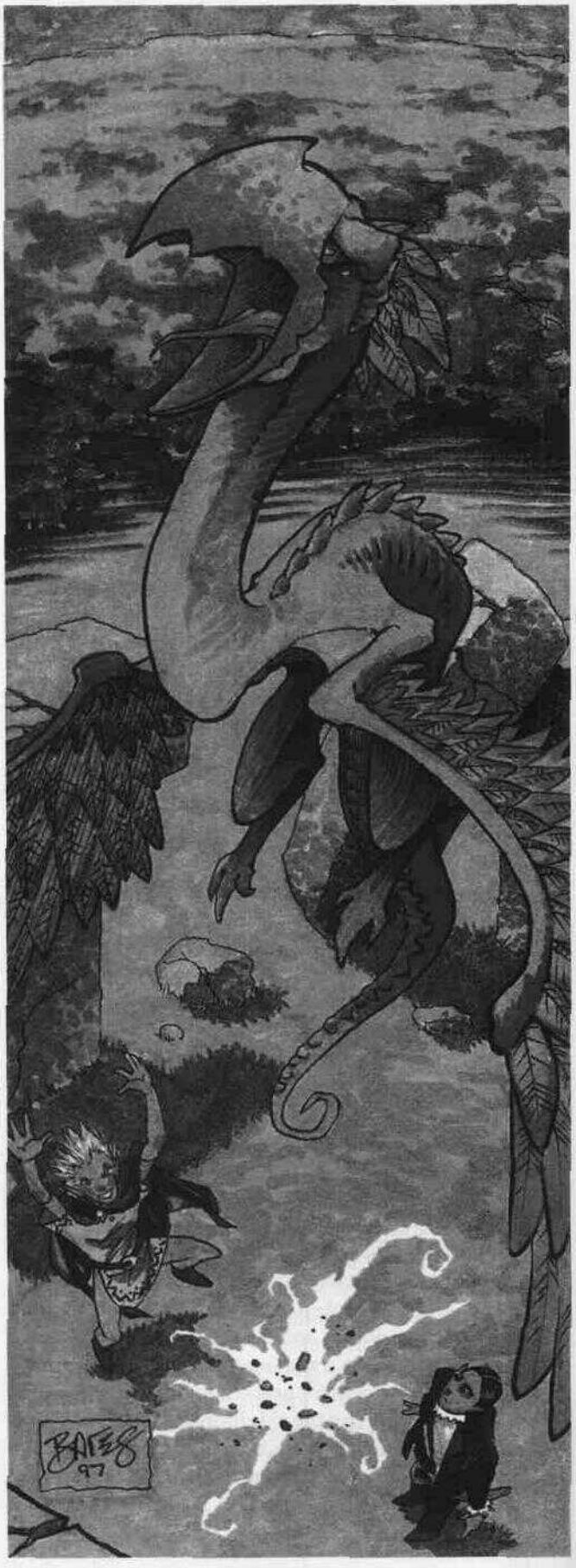
Play Within a Play

Utilizing elements from the parallel story, yet unique in that it takes place within the confines of the original story, the play within a play is a short vignette that obliquely comments on the action or interactions of the main tale. Shakespeare used the play within a play in *Hamlet* to ferret out a murderer, and in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to entrap the faerie queen Titania and comment on the blindness of love. Storytellers could use this technique for similar effects or simply to insert comic relief into a serious story.

Troupe-Style Play

Particularly complex chronicles may benefit from troupe-style play, in which each player controls more than one character. Usually this involves creating a primary character and one or two secondary characters who are played in particular circumstances. Even so-called secondary characters may play major roles in chronicles, for they are often chosen to accompany primary characters due to specific skills they alone have. The whole idea is to create a group that can work well together. Another reason for troupe-style play is to let the Storyteller have a break and play a character of her own in someone else's chronicle (preferably in a shared background).

Changeling is well suited to the idea of troupe play, since there are inherent class differences among the characters any-



way. Changeling society is built upon a feudalistic model in which each person has a hierarchical relationship (equal to, above or below) with each other person. In such a society, one character might be a sidhe baroness, two others might be redcap and pooka commoners, and a fourth might be an eshu in service to the baroness. The players of the pooka, redcap and eshu may have other characters who are nobles (or other commoners), while the baroness' player may in turn play a nocker in service to some other player's character.

Tarot or Suggestion Box

Sometimes a plot can be given a new twist through a randomizing agent. A Tarot card drawn at random from its deck may suggest a scene or symbols to be inserted in the story. Alternatively, the players may write out desired plot twists, story suggestions or character developments and put them in a suggestion box from which the Storyteller may draw. Even flipping through children's picture books, encyclopedias or comic books may suggest a new plotline or way of telling the story. Doing so on the fly is only for the very experienced or those who feel very comfortable "winging it," but can be quite rewarding.

Other Time Periods

Changelings are immortal, even though their mortal bodies age and die. It is possible that a story begun when the characters are childlings may have elements that recur when they are wilders, and are not fully resolved until they are grumps. Naturally, dozens of other stories occur in between the recurring one.

Alternatively, since changelings incarnate more than once, they may have begun the story long ago, gone through several mortal seemings, been drawn back together by mysterious forces to battle old foes, aged and died, been reborn and drawn together again. In this case, they would play through each different time period, perhaps even beginning before the Shattering.

Going for Broke

There is no reason why **Changeling** must be played on Earth or in the World of Darkness setting. Changelings in space battling alien threats are no less believable than anywhere else. How would changelings have affected Middle-Earth or Valdemar (Mercedes Lackey's Heralds series)? What would they be like on Deep Space Nine? Could cyberpunk changelings overcome the Banality inherent in turning themselves into metallic samurai? It's up to the Storyteller (and her players) to decide what they'd like to do with **Changeling** and where it should be set. Just remember that copyright infringement is a serious matter.

Crossover Potentials

Other supernatural creatures inhabit the World of Darkness. Creating mixed troupes of changelings, werewolves, mages, vampires and even wraiths offers unique possibilities for chronicles and stories. The magickal Tradition of the Dreamspeakers may have relations with the Nunnehi; should one of these mages discover that the fae still exist, any number of stories could result. The Garou may be drawn to changelings because of their intimate connection to the remnants of the Wyld, while some Kindred may seek to establish ties with changelings in order to maintain their own fragile Humanity. Wraiths and changelings both inhabit a dual world, and this common psychological ground may create a sympathetic bond.

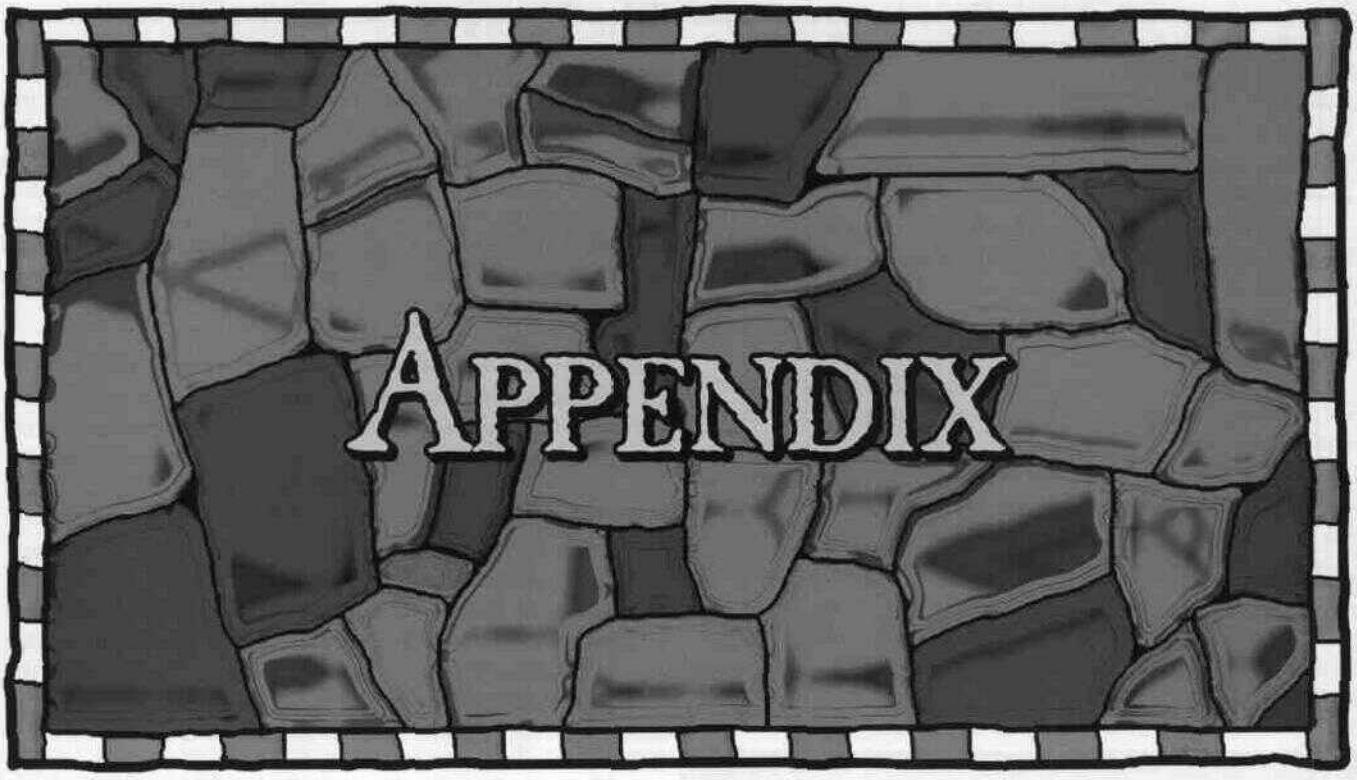
Here are a few story ideas:

- The Inquisition comes to town, forcing the local changelings to ally with Kindred, Garou and others to prevent their discovery.
- A Garou sept opens a caern in what is also a changeling holding. The two groups can either go to war or learn to coexist, perhaps strengthening the Glamour/Gnosis of the area. (What if the area is also located on an ancient burial ground that serves as a haunt in the Shadowlands?)
- A lonely Malkavian succeeds in passing herself off as a changeling — at least for a time — and earns the trust of a wilder clique. What happens when her ruse is discovered? Will she still be accepted by her friends?
- A Dreamspeaker finds her way into the Dreaming and encounters a group of changelings. Can they join forces to fight the Technocracy's latest Banality-fueled assault?
- A childling and a child-wraith become fast friends and decide to go "adventuring" together — to the consternation of everyone who knows either of them.

Final Words

Never be afraid to experiment. There is no "right" way to tell a story, no "correct" setting or mood. All stories and all dreams have some merit and validity. Feel free to experiment and experience the whole Dreamsong, not just a small part of it — and remember that through your creativity, you may be providing a changeling with the Glamour she needs.


"Come with me
for I will take ye
Dancing now -
with all my brothers
I am real,
and like the others!"
- Meg Davis
Elf Glade
Noble Sword



Character Development

This section discusses the ways a character can increase (or decrease) in power and abilities.

Experience

During a story, characters learn many things. Much of what they learn is not the *type of thing that can be recorded on character* sheets, but something the players keep in mind thereafter. They may learn never to leave a car door unlocked or never to walk into a dark alley with a light behind them. Sometimes, however, what characters learn can be recorded.

At the end of each story, the Storyteller awards experience points to each character, normally giving the same amount to each one. The players then record the points on their character sheets. Experience points can be used to increase Traits.

The cost for raising Traits varies widely; see the chart below for specifics. The cost is almost always based on the product of the present rating and a certain number. Thus, if the character has an Alertness rating of 2, and the player wants to raise it to 3, it costs four *experience points to do so. If the character* does not have the Trait at all, the cost is listed as a "new" Trait. A Trait can only be increased by one dot per story — never more.

Roleplay It

As the Storyteller, you should not let a player spend her experience points to raise any Trait she wishes — it's a little more involved than that. The increased Trait must be something the character had a chance to learn or use during the story — either the character achieved great success through use of the Trait, or she made a big mistake from which she can learn. In the case of Willpower, something must have actually occurred to bolster the character's self-confidence.

You should only allow Trait increases if they can be or have been woven into the story. At the very least, the changes need to make sense in terms of the story, and not simply be changes the player makes because she wants her character to gain certain powers or skills. The more you force the players to make sense of their experiences, the more character development as a whole is furthered.

Awarding Experience Points

Assigning experience points requires a careful balance between rewarding the players and maintaining game balance. If you follow the guidelines below, you probably won't get into too much trouble, but feel free to experiment as you see fit.

End of Each Chapter

Give each character one to five experience points at the end of each chapter (game session). One point is given whether or not the group succeeds or fails, as a function of simply participating (remember, sometimes we learn despite ourselves).

- **One point — Automatic:** Each player gets one point after every game session.
- **One point — Learning Curve:** The character learned something from his experiences during the chapter. Ask the player to describe what his character learned before you award the point.
- **One point — Acting:** The player roleplayed well — not just entertainingly, but appropriately. Award for exceptional roleplaying only; your standards should get increasingly higher. In most cases, award this only to the person who did the best roleplaying in the troupe.
- ***One point — Concept:*** The player acted out her character's concept very well.
- **One point — Heroism:** When a character risks herself for others, such as when she fends off several enemies with iron weapons in order to allow the rest of the group to escape, give her

an experience point. Don't let characters take advantage of this; there is a fine line between heroism and stupidity.

End of Each Story

At the end of each story, you can assign each player one to three *additional* experience points over and above the one to five points earned for completing the chapter.

- **One point — Success**: The characters succeeded in their immediate mission or goal. Perhaps it was not a complete success, but at least a marginal victory was achieved.
- **One point — Danger**: The character experienced great danger during the story and survived.
- **One point — Wisdom**: The player (and thus the character) exhibited great wits or resourcefulness, or came up with an idea that enabled the group to succeed.

If you want to award even more points, thus allowing the characters to develop even more quickly, simply invent new categories in which to award experience. These can even vary from story to story, and can be based on the specific circumstances of that story.

Increasing and Decreasing Traits

The costs for permanently raising the Traits listed below are listed on the Experience Chart.

Experience Chart

Trait	Cost
Attribute	Current rating x 4
New Ability	3
Ability	Current rating x 2
New Art	7
Art	Current level x 4
New Realm	5
Realm	Current level Realm x 3
Willpower	Current rating x 2
Glamour	Current rating x 2

Raising Arts and Realms

It is possible for a changeling to learn Arts and Realms on her own, but it takes longer and requires more effort. If a changeling has the Mentor Background, she may roll (usually against difficulty 6) a number of dice equal to the Trait score; each success reduces the cost of learning the Art or Realm. For example, a character with four dots in Mentor can roll four dice (difficulty 6); each success subtracts one from the experience cost to learn that Art or Realm.

Antagonists

Changelings inhabit a world filled with perilous adventure, nightmarish monsters and legendary treasures. Unlike humans, who must usually contend only with the dangers of our violent modern world, changelings must also be wary of threats from the Dreaming. Rarely does the Dreaming allow changelings much time for peace; sooner or later, enemies rear their heads.

The Nunnehi

When the Kithain of Europe arrived in the New World, they discovered an entire species of changelings who were not at all like them. Born of the dreams and myths of the native people, these other changelings, or Nunnehi, became justifiably angry at the European invasion. Just as European mortals came into conflict with the Native Americans, so the Kithain and the nunnehi clashed. Although many changelings sought to seal pacts of peace with the nunnehi (and in a few cases were successful), a constant state of unrest still exists between European changelings and Nunnehi.

Nunnehi Politics

The wisest dukes and barons have made peaceful overtures to the Nunnehi. This, however, has met with limited success. For the most part, Kithain nobles are unwilling to conform to the centuries of custom, etiquette and law that the Nunnehi cherish. For their part, Nunnehi despise the impatience and pigheadedness that mark Kithain politics.

For more information about the Nunnehi tribes, see **Changeling Players Guide.**

Nunnehi Raider: Nomadic Nunnehi can be found anywhere. They use great cunning in battle and retreat at the first sign of serious conflict — they seek to upset, disrupt and terrify rather than engage their enemies directly. They are intelligent tacticians and strategists, with an uncanny ability to discern weakness in their targets.

Character Creation: Attributes 9/5/4, Abilities 18/10/6, Backgrounds 7, Glamour 6, Willpower 6, Arts 7, Realms 5

Suggested Attributes: Assume ratings of 2, except for Perception and Intelligence, which are usually 3.

Suggested Abilities: Combat abilities are prized. Alertness, Kenning, Lore and Occult are usually high.

Equipment: Light and heavy firearms, motorcycles, possibly some treasures

Fomori

Driven by an ancient evil, these creatures do not remember their faerie past. In older times, a group of Unseelie made a pact with a force of destruction, taint and oblivion, which they called the Dark. These corrupted Unseelie sought to infect the Dreaming with their power. A great war was waged against the Dark, and the pure fae won. Those who had collaborated with the Dark were deemed Prodigal, excommunicated from the Dreaming and named *fomori*, or outcasts. The fomori were banished to the lair of the Dark, never to bother the children of the Dreaming again.

Or so it was thought. The Dark always finds a way. Modern Kithain have begun to realize that this long-forgotten threat has blossomed anew. Unnatural changelings are being born, their souls those of the original Unseelie traitors.

Fomori possess frightening powers that easily defeat Banality, and fomori themselves appear to be unaffected by Banality. They have also been known to be completely immune to Glamour. Luckily, the fomori have not yet made a concerted effort to attack changelings; they appear to be busy attacking other Prodigals (**see "Werewolves," pg. 284**), and for this reason Kithain occasionally ally themselves with werewolves. All Kithain fear the day that these hideous creatures fully turn their attention toward the fae.

Character Creation: Attributes 10/6/3, Abilities 15/9/3, Backgrounds 5, Glamour 5, Willpower 5, Banality 10, Arts 5,

Realms 5 (equivalents — all fomori have special powers granted to them by the Dark)

Suggested Attributes: Assume ratings of 2, except for Physical Traits, which have ratings of 3 or even 4. Appearance is often zero; fomori are generally grotesque.

Suggested Abilities: Brawl 3, Dodge 1, Firearms 1, Melee 2, Occult 1, Stealth 1, Survival 2

Equipment: Fomori are often equipped with an array of heavy weaponry: assault rifles, combat knives, flak jackets, etc.

Orphan Chimera

In ancient times, any fae who chose to do so could focus some of his own Glamour into the formation of a chimera. Now, with the weight of Banality everywhere, chimera tend to be creatures of accidental creation rather than conscious decision.

Four basic types of chimera are known, though at times the interspecies lines blur.

Nervosa

Certainly one of the most unnerving varieties of chimera is the nervosa. Born of madness, nervosa are completely unpredictable.

Plague

This nervosa is born from delirium caused by pain or fever. It *fills its victim with feelings of sickness.* A person in the grip of a plague nervosa will start to *feel* chills, aches, nausea and the like, but may not manifest physical symptoms. The symptoms become debilitating, and a person in full possession will start to show physical signs of illness.

Plague nervosa choose to haunt hospitals, urgent-care centers, hospices and places associated with sickness (like the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, which houses especially virulent ones). With diseases such as AIDS and ebola, changelings fear the rise of more plague nervosa.

A typical plague nervosa appears as a person in the advanced throes of its "parent" illness.

Chimera Point Cost: 25

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Glamour: 8, Willpower: 3

Health Levels: OK, -1, -1, -2, -3, -5

Attack: None (see below)

Redes: Fester

The Monster Under the Bed

Well, actually, there are a *lot* of monsters under the bed. There are things like giant purple snakes that wait for your hands or feet to stick out over the edge of the mattress so they can grab you, and there are small things that simply sit and stare back at you (with big, googly, yellow eyes) just outside the beam of the flashlight. Most changelings find they have one of the two kinds described below, and they are certainly the best known.

The Snuffler

It's big, it's hairy, it smells like dirty laundry, and it has teeth the size of jumbo crayons. You can hear it snuffling around down there, rooting in the odd socks, broken cap guns and dingy tennis balls you were afraid to look for once they had disappeared into its realm. Your Mom and Dad can't see it, but your older brother swears — cross his heart and hope to die — that it eats little kids just like you. He says it got Jimmy Peternik three years ago, and now it's moved in to get you.

Don't you believe it. The big ones are okay, once you get to know them. Talk to yours. Toss him the crusts off your sandwiches, and leave him the last little bit of milk in the glass. They *like* that *kind of stuff; it's far easier (and much tastier)* than hunting dustbunnies to eat. Give him a good name (like Groncher, Murgelflurt, Augustus or Fred), and before you know it, you'll have the best pal a childling ever knew.

Chimera Point Cost: 35

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Glamour: 7, Willpower: 3

Health Levels: OK, OK, OK, -1, -1, -1, -2, -2, -3, -5

Attack: Bite/6 dice

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Smell 5

Redes: Gulp

The Scritchers

These are the ones you've gotta watch out for. If you hear one, you know you've got at least a dozen. They're tricky. They plot and they plan, and they always know when you need to get up to go to the bathroom. The Scritchers just live for chances like that, and the more powerful kinds deliberately make you thirsty in the evening so you'll have to go later, after your parents are asleep. You don't even want to *think* about what they'll do to you if they catch you.

Fortunately, you can work around them. They don't like light, and if you can convince your parents to let you keep the lamp on, you'll be absolutely safe. Another good dodge is to walk to the door of your room without touching the floor. The Scritchers (even if they've climbed up a bookshelf or something) can't touch you unless you're touching the floor.

If you're really good at talking, you can confuse them and escape that way. They also take bribes, can be tricked into fighting among themselves, and hate the sound of whistling. Very clever, kind or persistent changelings have been known to convert their Scritchers into allies by force, friendship or intrigue.

Chimera Point Cost: 35

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Glamour: 7, Willpower: 4

Health Levels: OK, -1, -2, -5

Attack: Bite/3 dice or Claw/3 dice

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 4, Brawl 2, Dodge 5

Redes: Scuttle

Nocnitsa

Nocnitsa are chimera born from the darkest of nightmares. They are perhaps the most feared chimera of all.

The Creeping Fear (Spider Chimera)

Legends of giant spiders have been told for centuries, supposedly ancestral memories from times when the occasional giant arachnid scuttled from a forgotten cave or forest corner. Unfortunately for changelings, spiders have always haunted mortals' imaginations. The film *Arachnophobia* produced some of the most vicious chimerical spiders in recent memory

Chimerical spiders have been recorded and seen for nearly as long as fae have been on Earth, and are perhaps some of the most unfriendly of the chimerical beasts. Their poisons range from the debilitating to the lethal (the chimerical spiders related to the

deadly funnel-web spider of Australia produce venom that kills childlings within seconds). Chimerical spider-silk is comparable in strength to ballistic nylon. The strange shiver that occasionally afflicts some people or the sudden sensation of an insect crawling over a person's skin has been attributed to chimerical spiders.

Chimerical spiders are usually black and at least three times the size of normal spiders. The really nightmarish ones are the size of horses, and can sever limbs with their chelicerae. Their eight eyes shine in dim light. They are terrifyingly swift — think how fast most spiders can scuttle, then multiply that by the speed with which nightmare creatures seem endowed. Damage means little to chimerical spiders, depending on the specimen. Some have been dispatched with as little as hairspray; others need to be flamed and hacked to pieces before they will stay dead. Like their smaller cousins, they are blood-drinkers — but being bigger, they need bigger prey, and everyone knows fae blood tastes best. They have survived hacked-off legs, stabbing and even the occasional fireball. Good luck killing one of these bastards.

Chimera Point Cost: 40

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 5

Glamour: 8, Willpower: 3

Health Levels: OK, OK, -1, -1, -2, -2, -5, -5

Attack: Bite/4 dice

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Climb 5, Dodge 4

Redes: Ensnare, Venom

Monsters

This is the name given to chimerical beasts that do not fit into any of the other categories.

The Black Dog

Once a regional phenomenon confined solely to the Lake District of England, the Black Dog occupies a strange place among chimera. Part nightmare, technically monster and largely nervosa, this hound patrols roads by night, watching for travelers. It dislikes men and will cause accidents or stalk quietly beside trespassers, unnerving them completely. On the other hand, it has a great concern for women and children, especially if they are traveling alone; it will trot beside them as a guardian or even carry them if they are injured or tired. It keeps mostly to rural areas with few streetlamps, perhaps because such environs are more like the roads it remembers in the Lake Country.

The Black Dog, also called Black Shuck or Trash Hound (old form — Gytrash), always appears as a large, shaggy, coal-black dog about the size of an English sheepdog, with large teeth and eyes that glow like burning embers. When in a friendly mood, it licks and frolics with children as happily as any dog.

Chimera Points: 50

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Glamour: 7, Willpower: 8

Health Levels: OK, -1, -1, -2, -2, -5

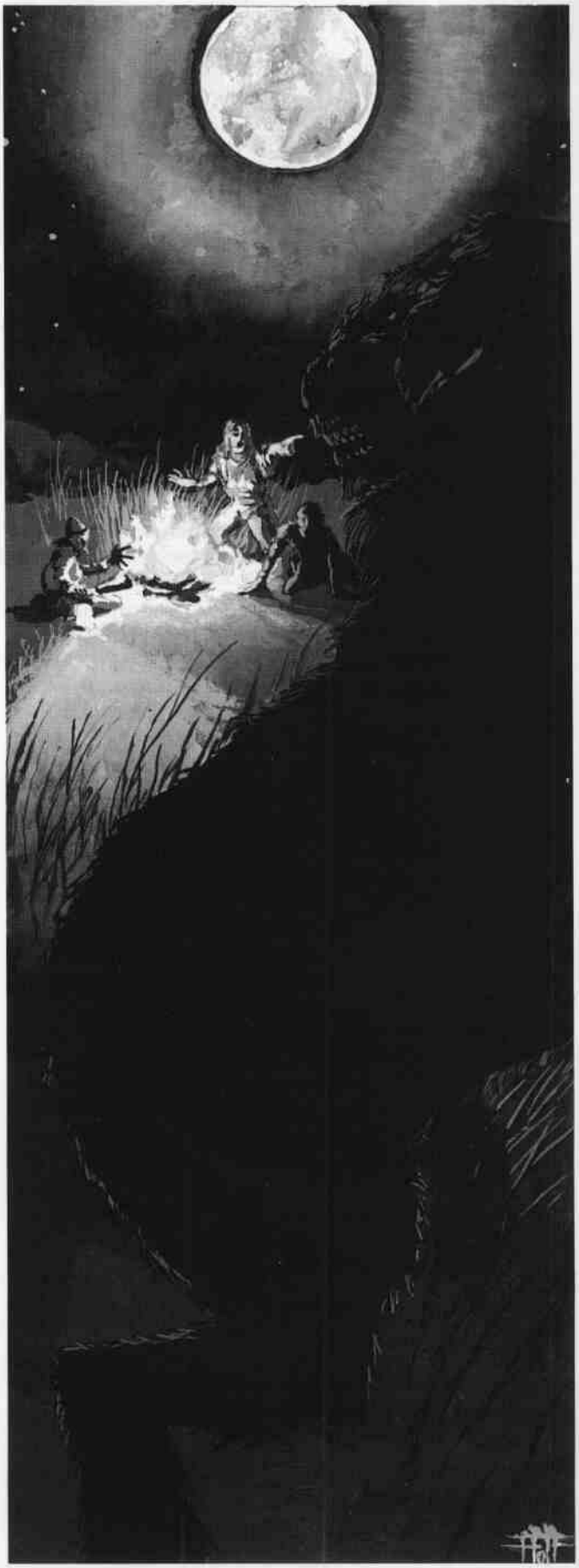
Attack: Bite/5 dice or Claw/5 dice

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Track 5

Redes: Fear

Sprites

These chimera are born of fancy and delight. They are usually playful and at the worst mischievous.



Nevers

"Nevers" is a shortened form of these sprites' more scholarly name of "Neverlanders." While some changelings find it ridiculous, those who first saw these faeries at the end of the Victorian Era noticed that they corresponded marvelously with the "fairies" of Sir James Barrie's *Peter Pan*. They had wings, gave off a glow like a firefly, and their voices sounded like tiny bells chiming until the listener grew used to their speech (which was perfectly intelligent English, often with a British accent).

Males emit a blue glow and frequently have blue-tinged skin; females emit a soft mauve-pink light and have rosy skin. Those Nevers who emit white light are just "little sillies" who don't know which sex they are and perhaps have none. The famed "pixie dust" of the story seems to shed from their skin like dead cells from a larger creature; the extent of its magical properties is still under debate.

Nevers thrive heavily on belief; the terrible words "I don't believe in fairies" can literally scare them to death, even in a freehold. A child clapping her hands to keep a Never alive is merely focusing her own belief into a tangible form, but a few cynics think it's applause for a well-done death scene. These sprites have a special love for children and are most attracted to childlings and those wilders who haven't quite grown up. Many actively disdain grumps because they're "grown-ups."

Chimera Point Cost: 35

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 5, Stamina 1, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 5, Perception 1, Intelligence 2, Wits 1

Glamour: 10, Willpower: 3

Health Levels: OK, -1, -2, -5

Attack: None

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Dodge 5

Redes: Enchantment

Autumn People

Unconscious servants of Banality, the Autumn People are the quintessential party-poopers. They are the sticks-in-the-mud who do not believe in anything magical or special. They are very rational, thoughtful and exact in their dress and speech. Kithain can spot an Autumn Person right away.

There are really two kinds of Autumn People: aggressive ones and spineless ones. Spineless ones are lesser threats, although they raise the local Banality in their vicinity and encourage others to become spineless Autumn People. These people are couch potatoes, video-game junkies and anyone else who gambles, drinks or is otherwise harmfully addicted to something.

The aggressive kind are the censors, the monitors, the mindless authoritarians who hate dreams and the Dreaming instinctively. An aggressive Autumn Person is the worst kind of mortal, and one to be avoided. A few such Autumn People seek the destruction of the Dreaming and are often found as allies of the Dauntain (see below).

Character Creation: Attributes 6/4/2, Abilities 10/6/2, Willpower 3, Banality 9

Suggested Attributes: Assume ratings of 2 in all Attributes.

Suggested Abilities: Brawl 1, Drive 2

The Dauntain

These are changelings who, unable to handle the "reality" of the fae, fled to the safety of Banality. Their perceptions twisted by their own fears, they are among the active forces of Banality and attempt to hunt down any changelings they can find.

There are two basic types: those who know what they are facing and those who do not. Oddly, the second type is the more dangerous because their lack of belief causes Banality to be extremely strong within them. The others believe in what they are facing, thus decreasing their resistance to changeling cantrips. However, they are knowledgeable of changeling weaknesses and often carry iron weapons.

The second group is spearheaded by psychiatrist Dr. Anton Stark. Several years ago, worried parents brought their daughter to him for evaluation. It seemed that she was living in a very complex fantasy world in which magic, elves, unicorns and other creatures of faerie were very real to her. After several session with the girl, Stark decided to use extreme aversion therapy, electro-shock therapy and several varieties of drugs as the treatment to shock her mind back to reality, where it belonged. Within two years he reported complete success: the girl had lost touch with her fantasy world and could live in the "normal" day-to-day world.

Over the next several years Stark discovered a few dozen more cases like his first patient. In all cases, onset of symptoms was rather abrupt, often leaving the victims in a state of shock as they adjusted to the fraudulent information their brains were giving them. His book, titled *Chimera: Living Within Our Dreams*, detailed the treatments of these patients based on the information "given" by them. The book gained attention among colleagues of his profession, and they begin identifying others who were suffering from this very same problem.

Now, Stark lectures at schools, universities and to community groups in hope of helping them identify this disorder before it renders its victims unfit for human society. Some groups have protested the extreme measures used to eliminate the disorder, but none can deny the treatment's success rate.

It should be noted that most of these doctors do not believe in the supernatural, and all are infused with an incredible amount of Banality. Some have been known to cause trods to wilt simply by passing through. High King David has decreed that these people are not to be directly approached, as the power of their Banality could destroy changelings. However, any changelings captured by them are to be rescued, if at all possible, before they are lost forever to Banality.

The first group of Dauntain is more dangerous in that its members believe in the existence of changelings, but believe them to be evil creatures who devour the force of human creativity for their own dark magics. Most of these are either survivors of a Ravaging, or someone close to them was destroyed by such. They are quite aware of the dangers such beings pose to humanity. A few of these latter Dauntain sometimes even develop a small facility with Kenning, as their belief enhances the intrinsic Glamour existing within them.

They use news stories to find changelings. They look for signs of Ravaging (such as a crowd riot at a soccer game in England) and move in on the area armed with cold iron weapons, searching for the changelings responsible for the attacks. While they do not always find those responsible, they are very skilled at digging up the nearest changelings in the immediate area and "destroying" their menace.

Such Dauntain are vulnerable to changeling magic, for they believe in it and are therefore less strongly influenced by Banality. In fact, some of these have surprisingly strong Glamour ratings.

On occasion, Dauntain form into small cooperative teams. These teams are extremely deadly when they locate changelings. A recently formed team is organized by Alex Hayward, a survivor of

a Ravaging after an Exquisite Agony concert. The team's members, who had been the opening band for the concert, were attacked by several Ravagers as they returned to their dressing rooms. The band survived, but were somewhat changed by the experience. They researched the subject, looked for similar occurrences and deduced the nature of their enemy. They have already subjected a changeling to death by iron, and have seen evidence of changeling abilities. While this has tempered their enthusiasm a bit, they still act without mercy or apology when they find one.

Scientist

Character Creation: Attributes 6/4/2, Abilities 10/6/2, Backgrounds 5, Banality 10, Willpower 5

Suggested Attributes: Assume Attributes of 2 in all ratings, except for Mental Attributes, which should be 3 or even 4.

Suggested Abilities: Computer 2, Intimidation 1, Investigation 1, Linguistics 2, Medicine 3, Science 3

Exterminator

Character Creation: Attributes 7/5/3, Abilities 13/9/5, Backgrounds 7, Glamour 2, Banality 9, Willpower 7, Arts 5, Realms 5

Suggested Attributes: Physical and Mental Attributes of 3, Social Attributes of 2.

Suggested Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Kenning 1, Firearms 2, Investigation 2, Lore 2, Melee 2, Stealth 2

The Prodigals

Changelings believe that there are a number of lost faerie races who have forgotten that they are fae. These lost races are collectively known as the *Prodigals*.

Magi

In the earliest days, the Tuatha de Danaan and all their kind moved like sunlight on the land. They held their bright Dreams aloft in slender fingers and carried them to dank caves where the mortals huddled, plagued with nightmares. From their light, the Tuatha nourished human folk, inspiring them to dream newer, brighter visions.

But they were not the only ones who Dreamed so.

It is said that Neul the Blue discovered the siblings in a clearing. One night, a star fell from high above and crashed into a grove. Neul traced its fall with wonder. When he went to see the ruin, Neul found four youths — two girls, two boys — whose eyes shimmered in the twilight. Unlike the drab mortals Neul had met before, these weavers crafted Dreams from waking thought. As they did so, the land around them changed. The very air glimmered where they stood, and it crackled with potent Glamour. Aroused yet terrified, Neul ran to fetch his cousins. Intrigued, they returned with him in multitudes.

"Who are you?" Neul demanded. "We have never seen your kind before. Are you like us, like mortals, or like some other thing?"

One sister spoke: "We are the Prime, the offspring of the flame."

Her sister spoke: "We are the Earth, the children of the clouds."

One brother spoke: "We are the Craft, the shapers of the world."

His brother spoke: "We are the End and the Beginning. We are all."

"Nonsense," replied Queen Rhayne, the leader of the horde. But the others hesitated. There was truth in what the children said. "Prove what you say," the foolish queen continued, "or we will take you back to the caves where you belong."

The children only laughed. "You call yourselves the givers of dreams," said the first sister. "We will Dream for you, then, Dreams of our own creation. We shall see who sends whom to the caves, proud one, and who passes on wonder to our folk."

So saying, the first child Dreamed like fire. Her eyes glowed like Samhain embers, and she spoke in nonsense tones. At her laughing cry, the air became a furnace. The Tuatha burned at its touch, and they fled the child. Safely away, they called her Té the Mad.

The second child's voice was light, and her Dreams were winds. Like a breeze she spoke, and the air grew clear; like a hurricane she roared, and the wind swept the faeries away. Her words carried comfort, joy and wrath. Those who heard them said, "Tempt not her anger," and they named her Li the Shadow.

The third child's Dreams were stone. His words grated like pebbles on slate, and they weighed so heavily that the air became mud and the mud became a prison. Some Tuatha stood too near the child, and he wrapped them screaming in dark stone prisons. Try as they might, no one could free the captives; in time, they expired and joined the stone. "He is anathema," the survivors cried, and they called him Ihenn the Ironmaker.

The fourth child's Dreams bubbled up from the sundered ground. The sky wept as he capered and spit. His eyes were dark, savage waters, like whirlpools or mad tides. His voice was sweet poisoned water, delightful to taste but deadly to swallow. He beckoned some fae on a merry dance, then turned on them like a griffin and split their bones to slivers. "He is a wonder," said the shadow-kith. "He is a demon," said their bright cousins. They all decided he was both, and named him Chla the Unbound.

Queen Rhayne turned to stone beneath the ground. Neul the Blue burned at the Mad One's touch. The surviving Tuatha gathered far from the clearing and discussed the children for many long nights. Finally it was decided that the siblings should be left alone. The Tuatha would seek them out when the time seemed right, but until then, the children would be left to blaze their own paths.

In time, the siblings grew, mated and had children of their own. Some faeries courted these magickal offspring, drinking their Glamour like fine wine; others fled their sight, and still others sought revenge. Bargains were struck, alliances entered and bitter enmities cast. The temperamental siblings bred temperamental offspring, and each soon warred against the others. As the Silver Age became Bronze, and the Bronze Age became Iron, the Awakened Dreamers took their cousins by the hands and led them from the caves. The mortals cast our dreams aside, and the children of the fallen star wove their own spells on the land. Ages later, their gifts have different shapes but still rework the world.

Behold them, for they Dream in an Awakened state; befriend them, for even the dullest of their kind breathe Glamour like the air; beware them, for that Glamour is potent enough to destroy the highest faerie king. These are the children of the fallen star. Dance in their footsteps, but stay clear of their sight.

As the tale of the four siblings reveals, the fae understand three very important things about the Awakened Ones called "mages" or "magi": First, that they're skilled Dreamers, with talents much like changeling Arts, but far more powerful. Second, that they epitomize the four elements of creation — change (fire, or Marauders), stasis (stone, or Technocrats), decay (water, or Nephandi) and balance (air, or the Traditions, Crafts and solitaires). And third, that they're compelling yet dangerous companions.

The ties between mages and the fae go back to the beginning of time. No other Prodigal shares such ties to the mystic night. Faeries and sorcerers have been allies, enemies, cousins and lovers, but never have they been strangers. Although the mages proudly call themselves "Awakened," the faeries know the truth: Wizards

walk through life in a precious dream-state, Awake to life's possibilities but Dreaming well enough to create new realities. The best of them are founts of Glamour; the worst, tar pits of Banality. These shifting creatures fascinate the fae, and the attraction seems to be mutual. Mages and changelings are fellow travelers on the same road. When they meet, a party — or a war — is the usual result.

Powers and Weaknesses

• Mages command raw reality. Some call the lightning from the heavens, others carry it in guns over their shoulders. As half-lidded Dreamers, mages perceive reality in ways only a changeling could appreciate. An inexperienced magus is already more attuned to the world than any banal mortal could hope to be. By the time she achieves some degree of skill and control, she may reshape the elements, kill or heal with words, transform into a variety of shapes, or perform a million other miracles.

• Even so, mages are fragile things. Without the proper magicks, a wizard ages, sickens and dies as easily as any mortal. While other Prodigals rip doors off hinges or shrug off gunfire, the Awakened Ones lie low, using their Arts in strong but subtle ways.

• Just as Banality poisons faerie Arts, a stricter form of unbelief — Paradox — straitjackets the magi. Long ago, the tales claim, sorcerers could do whatever they wished. After the Shattering, the old talents came harder, and many wizards died trying to use them. Thus, modern magi keep their magick hidden, *disguised as technology* or passed off as tricks and coincidences. Changelings do not carry this Paradox around like mortals do, but even a lone magus must be careful. The days of the flying carpet, sadly, are long past.

• Whatever form it takes, magick (also called "the Art" by mages with of mystick bent) is fluid and malleable. Most wizards channel their talents through ritual tools or wild gadgets, but some realize that the true power lies within themselves. A Storyteller may simulate Awakened magicks by granting a sorcerer a large handful of Arts, Realms and Glamour, creating a pile of cantrips which suit her approach to life and magick. A bad roll or failure creates some disaster, especially if the magick was somehow "vulgar," or beyond modern belief.

• The "formal" rules for magi and their powers can be found in **Mage: The Ascension**.

Banality, Belief and the Shape of the Art

Mages work their Dreamcraft according to their philosophies. The shape of their spells, the Glamour of their acts, and the power — or lack — of their Banality flow from the beliefs and practices of the Awakened Ones.

• *Marauders are insane* even by faerie definitions, and sweep everything in their paths along for the ride. A Mad One's magicks are as wild and unpredictable as a pooka on angel dust; bright Glamour whirls about her like a thunderstorm, and her Banality is low to nonexistent.

• *Mysticks* remember the old ways. While relations haven't always been cordial between the fae and mage societies, the witches and magicians of the Mythic Age accept changelings as close cousins. A mystick wizard is half-enchanted already — her Banality is low, her Glamour rich, and her magicks true Arts in the most wonderful sense.

• *True believers* supposedly draw their powers from demons or gods; these spells serve some greater purpose and usually involve blessings or curses, elemental mastery and some kind of punishment. Dedicated as he is, a true believer dismisses the existence of the fae, or considers them agents of some (un)holy power. Although the mage might stir up some tasty Glamour, that power often carries a strong sense of the wizard's purpose.

• *Modern cynics* are products of a dreamless age. Although they understand the wonders of science or mysticism, most of them are too "grown up" to believe in faeries. Their Arts take the forms of modern archetypes — computers, weird gadgets and strange machines — or "classical" magical tools — Tarot cards, incantations, crystal balls, etc. A cynic might open his eyes some day; if he does, his Glamour will be as refreshing as an icy stream. Until then, that stream is sluggish, dull and sad.

• *Technocrats* believe that magick comes through advanced science — cybernetics, blast guns, computers and other high-tech toys. These sorcerers are deeply banal and extremely dangerous. Few Technocrats believe in changelings; those who do want them wiped from the Earth. There is some Glamour to be had from a Technocrat, but to draw it in is to ride lightning: a furious burst of white-hot energy boils into a deep and lasting burn — the pain of pure Banality.

Mage Banalities

Banality	Affiliation
0-2	Marauders
2-4	Mysticks (Verbena, Cult of Ecstasy, Hermetics, Dreamspeakers)
4-6	True Believers (Nephandi, Celestial Chorus, Akashic Brotherhood, Euthanatos, most Craft wizards)
6-8	Modern Cynics (Sons of Ether, Hollow Ones, Virtual Adepts, many Orphans)
8-10	Technocrats

Young Mage

"It is a beautiful necklace, is it not? A visitor made it for me some time ago — a young wanderer-witch with a craftsman's eyes and an artist's hands. Feel that sparkle? The Glamour of her efforts lingers even now. I miss her, and I wish her well.

"She came here in the spring, wreathed in birds and small animals. Her eyes glowed with faint green mists. Her feet were bare like a child's, but her arms betrayed an adult's muscles, supple and well-formed. New to our kind, she spoke shyly, but her artistry was plain to see. The necklace I wear is testament to her gifts; she bore similar masterworks on her throat, arms and ankles. Our lady took the traveler in (for the girl needed shelter from some enemy), and gave her a room of her own. Though she tried not to stare, our lady stood transfixed by the choker on the witch's neck. The witch, no stranger to *politesse*, offered our lady six fine ornaments, each made to suit the host, in return for our freehold's generosity.

"How could we refuse?

"For a month, she stayed. Our lady was pleased with the witch's gifts, and the wilders lingered by her door, intoxicated by the Glamour that seemed to seep from the very wood itself. I took her as a lover — or should I say, she took me — and our dance was saffron and flame. Her temper was equally hot, alas, and we quarreled like childlings until at last she fled. I ventured to her room that night to beg forgiveness for my latest insult. Her tools and this necklace were all I found. No one saw the young witch leave, and no one I know has seen her since.

"It is a magnificent tear I wear at my throat. A tear for the witch who made chill gold glow warm. Here, touch it. You see? Even now, it sings of magick, of the Arts.

"No mortal heart could stir me so. No mortal heart but hers."

— Suleman, eshu grump

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Crafts 4, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Enigmas 3, Etiquette 2, Expression 3, Kenning 2, Lore 1, Medicine 2, Melee 1, Occult 5, Performance 2, Streetwise 2, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Glamour: 15

Willpower: 5

Powers: Legerdemain 3, Primal 4, Soothsay 2

Equipment: Light clothing, backpack, jewelry materials and tools, concealed knife, herbs and powders

Technocratic Badass

"Holy *shit*! Did you see that? He blew down half the goddamned *wall*! If I wasn't quicker than a flea on crack, I'd be history!

"I didn't think they could *do* that! I thought that they had some freaky sort of rules or something that said that they couldn't just whip it out and blow shit up! He's a goddamned Banality magnet, too! *Damn!* Holy *damn!* I'm stayin' away from those monsters from now on! Get outta my way!!!"

— Bandy Lexenfors, terrified pooka wilder

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Computer 3, Dodge 3, Drive 4, Empathy 2, Enigmas 3, Etiquette 2, Firearms 5, Intimidation 5, Investigation 4, Law 3, Linguistics 4, Medicine 2, Melee 5, Occult 4, Politics 3, Science 3, Security 4, Stealth 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4, Survival 2

Glamour: 30

Willpower: 9

Powers: Chicanery 5, Legerdemain 4, Primal 4, Sovereign 4, Wayfare 3

Equipment: Dark glasses (with infrared settings), black clothing, trenchcoat, heavy automatic pistol, communication link, badge, body armor (value 4), paranormal activity scanner, very big gun

Vampires

Once upon a time, in the long, long ago, lived a mighty fae, an Unseelie of the redcap kith. Now this redcap did battle with a puissant sidhe knight in the great wars that reddened the world's dawning. Back and forth the redcap and the knight fought, neither able to gain the measure of the other. As the day lengthened, and the duel grew more heated, soldiers from both sides stopped their fighting to witness the warriors' prowess. But as the afternoon's shadows lengthened to evening, the duelists' enmity was overshadowed by respect, and finally both threw down their arms and embraced the other. And after that day, so close they became that Seelie and Unseelie alike called them brothers. And brothers they became in truth, for the knight and the redcap mingled the blood each had spilled in the battle and swore a great oath of brotherhood to the Dreaming itself.

Now it came to pass that the lands were menaced by a frightful dragon. Across the lands the High King issued a call for heroes to vanquish the beast. The knight and the redcap set out to meet the challenge, and soon they came upon the dragon's minions, a terrible field of man-eating flowers grown from seeds of Nightmare. The redcap and the knight hacked their way through the evil jungle, but it seemed to the redcap as though his brother hung back ever so slightly, leaving the redcap to suffer the sting of the creatures' fangs.

Soon enough they came to the dragon's lair, and called the beast to battle. It rushed upon them with a whir of wing and a roar of flame, and the doughty warriors found themselves hard put upon. The knight stumbled upon a stone, and the dragon whipped its neck about and, opening wide its maw, prepared to bite the knight in twain. At this, the redcap charged forward, bedeviling the beast with a flurry of blows. As the dragon turned, the knight rose and, gripping his blade tight, hacked the head from the monster.

So the beast was dead, and the knight and the redcap went before the High King, bearing trophies. The redcap went before the High King, presenting the remains of the dragon's flower-demons, and the High King smiled thinly. "Well done," quoth the High King. And other words of praise were spoken, but coldly, and it seemed to the redcap as though the King's favor was but little.

Then the knight came forward, bearing the head of the dragon, and laid it before the High King, to the delight of the court. And quoth he, "My liege, for thee and thee alone did I smite off this marauder's head." And no mention was made of the redcap's valor. And the High King spread wide his arms, and bestowed upon the knight half of all his lands, and other favors besides.

And so the redcap's rage rose in him like a great storm, and gripping his brother's head, he bit it from his body in the manner of the dragon. And at this act, the renunciation of the oath the brothers had sworn, the very Dreaming roiled and flashed with terrible lightning.

The redcap was sore afraid, and he cried out to the High King and the Dreaming, calling witness to his brother's crime and the injustice of the sacrifice. But in breaking the oath of blood, the redcap had committed a sin a hundredfold greater. And the Dreaming cursed the redcap thus: Nevermore would he know the splendor of the Dreaming. The light of the High King's court would ever be poison to his eyes. Only the lands of death would he know — death and red, red blood. Blood was his crime, blood was his legacy, and so blood would be the root of his power. And all who sprang from the redcap would bear the seed of his crime, until the end of days.

Whatever the truth of the old changeling tale, vampires walk the earth to this night. Bearing the curse of their "father," Caine, these ancient beings stalk the cities of mortals, feeding on their blood. They know little of changelings, but are not averse to drinking changeling blood if the opportunity presents itself.

Powers and Weaknesses

• Vampires live until slain; having "died" once and been returned to life through the blood of their vampire creator (sire), they do not age. Vampire become more cunning and powerful with age; "elder" vampires, who have lived for centuries, are a match for the mightiest changelings.

• Though vampires can be driven into unconsciousness (torpor) by mortal weapons, only sunlight, fire or total dismemberment can permanently destroy them.

• Most vampires have moderate Banality ratings, though Unseelie are often intoxicated by the dark auras of these fellow denizens of the night. Some Unseelie even claim that vampires do not exude Banality, but rather surround themselves with a sinister and exotic Glamour all their own. The truth is unknown.

• Vampires have no Glamour as changelings know it, but they steal their power from a darker source: human (or changeling) blood. Vampires have a Blood Pool, which is identical to a Glamour Pool, but recharged by human blood (one pint equals one point;

most human-sized beings have 10 Blood Points. If more than half are taken from the body, the victim will probably die.).

• Vampires are burned by sunlight; each turn spent in sunlight inflicts an automatic point of aggravated damage.

• See **Vampire: The Masquerade** for more information.

Neonates (Recently Created Vampires)

"I remember the first time I saw her. It was at the Waydown, and I was standing there, soaking Glamour from all the angst-kids' florid little pirouettes. When I saw her, though, I forgot all about the music, the ambience, everything. She flitted from shadow to shadow, and it seemed like everyone was getting out of her way, even though no one was looking at her Which was impossible, because she was so beautiful.

"She had this long dress of crushed red velvet, just the right shade to match her lipstick. Skin so white it was iridescent, almost like a pearl gleaming with an inner phosphorescence. And the eyes — like pits into a private and very appealing hell.

"I saw her several more nights after that. I don't know what she did, but she always seemed intent on some errand or other. And she would look at me, not a flirty look, but a conspiratorial one, like she knew. Knew me, what I was doing, and most importantly knew how... different we were from the rest of the sots.

"One night, she came in with a bunch of her friends. And though I'd never seen any of these guys before, I knew they were like her. Everybody was paying attention now — that I remember. All the people just kind of shrank away, like mice when an owl crosses the moon. She wasn't wearing clubgear, just a black jacket and pants. And emotion was just washing over everything like an oscillating tsunami. I felt the people's terror, and the newcomers' smiles conjured a dream or nightmare all their own that... well, I can imagine the same primitive, carnal dreams coming from a sleeping T. Rex. She beckoned, and I remember... I threw back my head and just let the nightmare come up from my loins and out my throat.

"We walked out into the streets, and I knew the ancient majesty of the Wild Hunt that night. I don't know who he was, the victim — just a random passerby, I guess. We ran him down like a stag under the Horned One's hunting pack, and as they fell on him and sucked the life from his twitching body, Glamour shot up my spine like ebony lightning.

"Then they looked at me, their smiles bloody gashes across their faces. I decided to run. They didn't chase, but I still think I did the right thing.

"Haven't been back to the club since. It was a rush, all right, but their fun's a little lethal for casual consumption. Maybe next month, though...."

— Kevin Connaught, Unseelie wilder

Neonate Vampire

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Dodge 1, Etiquette 1, Expression 1, Intimidation 2, Melee 1, Occult 1, Stealth 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2

Blood (Glamour) Pool: 10

Willpower: 5

Powers: Chicanery 2, Soothsay 2, Sovereign 2

Equipment: Fashionable clothing, concealed weapon



Elders

"Don't go near the old Gromley House. It's that creepy, gross place at the end of Dead Man's Drive — the one where all the windows are taped up with this black goopy tape, and all the shingles are falling down.

"I've seen Old Gromley come out at night. His face is white like a ghost, and wherever he goes it's like a big black cloud of... of yuckiness comes out of him. His eyes glow in the dark, like they're burning. I hid my eyes, 'cause I was afraid he'd look at me.

"He wears this black suit that looks old and crusty, and he gets in this big black car that this lady drives for him. She looks sad, and kind of scared. I'll bet Gromley must pay her a lot of money to work for him.

"Billy said he went up to the Gromley House in the daytime. He said he threw an egg at the door, and this mean man came running out, screaming at him. He said the man didn't have any hands, just a big knife like you use to cut meat. Billy's such a liar.

"Is it true that Gromley's a Dracula? Billy said he'd grab me with those spider-fingers and suck out all my blood. I told him he was a big fat liar, but I was scared. Well, a little scared. Well, I wasn't really scared. I'm not afraid of old Gromley the Grinch! I'd go over to his house and kick his coffin, 'cept that the sun's almost down and it's time for me to go home."

— Tommy, childling boggan

Elder Vampire

Attributes: Strength 6 (yes, 6), Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 5, Charisma 1, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Enigmas 2, Etiquette 3, Expression 1, Intimidation 4, Melee 2, Occult 4, Stealth 3, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 4

Blood (Glamour) Pool: 20

Willpower: 9

Powers: Chicanery 5, Soothsay 4, Sovereign 5

Equipment: Outdated clothing, pocket watch, sword cane

Werewolves

A long time ago, when the lands were still green and sweet from shore to shore, the fae enjoyed the luxuries of many forms, of shifting from animal to plant to human as whim suited them. Eventually, as the Dreaming grew stronger, most of the fae chose one form or another, and each settled into the shape he or she had chosen. Only a few, those closest to the land itself, refused to give up the freedom of form, and even these eventually chose animals that suited them best. Then there were wolf-changers and swan-maidens and seal-folk that frolicked in the wild places, and the world mirrored their joy.

But as in all such stories, the peace was not to last. A great and terribly hungry evil arose, seeking to devour all the lands and all the folk, mortal or fae. None were able to look at this evil's face full on — those who had seen its tattered, shroudlike fringes named it only the Dark. The Dark boiled at the edges of the lands, and it ravenously chewed on the horizon, trying to swallow all of creation.

A great council was called by the High Lords, to draw up strategies against the Dark. But when the debates ran long, many of the animal-shifters grew impatient and angry, and they left the council. With the Prince of Wolves at their head, they ran to the horizon and threw themselves into battle with the Dark, before any could tell them nay. And to their credit, they beat back the Dark and held it there — but at a terrible price. For to gain their victory, they forgot all dreams other than dreams of battle everlasting. They passed from the blood of the fae, and became Prodigals, doomed to fight their wars against the fomorians and the Darklings until the end of all things.

However true the tale of the Prodigals may be, it's certainly truth that the werecreatures are out there. Although some pooka tell tales of forgotten cousins with raven, cat, bear or snake blood, the most famous of all the werelings are the werewolves. These creatures are indeed locked into an endless war with the fomorians and other fell beings, but they have not forgotten the fae entirely. Some still come to the aid of their long-lost kin; indeed, some even still bear the name of the Fianna, the matchless warriors of Fionn MacCumhail.

Powers and Weaknesses

- Werewolves can take the forms of humans and wolves, as well as some forms that combine the traits of both. Most terrifying of all is their "wolfman" battle form: a wolf-headed, nine-foot-tall killing machine that inspires a supernatural terror in humans. In this form, all their Physical Attributes are doubled, but they cannot use Social Attributes in connection with creatures other than werewolves and wild beasts (save to intimidate or terrify, of course).
- Werewolves can attack several times each turn, often taking two to six actions in a single turn.
- Werecreatures heal incredibly fast, regenerating a Health Level each turn. Only fire, silver, or the teeth and claws of other supernatural creatures (such as the fomorians) can permanently injure a werewolf — and a werewolf can even heal these wounds as a normal human could.
- Atlhough they don't possess Glamour as such, werewolves can fuel their supernatural powers with Gnosis, a measure of their innate spiritual energy. They regain Gnosis through long meditation or from bargaining with spirits. As creatures of change and the wilderness, they are traditionally lower in Banality than most people.
- Werewolves can enter the spirit world and travel to strange spirit realms. It's rumored that some of their elders can even travel to Arcadia, although this has never been proven.
- Silver is indeed the bane of werecreatures, although wolfsbane does little good against them. They cannot soak damage from silver weapons, and cannot regenerate such wounds as quickly as they normally can.
- See **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** for more information.

The Young Packs

"Why am I in such a temper? Why don't I like St. Paddy's Day, what with me being so Gaelocentric and all? Damn, I've been asked that question more than once. Well, fine — if it'll shut you up, here's the tale.

"Started three years back, at a ceili, of course. Not in a place I'd been to before, and I didn't know anybody there, but I've always been the sort that's willing to meet new people. I'd had some Guiness by way of early celebration, and I planned to do quite a bit more drinking before the night was through. Truth, I planned to do a bit more than drink, and I'd figured there'd be some comely lasses at the dance who'd be coerced into a bit of fun easily enough.

"Well, there were lasses aplenty, but not one of them compared to the vision that strolled into the circle long about 10. I swear, I hadn't seen beauty like that even on the faces of the noblest sidhe princesses, and I was completely taken. She was something

else, I tell you — the finest vision of the most gifted Dreamers, and those gemstone eyes were moving among the crowd to pick out a partner. *Oh, please, lady, pick me!* I wanted to shout, but I couldn't say a word. Wherever she glided, the dancers stopped dancing to stare better. Finally, her gaze settled on a burly redhead, she smiled just a touch — damn, my heart burned so green, I could have killed to be the one she favored! — and she moved out to take his hand.

"That's when it happened.

"The girl next to him swelled up into this huge, terrible creature — 12 feet tall if she was an inch! — reached out with ivory talons and tore the skin from that lovely woman's face. The skull underneath was running with green ichor, I swear it! And this thing — this green-bloodied, faceless *thing* hissed at the two of them and bolted from the circle, into the surrounding woods. The wolf-woman bounded after her on all fours, and in just a second or two, her red-haired bravo became *another* russet-furred werewolf, this time *15* feet tall, and leapt after the two.

"I don't need to tell you that the ceili was spoiled. People were running every which way, shrieking like a choir of banshees, even curling up into little balls. It was a full five minutes before the normals had collected themselves, and most of them drove home right away muttering about 'wild dog attacks' or something. I swear, they all *saw* what happened, so it wasn't the Dreaming — but nobody seemed to *really* see it but me. And damn me, I'll never forget.

"Right. That's my story. Now leave the bottle — I intend to celebrate the rest of this misbegotten anniversary in my own fashion. Cheers."

— Oisin Kennally, satyr wilder

Young Werewolf

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Crafts 1, Dodge 2, Enigmas 1, Intimidation 2, Investigation 1, Lore 2, Melee 1, Occult 1, Performance 1, Stealth 2, Survival 2

Gnosis (Glamour): 5

Willpower: 5

Powers: Chicanery 1, Primal 2, Wayfare 2

Equipment: Practical clothing

The Elders

"I've always been a hiker, and I've always liked the wild places. If it weren't for the last places of green leaves and blue water, I swear this city'd have choked the last bits of Glamour right out of me. You know how it is — trying to sift through the hordes of apathetic, workaday losers to catch that one bright spot of dream. Well, the parks are where I go to forget all the hubbub and brouhaha, and I've even been able to bring a few Dreamers to Reverie out there, just by pointing out how great it is out there.

"You remember a while back, when that Hale-Bopp comet was hanging in the sky? I'd convinced a, well, mundane friend of mine to come with me to the top of a bald to see it. It was quite a hike to get there, and we were barely able to set up camp before it was dark out. Wasn't much — just a couple of sleeping bags and a small fire. Then we stretched out and waited for the comet to rise.

"Well, the comet rose, sure enough, but once it crested that row of pines, we heard this long, rising howl, just like a wolf or some such. It scared Leena at first — hell, even I reached for ol' Warsickle, just in case — but then we got to listening. I swear, the howl sounded almost like someone singing, some bittersweet tribute that just about had me weeping like a childling. Next thing I know, there's a chorus of howls, all sounding like the heralds of Winter itself. Finally, they all broke off, save that one old, strong, sad voice, which went on a little longer. When even that howl stopped, Leena was misty-eyed and holding on to me, and I didn't have a thing to say to her.

"Whatever was out there, I'm not quite sure. I think I have some idea, but I haven't made that trip again since, at least not at night. Not yet."

— Peter the Hessian, troll grump

Elder Werewolf

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5, Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Abilities: Alertness 3, Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Enigmas 3, Etiquette 2, Firearms 1, Intimidation 4, Investigation 3, Leadership 4, Linguistics 1, Lore 4, Melee 3, Occult 4, Performance 3, Stealth 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4, Survival 5

Gnosis (Glamour): 9

Willpower: 8

Powers: Chicanery 3, Primal 5, Soothsay 3, Wayfare 4

Equipment: Backpack, silver dagger, enchanted elk-tooth necklace

Wraiths

Listen closely, my dears, and I shall tell you of the Restless Dead. I've heard you telling ghost stories, each to each, and giggling with the fright of them. Do you know why you could giggle? Because the stories you were telling weren't true.

I know the real ghost stories, little ones. I know the tales that will freeze the flesh from your bones and stop your heart like a cheap watch. And now, my childlings, I'm going to share those stories with you — because the Dead don't take kindly to being laughed at.

Now the first thing to know is that they are not as we are. Sure, the vampires and others are just Prodigals, but the dead folk, well, they're different. No magic to them, just sorrow — the memories of who they were in life, and they never were our kind, despite what the stories say. I suppose the best way to think of them is as chimera, but chimera who made themselves. They're souls remembering what they used to be, and they get all kinds of annoyed if you point out that they've missed any details.

The next pertinent bit is a bit trickier. You see, wraiths are in this world but not of it — they have the cheap seats at the other end of reality. For the most part, ghosts are stuck in a whole chimerical reality called the Shadowlands — but these are the ugliest chimera you've ever seen. Everything looks like it's falling apart, and not in the lived-in and loved way our things do. No, everything in the Shadowlands is frozen in a moment of decay. Fortunately, we can't see over there most of the time, but wraiths can peer through the curtain between worlds at the real show — us. The curtain, by the way, is called the Shroud. We can see wraiths moving on the other side of it (well, at least we shagh can. You nocker babies, well, I guess you won't see the ghosties creeping up on you until it's too late....). There are supposed to be other worlds that they wander through, called the Tempest and Stygia and the Labyrinth and whatnot, but that all sounds like a lot of pooka-talk to me.

I've asked a few wraiths why they don't leave the Shadowlands for more amenable circumstances, but they say they can't — once they finish laughing. Apparently these other places aren't quite as nice as the Shadowlands, which leads me to all sorts of terrible images. Besides, there are things that tie a wraith to the real world — a favorite person or something they loved — and ghosts don't want to get too far from those. If something bad happens to one of these Fetters (as they're called), then something Very Bad happens to the wraith. So, what this means for us is

that if you want to be friends with a wraith, you might want to collect and protect her Fetters. On the other hand, if a wraith is bothering you, well, let's just say that the dead aren't very fond of the word, "Oops."

Not everyone becomes a ghost, you know. The vast majority of dead people don't have the imagination to recreate themselves as ghosts. They just wander off to wherever it is that boring dead people go. It's only the ones who have a little extra oomph to their personalities that become ghosts, which can make them fascinating partners for discussion.

On the other hand, they just might have a bit too much oomph. Each ghost has a personal dark side called the Shadow, and you never know when that worse half will come out to play. Mind you, it's very difficult to tell when the Shadow's taken over. Sometimes you can spot the signs, but not always — and then it's usually too late.

You scoff at the notion of being afraid of ghosts? Little girl, where have you been? Ghosts can be terrifying, even without having the Shadow in charge. You've heard the stories. Walls dripping blood, objects flying through the air (knives are particular favorites), someone else taking control of your body — oh, yes, indeedy, wraiths can certainly do all of that and more.

But they can do worse. They can sing the Glamour right out of you, if they feel like it. They can tell your future and make it happen the way they cast it. Worst of all, they can harvest your dreams.

That's right, there are ghosts out there who drink the dream right out of you. They're called Sandmen, and once one sinks his claws into you, he'll never let go until you're drained dry. Ever have one of those mornings where you just don't want to get out of bed, and you can't remember your name unless it's written on the bathroom mirror? That's a sign a Sandman's been at you.

Then again, if you can get a Sandman to be your friend, you've got it made. Think about it — you get to go make dreams! It's hard to get started on that type of friendship, though. It's one of those "You-got-your-chocolate-in-my-peanut-butter/You-swiped-the-creativity-that-fuels-my-existence" sort of things.

Powers

• Wraiths, with rare exceptions, are completely invisible and intangible. Only sluagh, and sometimes eshu, can see wraiths, and unless the wraith chooses to materialize in the real world (an arduous task), the ghost cannot be touched physically. On the other hand, any contact of reasonable force with the area where a wraith is "standing" gives the wraith a single level of damage and disrupts the ghost's physical state for a number of turns equal to the wraith's Stamina rating. During this time, no further physical damage can be done to the wraith (except by another ghost). Ghosts willing to risk this level of injury can walk through doors, walls and other physical objects.

• A ghost's vision is sharper than a mortal's. Wraiths have the ability to see the auras of the living (which, incidentally, lets them pick changelings out of a crowd). Furthermore, their senses have been sharpened to a preternatural degree by death; a ghost can pick the numbers off a speeding car's license plate or read the signature on a Louisville Slugger in use.

• Ghosts called Chanteurs have the ability to sing raw emotion into a changeling, which can sometimes be turned into Glamour. They do this by means of a power called Keening; many changelings mistake Chanteurs for banshees.

• Wraiths known as Sandmen have the ability to harvest creativity, to alter dreams and even to take sleeping souls with them into full-fledged dream pageantry. A changeling who is targeted by a Sandman must roll Willpower (difficulty 8) or lose a point of Glamour for every night of the wraith's attention. On the other hand, a wraith dabbling in a changeling's dream must roll Willpower (difficulty 6) or get sucked into the dream as a permanent denizen.

• The ghosts who go by the name of Usurers can drain — or restore — Glamour with a touch. As one might expect, this leads to all sorts of complications.

• Wraiths feed on raw emotion. Usually, positive emotions fuel the wraith's personality, while strong negative feelings give strength to the wraith's dark side, or Shadow. Being creatures of passion (literally!) and memory, wraiths have very little Banality to them. In fact, the popular belief in ghosts and "haunted places" often makes the world more hospitable to changelings than it might have been otherwise.

• Some wraiths, called Risen, can actually repossess their bodies, climb up out of the grave and start walking around. Risen are very rare and extremely dangerous, but they do exist in the physical world.

• Wraiths are tied to objects in the real world called Fetters. If these items are connected or destroyed, the impact on the wraith is enormous (and extremely bad). Wraiths go to any lengths to protect their Fetters. Egged on by their Shadows, desperate ghosts may even resort to violence — or worse.

• Wraiths who have been consumed by their Shadows are called Spectres. Some of these are indistinguishable from normal ghosts, others are patently creatures of evil.

• See **Wraith: The Oblivion** for more information.

Lemures

"I don't go down to the Hanging Gardens anymore. The crawlers do once in a while, but I don't. Why? Because of all the ghosts down there.

"I mean, you figure a casino's going to be all sorts of fun for one of our kind. Bright lights, loud music, tacky costumes, people having fun, and if the music's any good, you just might find some Glamour sticking to the underside of the tables. Besides, it's the Hanging Gardens, you know — I mean, it's supposed to have flowers and stuff. Pretty things.

"But it's a scary place, and it's rotten with ghosts. I mean, if you listen real close you can hear them whisper, and there's dozens of them whispering all of the time. Out on the amusment pier it's even weirder.

"I was out there the other night, just sitting on the edge of the pier and watching all the jellyfish glowing blue in the water when I noticed this girl sitting next to me. She was pretty and sad, with her hair all done up in a scarf and all sorts of silver jewelry. I hadn't heard her coming, but I figured that was because I'd been too wrapped up in what I was doing.

"Anyway, we started talking. She said her name was Helene, and that she used to read Tarot cards for a living. I asked her what she did for a living now, and she just laughed. Then she told me that she worked at the Hanging Gardens, mostly at the tables.

"We ended up talking for hours, about music and magic and all sorts of things. I asked her to read my palm, but she said she didn't need to see my hand to tell me that I was going to have a brush with death. She seemed sad about it, too, but she seemed sad all the time.

"Anyway, we talked and talked until the sun started to come up, and she said that she had to go. I tried to kiss her goodbye, but when I leaned forward, I fell right through where she'd been and into the water. She'd vanished.

"And as I splashed around and tried not to drown, I could hear the other ghosts. Laughing."

— Devin Rasmussen, Seelie satyr wilder

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 2
Abilities: Alertness 2, Enigmas 3, Etiquette 2, Intimidation 2, Investigation 2, Leadership 2, Linguistics 1, Occult 2, Performance 3, Stealth 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2
Pathos (Glamour): 6
Willpower: 5
Powers: Chicanery 3, Wayfare 4

The Long Dead

"Old Ambrose is mean for a dead man. Old Man Johnson yells at us for playing on his lawn, and Mrs. Cleet the librarian gets mad when we make too much noise, but Old Ambrose is just *mean*. He's all scary-looking, with seaweed hanging off him and the seawater dripping and him leaving these wet footprints behind. Even worse, you can hear him before you see him coming — it's always *squeech squeech squeech* with his wet boots on the floor. And there's the smell, all dead fish and seaweed. And that's the times when you can see him. The rest of the time he's invisible, and that's worse 'cause you never know where he is or when he's gonna sneak up on you. He knows where you are, though.

"The thing is, Ambrose doesn't like us coming around to his house. He gets very protective of it, and he's liable to run off whoever trespasses. He puts up with the tours the college sends through, I don't know why, but he hates trespassers. It used to be a game for me and Elspeth. You know, sneak in, run around, soak up the super-scariness of the haunted house, and then try to run out before Old Ambrose or one of his kids or grandkids caught us. (He's got a whole family of ghosts in there. I'd hate that, being stuck with Mom and Dad forever and ever.) But I think he got tired of the game. One night, he followed Elspeth home and got into her dreams. He *put* something in there, and now she can't get it out so she wakes up screaming every night. Her parents are scared enough that they're going to send her away to a place where she can rest, which has the Duke in an uproar. He's mad at me for ever bringing Elspeth into the house in the first place, and he told me I'm never ever allowed to go back there.

"Suits me just fine."

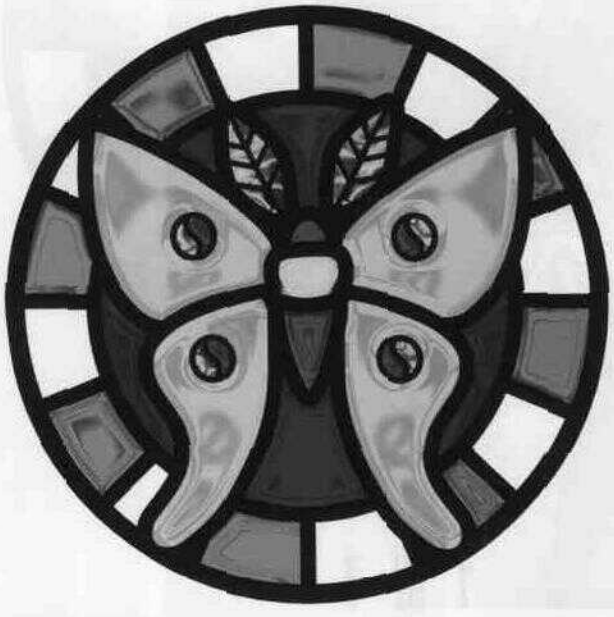
— Randall, Seelie sidhe childling

Average Banality Ratings

The following is intended only as a guideline. Each individual will have a rating based on their personality, activities, beliefs and level of intoxication, etc..

Target	Rating
Children	3-5
Wraiths	4
Drunks	5
Lunatics	5
Tradition mages	5-7
Malkavian vampires	6
Humans	6-7
Werewolves	7
Wyrm creatures	7
Mummies	8
Other vampires	8-9
Technocracy mages	8-10

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 5
Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Enigmas 4, Etiquette 2, Intimidation 4, Investigation 3, Leadership 4, Linguistics 3, Lore 2, Melee 3, Occult 4, Stealth 4, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4
Pathos (Glamour): 9
Willpower: 8
Powers: Chicanery 3, Ledgerdemain 4, Soothsay 3, Wayfare 4
Note: Certain wraiths, called Gaunts, have resolved their Fetters and can move freely between the layers of the Underworld. These ghosts are almost uniformly extremely powerful, and are masters of multiple wraithly powers (called Arcanoi). Changelings are unlikely to run into a Gaunt unless they are in so far over their heads that a bathyscape would have trouble finding them.





Chimerical Equipment

The following is a list of chimerical items that a character may begin with, based on the character's Chimera Background Trait. A character possessing the requisite number of dots (based on the rating of the Background Trait) for an item may possess other items of the same chimera requirement or less at the Storyteller's discretion. For example, a troll character with Chimera ••• may possess a suit of heavy armor, a battle axe and a dagger. Characters may only take one chimera that has a magical effect.

Items	Chimera Requirement
Armor, heavy	•••
Armor, light	•
Armor, medium	••
Armor, sidhe plate	••••
Battle-axe	••
Book	•
Bow	•••
Crossbow	•••
Dagger	•
Greatsword	•••
Mace	••
Magic Item (•-•• Art)	•••
Magic Item (•••-•••• Art)	••••
Magic Item (••••• Art)	•••••
Rope	•
Shield	•••
Spear	••
Staff	•
Sword	••
Warhammer	••

Afterword

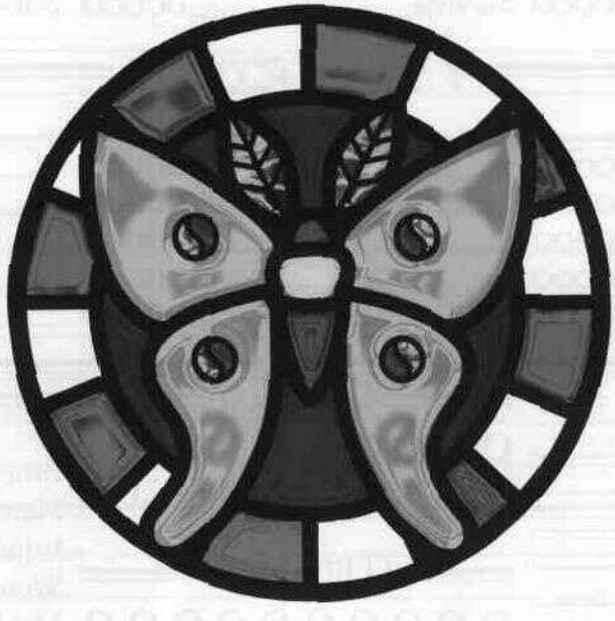
Wow! It's finally finished. I've been looking forward to this project for quite some time, and now that it is nearing completion, I am left with mixed emotions. Part of me is sad that the process of creating the second edition is over (in many ways the creation of the second edition was more exciting that the first). But another part of me is happy. The hard part is finally out of the way, and I can get back to the business of expanding the world of the fae.

The book you hold in your hands is much closer to **Changeling** as I had envisioned it when we originally set about creating the game. Though much remains the same, many things are changed. The most notable change is the elimination of the card system for casting cantrips. As anyone who has spoken with me in the past two years can attest, I have always felt that the card system hampered players rather than helping (not to mention being very confusing). In many ways the cards stifled players' creativity rather than inspiring it. Many of the changes in the second edition came about because of areas in the setting and rules that I felt needed to be expanded or better explained. Concepts introduced in other sourcebooks have been brought together here, and many of the new systems have been created with compatibility with the other Storyteller games in mind. *Calling upon the Wyrd* in particular allows changelings to step out of their own world and into others.

Yet as any veteran player of **Changeling** knows, this game isn't about rules but about dreams — the dreams we all have of waking up one day to find ourselves or our lives somehow changed. Everyone dreams of change, whether it is the desire for a new car, a new job, a different appearance or the ability to cast magical spells. We all dream, and *it is these dreams* that drive us to go on day after day, forever questing for them. In a sense, this is what **Changeling** is all about. It is about the continual quest in the name of a dream, whether for a magical homeland and the answers to every question ever asked, or for the chance to put on another face and take up another life, if only for a few hours.

In the end I hope that all those who pick up this game find a little of that drive and have fun with it. Tell a few stories, have a few adventures, and have a good time. After all, **Changeling** is a game, and games should be fun!

Keep Dreaming,
Ian Lemke



Changeling: The Dreaming™

Name: **Court:** **Seeming:**
Player: **Legacies:** **Kith:**
Chronicle: **House:** **Motley:**

Attributes

Physical
Strength ●○○○○
Dexterity ●○○○○
Stamina ●○○○○

Social
Charisma ●○○○○
Manipulation ●○○○○
Appearance ●○○○○

Mental
Perception ●○○○○
Intelligence ●○○○○
Wits ●○○○○

Abilities

Talents
Alertness ○○○○○
Athletics ○○○○○
Brawl ○○○○○
Dodge ○○○○○
Empathy ○○○○○
Intimidation ○○○○○
Kenning ○○○○○
Persuasion ○○○○○
Streetwise ○○○○○
Subterfuge ○○○○○

Skills
Crafts ○○○○○
Drive ○○○○○
Etiquette ○○○○○
Firearms ○○○○○
Leadership ○○○○○
Melee ○○○○○
Performance ○○○○○
Security ○○○○○
Stealth ○○○○○
Survival ○○○○○

Knowledges
Computer ○○○○○
Enigmas ○○○○○
Gremayre ○○○○○
Investigation ○○○○○
Law ○○○○○
Linguistics ○○○○○
Lore ○○○○○
Medicine ○○○○○
Politics ○○○○○
Science ○○○○○

Advantages

Backgrounds
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○

Arts
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
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Realms
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○
_____ ○○○○○

Other Traits
_____
_____
_____
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_____
_____

Glamour
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

Willpower
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

Health

		Real	Chimerical
Bruised		❑	❑
Hurt	-1	❑	❑
Injured	-1	❑	❑
Wounded	-2	❑	❑
Mauled	-2	❑	❑
Crippled	-5	❑	❑
Incapacitated		❑	❑

Ravaging/Musing Threshold

Banality
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

Birthrights/Frailties

Experience: ☐

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Changeling: The Dreaming™

Character History Sheet

Mortal Name: _____

Faerie Name: _____

Mortal Age: _____

Mortal Profession (if any): _____

Chimera/Companions/Treasures: _____

Description

Mortal: _____

Changeling: _____

Personality

Quirks: _____

Motivations & Goals: _____

Identity

Mortal: _____

Changeling: _____

Equipment

Oathcircle

Other Notes

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